

WALSALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OCTOBER 2025

Registered Charity No. 1189701

Programme for the Annual General Meeting
of the Walsall Community Association
Friday 31st October 2025

- 1. Registration**
- 2. Welcome and Opening Remarks**
- 3. Apologies**
- 4. Minutes of the last AGM**

- 5. Elected Officers Report:**
 - a) Chairman's Report
 - b) Secretary's Report
 - c) Acceptance of Elected Officers Reports

- 6. Presentation of Accounts**

- 7. Election of Officers**
 - a) A Vote of Thanks to outgoing Officers
 - b) Election of Chairman
 - c) Election of Vice Chair
 - d) Election of Secretary
 - e) Election of Treasurer

- 8. Election of Additional Members to the Management Committee**
(N.B. nominations must be made, accepted and seconded by members eligible to vote)

- 9. Chairman's Closing Remarks**

Section 1

MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Registered Charity No. 1189701

Minutes of the Walsall Community Association (WCA) Annual General Meeting
held on Friday 25th October 2024 at the WCA Centre
36 Wolverhampton Road, Walsall
Meeting started at 7:20pm

In Attendance

Management Members

Chairman	Ms. Yvonne Vassell
Vice Chair	Ms. Evadne Harris
Secretary	Mr. Basil Ellis
Treasurer	Mr. Leslie Haye
	Ms. Camille Ebanks-Powell
	Mr. Norman Reid
	Mr. Hartley Walker

Staff	D. Mitchell
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WCA Members	Non Members
E. Buckley	C. Johnson
A. Francis	D. Johnson
J. Morris	G. Johnson
L. Randall	M. Lawrence
D. Simmonds	K. Showande

APOLOGIES

M. Idowu and M. Amani (Peace)

Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed members, visitors and friends to the meeting. She spoke of the events and activities culminating over the past twelve months. Walsall Community Association has managed to maintain its existence in the community during some tough times and continue to deliver on its main core activity which is the weekly Community Hub and Luncheon Club.

Minutes of the Last AGM (circulated)

Accepted: C Ebanks-Powell & D Johnson respectively.

Matters Arising

Maintenance - Given the age of the building and its surroundings, the refurbishment of or total demolition of the building were the main discussion from this part of the agenda.

Questions asked: How much does the current property value at? How much would it cost to rebuild? How much interest have property developers shown?

Elected Officers Report

Chair's Report (circulated)

The Chairperson's report captures the events that took place over the period of the last twelve months.

Maintenance - The upkeeping of the building has been a strain on the organisation finances. The constant leaking of the roof from the porta-cabin stretching to the main part of the building housing the classrooms have been a major headache. A new boiler being installed in the kitchen, and taps replaced in the school toilets. Asbestos and Legionella reports have been carried out, emergency lighting has been changed and all the electric around the centre has been regularly checked, to make the centre safe for everyone to use. Given all that, the organisation enjoys a period of favourable increase in bookings and large attendances in fund raising events and other social happenings held at the centre

Recognition - On 24th June, the Chair was recognised by the Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands for volunteering services in the community. The Chair stressed that the award is an acknowledgement of the hard work and commitment of everyone who volunteers at the centre.

Looking forward – The Management Committee will be shortly assembling a sub-committee, who will put together an action plan to help to identify and manage the organisation's priorities, and to identify funding opportunities and make applications.

The report ended by acknowledging committee members, and the pleading for more people to become more involved with the centre by joining up and becoming a member and help the organisation move forward.

Comments: L Randall suggested that a map indicating direction to the centre should be on the organisation's web site, making it easier for visitors to find the centre.

E Harris suggested that the organisation could sponsor members to do some walking as a way of raising funds and it would also be health beneficial.

Accepted: N Reid and H Walker respectively.

Secretary's Report (circulated)

The report covers the on-going activities, budgeting and partnership with other bodies. Sporting Spirit CIC (a Community Interest Company that offers sports) has become a regular user of the organisation. During the school holidays in August and December, Sporting Spirit ran a range of activities for children age between 5 – 11 years old.

Finance – our audit report shows that the organisation is in a good financial position. Emmanuel School is our major income contributor and as always, we appreciate their continued support. Budgeting for building management has been very expensive giving an ageing building that presents a challenge in its own kind.

Challenges – a declining building, high utility costs and a small workplace are significant obstacles to the organisation's growth. These factors can be addressed by renovating the centre, but trying to get funding is a major task. A proposal being put forward is to host a Community Consultation meeting on re-imaging a Walsall Community asset. This will involve identifying Key Stakeholders. Their presence is crucial for fostering collaboration and enhancing community initiatives.

The Secretary's appeal for younger people to join the organisation is a move to ensure the long-term existence of organisation and its value in the community.

Comment - D Johnson told the meeting that he has a brother-in-law who own his own building firm and would be readily available to be in any discussion regarding the development of the property.

Accepted: - E. Buckley & Y. Vassell respectively.

Treasurer's Report (produced by Accountant Paul Wilcox - circulated)

Balance Sheet on 30th September 2024

Current Assets £63,226.00

Current Liabilities

Creditors £824.00

Net current assets £62,402.00

Total assets less current liabilities £62,402.00

Capital Reserves £62,402.00

Unrestricted Funds £62,402.00

Fixed Assets

The Association holds the freehold of the charitable premises
36 Wolverhampton Road
Walsall
WS2 8PR

Accepted: D Johnson and N Reid respectively.

Election of Officers

The outgoing chair thanked committee members and volunteers for their commitment and hard work over the last year.

Chairman

Yvonne Vassell: nominated by B Ellis, seconded by E Harris.

Yvonne Vassell elected unanimously as Chairman.

Vice Chair

Evadne Harris: nominated by H Walker, seconded by B Ellis.

Evadne Harris elected unanimously as Vice Chair.

Secretary

Basil Ellis: nominated by Y Vassell, seconded by L Haye

Basil Ellis elected unanimously as Secretary.

Treasurer

Leslie Haye: nominated by E Harris, seconded by N Reid.

Leslie Haye elected unanimously as Treasurer.

Election of 5 Management Committee members

All members to the Management Committee have been unanimously elected on to the committee.

N Reid nominated by B Ellis, seconded by E Harris

C Ebanks-Powell nominated by B Ellis, seconded E Harris

M Idowu nominated by H Walker, seconded by N Reid

Mkuu Amani nominated by B Ellis, seconded by Y Vassell

D. Simmonds nominated by E Harris, seconded by C Ebanks-Powell

D Johnson nominated by L Haye, seconded by Y Vassell

Election of any other members will take place at the next management meeting.

Closing Remarks

The chair thanked all returning officers and praised members, volunteers and supporters for their hard work. She hoped that the next 12 months would be a much better year for the organisation.

Meeting closed at 8:50pm.

Section 2

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Registered Charity No. 1189701

Chairman's Report 2025

As the Chair of Walsall Community Association, it is my pleasure to present to you my report for the year 2025.

As has been the case for several years now, it has been a quite challenging year for Walsall Community Association, but it has also been a productive year full of well attended activities and events.

Centre Activities

A number of events & activities have taken place at the centre over the last year.

- In October 2024, working alongside Yourmindinmyhand, we ran a Community Well-Being Event.
- In December 2024 we had our Annual Social Club Christmas Party and Luncheon Club Christmas Party.
- In December we also had our Annual New Year's Eve Party.
- In December and January, alongside Sporting Spirit, we ran HAF Children's Activities.
- In February, working alongside Walsall College, we ran a Healthy Living Session.
- In March we ran an 80s & 90s Night.
- In June we ran an Armed Forces Day Fish Fry Event.
- In August, alongside Sporting Spirit, we ran HAF Children's Activities, we had a VJ Day Celebration during our Wednesday Community Hub and we ran a Day Trip to Weston-super-Mare.
- Throughout 2025, we have been working alongside Walsall Housing Group to offer regular Meet Your Community Housing Officer sessions.

The Community Hub and Luncheon Club continue to provide a warm and welcoming space for our senior members and for the community every week, with hot Caribbean cuisine served up in the kitchen every Wednesday. Social activities continue to take place each week, and cost of living and health sessions have been run throughout the year.

The organisation continues to have monthly meetings to co-ordinate and execute plans of action, whilst the WCA bar sub-committee meets on a more regular basis to plan community events and prepare for room bookings.

The Black Country Commonwealth House and Future Plans

A Community Consultation was held in March to discuss the redevelopment and refurbishment of the derelict building at the front of Walsall Community Association, as the Black Country Commonwealth House.

Armed Forces Day

In June we ran a Fish Fry Event to celebrate Armed Forces Day. The event was well attended and brought together people of all ages for a joyful afternoon filled with delicious food, engaging activities, and powerful moments of reflection and gratitude. A major highlight was a live outdoor Commonwealth food demonstration led by the late Queen Elizabeth II's personal chef, giving attendees a rare culinary experience steeped in royal tradition and cultural heritage. Children and families were treated to a variety of fun and engaging activities including face painting, creative balloon display workshops, and interactive "tell a story/dance" sessions that encouraged expression and cultural storytelling. Adding a rich visual component to the day, a photo exhibition showcased Commonwealth and Foreign Military Personnel throughout history — offering a poignant reminder of the global reach and shared sacrifices of the Armed Forces.

We would like to thank Walsall Council for helping to fund this event and the VJ Day Celebration in August.



Commonwealth Food Demonstration

Signing of the Armed Forces Covenant

In June, Walsall Community Association were proud to have publicly signed the Armed Forces Covenant, showing our support and commitment to our Armed Forces and their families. We also received the Armed Forces Covenant bronze award from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS).



Chair Yvonne Vassell Signing the Armed Forces Covenant

Walsall College

Students from Walsall College have been helping WCA every Wednesday during the community hub sessions. We have continued to work with Walsall College throughout 2024 and 2025, and more students will be helping us in 2026.

HAF Children's Activities

Sporting Spirit ran a range of activities during the school holidays in December and August for children aged between 5-11 years old, including arts & crafts and multi-sports activities. These activities benefited over 20 children each session. The activities received positive feedback, and future activities are planned for 2026.

Maintenance

As has been the case for several years, a considerable amount of money has been spent on maintenance around the centre, including repairs to the roof, repairs to the kitchen wall, boiler servicing and boiler repairs. This year we have also had windows replaced in the kitchen and the carpet and flooring replaced in the Social Club. Asbestos and Legionella reports have been carried out, emergency lighting has been changed and all the electric around the centre has been regularly checked, to make the centre safe for everyone to use.

General Cleaning

We would like to thank members, volunteers and friends have attended several “Clean-up Days” at the centre over the last year. All the weeds growing in the yard, on the side of the building and on the roofs have been cleared. Cleaning and general maintenance of the Community Garden was regularly carried out as well. WCA also received additional support from Commonwealth Military Personnel throughout the year, who helped with the clearing of the derelict front building. This collaboration has helped to enhance the pace and progress of the restoration work, and we would like to thank the Military Personnel for giving their time, and for their hard work and commitment.

Financial

Despite large maintenance costs and an increase in our utility bills, our centre continues to be used by the community for social events, and we can show a cash surplus for the year ended 30th September 2025. As has been the case for some time now, our financial strategy remains the same, to have sufficient funds to maintain our significance in the community and to cover our liabilities.

Thanks

I would like to thank all the organisations who have contributed to the centre over the last 12 months, including Emmanuel School, The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Sporting Spirit and Walsall College, and to everyone who has provided valuable information during our cost of living and health information sessions.

I would like to thank everyone who has attended our Community Hub and Luncheon Club each week, who has taken part in our activities and who have attended our events over the last year, and thank you to everyone who has used our centre for functions during the last 12 months.

I would like to give thanks to our volunteers and staff, centre users and those who help in the kitchen each week. I would also like to thank all the Commonwealth Military Personnel who have helped WCA this year. I am always in awe of the effort put in by everyone associated with Walsall Community Association, including all the Management Committee, whose support and care make my job as Chairperson so much easier. The activities of the Committee can often go largely unseen by many, but without them the organisation would quickly grind to a halt.

As always, we are looking for new members to join the organisation or our committees. We are always welcoming of new faces and new ideas, so if anyone would like to speak with us and give us your input, then please do not be afraid to do so.

Yvonne Vassell
Chair
31st October 2025

Section 2

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Registered Charity No. 1189701

Secretary's Report 2025

Welcome to the 2025 Secretary's Report for Walsall Community Association, in which I am pleased to report on the events happening over the last 12-months at WCA.

We will continue our commitment to maintaining our presence and services to the community.

Main Building Development (re-imagining the Community Centre)

In my report of 2024, I mentioned that the organisation would be putting through a proposal to host a **Community Consultation Meeting** on re-imagining our Walsall Community asset. This consultation would involve identifying Key Stakeholders, with their presence crucial for fostering collaboration and enhancing community initiatives.

Community Consultation – 22nd March 2025 (lead by Prof. Martin Levermore)

A video and PowerPoint presentation was prepared and delivered by Prof. Martin Levermore, showing what the refurbishing and re-branding of the front derelict building at WCA would look like as **The Black Country Commonwealth House**.

The Commonwealth House will be the first of its kind in Walsall and will serve as a focal point for Commonwealth cultural exchange, community engagement, and education that is reflective of the diverse heritage of the Commonwealth nations represented across the Black country.

The consultation was a true and meaningful experience, attended by members of the local community, veterans and serving personnel of the armed forces. A defining moment of the day alongside the project, was the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant. This reaffirmed commitment to supporting those both serving military personnel and veterans, as well as their families.

Activities

Over the last 12 months we have run several events, including our Christmas and New Years Eve Parties, 80's & 90s Night, Armed Forces Day Fish Fry, VJ Day Celebration and a Day Trip to Weston-super-Mare. The events and our trip were all well attended, and they all received positive feedback.

Finance

The financial health of the organisation remains in the black. Income is through the letting of the main part of the building and porta-cabin to Emmanuel School, Function Room Hire, Social Club and Fund-Raising Events.

The Social Club once again is the heartbeat of the organisation in terms of hosting social events and has seen an uptake in users and hirers for functions. It has undergone a bit of upkeep in terms of new carpeting, laminate flooring and painted doors and walls.

Building Maintenance

Repairs and maintenance costs have amounted to just under £14,000 for the year. Most of the repairs have been carried out on the roof, with the main area repaired being the porta-cabin. Even now pockets of small leaking have sprung up elsewhere.

New Member

We welcomed Ms Deuaine Simmonds as a new member of the committee. Ms Simmonds is an educator who brings fresh ideas, communication and interpersonal skills, which can help to inspire and motivate our existing team of community leaders.

Conclusion

The Association must continuously adapt to the evolving needs of the community especially in social landscape which includes challenges such as mental health awareness, social isolation, youth engagement, and economic hardship. By addressing these issues, the association can function as a beacon of support and empowerment meeting some of the pillars of regeneration within Walsall.

I would like to thank and acknowledge all our Volunteers, Committee Members and their respective partners and friends, and our lone staff member Darren Mitchell, for their continued hard work and persistence, for without them, the flame of the organisation would have long gone out.

Basil Ellis
Secretary
31st October 2025