Committee Update for Members - Issue 5 - July 2026

The Committee met on 15 July to review current site matters, projects and plans for the coming months.

Site Projects

Work is being arranged to replace the doors on the Community Hut and Pig Hut. The Pig Hut will also have new guttering fitted so that the waiting IBC tank can be connected for rainwater collection.

Further tree and hedge work is planned around the orchards and other parts of the site. More than £1,000 of remaining grant funding is available towards this work.

The Committee has also agreed to install a secure post box on the Community Hut. This will initially be used for seed order forms but may also be used for other written correspondence.

Community Orchards

James Sharman will continue maintaining the Butterfly Garden. The two community orchard areas will require additional volunteer attention, including pruning and general maintenance.

Members are welcome to pick ripe fruit from the community orchard trees. Please take only what you will use and leave some for others.

Horticultural Show

Entries are now being accepted for this year's Horticultural Show, which will take place on Saturday 22 August.

Members are encouraged to submit their entries as early as possible to help with planning and preparation. Full details of the categories and how to enter have already been circulated.

Seed Ordering

We are pleased to confirm that Richard Peacock has volunteered to become the Society's new Seed Secretary.

Seed catalogues and order forms are expected next month. Further information will be circulated once they arrive. Completed forms will be returnable through the new Community Hut post box.

Plot Inspections, Vacancies and the Waiting List

The Committee has completed the summer plot inspection and contacted members where plots required attention.

Most members responded positively, and many plots have already improved following grass cutting, weed control, repairs and increased cultivation. Thank you to everyone who acted promptly.

We understand that health, family and other personal circumstances can sometimes make it difficult to maintain a plot. Members experiencing difficulties are encouraged to contact the Committee as early as possible. Genuine circumstances will be taken into account where members communicate with us and demonstrate reasonable efforts to improve or maintain their plots.

However, the Committee also has a responsibility to ensure that plots are actively cultivated and do not become seriously overgrown or create additional work for volunteers. Following repeated concerns, previous warnings and a lack of sufficient improvement, four members have recently received termination notices and are no longer members of the Society.

We currently have approximately 10 people on the waiting list and are actively working to allocate available plots. Prospective members are being invited to view vacancies, although several plots require significant clearance before they can be cultivated.

Members leaving the Society must remove their belongings and rubbish before their tenancy ends. Where the Society incurs substantial costs clearing an abandoned plot or disposing of waste, it may seek to recover those costs from the former tenant.

Waste and Site Clearance

The Committee is investigating options for arranging a skip or alternative licensed waste collection later in the year.

Please do not bring household waste onto the allotment site or leave unwanted items around the bins, tracks, vacant plots or communal areas.

Rainwater Harvesting

The new rainwater tank beside the Community Hut has been well used. A smaller, easier-to-operate tap will be fitted and new signs will be installed.

Members should use collected rainwater before using the mains-fed tanks whenever rainwater is available.

Further practical guidance on water harvesting is also being prepared.

Feral Cats

Cats Protection is supporting the neutering and treatment of the three adult feral cats currently living around the site.

The Committee has agreed to donate £150 to Cats Protection in recognition of this assistance.

Members are asked not to begin feeding stray or feral cats without first speaking to the Committee. Regular feeding can encourage cats to remain and breed on the site, creating longer-term welfare and financial responsibilities.

Site Security

The Committee is reviewing site security and intends to change the gate code after the current tenancy changes have been completed.

Please do not share the gate code with people who are not members. Anyone visiting or caring for a plot should be accompanied or specifically authorised by the plot holder.

Notice Boards

The locked notice boards are managed by the Committee. Members wishing to display a notice should contact the Committee rather than placing items directly inside the boards.

Volunteering

A recent request for volunteers to assist with site improvements received no responses.

The site is managed almost entirely by volunteers. Even occasional help with pruning, clearing communal areas, maintaining orchards or completing small repairs would be greatly appreciated.

Please contact a Committee member if you can offer any practical assistance.

Binswood Allotment Society Committee
July 2026