
Brighton & Hove Social Welfare and Educational Trust Ltd

Minutes of Annual General Meeting
held on Wednesday 29th October 2025
at St George's Hall, North Moulsecoomb

There were 21 organisational members of the company present

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| 1. Action for Bevendean Community | 12. North Portslade Residents' Association |
| 2. Albion Life | 13. On Your Way (Job Club and Digital Inclusion) |
| 3. BG Society | 14. Robert Lodge Community Space |
| 4. Coldean Village Bingo | 15. Salaam FC |
| 5. Conway Court Resident's Group | 16. Stand for Ukraine Brighton & Hove |
| 6. East Brighton Food Co-op | 17. Sussex Syrian Community CIO |
| 7. Essex Place Residents' Association | 18. Very Local Food Hubs |
| 8. Highcroft Lodge Residents' Association | 19. Warwick Mount Tenants' Association |
| 9. Hollingdean Residents' Association | 20. We are the Tree CIC |
| 10. Hollingdean Artists' Collective | 21. Woods House Residents' Association |
| 11. LGBTQ+ Neurodiversity Meet-Up | |

Individual members of the Company present

Directors: Muriel Briault, Christine El-Shabba, Emma Salcombe, Jonathan White, Ahmad Yabroudi

Staff: Dani Ahrens, Kate Chapman, Kate Page, Mireille Shimoda

Chair: Kate Page; *Minutes:* Kate Chapman

1. Chair's introduction

Kate Page welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming and explained the purpose of the meeting.

She introduced the Resource Centre staff and explained that Ali Ceesay, who joined the Resource Centre staff team in February, was unable to attend as she was unwell.

Kate also reported that Rebecca Luton who started work at the Resource Centre in 2019 had made the difficult decision to resign from her post at the end of July after a long period of ill health. Kate said that Rebecca had been a highly valued member of staff and that everyone who worked with her was sad to see her go. The meeting sent Rebecca best wishes for the future.

Kate concluded her introduction with this tribute to Robin Berry, Trustee, Director and Chair of the Committee until June 2025, who sadly passed away in August:

We were all devastated to learn that Robin Berry passed away in August 2025. Robin was the Chair of our Management Committee and member of our committee for ten years. Robin was a very special person and was admired and respected by all of us here at the Centre.

We will miss his calm, thoughtful approach, his dedication and his ability to get straight to the heart of the matter. We will miss the support he gave us in his role as Chair and we will miss him—his humour, his kindness and his warmth. He made a huge contribution.

Robin was an enthusiastic supporter of the work of the Resource Centre and he will always be a part of the Centre, in our practise and in our memories.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from 18 organisational members:

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| 1) Alnoure Academy | 11) Making our Mark |
| 2) Bevendean Food Bank | 12) Somerset Point Residents' Association |
| 3) Chattri Memorial Group | 13) Sudan Club |
| 4) Craven Vale Community Association | 14) Surdi |
| 5) Coldean Residents' Association | 15) Sussex Refugee & Migrant Self-Support Group |
| 6) Dolphins Disabled Swimming Club | 16) Sylvan Hall Residents' Association |
| 7) EuroMernet | 17) Whitehawk Crew Club |
| 8) Grosvenor Room Tyson Place Management Committee | 18) Woodingdean Tenants' and Residents' Association |
| 9) Hangleton and Knoll Hedgehogs | |
| 10) Knoll Community Association | |

Apologies from groups awaiting approval of membership

North Whitehawk Residents' Association

3. Welcome from Chair of Trustees/Directors

As Chair of the Resource Centre's Management Committee, Muriel Briault, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them very much for attending.

Muriel took a moment to pay further tribute to Robin Berry on behalf of the committee, saying that Robin was a lovely man, a great Chair of the Management Committee and always a pleasure to work with.

She praised the really important contribution Robin had made to the Resource Centre and said how much he would be missed, offering Robin a heart-felt thank you.

Muriel also thanked Rebecca Luton for the enormous contribution she made during her time working at the Resource Centre and wished her health and happiness in whatever she goes on to do.

After Rebecca left at the end of July, the centre has been short-staffed and Muriel thanked the staff for all their work and commitment to keep the centre running smoothly despite this. She reported that plans are in place to introduce a new worker early in 2026.

Muriel finished by thanking everyone on the committee for their work throughout the year.

4. Minutes of B&H SWET Ltd Company AGM 23rd October 2024, and matters arising

There were no matters arising.

The meeting approved the minutes of last year's AGM. There were no abstentions and no objections.

5. Finance and Fundraising Report (Annual Report and Financial Statements year ended 31st March 2025 and financial position)

Mireille gave the following report on the Centre's financial position:

Total income in 2024-25 **£214,174**

Total spent **£199,738**

So, our income was higher than our spending:

Net income was **£14,436**

At the end of the year (March 2025) our bank balance was **£105,673**

Mireille explained that in the last financial year, the centre's expenditure wasn't as high as anticipated – it had been hoped that a new staff member would be recruited in 2024 but the right person wasn't found until Ali, who started in February this year. This means that the wages bill was lower than expected.

The centre's income of **£214,174** came from the following:

Money raised from print & equipment (19%): **£41,540**

Grants total (just over 78%): **£167,640**

Donations & interest: **£3,941**

Money raised from print/equipment:

The net income from print was 10% lower than the previous year. Mireille said that staff are aware that usage of the print room has gone down, partly because we can't compete with commercial prices. Staff had a meeting earlier this year to start exploring and investigating alternative ways of generating income.

The net income from equipment was 7% higher than the previous year—suggesting that the income from this service is levelling off again after the rebound after the years impacted by covid.

The centre received grants from the following organisations:

Brighton & Hove City Council

(for our front desk work)	£89,853
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Brighton & Hove Housing Services

(for our work with Residents' Associations)	£36,347
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Early Years and Childcare

(to support our work with preschools)	£7,500
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East Brighton Trust

(for our work with groups based in East Brighton)	£2,000
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Sussex Community Foundation (for our work with refugee/migrant/minoritised groups & groups based on estates)	£10,000
The Fore (for the Tech Project)	£21,940

How things are going in 2025-26

Mireille reported that at the end of Quarter 2, the centre is forecasting a net expenditure of around £30,000 in 2025/26. However, she pointed out that applications to Sussex Community Foundation and Common Ground for funding totalling £20,000 are in process, so the outturn for 2025/26 may be significantly better than the current forecast.

The future

Mireille reiterated that, following another period of being short-staffed, the centre is hoping to recruit a new member of staff to start in early 2026 in order to ensure that we have enough capacity to continue to support groups and to develop and improve our work.

She went on to thank everyone present for their support year on year, in particular for their feedback on the centre's work which is so helpful when we apply for funding and when we write reports to funders.

Mireille then invited questions from the meeting:

There were no questions about the finance report, but Ian Beck offered thanks to the Resource Centre, saying that with the work it has done for Hollingdean Community Association over many years, the association would not exist.

The meeting approved the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2025. There were no objections or abstentions.

6. New Members

Kate Page explained the criteria for membership of the Resource Centre.

Five new membership applications had been approved by the management committee at meetings during the past year.

- Dolphins Disabled Swimming Club
- Culture Collective (BME women organising cultural/creative activities)
- Coldean Village Bingo
- Telugu Brightoners (running cultural events for the Telegu speaking community from Kerala, India)
- We are the Tree (led by forcibly displaced refugees and migrants, committed to dignity, inclusion and empowerment of their communities: training, activities, well-being).

A further seven applications for membership had been received since the last committee meeting, and Kate Page asked the AGM to approve these applications:

- Conway Court Residents' Group
- EB Sports academy (a non-profit multi-sports club created by local players, coaches, enthusiasts and members of the local community to promote playing opportunities for young people in East Brighton).

- Sussex Tamil Kudumbangal (a group organising cultural/community events for the Tamil community living in B&H)
- North Whitehawk Residents' Association
- Artspace Brighton (a charity running from the community studios in Bristol Estate. They aim to support the mental health and wellbeing of the artists who use their space).
- Tonic Gay Sober Socials (a group organised by people in recovery, helping members of the gay community overcome addiction)

The meeting voted unanimously to approve all seven applications.

Q: Theresa Mackey asked where the centre's membership criteria can be found.

A: Kate Page said that membership criteria is on the Centre's website and that staff always encourage groups who appear to meet the criteria to apply.

7. Election of Trustees/Directors for 2025/26

Firstly, Kate Page explained that there were eight names on the ballot papers, where only seven nominees had been listed on the Agenda that was sent out. This was due to an administrative error which resulted in a valid nomination, that of Rawaa Ibrahim, being omitted from the agenda. Sher offered her apologies to Rawaa for the error.

Kate then asked those nominees who were present to introduce themselves and say a few words about their group and how they have worked with the Resource Centre. The following people spoke :

- Ahmad Yabroudi
- Aisha El Turki
- Awel Harun Abdo
- Emma Salcombe
- Christine El Shabba
- Jonathan White
- Muriel Briault
- Rawah Ibrahim

The voting system was explained and ballot papers distributed and collected for counting.

8. Work Report

Dani gave the following report on the year's work at the Centre in 2024/25:

2024/25 was a year of being short-staffed. Despite this, we managed to keep all our services going and the doors of the Centre open to welcome groups of all kinds.

Around 600 different groups visited the Centre during this time, and every visit is an opportunity for us to learn about what matters to community organisers in the city, the challenges they are facing and how we can offer support that helps them run their groups effectively.

One of the things that makes the Resource Centre unique is that all of our staff work directly with groups on the front desk, and delivering one-to-one support. For all of us, helping groups to solve their day-to-day problems is a core part of our working week.

Being available to speak to people on the phone and face-to-face is immensely valuable for us, and we hope groups find it valuable too. When the Centre is busy with

visitors, we love to take the opportunity to chat with everyone about how their groups are going, and gather information and tips that we can pass on. Groups often chat with each other in our print room too, which is fantastic to see.

We are currently working on three initiatives that are all about making these aspects of the Resource Centre even better:

Tech Project

First, our tech project. We have been awarded a grant of just over £20,000 to improve our database and website. For us, the key benefit of this will be that it will free us up to have better conversations with groups when they come in or call us. At the moment, we are having to use a lot of effort dealing with old and inefficient admin systems instead of focusing on listening to our user groups.

The tech project has two main strands:

- A redesigned website, where we hope it will be easier to find the information you need
- An online booking system for our equipment hire service.

You'll be able to check availability of equipment in advance and choose collection and return times that suit you. Of course, we'll also still be there on the end of the phone if you need any help with making your equipment bookings—or anything else.

A new database that will enable us to track the work we do with each group and create powerful stories about the difference we are making, to help us make a stronger case to funders.

We are excited about this project and we are very much looking forward to launching it next year. In the meantime, we would love your help with the structure and design of the new website.

Print Room Project

The second project is a programme of improvements to the print room.

We are applying for government funding to replace our colour copier with a new model, update all the computers with new ones that can run the latest software, and get some new furniture made that will make it easier for people to produce their own stickers, badges, large posters and banners in the print room.

We've also got ambitious plans to offer a wider range of printing options, including equipment to produce things like mugs, tote bags and fridge magnets.

The overall aim is to make the print room more welcoming and accessible, to bring more people in to the Centre, so that we can have those all-important conversations.

We know we can't compete on price for long print runs, but we do offer something you can't get from commercial print shops—we care about the impact of your printed materials on the work of your group overall.

For groups with no offices of their own, we provide free computer access, a calm space to work and a second pair of eyes on your design, to spot that last-minute typo.

Dani followed her report by inviting feedback on these projects and by reminding people that the deadline for applications for the post of Resource Centre Worker is 9am on

Monday 10th November. She encouraged everyone to take a card advertising the post and to pass these on to anyone who may be interested in making an application.

Questions and Feedback in response to Dani's report:

Print room project

Q: Jonathan White asked whether the centre has facilities to print plastic business cards.

A: Dani said she will look into whether there is a way of doing this using our existing machines, and if not, will research what the centre would need in order to provide this. It could potentially be a new service under the print room project.

Feedback:

Janet Cronin commented that facilities to print on mugs, bags etc would be really useful to her group.

Tech Project

AI

Q: Pippin Boardman asked what impact AI might have on the centre and the groups who use it.

A: Dani said that this is a question the Centre's staff have in mind, and have been considering how AI might be utilised by groups and by the centre itself. They don't have any clear ideas about this yet, but will keep thinking about how and where AI might be useful.

This question about AI led to a broader discussion in the meeting and the following comments and points:

Jonathan White: commented that AI can be very useful for designing flyers and publicity materials.

Des Jones: said that he thought AI is good if it can serve us (and not vice versa). He thinks could be useful to groups for certain tasks, but that we need to be careful about how we use it.

Don Donchev: has expertise in this area and offered his help to the centre if needed, especially around integrating AI into the new website. Dani thanked Don and said she would be in touch with him about this.

Networking

Sarah Fernee: commented that it's really good to visit the centre and have the chance to meet other groups. She thought that it would be nice to have a noticeboard at the centre dedicated to championing members groups and what they do. She suggested that the centre could 'feature' one group at a time on the noticeboard and include photos and stories about the group's activities. This would allow other groups visiting the centre to get an insight into how others work.

Kate Page thanked Sarah for this idea and said that staff will put some thought into how it could be implemented.

Q: Manal Ahmed: asked what the centre could do to help the 600 groups who use the centre to network and connect with each other.

Q: Ellis Thistle: agreed that more networking opportunities would be useful, and asked whether the Resource Centre keeps or publishes a directory of its members, suggesting that members could be given the option to consent to their contact details being shared.

Q: Janet Cronin: agreed that Resource Centre is in a key position to facilitate networking. She asked whether staff have considered greater use of social media to publicise the work that groups are doing at the centre eg posting pictures of groups' leaflets, posters etc (with their consent).

A: Dani: answering Manal, Ellis and Janet - pointed out that Community Works keeps a directory of its members and has historically been better placed to provide networking opportunities than the Resource Centre.

However, she said that she would take these comments and suggestions on board, and will have them in mind during the development of the new website and database.

9. Election results

All eight nominees were elected as trustees and directors to sit on the Resource Centre Management Committee for 2025-26. They are:

- Ahmad Yabroudi (Sussex Syrian Community)
- Aisha El-Turki (Alnoure Academy)
- Awel Harun Abdo (Oromo Community in Brighton & Hove)
- Christine El Shabba (Robert Lodge Community Space)
- Emma Salcombe (Essex Place Residents' Association)
- Jonathan White (On Your Way)
- Muriel Briault (North Portslade Residents' Association)
- Rawaa Ibrahim (We Are The Tree)

Kate congratulated the new committee, and thanked candidates for standing.

10. Close of meeting

Kate thanked everyone for their support and contributions to the meeting and invited everyone to stay for the buffet.

These minutes were approved by the Annual General Meeting of Brighton and Hove Social Welfare and Educational Trust Ltd on _____ (date)

Signed

on behalf of the Management Committee