

Calder Valley Community Land Trust Ltd

Minutes of AGM held on Saturday June 24th 2023 at 11am in Hebden Bridge Town Hall

Present: Simon Brearley (chair), Paul Brannigan, John Wilson, John Berry, Sally Hinton, Richard Henderson, Abigail Gregory, Dai Larner, Karin Lowson, Kala Wild, Judy Audaer, Catharine Browne, Joyce Catterick, Melvin Coleman, Dave Collins, Christopher Dale, Eleanor Dale, John Day, Tim Edmondson, Hannah Elliott, Linda Levick, David Procter, Holly Rothwell, Nigel Sagar, Caroline Pinder, Barbara Brannigan, Sam Roberts, Oliver Chan, David Holmes, Catherine Potts, Derren Naylor, Sarah Rae, Judith Appleton, Jenny Coleman, Maggie Woods. Guest: Margaret Procter, Linda Roberts.

Apologies: Jenny Slaughter, Mo Ludlam, Paul Monahan, Diana Monahan, Barbara Jones, Jan Hinde, Amanda McDermott, Andrew Bibby, Barbara Abbott, Dian Wilson, Jane Scullion, Nina Smith, Robin Pennie, Sarah Pennie, Anne Sutcliffe, Maggie Smallwood.

1. Chair's introduction

Simon Brearley welcomed members to the 2023 AGM.

2. Minutes of 2022 AGM

These were approved as circulated. There were no matters arising.

3. Core functions

3.1 Secretary's report

Kala Wild spoke about:

- how we ensure we are run responsibly.
- how we engage with the community.
- our generation of £176,000 of added social value.
- the opportunity to join our advisory panel if you have skills that could support the land trust.
- our membership survey that is to be sent out soon.

3.2 Treasurer's report

Karin Lowson gave a comprehensive review of the 2022 accounts and informed the meeting:

- We have moved from the Charity code of conduct to the Confederation of Cooperative Housing code of conduct which is a better fit with the work we do.
- The varied sources of funding that help us carry out our work.
- The notional figure of depreciation of our houses and how it affects the bottom line of our accounts, whilst the actual value of the houses increases.

Karin shared information about the income and expenditure of the organisation, to demonstrate that the finances were sound and that there were increasing reserves building up, including funds being put aside for future repairs and maintenance.

Karin answered a question from the membership related to adapting to increasing interest rates. Discussion took place around the possibility of reducing the loan or finding a better rate with another lender. Our rent increases are capped by government.

3.3 Housing management

John Berry spoke about how we maintain an excellent cost-effective service to our tenants through our partnership with Connect Housing, who we contract to deliver services to our homes and tenants. Where we can help our tenants, we do, and a recent example is the installation of an external tap and hosepipe for a tenant no longer able to carry a watering can.

John answered a member's question about affordable rents, explaining that affordable is deemed as up to 80% of the local market rent. We have reduced service charges every year at Birks Court.

3.4 Communications and marketing

Abigail Gregory described our marketing and communications work prior to the recent establishment of a Communication & Marketing task group. We have experienced growth in membership, newsletter subscribers and social media followers.

Our key priorities are:

- Ensure more people know about our work.
- Maintain our excellent reputation.
- Encourage people to get involved.
- Raise unrestricted funding to support our core work.

Abigail called on members to help us to increase our membership to 400 by the next AGM. Members can distribute our annual review, promote the land trust on social media and encourage anyone with marketing and communications skills to get involved with the land trust. Ideas came from members about how to recruit, the attributes that would help and sources of volunteers.

4. Projects

4.1 Fielden Hall

Melvin Coleman spoke about Fielden being part of the Todmorden Town Deal Centre Vale project. We have been awarded £150k to retrofit Fielden Hall and are looking for match funding to deliver a higher level of energy efficiency. We are in discussions with Todmorden College about working with their green building skills students.

4.2 Empty properties

Sally Hinton shared updates on:

- Jerusalem Farm Cottage. CMBC have offered a 21-year lease on the property, and we need to raise funds to renovate and retrofit the property.
- Crown Street. CMBC have offered a 21-year lease on these 2 empty properties. We have been awarded funding from the Local Authority Housing Fund to renovate and retrofit the property and let them to refugees initially.
- Brunswick Street. An altruistic local person is working with us to ensure it becomes an affordable rented community asset rather than an Airbnb,

4.3 High Street

Richard Henderson informed the meeting that we have secured planning permission for the houses through a significant and more costly redesign. Since the first planning application building costs and borrowing rates have increased significantly making it difficult to make the project viable at this time. Work is continuing to raise £3.5m with £2m in grants already identified. We are also looking to reduce the funding gap by identifying a contractor who can meet our quality criteria and deliver the project at a lower cost.

4.4 Enterprise centre

Dai Lerner informed the meeting that there are 10,000 people on the housing waiting list. When we were asked to sponsor the enterprise centre in Todmorden, we agreed to take it on if we could put affordable rented homes on top. There are no sites in the Local Plan for commercial or housing development in Todmorden, except for the Rose Street site in Todmorden. The site is in a flood zone and we are working on a design that will pass the exception test that would give us permission to build there.

4.5 The Signal Box

Karin Lawson informed the meeting that we have agreed a lease with Network Rail. Member Chris Dale shared plans for a heritage centre on the upper floor that would appeal to everyone from rail enthusiasts to visits from school parties.

5. Approval of accounts

The Trustee Report and Accounts were approved by the meeting.

6. To approve the reappointment of Third Sector Accounting as independent examiners for the 2023 accounts

Karin Lawson proposed that we continue to use Third Sector Accounting for the 2023 accounting period. This was approved by the meeting.

7. Election of trustees

Sally Hinton, Simon Brearley and Anne Sutcliffe who are at the end of their terms and are standing for re-election. Oliver Chan, a co-opted trustee is standing for election. Dave Collins is standing for election. Cathy Wheatcroft has been a great support but has chosen not to offer herself for re-election due to time commitments elsewhere. The chair proposed individual votes for the following candidates for election or re-election to the board and this was agreed. The votes were taken, by show of hands, and the following people were overwhelmingly elected: Simon Brearley, Sally Hinton, Anne Sutcliffe, Dave Collins and Oliver Chan.

8. Any Other Business

Questions were taken in relation to:

- our retrofit plans
- the demand for business units in Todmorden
- how are we addressing flooding impact at the enterprise centre
- parking around the enterprise centre

The meeting closed at 12.40pm.