



Annual General Meeting 22nd February 2020 10:30am
& Public Meeting 11:30

Present:

Management Committee

Committee Members

Adrian Nagle
Ellie Edgar
Debbie Tomkins
Louise Amond
Vikki Malcolm
Philip Hunt
Bronwen Barnes
Kelly Hall

Sophie Harrison
Linda Carty
Vic Tomkins

AGM Business

This was our second AGM and was attended by 24 members. Meeting opened 10:30. Apologies were received from one member of the management committee, James Richards, and from two members Lucy Child and John Sellgren.

1. Introduction and apologies

Chairman Adrian Nagle welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlining the procedure that the AGM will follow. All members of the management committee (MC) gave a brief introduction of themselves to the meeting.

2. Chairman's Report

Adrian Nagle gave his report to the members giving a brief history of the progress made to date and the plans for the future. The text of the chairman's report is embedded below.

Annual report 2020

A very warm welcome to our 2nd AGM and annual report of the Society's activities.

It has been an exciting year and has taken continuing commitment and team effort to get to where we are today, on the cusp of a community shop and café. We have a great team and I would like to say thank you to the Management Committee (MC), and everyone who is helping, all of whom give freely of their time to bring this vision to fruition.

Ellie Edgar, a founder member of the Society, has decided to stand down from the MC this year. I know that she now wants to continue helping in other ways and the MC join with me in thanking her for her contribution over the last 3 years on the committee.

Bronwen Barnes and **Kelly Hall** became valuable members of the MC during the year focusing on retail and volunteer recruitment. As they were co-opted our rules require that they must now stand for election at this AGM.

The Walled Garden freehold was transferred to our Parish Council (PC) in July last year. I think it should also be acknowledged that the PC are also volunteer's and after being convinced to come on board I know that it has taken a lot of effort and time on their part to support the project and our thanks are due to them.

Munnings Construction were appointed by the PC to undertake the repairs and structural requirements needed to make the garden walls safe and subsequently they were also been tasked by the PC with refurbishing the exterior of existing outbuildings. Munnings moved onto and took control of the site during early Sept 2019 and finished on 14 February this year. They have done an exceptionally good job of sympathetically repairing the walls and we do extend our thanks to them for a job very well done.

The Lease with the PC was completed on 17 February 2020 and now that Munnings have vacated, we are officially the tenants of the WG site. Registration of the lease is in process with Land Registry and I would like to note that our solicitors Leathes Prior have provided an exceptional service for which we are very grateful. Our rent payable for the first 5 years is a peppercorn £1 per annum.

We appointed **Lesko Modular Group Ltd** as our contractor to supply the shop and café and the order for the building was placed on 6 November 2019. The initial groundworks for the building footprint and services inside the WG have been completed together with the necessary arboreal work. Projected delivery of the shop and café is during the Easter holiday period.

Revised planning permission for the downscaled design version was applied for and has been granted by Broadland District Council.

The PC have taken responsibility for the **frontage car park area** and services are in the process of being provided by Cripps developments, as part of their S106 liabilities. Completion of these two aspects will be instrumental in determining our opening date.

The interior of the **outbuildings**, and especially the existing toilet block, will be refurbished by us. The toilet block must be fit for purpose before the shop and café opens. We have appointed an electrical contractor for the necessary re wire. In the west garden there is a storeroom and tool shed needing a new roof and some general tlc and quotes for the roof are being obtained.

As you know the **Post Office** had approved Little Plumstead as a location for a Post Office Local service. We have just completed the application process and await further news from the PO. If our application is successful, the next step will be the interview stage.

I am pleased to report that, except for the Leader grant, which is paid retrospectively, all **Funding** as detailed in my report last year has been received including the £60,000 from HPFT. In addition a **Legacy Gift** of £30k was received last year from a patient who was a former resident at Little Plumstead Hospital. She died in 2018 and bequeathed money to be used for the benefit of the local community. In due course you will notice a Hare appearing in the garden (a sculpture not a real one) to commemorate her, named 'Spirit' by the children at Little Plumstead Primary School. Thank you, Connie.

We have also continued to receive ongoing support from Broadland clinic including use of their office facilities which is of considerable help. As mentioned, the Leader grant is paid retrospectively, and we have received payment of our first claim covering costs of the groundworks and deposit for the shop and café.

We achieved another grant success with **Pocket Parks**, public money made available to community groups to help develop outdoor spaces. We are delighted to say that our application was accepted, and we were awarded £15,500 which is earmarked for the garden areas.

Community Shares issue phase 2 SEIS is now open again until 31 March when it will close for the final time. We have taken the decision to do this at the behest of several members of the community, to increase the Societies investment membership and of course our overall financial robustness. All investment received will be used in the capital works and help reduce any reliance on the loan facility that we have.

Sponsor a fruit tree for £20 was launched during the year and is proving popular. Details of how to do this are available after the meeting.

Grant Applications are ongoing, and we currently have three in progress with; Lottery Heritage (for a Victorian style greenhouse and part time gardener) Lottery partnerships (for 50% of salary costs for the first 3 years) and the National Garden Scheme (for garden tools) All are currently awaiting decisions.....

We are in the process of developing a **Crowdfund** campaign through Aviva which will go live to the public on 4 March and then to Aviva employees on 10 March. Aviva are distributing £250k to community projects (with a £50k maximum per project) through their employees, who will make their own individual choices as which project they will support. Generating donations before Aviva come on board will help to energise our campaign enormously. Details will be on our website shortly.

The **Recruitment** phase is now open, and we will be advertising for 2 FTE positions in the shop (a manager and assistant manager) and 1 part time position in the café. CV's have already been received.

Volunteers will be the vital element of the project to support the smooth running of the shop and café, and development of the garden. After a long wait we are now very much 'open for business'

Work in the **Walled Garden** has started, with an initial clean up party last weekend but lots more to do! We will be advising today the dates of the next work parties for everyone who wants to join in.

As we now move from the build phase into recruitment and then opening, **we invite you** to join us on this journey. If you feel you can get involved in any way, from being the shop manager to serving coffee, re stocking the shelves or helping in the Post Office, lovingly tending the garden areas or perhaps you're a tradesperson who can lend a hand. Can you write grant applications, help with social media or our website or good at admin, please do let us know.

And finally, it is in all our hands now to create a community asset that we can be proud of and I look forward to doing this with you.

Thank you

Adrian Nagle

Chair

Plumstead Community Shop Ltd

22 February 2020

3. Accounts for the year ended 31st October 2019

All members were given a copy of the income and expenditure analysis, the formal annual accounts were made available to all members who wished to have a copy. Debbie Tomkins (DT) gave a report of the important points contained within the accounts. It was explained that although it was not necessary to have the accounts audited that the MC have chosen to have an independent accountants report and that Lovewell Blake had kindly prepared the report for a nominal fee.

It was explained that costs incurred during the financial year had been offset by grant income, and that the amount shown as creditors is the remaining balance of grants that have been received which will be set against expenditure in following years. There is an amount of £116 for interest on cash deposits which is not allowable for offset and this is consequently our pre-tax profit for the year, which gives rise to a small tax liability of £22.

The main activity during the course of the financial year was ensuring all pledged grant funds were secured into the bank account. There is one grant, the "Leader" grant for £100k, which is awarded retrospectively on submission of various evidencing documentation. Whilst no eligible expenditure was made during the financial year ended 31/10/19 we have since made a claim covering expenditure for the foundation pads and deposit to Lesko which was approved, and funds have been received. DT also advised that we have been successfully registered for VAT and our first re-claim has been both submitted and received.

There were no questions from members regarding the accounts.

4. Resignations of elected members of the management committee

There was one resignation from the management committee during the year, Stephen Howard – the management committee thanks Steve for his valuable help as a member of the committee and his ongoing practical help with the project.

As explained in the Chairmans Report, Adrian Nagle, Louise Amond and Ellie Edgar are required to step down and seek re-election, Ellie is not seeking re-election and will be helping the project in other ways. Ellie was thanked for her valuable contribution and for her commitment to helping with the project in other ways.

5. Resolutions:

a. Adoption of the accounts for the year ended 31st October 2019

The resolution was voted on by a show of hands, there were no votes against and no abstentions, the resolution was unanimously passed by the members. 2 votes were received by proxy both in favour.

b. Re-election/Election of the Management Committee

The members were asked to vote in turn for each nominee, each member was unanimously elected with no votes against and no abstentions. 2 votes were received by proxy both in favour of all nominees to be elected.

Each of the following were hereby re-elected/elected to the Management Committee.

Adrian Nagle
Louise Amond
Bronwen Barnes
Kelly Hall

6. Any Other Business

The floor was opened for any questions, as the public meeting directly followed, and there were questions & topics raised at both meeting, all questions have been covered in one section at the end of these minutes.

Public Meeting

The format followed that of the AGM in that the MC introduced themselves each giving some background to the areas of responsibility that each covered. Adrian ran through the Annual Report that had been addressed to the AGM.

Vic Tomkins was introduced to the meeting as Membership secretary and asked to run through the re-opening of the initial share Offer. VT introduced himself and gave a brief reminder on the two types of membership, those who have purchased Community Shares and those who are members by annual subscription. VT advised that the subscription membership was introduced as a means of ensuring that none from the community would feel excluded as it was felt the subscription at £10 per annum would not be a financial barrier. The MC agreed that the subscription period for the first year should run for 12 months following the opening of the shop, Vic acknowledged that there are some who have standing orders in place which may result in early payment being taken and made a commitment to ensure that corrective action was taken to ensure none were disadvantaged.

As mentioned by Adrian **the share offer has been re-opened** to the public in order that those who missed the initial opportunity have a second chance, and any who wished to increase their shareholding had the opportunity to do so. This re-opening is still within the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme period, and so any investment made is eligible for the 50% tax relief offered under the scheme. Vic advised the meeting that whilst advance assurance has been received from the Inland Revenue that the investment will qualify for SEIS, that neither he nor any of the MC are able to offer any guarantee that the IR will grant any individual tax relief for this investment. The share offer documentation is available on-line and there are hard copies available should anyone wish to invest. The documentation consists of the original share offer, an addendum covering the changes made to the project since the original offer was made, and an application form. For new investors the minimum level of investment remains at £100, for existing shareholders any amount can be invested as in their case the minimum investment has already been reached.

Vic explained that in our case the criteria for applying for a SEIS compliance certificate will be achieved when the building is delivered to site, the criteria being that a minimum of 70% of the funds raised having been expended for the purpose for which they were raised. We anticipate the building delivery to site over the two weeks school Easter holiday period. Once we are in possession of the compliance certificate, all those who advised they wished to take advantage of the tax relief on their share application form will be contacted.

Vic asked that should anyone at any time have any suggestions, thoughts, ideas, issues that they contact him at membership@thewalledgarden.co.uk – a promise was given that every message received would be responded to.

The idea that periodic meetings for members could take place within the walled garden, maybe as a cheese & wine event, and/or an entertainment event, was floated by Vic and we look forward to being in a position to do so.

Finally, Vic wanted to acknowledge the enormous contribution made by Adrian on this project, to the extent that without the constant drive of Adrian this project simply



would not have become a reality.

Q&A's

Q1. When is it envisaged that the shop will be open?

It was recognised that at the last AGM that Christmas 2019 was the aspiration for an opening date, at that time there were many obstacles and we were sadly unable to overcome those within the hoped for time frame. With us now holding the tenancy, the foundations laid and the building construction underway our current expectation is for late June/early July as an opening date.

There are still many things that need to happen in a timely manner, however we do believe June/July is an achievable date.

Q2. What age restrictions will apply for staff and volunteers?

For permanent staff the lower age restriction will be those of school leaving age – no upper age restriction.

For volunteers there are still specific restrictions that apply for those under 16, it is hoped that we may be able to offer work experience for the under 16's but it is unlikely we will be able to engage them as volunteers – again no upper age restriction.

Q3. What products will the shop stock?

This will be largely determined by the community in their purchasing/requirements. We initially intend to stock general groceries and also hold a selection of locally produced product both to support local producers and reduce food miles. We intend to have a selection of fresh produce but being mindful to minimise wastage. It will be an ongoing process to develop a range in accordance with the wishes of the community.

Q4. Do we intend to sell newspapers?

Not initially, in order to do so we would be required to have a very early opening and without a known level of volunteer support we could not commit to a 7 days a week early opening.

Q5. Will our facilities take into consideration the needs of those with physical limitations, in particular wheelchair users?

Absolutely they will, the garden paths are of sufficient width for wheelchairs, the shop is being fitted to accommodate wheelchair access and the toilets, which are to be housed in the refurbished outbuilding, are already compliant in structure and the toilet finishing will include a facility for those with disabilities.

Q6. Thorpe End

The access for those from Thorpe End is not suitable for either walking or cycling to the shop and it was wondered if this had been considered and are we able to do anything to improve safety along the roadway. Linda who is on both the WG committee & Parish Council acknowledged the dangers and advised that Broadland District Council have committed some cash to carry out a survey along Broad Lane for some form of pathway, but also acknowledged that should the outcome be positive it would likely be several years in the making and in excess of £100k to establish a form of pathway along the route.

Q7. Allotments Surplus

Have we been in touch with the allotment association with a view to being able to sell any excess fruit & vegetables?

At the outset of the project some years ago contact was made with the Chairman of the allotment association in this regard. To date this has not been followed up with all energy going towards establishing the shop & café – but yes this is something we would like to include and will look at in the future.

Q8. Coffee Style

Adrian advised the meeting that within the MC there is a debate regarding the style of coffee which we include in the café. On the one hand there is the artisan barista style and on the other a bean to cup push button type of machine. Both are capable of making excellent coffee and there both advantages and disadvantages to each style. Adrian canvassed by a show of hands whether it would make a difference if the style on offer was barista espresso machine or not.

There were 51 attendees with 15 hands raised for it making a difference.

Q9 Garden Work

Louise advised the meeting that we have had our first work party in the garden and there is an enormous amount of work which needs to be done. There will be a regular work party in the garden every 2nd Saturday of the month, all are encouraged to come and lend a hand and where possible bring along some tools to carry out general clearance work. In addition to this regular work party the garden will be open for work on 3rd/4th March, and future dates will be communicated by e-mail – also shown on a board during work-party days.

Louise also advised that an application has been made to the national garden scheme for some funding assistance towards hand tools.

Q10. Volunteering

It was reiterated by Bronwen that volunteer support is critical to not only the success of the project, but also to when the shop/café can be opened. Bronwen gave an impassioned speech on the benefits of volunteering and that nobody should feel excluded no matter what their lack of experience might be – everybody is welcome and will be able to do something, even if it is simply to welcome people into the garden/shop/café. “ If you can make a cup of tea/coffee or put things away in a cupboard at home, you have the skills to be able to volunteer and make a difference in this great community that we have !!!”

Debbie acknowledged the importance of volunteers from her own experience of volunteering at RSPB Strumpshaw, they have a significant volunteer base and still have need to call in emergency cover – the volunteers are of vital importance. Kelly made her own impassioned plea for as many people as possible to contact her in order to establish a solid volunteer base.

Q11. Communications

Vicki Malcolm showed the video of the first garden work party giving all a glimpse of “the other side of the wall” Advised of some developments in our ongoing comms & publicity and in particular the opening of a Crowdfunding Campaign hosted by Aviva where all Aviva employees will be given the chance to “donate” funds allotted by Aviva for community crowdfunding appeals. The appeal will be open soon and getting early interest and support prior to the Aviva employees allocating “their” funds is likely to make a significant difference to the interest raised at Aviva. This is an all or nothing campaign in that we set a target, and if we do not reach that target get nothing with all funds being returned, however any fund in excess of the target we are able to keep. Please look out for the appeal!!

The public meeting was closed at 12:30.