

BLAKENEY NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSING SOCIETY LIMITED

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT 7.00 PM WEDNESDAY, 15th
JUNE 2022

Present:

John Seymour (Chairman)	Duncan Groom
Martin Tyler (Treasurer)	Judith Paxton
Richard Kelham (Committee)	Trevor Preston
Madeleine Collett (Secretary)	Debbie Reed
Dawn Slegg (C)	Anne Stevens
Steven Hall (C)	Ross Twiddy
Elizabeth Brett (Rent Officer)	Gaye Withers
	Lal Wright

Chairman's Opening Remarks: John Seymour opened the Meeting and thanked everyone for coming to our first in-person AGM for three years, the last two having had to be held via the platform Zoom due to the pandemic Covid-19.

1. Apologies for Absence were received from:

David Grove	Linda Cripps (Housing Officer)	Louise Donohoe (C)
Tricia Temple-Crowe	Judy Pegden	Mary McLean
Louise Donohoe	Diana Cooke	Lilian Timms
Clare Pepper	Maureen Lait	John Wright

2. Minutes of 2021 Annual General Meeting held on 9th June 2021

The Chairman asked the Meeting if everyone present had seen and read the Minutes from last year. There was general assent. Dick Kelham proposed Adoption of the Minutes and the seconder was Lal Wright. Debbie Reed stated that she did not receive the AGM papers. Madeleine said she would look into this.

3. Matters Arising

There were none expressed, either by email or in person at the Meeting.

4. Chairman's Report

John Seymour stated that he did not intend to read this out as it had also been sent out with all other AGM papers. He asked if there were any questions about it and all present indicated that there were not.

5. Treasurer's Report

John then introduced Martin Tyler, the new BNHS Treasurer who had taken over from Don Glaister since the last AGM. Martin might already be known to some as he is also the Treasurer for the Glaven Valley News. Martin repeated John's statement that he hoped everyone had also read his report – a Summary of the Accounts - which, like the Chairman's Report, had been sent out with the AGM papers. He wished to highlight that

rents applied in the last year had once again been held down to pre-Covid rates. In further income, BNHS had also been the recipient of a generous legacy of £10,000 in 2021 and the same estate, when it was wound up, had gifted BNHS a further £36,000, although this sum would be shown in this year's accounts. BNHS expenditure had significantly increased due to Covid-related pent-up building works which needed to be carried out. However, due to the afore-mentioned legacy, our net income ended the year slightly higher than the previous one. Martin had copies of the full accounts if anyone wished to see them.

As our net income had been less than the threshold of £250,000 there had been no requirement on us to have a full audit. This had in effect saved us £5,000 as a full audit last cost the Society £7,000 and this year's Accountants Report had been charged at the lower cost of £2,000. John asked if anyone needed a copy of the full accounts and he elaborated that the legacy had been from Elizabeth Wilkinson, a lady who he was sure many people in the meeting would remember as she had at one time served on the BNHS Management Committee. He proposed that a BNHS plaque placed on 100 High Street as we had been able to refurbish this property thanks to Elizabeth's generous gift to the society. A commemorative plaque would echo the series of John Wallace Legacy plaques placed on the properties BNHS had been able to purchase due to that gentleman's generosity to the Society. This idea received universal assent from the Meeting.

Duncan Groom then stood to acknowledge publicly his appreciation to the Society that the rents had been held down for the past two years. Others indicated their support for his statement. John thanked Duncan for saying this and mentioned that, despite our appearing to be coming out of the pandemic-related restrictions on working, individual's financial strictures were set to continue for some for a while due to the impending Cost of Living crisis. That said, the society would not be able to continue to hold rents down but would be examining the unfolding situation with great care. Costs were increasing all round and these would also affect maintenance and building works.

6. Adoption of Financial Statements

As Chairman, John proposed the formal adoption of the end of year accounts. Richard Kelham seconded.

7. Proposal to vary the Rules to take advantage of the statutory exemption from the Audit requirements.

With reference to this Item on the Agenda and to the Treasurer's remarks earlier, John as Chairman stated that he wished therefore once again to invoke this Variation of the Rules, as shown on this Item. As had already been stated, the Society's income had not reached the required threshold (£250,000) this year and under this Variation, we were once again therefore not obliged to have an audit. He was thereby keen to propose this Variation so that the Society could opt for the lower cost course of action. Reading from Item 7, John Seymour then proposed this and there was a unanimous show of hands in support for this Resolution.

8. Appointment of Accountants

Traditionally we have automatically re-appointed Larking Gowen as the Society's accountants every year. As stated at last year's AGM, the Management Committee had been considering a re-examination of this arrangement but has come to the conclusion

that this company continues to look after the society well and professionally. John asked if everyone was in favour of continuing this re-appointment and everyone agreed.

9. Election of Committee of Management

In accordance with Rule 36(a) the longest serving members of the Committee were John Seymour, Richard Kelham and Dawn Slegg; if they are willing to remain on the Committee, they can be re-elected without nomination. John asked for all those in favour of their re-election and the rest of the committee raised their hands and indicated their assent. Dawn and Dick indicated that they were happy to continue as was John himself. John asked for a show of hands on and these three were unanimously re-elected.

As Martin Tyler joined BNHS as Treasurer since last year's AGM, in accordance with Rule 38(b), he had been co-opted onto the Committee. Under this Rule, he has now retired at this AGM but also may be re-elected without nomination if he wishes to continue and is voted in. Martin agreed to stand and received unanimous support.

In addition to the four names above, the current total members of the Management Committee are comprised of Linda Cripps, Elizabeth Brett, Louise Donohoe, Steven Hall, Lauren Price and Madeleine Collett.

John then asked Madeleine if there had been any further Nominations to the Committee since the dispatch of AGM papers and she confirmed there had been none. John therefore stated that the Committee therefore will carry on comprising the above named nine persons.

10. Any Other Business

John invited any members at the Meeting to come forward and Gaye Withers wanted to discuss the lack of completion of building works on her property. John replied that he knew the Covid Pandemic had initially impacted progress on the work needing to be done but that he would speak to Big Sky about why it was still behind schedule. He hoped that she was happy with the work on the outside that had already been done and she agreed she was. As there were times when maintenance issues – sometimes urgent – had to be prioritised, it may be that this was one reason. Duncan Groom backed Gaye up by stating that some jobs were being started but not completed. The windows on his own property were a further example. John asked that tenants contact him with these issues at the time so that he could investigate them further. He asked the Meeting if most tenants were happy in general with Big Sky's services and the view was expressed that communication from the builders could be improved. John emphasised that tenants must feel free to contact him or any member of the committee whose names they could find on the headed paper. Otherwise, the Committee cannot know when to chase up the contractors.

John had a second AOB item and he then talked about two historic legacies and how he had been working with Broadland Housing Association on a potential development of 8 new homes on the Langham Road in Blakeney. It would be a similar scenario to the affordable rent Durrants Row Cottages in Cley. BNHS is not eligible for government grants but BHA is. BNHS would buy the land from Norfolk County Council. Broadland would then build the properties and BNHS would get priority to allocate tenants. The criteria used would be according to local lettings policy, which is a cascade system. We

have been able to negotiate and insert our own criterion at the top of this cascade, that someone who has been a Blakeney resident living here for 10 years up to age 18 would be eligible, as well as the stricter system we currently operate for our own properties, that is eligibility for someone who was born here. The NCC is willing to sell us the land. The Parish Council objected at first as the original model contained some marketable housing, but it has now accepted it based on BHA's modification to build properties on an affordable to rent basis only. The tenants will not be ours, but we will continue to have nomination rights. This right will also be re-extended to Durrants Row tenant placements as this had been allowed to slip in the past. Although we could spend our legacy funds on refurbishments to existing properties, the Committee feel it would be a better use of them to build more housing options. There would be bungalows and more single occupancy options. Nothing had been signed yet so John wished to ask the AGM if it supported this way forward and there was general support and no objections raised for this. John said that once this project was underway, there was also potential for a similar scheme in Wiveton.

Conversation returned to Gaye's new rendering only coming half-way up her walls and if this was the intention. John remarked that the skilled contractor working on this may have been hampered by the PC embargo on scaffolding in the summer months which he knew had been extended last year. He would also mention this element to Big Sky.

The 2022 Annual General Meeting ended at 19.35 hours. John Seymour thanked everyone for coming.