

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Nailsworth Community Land Trust held at 7pm on Monday 11th November 2019 in the Council Chamber, Town hall, Old Bristol Road, Nailsworth, Glos. GL6 0JF

Present:

Members - Jonathan Duckworth, Mike Levett, Matt Zorn, Colin Gerrard, Keith Angus, Elizabeth Francis, Steve Robinson, Ian Potts, Wendy Gerard, Ian Crawley,, Sally Millet, Joe Millet, Laurie Smith, John Holmes, Derek Pitt, Adrian Kilburn. There were 16 members present.

Proxies received from Caroline Duckworth, Gillian Crawley, Nicola Potts, Tony Anhoury, Sue Levett, Caroline Crook, Alison King, Nick Baker.

A total of 24 members.

Observer: Alan Skene.

Items

1. Welcome and Introductions. Ian Potts, CLT Chair introduced himself and the Board members. He declared the meeting quorate on the basis of the current membership of 236 and welcomed the good turnout.

2. Apologies for absence: Kevin Hibbs, Mike Kelly.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 12th November 2018 were approved unanimously.

4. Report of the CLT's Activities in the previous year by the Chair, Ian Potts.

Our most successful year. The completion of our first development of new homes for rent at Valley View, Lawnside in Forest Green. Occupied in May, owned by the CLT. No Right To Buy, so owned by the CLT for ever. Nailsworth CLT has provided ten homes for people with local connections, who would not otherwise have been housed in this way.

The 2013 Housing Needs Survey gave an affordable home requirement of 52. Planning for a further 20 homes is being progressed by Stroud DC for Ringfield Close. A private developer has a consent, won on appeal for 15 homes including 5 affordables, off Pike lane. The Town Council has commissioned a new Housing Needs Survey from the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council for the spring.

We are confident the need is there for the CLT to undertake further developments. Sites are scarce, but we are exploring two sites with the potential for 15 to 20 more homes. One could be on site within a year if we can use the normal planning application route, rather than the Community Right to Build Order route which took 18 months alone for Valley View.

This has been a team effort from day one. We have a Board of Directors in place who have promoted and led the first scheme from the idea of acquiring the site at Lawnside from Stroud District Council through partnering with Aster Homes, appointing architects, obtaining funding, appointing the contractor, achieving a grant from Homes England, completing legal documents with Aster Homes and Stroud District Council and seeing the ten homes occupied.

To build on this success, we welcome land and buildings gifted or sold to the CLT at significantly less than market price to the CLT, so that we can provide further affordable homes for rent. Ideally these will be around the settlement boundary where private development would not be allowed.

We welcome new Directors from amongst our members to help take forward further schemes. Kevin Hibbs who came to this AGM last year and has a background in the construction industry has joined the board. Sadly, Mike Levett is standing down this year. He has served a particularly important role through his local knowledge and understanding of issues, living close to the Valley View scheme.

We could not have done what we have achieved without Stroud DC, who sold the CLT the freehold of the site for £1; Aster Homes, who partnered us in the development and now manage and maintain the homes on our behalf; and Homes England who provided a grant of £67,000 a home, to make the project financially viable.

5. Financial Report. Jonathan Duckworth, the Treasurer noted that the CLT was solvent based on the grants it had received from the Town Council. At 31st March 2019 the balance sheet showed total assets of £843.63 with no liabilities. The CLT pays an annual fee to the Financial Conduct Authority and an annual membership fee to the National CLT Network. The CLT will receive a ground rent of £200 a year per home from Aster homes commencing in May 2020. The Community Housing Fund grant scheme managed through Homes England provides 90% grants to meet the revenue costs of getting a scheme to planning, 100% capital grants to meet infrastructure costs and capital grants to subsidize the costs of construction. The CLT will, however, raise the 10% for each revenue grant received. The report was approved unanimously.

6. Election of Directors. Ian Potts noted that Directors were elected for three year terms. Three were re-elected in 2017 for three years; a further three were re-elected in 2018 plus one new Director for three years. Mike Levett is standing down. The rest are willing to continue. New Directors are welcome.

7.8. Any Other Business. There were a number of questions.

Q1. Adrian Kilburn. What are the local connections criteria? Did the CLT meet its objectives in their application?

A1. The primary local connections criterion is five years living and or working in the civil parish of Nailsworth. Interested applicants must already have applied to Stroud DC to be assessed as being in housing need. SDC apply income and capital criteria and assess local connections. When the properties were posted on Homeseeker Plus (the Gloucestershire Choice based lettings website), SDC approved and interested applicants could then apply, if they believed they met the local connections criteria. SDC checked their applications and through applying the Gold, Silver and Bronze levels of eligibility/need provided Aster Homes with a list. Aster then interviewed them and offered tenancies. The Board is happy with the tenants Aster approved. All tenants have a one year introductory tenancy. Any turnover will be through the same process.

Q2. Derek Pitt. The common planted areas are looking scruffy at Valley View.

A2. Agreed. Board members have raised this. The planting is subject to a 12 month maintenance contract with the landscaping sub-contractors, responsible to Aster Homes. We are chasing Aster to ensure they are kept tidy. Aster will then either maintain them in-house or appoint a local contractor.

Q3. Colin Gerard. The appearance of the new homes is pleasing apart from the external gas pipes on the six apartment block.

A3. The Board are disappointed with this feature but Gas Regulations require external pipework with maisonettes.

Q4. Adrian Kilburn. What is the timeframe for further projects ?

A4. The Board would like to have a further project formally underway at the time of the next AGM, but may still be required to use the Community Right To Build Order route rather than the normal planning process, to remove leasehold enfranchisement, i.e. the Right To Buy. We are currently exploring a number of sites.

Q5 Laurie Smith. A vote of thanks to all Board members. Unanimously agreed.

Signed

Ian Potts, Chair, Nailsworth Community Land Trust