

Gosforth Garden Village Association
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 12:30pm on Saturday 10th June 2023

Apologies:

Umi Filby
Dave McGuinness
Pat Harvey (Volunteer)
Margery Lyons – (Tennis Representative)

1. Welcome

Audrey welcomed everyone to the 2023 AGM.

2. Minutes:

13 July 2022 Minutes approved, *proposed* by, Marjie Moffat seconded by. Jackie Fender

3. Matters arising:

- a. It was reported that the amendment to the Trust Deed had been registered with the Charities Commission. For reference the changes in the November 2021 AGM from the Chair's report were

We have asked and received approval from Garden Village residents to increase range from Salters Bridge to Marks and Spencer and Shields Grove. We are excited to welcome new member residents and hope to increase the number of our management committee volunteers from 6 to 9.

It was correctly reported by the Chair at the 2022 AGM that the Charities Commission had received and approved our registration, however, it has come to light that the changes were not to Full Member but rather Associate Member. We assume this is an oversight and the Chair of Trustees has taken this on and is to contact the lawyer who holds the original Deed. The administration change of maximum number on the Committee members was not progressed to a conclusion and is included in the discussions with the lawyer.

- b. Report from Sections

The minutes stated that "each appoints a member to the management committee", It should be noted that they are termed as representatives of the sections and are not management committee members. The main reason is that we are limited to a maximum of 6 committee members, and we can have up to 7 sections.

4. Committee Appointments:

Resignations within the year have been Chrissie Hall, Louis Cole and Emma Williams. Audrey thanked all three for their contributions and their ongoing support of everything that the Association does and is aiming to do. Louis Cole has retained his role as Safeguarding Officer until such times as that is handed over.

There were no proposals from the meeting other than those made in advance by the Committee:

- Tara O'Connor and Umi Filby joined the committee and as their first meeting and formal appointments were in May 2022 they are included in this AGM as appointments.

- Lucy Smyth joined the committee as Treasurer in March 2023.

Objections were sought and none forthcoming, so the Committee will remain as is.

5. Chair's Report.

Audrey read her report.

Welcome to the AGM Gosforth Garden Village Association (GGVA), which is such a great asset to the area and to our lives as Garden Village residents.

Perhaps it isn't that well known that the GGVA is governed by a Trust Deed of 1959 which lays out the conveyance of the piece of ground from the rail company to be used as a recreation ground for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Gosforth Garden Village estate.

As a committee we refer to the Trust Deed regularly when making decisions on activities, development of the way we work and on policies.

There are several clauses in the Trust Deed which can prove impractical and restrictive, one which has already been reported on, the maximum number of committee members, which we adhere to but can be difficult with the amount of work to be done in putting on events and maintaining and upgrading the site.

In the year covered by this AGM, we, as a Committee, were challenged on our adherence to the Trust Deed with a specific focus on the running of the Tennis Section. We carried out an investigation, held a meeting with the parties involved and set in motion changes to make sure we were working within the clauses and the intentions of the Deed. One of the changes that has been made already is that Margery Lyons is now the representative on the Committee for the Tennis Section, replacing Ken Douthwaite who is not a resident of the Garden Village. I would like to thank Ken for his years of service as a past representative of the Tennis Section and thank you to Margery for taking on the role.

Still on the Committee, all members of the Committee have worked so hard within the year in question which took in the Jubilee event as well as the now regular bi-monthly Lunch Club; a great Christmas calendar of events which had wreath making and a family fun day which was so popular that we had to run it twice! In 2023 so far we have had an Easter event alongside the regular programme which includes Craft Club, Yoga, Tai Chi, Keep Fit, and Choir.

That's what is seen by everyone, but the unseen work carries on such as dealing with booking enquiries and the general running and upkeep of the whole site. It is a lot of work and that's if you don't consider a leaking boiler and a broken-down dishwasher in the middle of a busy time.

During the year we produced two newsletters - one in the Spring showcasing the Garden Village Hall and Jubilee celebrations on the 4th June and introducing the mission; one in the Autumn which highlighted recent events and advertised up and coming events, regular events and the sections. The second newsletter was cost neutral thanks to securing advertising from local businesses. The noticeboards are kept up to date and the website has recently been updated. We promote the events and how people can be involved on the Garden Village Facebook page in an effort to keep everyone updated and involved. As the Trust Deed says the site is a recreation ground for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Gosforth Garden Village estate

One of the allotments on the site became free during the year and we established a Children's Allotment, launching it with sessions at the Jubilee event. Since then, a larger allotment became free and we have moved to that bigger and more open position, established a working group to maintain the site and arrange sessions for local children to be introduced to food

growing and allotment tending. We have received support from Asda in the form of donations of compost, plants and the like and Michelle at Asda has encouraged us to apply for funding.

The development of the overall facilities continues, and we have secured National Lottery funding and planning permission to install children's play equipment. This will touch directly on one of our priorities to provide a great space for young families and will add to the appeal for bookers of the Hall which all helps with our fundraising. It should be noted that the play area will not be open access.

I hope you agree that the scale of community engagement and the level of activity has increased in this year, and it is all thanks to the hardworking Committee Members and the wider pool of volunteers. This is sometimes a stretch and offers of help are gratefully received. In addition, if someone would like to take on an event, either a one off or a regular occurrence, that would be great to hear. It is not a "closed shop" so please do speak to any member of the Committee or email chair@ggva.co.uk the more you support the Hall.

Once again thank you for attending. I'll pass you on to our outgoing Treasurer, Emma, for the finance report.

6. Financial Report.

Management accounts were presented.

An overview was given by the outgoing treasurer Emma Williams and Emma also confirmed that the Auditor is happy with our submitted accounts.

Statutory Accounts 2022-23

Overall total net surplus generated of £4,376 (2022: £5,794)

Total income was £29k (2022: £20k)

Hall rental has continued to improve rising to £11k (2022: £6k). Regular bookings were strong in the year, with new bookers Bloom Baby and Fun Little Foodies holding regular sessions at the Hall. Various yoga, craft group and choir continue to use the Hall regularly. Private bookings have continued to perform well through the year.

Annual income from the bowls, WI and tennis club remained in line with the prior year contributing £2k. Other income has risen significantly due to holding fee paying community events through the year, this has an offset of events costs shown separately – so overall the net position comes in at a small surplus (this is just presentation to show income and costs gross in the accounts).

Grant income continued at the same level of £11k. A Grant of £10k was awarded in the year for the Childrens play equipment and allotment. This is due to be spent in FY23/24. Also a Grant of £500 was received to support the Lunch Club programme. In the prior year £11k was received for Covid-19 support from Newcastle County Council.

Expenditure was £24k (2022: £14k)

The increase is mainly attributable to

- Higher utility costs of the Hall (electricity mainly)
- Main property costs in the year were improvements were made to the side access and toilet, new gate and fencing costs, replacement windows, heat pump maintenance, replace dishwasher.
- Also the event costs are shown (but net off with the income generated overall).

Bank balances were healthy at £19k (2022: £14k) in HSBC current account and £26k (2022: £26k) in the VM savings account. Reserves c/f were £45k(2022: £41k).

- Unrestricted £19k
- Designated
 - Tennis wall £10k
 - Bowls work to grounds £3.5k
 - VAT on play equipment £2k
- Restricted
 - Lottery £10k
 - Lunch club £500

7. Sections Reports

John Fisher representing the Bowls Club.

Dave McGuinness, the Bowls Club representative, sends his apologies as he is away, and asked me to report on his behalf.

Before he took on the role, the Club and Committee had discussed some necessary work on the upright boards which surround the bowling green and the paving that rests on them. We eventually engaged a contractor but, when he started the work, he reported that the base on which the paving rested was inferior to what he had expected. He claimed he would have to do more work and use more materials to achieve his normal standard of workmanship - but his revised price was out of our reach! Fortunately, our regular groundsman offered to do the work. The most urgent parts have been repaired and the rest will be done once the match season has finished towards the end of the Summer.

We play in five local leagues within the framework of the Northumberland County Association. This can involve games in Hexham or Alnwick, although most matches are closer to home, against other Newcastle clubs or in North Tyneside. Matches are normally 12-a-side but we are also in a six-player league. We can find ourselves playing against opponents of County Standard, but we do try to give all members the chance to play in matches. The afternoon "Friday Friendly League" does give an opportunity for less experienced players to play against other clubs. In our team yesterday we had three members who joined as beginners this season.

We also have internal knock-out competitions that run during the season and end with a Finals Weekend in September, plus the opportunity for members come and play socially. Monday afternoons have become popular this year for casual play, with over 15 people sometimes turning up for informal games.

Dave has been active in discussions with the Association about sponsorship, which many clubs use to boost their income. You will see against the north hedge two boards as evidence of the success he has had in recruiting sponsors. I understand there may be more on the way and the Club is grateful to the Association for supporting this initiative.

A fortnight ago we were part of the national Big Bowls Weekend, aimed at encouraging people have a go at Bowls. Our Sunday session was well attended with over 15 new members signing up, I believe. If anybody here wants to have a go on the green after the meeting, see me afterwards.

Audrey read out the report from Marjory Lyons representing the Tennis Club

As we reflect on the last year at the tennis club, we can see many positives both on and off the court. The club continues to have a good membership level, although the peaks reached during Covid have dropped off and some of the players the club gained during that time have been lost. However, the club continues to try and recruit new members especially from the

village and would welcome anyone who would like to come along and give tennis a go, players of all ages and standards are welcome. The club currently have around 40 senior members, and around 10 junior members who are not part of the coaching schemes and play with a parent or guardian. Junior coaching courses are run throughout the year and last year over 70 children completed these courses, the vast majority from the village. The Club's award-winning coach Ian Pearson-Brown continues to coach at the club with the assistance of Anthony Simmons. Anthony is a local village lad who has now completed the level 3 LTA coaching course with support from Ian, and some financial help from the club. As well as coaching for juniors, the club also runs coaching for adult members, so anyone joining the club can take up this option. The club runs social tennis sessions throughout the week for any members that want to join in, and some sessions continue all year round.

Members can book courts through our online booking system at no extra cost. This shows when the courts are available and ensures that there are no wasted journeys when people arrive to find the courts being used by others. This has become very popular. The club also takes part in competitive tennis, and has several teams in local leagues, and a good number of players represent the club in these teams. On various occasions throughout the year, the club holds afternoon charity events, last year money was raised for the Percy Hedley foundation, a Macmillan tennis coffee and cake afternoon was also held, and we also raised money for Crisis, with a Christmas themed tennis event. The club also had a successful social event in January when nearly 40 members came here to the hall for a quiz and shared buffet. It was intended to hold an event for the Kings coronation but that was rather washed away by the weather!!! It was the wet weather throughout the winter and spring months that finally showed the club that the tennis court drainage was deteriorating, and the courts were performing poorly in bad weather. It became obvious that the surface was reaching the end of its life and needed major refurbishment to allow them to last a few more years. The club have had specialist companies look at this and price the work, and we intend to select a contractor to carry out the work this autumn. This is an exciting step forward. Finally, we would just like to repeat that the club is always looking to recruit new members, especially from the village. The club is in the heart of your community, and it is only right that it is used by as many people as possible from within the village. The club's membership rates are some of the most competitive in the Newcastle area and this is ensured by monitoring fees of other clubs to make sure that this continues to be the case. More information can be gained from the association website or our own website. Or please talk to Ken after the meeting, anyone interested is welcome to come across to the courts to see our facilities and meet other members. The club would love to see you today or any Saturday afternoon when there will always be someone available for a chat.

Melanie Proud representing the WI

Garden Village WI continues to thrive, with an increase from 26 to 30 members in the past year and continues to provide all women of all generations the space to meet to share experiences, learn and have fun.

During the past year we have had many interesting speakers and events. These have included an accordionist who told us the history of the instrument and played beautifully, Audrey Macnaughton telling us about her amusing book "Up the Wall" written during lockdown, the local history of women's football, and St Mary's gin, including plenty of samples!

We also ran our own member evenings, including making Christmas decorations out of recycled materials, a surprising taste testing evening and our Coronation celebration with bingo and a royal quiz.

In addition to our monthly meetings, we continue with the mission of learning, fun and friendship with our walking group and book group and the occasional meet up at the weekend for lunch.

Although we have increased our membership this year, we are still 25% down from our pre-covid numbers and will continue to promote in the village and beyond to ensure the continued success of the group.

We are pleased to be able to support the Garden Village lunch club with a loan of tablecloths and cutlery and would like to thank GGVA for their support over the past year.

We meet on the third Wednesday of the month and would love to welcome any woman to one of our meetings as a visitor to find out more about us.

8. AOB

John Fisher mentioned that the three sections need to be appointed. The three sections were appointed.

John Fisher wanted a sign putting on the fridge not to lie open bottles in the fridge horizontally. Audrey said that this would be taken forward to the next Management Committee meeting but counselled against getting "sign fatigue".

A lady has been in touch as they would like a memorial bench to be placed in memory of her parents who established the Youth Club for the Association many years ago. This is being progressed.

Existing benches are looking unkempt and the Bowls Club together with the Association will look at them and replace the broken one.

Audrey mentioned the young couple who have taken over the corner allotment as they do not live on the back of the allotments, they will be given a key to use the shed. There are several lawnmowers that need to be disposed of and this is an action that has been going on for some time a deadline will need to be set. Colin has been consulted and is happy for the disposal.

Jackie Fender thanked everyone for their help on their committee. Seconded by John Fisher

Meeting closed at 13.15