

Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Noah's Ark Children's Venture

Tuesday November 19th 2019

Lewisham Town Hall, Catford

Attending:

Caroline Newton	Chair	NACV
John Davidson	Vice-Chair	NACV
Adam Hainsworth	Treasurer	NACV
Martin Doyle	Trustee/Member	NACV
Jo Wylie	Trustee	NACV
James Eastman	Trustee	NACV
Sophie Edwards	Secretary	NACV
Mark Smyth	Business Lead	NACV
Marcus Scrivens	Centre Manager	NACV
Matt Attwater	Site Maintenance	NACV
Alex Bailey		Gems
David Darey		Gems
Zoe Fitzgerald		Gems
Craig Smith		Gems
Mary Hamilton		Gems
Alvin Gyimah		Gems
Debbie Cucuk	Member NACV	Gems
Anna Zieba		Gems
Melissa Zieba Beckford		Gems
Carl O'Sullivan		Gems
Dave Newman	Member NACV	Young Lewisham Project
Johann Williams	Member NACV	St Andrews Centre
Cllr. James Walsh	Councillor	Lewisham Council
Sarah Chambers		Oaks and Acorns in Harmony
Jentai Gen-One		Oaks and Acorns
Jaheim		Oaks and Acorns
Juarnelle		Oaks and Acorns
James Wilkinson	Individual	
Alvan Wright	Individual	Ex-Trustee NACV
Richard Wilkinson	Individual	
Tung Nguyen	Member NACV	Vietnamese Family Partnership
Alan Till	Individual	Ex-Trustee NACV
Terri Holley	Individual	
Maxine Roberts	Individual	
Ivona Huszcza	Young Carers Programme Manager	Carers Lewisham, Young Carers
Sam Wilkinson	Individual	
Cllr. Jacq.Paschoud	Councillor	Lewisham Council
Cllr. John Paschoud	Councillor	Lewisham Council
Mandy Hosking	Individual	St Andrews

1. Welcome & Apologies

Caroline Newton, Chair, welcomed the many supporters, trustees and users of the charity attending the AGM; a list of apologies was provided by Mark Smyth;

Cllr Muldoon, Cllr Barnham, Sandy Turner, Amber Lyseight, Cllr Best, Andy Stewart, Barrie Tomkinson – member.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the 2018 AGM, having been circulated, were proposed by David Newman and seconded by Debbie Cucuk, and approved as a correct record

Presentations to former Trustees

Caroline gave warm thanks to Alvin Wright, Alan Till and Muhammad Rahmani for their contributions as trustees over many years. Those attending were presented with a picture of the Woods in thanks for their service.

Caroline also sincerely thanked Stanley Skoglund, who had been chair of the charity up until April 2019. Stanley had contributed a huge amount to the charity steering it through Richard and Liz Wilkinson's retirement, until stepping down as chair and, now, as a trustee, due to family commitments.

3. Chair's report

Caroline gave a report on her first year in the role as chair. She noted that it had been a busy and successful year, with the new management and team continuing to strengthen and establish itself. She also noted that the organisation was still 'in transition' following the retirement of Richard and Liz Wilkinson in 2018 – there is still lots of work to be done to secure a sustainable future. However, she was confident that NACV is stable and poised for further success.

She noted that the staff team had expanded with the appointment of Matt Attwater working on site maintenance, and Donna Cole as bookkeeper. She particularly thanked Liz Wilkinson for extending her term as part-time bookkeeper until April, to allow a good handover.

She thanked Mark & Marcus for their hard work and skill in leading the charity over the current phase.

Caroline paid a warm tribute to Dennis Hunter, who had sadly passed away in April. Dennis had been a key figure in the history of NACV for many decades, from his first visits to the site with GEMS group, to joining the board of trustees and, in recent years, taking on the key role of Treasurer. He was devoted to the charity and this continued right up until his untimely passing. She noted that his kindness, patience, skill and compassion had helped sustain the charity through many highs and occasional lows, and that he would be sorely missed. She noted that a sensory trail was now being constructed, along with a memorial plaque, in his memory.

Finally, Caroline thanked members, trustees, users and supporter of the charity for their continued contribution, support and use.

4. Annual report and Financial statements

Adam Hainsworth, Treasurer, gave a report with the following highlights:

- **Income** Reduction from grants offset by increase in income from charitable activities

- **Expenditure** had reduced £20k on the previous year.
- **Reserves** – the charity designated non-restricted funds e.g. into building maintenance funds; revenue contingency fund; future management change fund; new minibus fund. A pot of funding was also designed to be used to develop the two units owned by the Ernest Cook Trust, which may become available to the charity in due course.
- **Sustainability.** While income and expenditure hold steady and reserves are healthy, securing sustainable ongoing funding, including via grant-fundraising, was essential, particularly following the loss of the core grant from Lewisham Council.

5. Resignations and retirements of Trustees

No trustees were due to be retire by rotation. The resignation of Stanley Skoglund was noted and again he was thanked for his service to the charity. Caroline noted that further trustees were likely to be recruited over the coming year; she invited anyone interested in the role to consider this and get in touch if they would like to hear more. Note of thanks to Stanley for his service to the charity and people invited to consider whether they would like to apply.

6. Approval of Annual report & accounts

The Annual report and accounts were proposed by Debbie Cucuk & seconded by David Newman

7. Approval of independent examiner

Simon Jacobsen was proposed by Debbie Cucuk and seconded by Johann Williams.

Proposer Debbie Cucuk, Johann Williams

Adam asked to record thanks to user groups, funders, supporters and members and the many folks who work behind the scenes to make the charity sustainable and successful.

8. Future Strategy

Adam and Mark presented a summary of the draft strategy for the charity in its next phase. Some key themes include:

Sustaining the core offer to users, while diversifying target audiences to maximise occupancy, including in off-peak times

Developing a robust financial strategy so that the charity can continue to support groups who have been coming for years, to keep coming regardless of the loss of the Lewisham core funding grant; and to mitigate the risk of loss of critical income streams

Making it easier for friends, volunteers and – where appropriate – users to ‘give something back’ in kind, by contributing to the charity e.g. time or other skills

Those attending were invited to share their views on the proposals in the plan and ask questions:

- It was noted that one way the charity could help sustain use by groups in Lewisham and elsewhere was by building fund-raising capability – e.g. groups with a fundraising resource to help groups without apply for grants etc and share expertise and ideas
- Asked how would it be similar or different in future years, trustees noted that there was no intention to radically change the ‘formula’ for the Woods as it remains successful. We hope existing users will continue to make full use of the centre, while new users and contributors are brought into the fold.

All members and supporters and users were invited to stay in touch and share thoughts and ideas.

Close of meeting

Closing the meeting, Caroline thanked everyone for their contributions and invited them to stay behind for refreshments and networking

Sophie Edwards

Nov 19th 2019