



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ACRE  
MINUTES OF  
THE 2018 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**12.30pm Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2018**

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**PRESENT:**

Gareth Lugar Mawson (Chair)                      Ken Christy (Director)  
Richard Hollingum (Director)                      David Scudamore (Director)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Elaine O'Leary (Chief Executive)                      Hugh Fenton (CVS)  
Rebecca Breakwell (Rural Officer)                      James Davidson (Site Caretaker)1  
Jeffrey Greenwell (Vice-President)                      Sarah Clarke (Centre Co-ordinator)  
Jessica Gooding (Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker)                      Kay Giles (Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker)  
Ann North (Blisworth Parish Council)                      Richard Quallington (National Acre)  
Jeffery Greenwell (Vice President)                      Gordon Shorley (Vice President)  
Cllr Anne Sharp (Overstone Parish Council)                      Cllr Libby Hart (Weedon Bec Parish Council)  
Nick Richards (Chair of Wilbarston Parish Council)  
Cllr Veronica Ward (Chair of Greatworth Parish Council)  
Suzy Sanders (external minute taker)  
Cllr Laurence Harper (Finedon Town Council)

**1. APOLOGIES:**

Fabienne Fraser-Allen (Director)  
Cameron Waldron (Director)

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018 were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by DS, Seconded by KC and carried unanimously.

**Approved**

**3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

GLM stated that the Charity is doing very well and is now debt free with adequate financial reserves. The Charity has been successful in obtaining funding from DEFRA albeit slightly less than in previous years.

GLM explained that HHC Ltd is also performing well with 68 weddings taking place in 2018 and 60 confirmed for 2019 and various corporate events and party bookings.

GLM explained that the Rural Projects are progressing well with increased income noted from consultancy work. Two new workers are now onboard. The Best Village Competition was a success but only a few villages applied. Sponsors Hollowell's Funeral Plans had pulled out, so the project was funded by the Charity. There has been interest from the Campaign from Rural England for next year's competition.

No questions or concerns were raised and GLM thanked the Board and Staff for their support over the past year.

#### **4. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

EOL explained that it has been an interesting year and that the Charity is starting to thrive.

EOL stated that a lot of maintenance work has been carried out onsite.

EOL passed on her thanks to the staff. To SC for arranging venue viewings, the increase in Wedding bookings is a result of her hard work. EOL also thanked JD for continuing with his fantastic work on the grounds and building maintenance. EOL also acknowledged FH as a willing and knowledgeable member of the team whose hours have increased to three days per week to cover the many queries she receives as the Community Facility Advisor.

EOL acknowledged RB has done a wonderful job at getting our name 'out there' and that we are starting to see more people contacting us to help with work on rural matters, in particular for neighbourhood planning and good neighbour schemes.

EOL explained that KG and JG are both making good progress with familiarising themselves with the Rural Wellbeing Service and making the important contacts with other agencies. They have been working with RB to encourage more villages to think about setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme. There are currently ten villages (mostly from the Daventry Area) who are keen on setting up Good Neighbour Schemes. This is a scheme that the team are particularly passionate about as they know it works. There is a free Good Neighbour Scheme Meeting taking place on 1<sup>st</sup> October for anyone who wishes to join and learn more.

EOL explained that a full staff update is available in the Meeting Packs provided.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2018:**

GLM explained that the Trustees are very pleased with the health of the accounts and that all external debts have now been paid. Only one internal debt of £10,000 remains, which is owed by the charity to the trading arm but has no interest or timescale for repayment. Financial reserves are increasing, and the charity is in a much healthier position thanks to the dedication of the staff and the performance of the trading arm HHC Ltd.

GLM advised that the draft Annual Accounts for 2017-2018 (SOFA and Balance Sheet) have been tentatively approved by the Trustees. The full draft Annual Accounts for 2017-2018 are currently with the charity's accountants, Jervis and Partners for final review prior to being sent to all trustees for approval.

The final accounts will be prepared for approval by the Trustees at the next Board Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December and will be submitted to Companies House prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> December deadline.

#### **6. The ACRE Network: delivering change – Mr Richard Quallington, Executive Director, ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England)**

RQ congratulated NACRE on its achievements and wished all ACRE members were doing as well. RQ provided an update on ACRE (at a National Level), the ACRE Network and ACRE Development plans. Stating there has been great changes Nationally and Locally. RQ shared his background, experience and passions. RQ

explained that ACRE are doing a lot with very limited resource, they are a small organisation with only 3.5 focused members of staff. RQ stated that good progress is being made with national stakeholders. In 2016 the whole network signed up to ACREs working principles, agreeing a standardisation of their way of working with a particular focus on wellbeing.

This step galvanised the network and allowed members to be heavily consulted with when forging future business development plans. The network is now committed to working closely together to focus on its priorities, the brand nationally, health and social care as well as service access.

RQ explained the need for a policy and advocacy group and work is underway to look at service levels collectively. RQ expressed the need for a consistent level of service across the national network, regardless of location. Research is underway with regards to collaborations and how to 'upscale' and transfer successful projects relying heavily on mentoring and peer-to-peer support.

RQ stated that regardless of its challenges ACRE is working towards operating more effectively, efficiently and sustainably.

#### **Questions raised:**

Whilst the relationship with DEFRA remains significant, RQ explained that relationships with other organisations (such as DCMC and HLCMG) are being developed. Whilst equally as important, these relationships may not be as fruitful.

When asked about the percentage of affordable housing in Overstone being reduced and how members of the community can fight this, RQ acknowledged the challenge and advised that relationships with the Housing Association would be worthwhile. The Trustees support by providing contact details for the appropriate people.

KC and GLM attended a meeting in London recently and advised that the ACRE network is seen as a vital sounding board for rural opinion and that they support and deliver change.

A question was raised regarding the removal of business services locally to small villages. Whilst this is an issue locally, it is a real problem nationally too. RQ advised that more discussions are taking place in Central Government, but these conversations are yet to translate to an immediate solution.

RQ closed by offering a huge thank you to everyone for their efforts. EOL echoed this and stated that she is hopeful for the future.

**Tweet from RQ to be inserted.**

## **7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2018 – 2019**

The current president is David Laing, HM Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire.

The current Vice Presidents are the Right Reverend Donald Allister, the Bishop of Peterborough, Lord Boswell of Aynho, Canon Paul Rose, Mr Gordon Shorley and Mr Jeffery Greenwell CBE.

All have indicated their willingness to accept and have been re-elected.

**Proposed by GLM and seconded by RH.**

## **8. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES**

- a) Re-election of Mr Gareth Lugar-Mawson
- b) Re-election of Mr Bernard Lock

**Proposed by KC and seconded by RH.**

The Trustees of Northamptonshire ACRE for the ensuring year will be (in alphabetical order): Mr Ken Christy, Mrs Fabienne Fraser-Allen, Mr Richard Hollingum, Mr Bernard Lock, Mr Gareth Lugar-Mawson, Mr David Scudamore and Mr Cameron Waldron – a total of 7 Trustees.

## **9. APPOINTMENT AND REMUNERATION OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS:**

GLM and the board recommends that Messrs Jervis and Partners be remunerated and reappointed as Independent Examiners for the year 2018 - 2019. Seconded by DS.

**Approved**

## **10. DEVELOPING THE HUNSBURY HILL CENTRE WOODS AND FARMSTEAD – MR RICHARD HOLLINGUM, TRUSTEE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ACRE**

RH gave an update on what we are considering with regards to a woodlands management plan which covered:

1. The Hunsbury Hill Centre Restoration Bid which was submitted to (and subsequently rejected) by the Heritage Lottery Fun in late 2007.
2. The site overall and the various areas contained
3. The status and historical importance of the site and it's buildings
4. Ideas for the site including: artisan workshops, education facilities, a small museum, café, small high-tech office space and meeting rooms
5. Next steps and the Charities responsibility for the upkeep of the development
6. Things to address including; the conservation and preservation of the buildings and green spaces, development and cost of the hovels and sheds, implications of the site and it's uses and energy
7. Possible business models, funding and issues

RH explained that the following individuals have been spoken to (or met with) and contributed to the project:

1. Rachel Boyd – Delapre Abbey
2. Jane Jennings – Northamptonshire Borough Council
3. Lucie Oakley – Architectural Heritage Fund
4. Alan Wadsworth – Worcestershire Farmsteads
5. Cheryl Lundberg – Lockhart-Garratt
6. Matt Johnson – BCN Wildlife Trust
7. CPRE
8. Northampton University
9. Moulton College

A one-day Exploration Workshop will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 for staff, trustees, members, representatives from local interest groups and the community will be invited to explore their views and thoughts.

## **11. MEETING DATES FOR 2019**

The suggested meeting dates for 2019 are as follows:

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (Away Day)

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019 (Pre AGM Board Meeting)

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019 (AGM)

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- a) GLM expressed the need for more Trustees and requested that anyone who is interested should contact GLM or EOL.
- b) GLM stated the need for an Independent Director to be appointed for HHC Ltd. This appointment should not be a Trustee and someone with Land Management and/or Building Surveying experience.
- c) GLM made a plea for more villages to take part in the Best Village Competition. GLM explained that 14 took part this year out of around 300. He would like to encourage more communities to support and take part in this initiative. Anyone interested should speak to either DS or RB.

## **13. CLOSING REMARKS**

JG expressed his thanks to the Trustees for a successful year and for the care of the grounds and buildings. JG commented that the estate looks wonderful and thanked the staff for their enthusiasm and commitment.

GLM ended the meeting by thanking the directors, observers & staff for attending.

*Meeting closed at 1.30pm*