

The Othona Community

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

September 21st 2019

Venue: Living Space Coral St. London SE17BE

Welcome and introduction

Clare Gough Chair of Othona Community Trustees welcomed everyone, introducing our AGM 2019 saying that we are here to celebrate The Othona Community and give thanks for a good year. Clare reminded us of the Othona vision and how the Centres work to live this out day by day.

Nicolas Mannoukas led us in worship.

Othona's Founding Vision

Jan Marshall inspired us with a talk on the founding principles we inherited from Norman Motley, her father. He recognised then, the need for a community that respects everyone, and we see how very relevant that is today. Jan talked about how both centres continue the work that Norman started, striving to fulfil his vision in ways suitable for these times.

Warden's reports

Tony, Warden of OWD, introduced the core members at OWD, Liz, Kate, Alix and Robin. He updated us on the progress of OWD's major project, the Four Seasons Studio, which after 10 years' planning, is now being built. He showed pictures of the demolition of the old Art Room, and of the foundations being laid for the new Studio. This is multipurpose with toilets and kitchen and offers the possibility of running events for local people. Tony then showed us highlights from the year at OWD.

Tim, Warden of Bradwell described some examples of outside groups who come and use the Bradwell facilities. They support the work Bradwell does, and enable us to help others with bursaries to experience community. Tim then showed a very moving video of visitors talking about their experience of life at Othona Bradwell and the difference it has made to them.

Tim gave thanks to the VAPS (Volunteer Action for Peace) with whom he has been working very closely. His application for more volunteers in 2020 has been agreed. Tim gave thanks to Debbie and Richard, to all the volunteers who give practical help, and to committee members and trustees without whom the Centres couldn't carry on.

Chair's report

Clare explained that governance is the scaffolding that supports the organisation. This has been her priority this year. Trustees and committees have taken a grip on **Health & Safety**. Policy Statements for each centre have been agreed, each centre has its own procedures. The centres are both audited every year.

New procedures and training are being developed for **Safeguarding**.

GDPR (Data Protection), is important to Othona. We are now using G Suite to make sure we are secure.

The Trustees are keen for the Centres to keep up with **maintenance programmes**. OWD has had a building condition survey. Bradwell has submitted plans for Energy Generation. We have been working to improve **communications** with members and visitors. Next year our priorities will be getting building work done and refreshing our strategic plans.

Financial Report

Angie Smith, Othona trustee treasurer, and Javed Salim, partner at Alwyns our accountant, presented the financial report. They went through the Financial Headlines document which summarised our finances in friendly terms. The Annual Report and Financial Statements will be put onto the website.

Community Secretary

Ruth Bull, chair of Bradwell committee, took on the role of Community Secretary 10 years ago. She wanted to give something back to Othona. This role supports trustees in organising the AGM, and fulfilling our legal obligation by doing Charity Commission returns. Ruth wants to step down. We welcome Geraldine O'Grady who has applied to take up this position. Thanks to Ruth who has served so well.

Membership

As Membership Secretary, Ali Tebbs, keeps a record of members. Membership has changed a lot in the past few years. Technology enables us to keep people informed via websites, emails and social media. The information that was the main benefit of membership, is now freely available to anyone. So why become a member? Is membership about what you get or what you give? We hope that Othona membership is about belonging, supporting, and sharing responsibility for something we value. The membership subscription - still only £12 per year- makes an essential important financial contribution. If you make an additional donation that really helps to cover our increasing costs. For example the website costs over £7000 per year. And as a member you can have your own say. Ali now wishes to stand down and is looking for someone to take over.

A member asked if decision making meetings should have a membership representative. The Chair explained that this is the responsibility of the local Management Committees- (who are all members).

Election of Officers

Angie Smith, Treasurer, Geraldine O'Grady, Community Secretary was nominated by Ruth, seconded by Dave Bull and unanimously elected.

We ended our AGM together, with a hymn and the Grace and then enjoyed time together to socialise with refreshments.