



Ashwell Community Land Trust
Office at Bear Farm
6a Back Street SG7 5PE
☎(01462 743706)
✉ ashwellclt@ashwell.gov.uk

Minutes of a meeting of the Ashwell Community Land Trust Ltd

Date/Time/Venue: Wednesday 10th September 2024, 7pm at the Parish Room.

Present: Graham Lee (Director and Parish Council Chairman), Norton Mahy (Director and Parish Council Vice-chairman), George Tait (Director and Parishioner representative). Jane Porter, Clerk to Ashwell Parish Council, acting as Secretary to the Trust. Five Members were also present (Sharon Dawson, Will Fletcher, Andrew Ingham, Paul Miller, Karen Mills).

- 1 **Apologies for absence.** Received from four Members (Clive Godfrey, Cliff Jenkinson, Vanessa Jenkinson, Jill Powell).
- 2 **Welcome and introduction by the Chair and other Directors.** It was noted that under the rules of the Ashwell CLT the Chair and the Vice-chair of the Parish Council were Directors; this was in line with the model supplied by the solicitor recommended by the CLT Network. It was noted that some other CLT's created by parish councils remained closely linked to them whilst others became much more separate bodies; CLT's could also be created by independent community groups. For a variety of reasons including conflicts of interest, workload, skills, etc a review of the current set up could be addressed in the future when it was thought to be desirable.
- 3 **To note the Rules of the Ashwell CLT Ltd and other information on the website.** These were noted. <https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/ashwell/ashwell-community-land-trust-ltd-/>
- 4 **To note the current Members (as at 10th September 2024) and accept any additional requests.** There were currently 16 Members in addition to the three Director Members.
- 5 **To note the minutes of the AGM held on 26 March 2024.** These were agreed as a true record. <https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/ashwell/ashwell-community-land-trust-ltd-/>
- 6 **To receive oral reports on actions from the meeting of 26 March 2024.**
 - 6.1 Accounts for the financial year ending 31 October 2023. Following approval at the March meeting these had been submitted to the FCA as required. The current year's accounts for the financial year ending 31 October 2024 would be due by 31 May 2025, ie within 7 months.
 - 6.2 Community Assets registration. <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/assets-community-value>
This would enable forward notice to be given of any future sale but market prices would still apply. Registration was only possible if the intention was to to maintain the existing service,

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Directors: Graham Lee (Chair of Ashwell Parish Council and appointed as such under the Rules), Norton Mahy (Vice-chair of Ashwell Parish Council and appointed as such under the Rules), George Tait. Secretary: Jane Porter (Clerk to Ashwell Parish Council).

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Signed.....Date.....



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eg a pub to continue as a pub. If one of the three existing pubs were to come onto the market the commercial viability of maintaining it as a pub would have to be considered.

6.3 A list of community assets to be compiled (10.3/26 March 2024). **Action: JP**

6.4 Possible initiatives.

6.4.1 Post office services. The Parish Council's village survey re the reduction in the opening hours of the current outreach service in the Parish Room had not resulted in any demand to request a review. It was understood that the new owner of the farm shop on the Steeple Morden road was looking into providing a service.

6.4.2 Site of the previous day nursery at West End. An approach had been made by a parishioner with a proposal that it be turned into a business hub to provide an alternative space for those working from home or running small businesses from home; they had established that some 90 individuals had expressed a potential interest. The Directors had met with the site owner who had expressed a willingness to consider the proposal. It was agreed that there was a need for fuller information from those interested possibly via a questionnaire; GL and AI to progress this.

Action: GL/AI

6.4.3 Merchant Taylors' site off Gardiners Lane. GT reported that his approach to a contact at the Merchant Taylors' had not been responded to; he would try again. GL agreed to follow up on the Parish Council's enquiry to the school head for any information they had.

Action: GT/GL

6.4.4 BT site off Silver Street. It had been established that BT were selling off sites, at market prices, that were redundant; the purchase cost, should it become available, would obviously be an impediment.

6.4.5 ID Products site at West End. It was noted that this was designated as a brown-field site under the District Local Plan; it would attract a high value for housing development should it become available.

7 To consider the next steps for the recruitment of further members/issue of shares and agree any actions.

It was agreed that an item be included in the 2025 Yearbook, a flyer be produced for door-to-door delivery, reports placed in the Village News, and items published via the Parish Council's website. Members would be encouraged to publicise the CLT through word of mouth. Updates on actions and any other matters of interest would be emailed to Members between meetings.

8 Any other matters of report.

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- 8.1 Hunts Ridge development site. It was reported that, if it gained planning permission, this would include four affordable units in accordance with the District Council requirements. These units would be in line with district-wide needs rather than those specific to Ashwell as the outcome of the Ashwell Housing Needs Survey undertaken earlier in the year were not yet in place. A potential role of Ashwell Housing Association had been looked into, and a meeting held with their representatives, but as it was 'deregistered' NHC had notified that it was not eligible.
 - 8.2 Zero Carbon Ashwell (a working party of the Parish Council). It was reported that the group was applying for a grant that would fund an assessment of the village's energy needs and potential means by which green energy could be generated to meet these. There might be an opportunity for the CLT to be involved in any future project; examples of other communities were cited where a benefit society had carried out a holding role with a commercial supplier as operator. The CLT Network would be investigated for possible options. **Action: GL**
 - 8.3 Empty residential properties. It was noted that the District Council was required to maintain a register of these. It was agreed to request information on empty properties and the current regulations re compulsory purchase or similar. **Action: JP**
- 9 To agree a date for the next meeting. Tuesday 21 January 2025.

Jane Porter, Acting Clerk to Ashwell Parish Council acting as Secretary to the Trust.

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