

Chair's Notes AGM 2019.09

The AGM was held for the first time at LivingSpace, Coral St ,Waterloo. 49 friends and members attended. We opened with worship led by Nicholas Manoukas. Jan Marshall shared some thoughts about her father's (Norman Motley) founding intentions and hopes for The Community. The Wardens gave their reports. Tony Jaques describing the four seasons studio which will replace the now demolished prefabricated art room. It will be a multipurpose eco building of high specification, funded from grants, gifts and legacies together with funding from the Othona Community Charitable Trust. The foundations have been laid and completion is expected next spring. Tim Fox gave his report, this was followed by a video made by one of the short term summer volunteers (volunteer action for peace). The video showed various aspects of the site and activities, with individuals (volunteers, staff, visitors) describing what being at Othona Essex means to them.

As Chair of Trustees I gave a brief report of the work undertaken by Trustees. We have been concentrating on streamlining our accounting and budgeting, working on governance, reviewing our health and safety and safeguarding Policies and procedures. The safety of our visitors, staff and volunteers is very important to Trustees. Our business is now conducted on a web based IT system (G Suite), which is free to not for profit companies. All officers now have an @othona.org email address (mine is chair@othona.org). Fundraising to repair, renew and replace our buildings will be a focus for next year - keep up to date with these projects on our 2 Centre websites.

Angie Smith our Treasurer, together with Salim Javed our accountant from Alwyns presented the accounts which show an overall small surplus.

Ruth Bull our very long serving Community Secretary presented Geraldine O'Grady to the members for election as the new Community Secretary. Geraldine introduced herself, she is a teacher who has worked in London for many years, she set up a charity to skill overseas teachers of handicapped children and has been a school governor. She spends weekends in Southminster and looks forward to getting to know the Community. Members duly elected Geraldine, she and Ruth will overlap for a few months whilst Geraldine is introduced to the role.

Clare Gough presented Angie Smith, commending her work highly, she was duly elected as Treasurer.

Ali Tebbs gave the membership secretary report, Ali has done much work recently on the membership database, removing duplicates and lapsed accounts in line with the requirements of GDPR legislation. Membership is still only £12/yr. Ali had membership forms with her and several people took the opportunity to become members. Ali asked for a volunteer to replace her after many years of service. Several people came forward and Dave Hodgson Brown will take over some time in October.

There was plenty of time between agenda items for questions and discussion. One person commented that she thought that Norman would be proud of how the Community is doing.

The formal meeting finished with a rousing song and the Grace. There followed a bring and share tea, much discussion and making of connections new and old.

The AGM next year will be in the same venue, LivingSpace, 1 Coral Street, Waterloo, SE1 7BE

Advance warning: voting will be restricted to paid up members only.
Clare Gough 14.10.2019