

The Othona Community 277843

Annual General Meeting of Membership

Saturday 23rd September 2023

10.30 to 12.30

MAIN Meeting

Apologies from:

Elizabeth Turner, West Dorset Committee member

Mark Gallagher who joined late also West Dorset Committee member

Sasha East OE Bradwell link Trustee

Dan Dutfield Central Trustee

Welcome by Chair of Trustees: Clare Gough

1. *Opening Worship - video compiled by the Bradwell team.*
2. News from the Centres
Much of the News from Centres was delivered in excellent audio-visual form which will be available to everyone on the websites
OWD Video
OE Video
Alwyns Accountants Video and presentation of data graphs by Javed Salim
3. Financial report - Javed Salim, Alwyns Accountants,
[Othona 2022.23 financial summary sheet.pdf](#)
4. Financial performance - Michael Hunt Community Treasurer
Michael talked to the figures as sent out in AGM pack
Michael reminded the members that most of the £4+ million pounds is tied up in buildings and land so not liquid assets that are available for use. There is £450K in investments and cash.
Investment managers have been given the authority by Trustees to manage our funds and this seems to be beneficial.
They have parameters from Trustees about what *not* to invest in.
5. Membership report, survey findings
Membership currently stands at circa 370. Which remains similar to last year.
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A key recent focus for Membership has been undertaking the Othona Community

Membership and Belonging Survey.

Over 270 responses have been received, thank you to everyone who completed the survey.

The survey results and comments will be compiled into a report for consideration by the Board over the coming months.

The report was given by Steve Barnes on behalf of Phil Martin.

Question regarding the £12 Annual Membership Fee. Is this too low?

Chair suggested that those who *can* pay more then *please do add a donation on top*, as Gift Aid can be claimed on the donation.

The Membership Fee itself cannot be claimed as Gift Aid. (MH)

6. Remembering with thanks the lives of Members who have died.

We remember those who have passed away in the last 12 months:

~~Kees Maxey, Dave Hodgeson-Brown, Ford Lerner~~ May they Rest in Peace~~

A period of reflection and silence was held, led by Steve Barnes.

7. Trustees report highlights

Chair talked to her written report [Chairs round up AGM 2023](#)

Major issue with regard to the sewage system at OE Bradwell.

This system is now completely beyond repair, and we need a septic tank urgently.

If this is not addressed, the site will have to be vacated. Estimated cost £70-80K

Chair recognised we were turned down for planning permission for a larger new wind turbine. So please can members who donated for this specific purpose indicate if they wish their money returned or to go towards the septic tank or disabled toilets upgrade? A letter will be coming out by the end of November to explain this.

If members don't wish to wait for the letter, then please contact Richard Sanders who will let the Treasurer know your wishes.

Janet Webster will be stepping down at the end of the calendar year 2023.

Chair recognised her enormous efforts with HR, Recruitment Policies and Procedures, the 4 Seasons studio and many more projects.

8. Introduction of new Trustees

- a. Jane Pearse as Vice Chair of the Trustee Board.

Jane is a retired Anglican Vicar and she spoke briefly to introduce herself.

9. Election of officers

- a. Treasurer - Michael Hunt proposed by Clare Gough,
seconded by Jane Pearse

Elected unanimously by Members. Nil objections.

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Community Secretary - Geraldine O'Grady proposed by Steve Barnes

and seconded by Jan Marshall
Elected unanimously. Nil objections

Written questions: Issues addressed again regarding in-person AGM.
Many more people attend the AGM by Zoom. Last in-person AGM in Central London, no one attended from the 'west' apart from officers of Othona.

Richard and Debbie have been holding an in-person Bradwell open committee meeting now for two summers running, on a Saturday. All are of course welcome. Next one in August 2024. Date will be on the website.

Hopefully new improved websites soon - including one for the Trust which will hold and make publicly available the details of how the charity is constituted, with key governance documents and details of officers.

Portia Roelofs raised some queries about what structures were available *between* the Board of Trustees and the Community Members. Chair explained that there were two local committees, one in Essex and one in Dorset which had their own brief and structure.

Chair explained that once the overall 'landing page' for Othona's new improved website is up and functioning, we will be able to highlight more about the Othona Structures and Governance to make it clearer to all.

Portia suggested electronic screens (smartphones/tablets etc) could have restricted-use times at Othona and was asking how to bring this up (and similar issues that affect the community).

Parents find it difficult to restrict their childrens' usage.

Richard and Debbie said that they were not willing to 'police' this, as it is another responsibility. It is really up to parents to discuss together.

There was a discussion about needing to negotiate this afresh at *each* event with the participants/guests/parents, so that a shared "rule" could be decided over each week/ weekend.

Other Members mentioned children's bedtimes as an example of an issue that had been successfully negotiated in the past.

Issues that affect the general running of the Centres are the responsibility of the Centre Manager and Centre Management Committees.(CMC's)

10. Closing Prayer and Grace.

Jan Marshall led the meeting in an affirmation entitled;
Where People are Gathered Together,
followed by the Grace led by Rev Steve Barnes

11. The Meeting was Closed formally by the Chair at 12.40.

This was then followed by an informal chat with those who did not have to leave for prior appointments. The potential of a reunion in London in the winter was discussed.

An affirmation offered by Jan Marshall;

Where People are Gathered Together.

I/We believe that when people are gathered together in love, God is present, good things happen, and life is full.

I/We believe that we are immersed in mystery and that our lives are more than they seem. That we belong to each other and to a universe of great creative energies, whose source and destiny is God.

I/We believe that God wants us, that he is calling to us from the depth of human life.

And most deeply I/we believe it is in our struggle to love and care that we incarnate God in the world.

And so aware of mystery and wonder, caught in friendship and laughter, we celebrate the sacredness of life in our lives together.

Date of the next AGM: *Saturday 21st Sept 2024*

Thanks to those who have made today possible: Geraldine O'Grady for receiving and compiling the feedback and questions from members, Phil Martin, Membership Secretary for the membership survey. Andrew Gough for technical support. 43 people attended. on zoom.

Officers of the Charity attending were:

Michael Hunt, [Mark MacDonald \(Board Secretary\)](#), John Smith, Janet Webster, [Chris Wilson](#), Warren Douglas, Rachel Tocknell, Steve Barnes, Chris Jones, Jane Pearse (Vice Chair), Clare Gough (Chair of Trustees), Phil Martin, Richard Sanders, Debbie Sanders, Tony Jaques, Liz Howlett.

[Mark MacDonald \(Board Secretary\)](#)