

**Minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting of the
KEW COMMUNITY TRUST
held at St Luke's in The Avenue on Tuesday 3 October 2017**

Welcome and Apologies.

TRUSTEES

Present: Sally Durant (Chairman), Mark Boyle, Janet Chesterton (Treasurer), Lucinda Evans, Richard Hannan, Shahareen Hilmy, Rita Kamat, Serge Lourie, Tara Quick, Stephen Robinson, Joanna Stewart, Suzy Stone

Apologies: Margaret Marshall,

PATRONS

Present: John Cooke, Chris Stephens

Apologies: Sir David Durie

STAFF

Present: Nicola Patel, Lisa McTaggart, Roxy Botkin, Caroline Hart, Patrick Boateng

OTHERS

Present:

Malcolm Alexander, Valerie Booth, Judi Braddock, John Deane, Guinevere Duff, Ian Durant, Rosalind Eagleton, Stephen Eagleton, Veronica Edwards, Christine Ellis, John Ellis, Celia Evans, Tony Glastonbury, Susan Goddard, Janet Graham, Diana Guy, Robert Guy, Jean Harding, Peter Hart, Teresa Hartley, Caroline Jackson, Mark Jackson, Janet Kingston, Ellie Kinnear, Sue Kirkpatrick, Ian Lewty, Mary Lewty, Michael Lowe, Marian Mollett, Diane Morris, Isobel Moses, Ann Schauerman, Suzanne Sheffer, Irene Stephens, Pat Thrift

Apologies:

William Cottle, Susan Craig, Arun Sarwal, Mike Springate, Geoff Williams, Shiona Williams

WELCOME: The Chairman, Sally Durant, extended a warm welcome to everyone present. She explained that if any Community Supporters wished to become Trust Members, and thus be entitled to vote at the AGM, there were forms available. No extra payment was required. The Chairman outlined the agenda for the evening: to carry out the business of the AGM; to listen to our guest speaker, Michael Lowe, give a talk about the history of the Trust and The Avenue Club, and then everyone was invited to join the Trustees to enjoy refreshments, and learn more about the work of the Trust.

1. To receive and approve the Minutes of the AGM held on 4th July 2016.

These were agreed to be correct. ***Approval proposed by Stephen Eagleton, and***

seconded by Mark Boyle. Approved unanimously. Minutes signed by the Chairman.

2. To receive the Report of the Trustees from the Chairman

“I’m pleased to report that The Avenue Club, the main charitable purpose of Kew Community Trust, continues to thrive and during the last financial year its membership reached 439. The Club’s aim is to help its members keep fit, active and enjoying life and it does this by providing a wide range of activities. Some of these activities have become so popular that extra classes have been added. Pilates and French have expanded to 3 sessions each and there are 2 Yoga classes to choose from. The Art Class is extremely popular and now has 2 teachers to support the numbers attending. In September 2016, the Club started ‘Italian for Beginners’ which is attended regularly by 7-8 participants a week. A Philosophy Club was tried out in July last year for a 4 week period. This was successful initially with 16 participants but the numbers waned. It may be re-launched in the future with a new format following consultation with members.

Our Meditation classes have been replaced by Mindfulness classes with a new instructor. This was introduced as a 6 week trial but has now been established as a regular weekly class. In the summer of 2016 the Club organised a 4 week course of Men’s Health & Lifestyle Workshops. These have now evolved into a weekly Men’s Wellbeing Class which regularly attracts 9-10 participants. Another popular new activity is the Club’s monthly walking group started by Serge Lourie which had 11 walkers in August. The walks are carefully planned to cover a different area each month and they include an optional stop for lunch.

The Monday Transport & Carer Day is an important part of the Avenue Club’s service as it enables less mobile members to come to the Club by taxi and be looked after by a carer provided by the Club. During the year, 15 members have taken advantage of this service and, although this is a relatively small number, it provides a weekly outing for people who might otherwise be housebound. The carer and volunteers arrange activities such as board games, crosswords and quizzes with the members.

One of the Club’s core activities is to offer outings to members and in the last year there have been large coach trips to Bowood House, Eltham Palace and Claydon House. RAKAT buses have been used to take smaller groups to the Museum of Brands, Packaging & Advertising, Dennis Severs’ House, the British Library, the Museum of Childhood, the Library & Museum of Freemasonry, the Imperial War Museum and Neasden Temple. Last November the Discovery Bus in Kew Gardens was booked for 2 sessions on 2 days so that up to 54 members, including the Monday Transport & Carer Group, could enjoy the autumn colours and visit the hive. We are very grateful to our 4 volunteer drivers who enable the trips using RAKAT minibuses to take place.

Music and dance are an important part of the Avenue Club. As well as regular activities such as line dancing and the Community Choir, there was a Steelpan Workshop in May 2016, attended by 28 members. In July last year Spaghetti Opera presented by 'Opera on the Run' entertained 80 at an early evening performance and in August a ukulele based trio performed to 40. It must have inspired the attendees as the Club is soon to start its own Ukelele Class on a Friday afternoon. Last autumn there was a Flamenco Performance watched by 40 members, a similar number enjoyed a performance of the story of operatic phenomenon Florence Foster Jenkins and 25 attended Connaught Opera's afternoon of music. There was also musical entertainment at our popular Christmas lunch attended by 126 people with carols in French from the French conversation groups, singing waiters and a performance by the Avenue Club choir with encouragement for the audience to join in some of the well-known carols and popular songs.

The Avenue Club also aims to stimulate and keep members informed with talks and advice sessions. Last year there was a talk about the history of Macmillan, a workshop on healthy hops by the Kew Brewery, a special book club talk by Erin Pizzey and a talk by the inventor, Trevor Baylis. There were also police surgeries and one-to-one tablet workshops to help our members get the most out of their ipads or tablets. The Club has recently produced a very full newsletter with details of all the activities for the autumn and Activity Sheets have been put on the table if anyone would like to take one home.

After 10 years as Centre Director, David Polya stepped down from the role and moved to semi-retirement at the end of April. We were all sad to say goodbye to him and the Avenue Club wished him well at a tea party in the Main Hall during his last week. The party was attended by many members, hirers and others who had dealt with David over the years and who wished to express their gratitude for all he had done for them. The trustees also bid farewell to David at a dinner party for him and all the staff. It was catered by the trustees who turned out to be rather fine cooks! Our new Centre Director, Nicola Patel, is employed on a full time basis and joined us a week before David left so has now been with us for 5 months. While getting to grips with the many tasks expected of the Centre Director, Nicola has had to contend with the crucial final stages of the building works which have been very demanding at the same time as coping with the requirements of our first full audit. We are very grateful to her for taking all this in her stride and for being so generous with her time, even to the extent of cutting back her planned holiday in August so that she wasn't away at the same time as the contractor's site supervisor. Ellen McRae, who was an Avenue Club assistant for 18 months, also left the staff in April and has been replaced by a local resident, Caroline Hart, whose IT & other skills have already been put to good use.

The Trust has obligations under its lease from the Diocese & the Parish to ensure that the Centre is kept in a good state of repair and compliant with all government regulations. This year the West End Room has been refurbished with a new

cupboard, radiator and redecoration. The Avenue Club office has been extended into the adjacent cupboard and redecorated which has greatly improved the working environment for the staff and is much better for members visiting them too.

After numerous delays caused by complications such as the manufacture of the windows and the ventilation of the boiler room, the Marwood Room and the rest of the extension were officially opened by our local MP, Zac Goldsmith, on 1st September. The trustees were pleased to be able to use this occasion to thank those who had helped with the project, including our Community Supporters who give the Trust regular financial support. I am still amazed by the transformation of the dumping ground behind the kitchen into the stunning extension designed by Stephen Tallis of Somorjay & Tallis. I'm also hopeful that the smart new bin enclosure will deter the fly tippers who regularly leave unwanted items which Patrick has to try to dispose of. The Marwood Room will be used by the Avenue Club on Mondays and by Monkey Music on the other week days which has freed up the Alexandra Hall for Avenue Club activities and provided a more peaceful working environment for the shared Trust and Parish office, to the relief of Nicola, Guinevere & Irene, not to mention those who visit them. The Trust is very grateful to the Diocese and the Parish for consenting to and helping with the project and to our neighbours and others affected by the work for putting up with all the noise and disturbance. I should also like to say a big thank you to 2 of our trustees, Steve Robinson & Margaret Marshall, for the time they have given to the project and continue to give. The snagging goes on....

When not used by the Avenue Club, the Trust lets different parts of the building to hirers who meet a wide range of interests and provide valuable services. Our new facility has meant that we have been able to give a home to Kew Karate Club, which has recently lost the use of the Victoria & St John Hall in Sandycombe Road, as well as being able to accommodate new fitness classes and an adult ballet class among others. We also continue to offer a venue for Q2 Players, charity fundraising events and private parties and wedding receptions.

The Trustees review the operation of the Trust with guidance from the Centre Director and Avenue Club Manager at regular committee meetings. A strategy meeting was held in January to consider potential developments over the next 5 years. The Trustees intend to continue to run the Trust as at present but to use the extra space provided by the Marwood Room to expand the activities offered by the Club. A decision to carry out research into the wishes of Avenue Club members using a simple questionnaire has already been implemented and the trustees are grateful to our Avenue Club staff for all their work relating to this. New classes will be starting soon as a direct result of the questionnaire including Spanish, Art History and the Ukelele class already mentioned. Other plans formulated at the strategy meeting include refreshing the Trust's website and branding and reviewing the catering.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some important groups of people:

1. Our Staff – Nicola, our Centre Director, Lisa who runs the Avenue Club and Roxy & Caroline, her assistants, Patrick, our site supervisor, Steve, our cook, Janet, our book keeper and Daiva, our cleaner who is now working more hours due to our increased facilities. They are all paid employees but their hard work and caring attitudes make the Avenue Club a very special place.
2. Our volunteers, some of whom are here tonight. They make a big difference to the Club and the generosity with which they give their time is very much appreciated. I would also like to say a big thank you to other volunteer organisations, in particular KNA but also Richmond Good Neighbours, who provide a wonderful service by driving some of our less mobile members to and from the Club.
3. My fellow trustees for their advice, support and work in ensuring that KCT continues to operate in an effective and professional way and also for their enthusiasm in seeking to expand and improve the services we offer to meet the needs of our community.

I would like to mention in particular 2 of our trustees who are retiring this year after many years of service:

Linda Skuse actually stepped down as a trustee in January after almost 13 years as a trustee and I apologise for this rather long delay in thanking her formally which has resulted from the change in the date of our AGM. Linda has always been an enormous help with questionnaires, grant applications and safeguarding issues. More recently, she joined our Communications Sub-Committee whose work resulted in the revised Avenue Club leaflet and banner which we use at events. Linda is not present this evening but I have some flowers for her which I will give to her later.

There seems to be some mystery as to when Serge Lourie actually became a trustee. He tells me that it was long before the year 2002 on my list. There was a period when Serge was so busy with Council business that he rarely had time to attend meetings. But when he did, his knowledge of the local community and his Council connections were invaluable to us. Since his retirement from local government, Serge has been an extremely active trustee and he was a vital member of several of the Grand Kew Dinner Party committees followed by the Casino Royale committee. More recently, he started and now organises the Avenue Club walking group which has been a great initiative. Serge, on behalf of the Trust I'd like to thank you for everything you have done for it over many years and please enjoy your retirement. “

Serge Lourie thanked the Chairman, and commented that he had been attending Trustee meetings for 35 years, although not initially as a Trustee.

Malcolm Alexander commented on the fantastic set of accounts and said that the recent Marwood legacy gave Trustees the opportunity to do things differently, with opportunities in a wider field. He asked the Chairman whether she had any ideas. The Chairman made the point that the objects of the charity would have to be carefully considered before undertaking activities in a significantly wider field. She welcomed any ideas.

Robert Guy remarked that although the Avenue Club did a tremendous job, consideration should perhaps be given to doing things for younger people. The Chairman commented that a proposed new Trustee, Shiona Williams, was interested in organising events for younger people. Trustees were open to considering new ideas.

Peter Hart wondered whether the Avenue Club could undertake more outreach activities, visiting people's homes. The Chairman commented that this was likely to involve more expense, and possibly more staff, but the Trustees would think about it.

3. To receive and approve the Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2017 and the Report of the Management Committee and Accountants thereon.

The Treasurer was very pleased to present her first report as Treasurer to the members of the Trust:

"The financial year to March 2017 was transformative for the Trust thanks to the generous bequest from Sheila Marwood. The proceeds of the bequest contributed over £3.1m to the trust and after allocating a portion of this to the cost of the building extension, the balance was invested over a period of four months in CCLA's Charities Investment Fund. The income from the investment will be a significant boost to the Trust and the capital provides a sound base for the Trust's future financial security.

One consequence of the Marwood bequest was that the value of income for the year and the increase in net assets meant the Trust qualified for an audit for the first time and the format of the accounts has changed as a result. The trustees appointed PK Group as auditors and I would like to thank Elin Harraghy from PK Group for her help in completing both the audit and the statutory accounts.

Now for a more detailed look at the financial activities for the year. The income from normal operating activities was marginally higher than the previous year as income from room lettings increased by some ten thousand pounds. There is a strong core of regular hirers and the halls continue to be well used for wedding receptions, parties, meetings and other events as Sally has already mentioned. The first CCLA dividend contributed investment income of £7k. Although regular operating costs continue to be tightly controlled, some additional costs were incurred in the financial year. Of these, the most significant were the refurbishment of the West End Room and the Avenue Club office, professional fees relating to the Audit and a VAT review,

installation of a new telephone system and work on rebranding for the Avenue Club and the Trust. In addition, staff holiday pay was accrued in line with financial reporting requirements. The net effect was an operating deficit (before the Marwood bequest) of £11k which was some £9k more than anticipated at the start of the year.

There were two further significant items to note from the Statement of Financial Activities:

The Trust is VAT registered and following questions surrounding the treatment of costs relating to the building project, I decided to undertake a full review of the Trust's VAT compliance and structure. Given the complexities of the Avenue Club's and the Trust's different income streams the Trustees sought advice from local VAT expert, Mike Thexton. As a result of our review, an additional £14k in VAT was due to HMRC and this is reflected in the accounts. Some of the VAT incurred on the building extension will not be recoverable. Similarly, going forward, some VAT incurred on overheads will not be recoverable which will add a few thousand pounds of costs each year. New systems have now been implemented to facilitate VAT compliance.

Furthermore, the revaluation of the CCLA investment at year end, in accordance with financial reporting requirements, produced a loss of £22k. The Trustees are mindful that there is risk attached to the investment and that prices will vary over time. At the most recent valuation, the investment shows a gain.

The net result for the year was an addition to reserves of close on £3.1m which places the Trust in a very sound financial position for the future. The Trustees decided to designate £377k of the surplus to the Development Fund. This amount, together with previous funding from RPLC, the Elizabeth Ashton Edwards bequest and proceeds from the fundraising event Casino Royale held in 2015, brings the total development fund to £510k which was the anticipated cost of the building extension works. The major repair fund stands at £55k and the general fund is £2.786m.

KCT is fortunate to have a diverse source of income. The Avenue Club's main funding is from the Community Independent Living Scheme administered by Integrated Neurological Services and funded by the London Borough of Richmond. The funding has been cut by 5% since January 2017 and is subject to a new commissioning process the outcome of which is due in September 2018. RPLC once again granted £9.8k towards the costs of the Trust but we understand this funding will no longer be forthcoming following the change in the Trust's financial circumstances. The Transport and Carer Day has been funded by grants from the Sobell Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Kew Village Market and Kew Midsummer Fete. We appreciate the support of these organisations for such an important service. Whilst most Avenue Club activities operate on a break-even basis, the contribution from Central and Cecil Housing Trust towards some Avenue Club activities is also appreciated.

Other funding sources include the generous donations made by our Community Supporters and local churches including St Luke's, St Winefride's and St Anne's; the fundraising activities of the Avenue Club such as the Bring and Buy sale and the annual subscriptions of the Avenue Club members. These sources of income are vital to the charity and the support is greatly appreciated. It is anticipated that the Trust's access to grant funding will diminish in future due to the increased investment income and level of reserves, so ongoing local support for the activities of the Trust will be important.

Looking ahead, the Trust has a sound financial footing from which to continue to pursue its charitable purposes and a significantly enhanced space from which to do so.

To conclude, I would like to thank the following:

- St Lukes PCC, the Trust's landlord, with whom we have a very good working relationship
- My predecessor, Stephen Eagleton, for his patience and support in handing over to me
- Our long-standing bookkeeper, Janet Griffiths who has been a great help to me this year
- And finally, to all the staff for their help, in particular David while he was here, our new Centre Director Nicola and Lisa in The Avenue Club.

That concludes my report. Thank you."

Malcolm Alexander asked about the process undertaken before appointing CCLA as investment managers. The Treasurer and Chairman explained that the Finance sub-committee had approached a number of organisations. The Trust already knew CCLA as it had a deposit with them. It was felt that CCLA best met the Trust's requirements. Serge Lourie commented that the process that the Finance sub-committee (which he was not involved with) had gone through had been very good and very transparent and had led to a reasonable decision. CCLA specialised in charities, churches and local authorities. Malcolm Alexander asked about the expected yield. Mark Boyle explained that CCLA's target return was CPR +5% but the dividend yield, which was the amount distributed, was 3%. Malcolm Alexander asked about any impact on grants. The Treasurer remarked that it was likely that some grants would be lost. The Trust would not receive the grant from RPLC going forward and it would be difficult to apply for grants to cover, for example, the costs of the Transport and Carer Day. After the next commissioning process, it was possible that the Council funding would be reduced.

The Treasurer was asked to comment further on the recent review of the VAT position. She clarified that the Trust would not be able to reclaim VAT on all of its costs.

Chris Stephens asked whether it was correct that, following the recent extraordinary gift, Trustees were not currently planning to use it to change incrementally. The Chairman commented that Trustees were not saying that they would definitely not make radical changes. Income from the legacy was only just being received and it was not yet clear what would happen to the funding from the Council after the next commissioning process. If another charity were to win the contract, it was possible that the Trust would receive much less as a sub-contractor than at present. The Marwood Room was still not quite completed as there were significant snagging items. Trustees had lots of ideas but would have to take decisions slowly and carefully. It was likely that the Trust would have to fund the Transport and Carer Day itself going forward. Trustees might decide to help existing members by not charging for all activities. Outreach activities were very difficult, as KNA had experienced.

Serge Lourie asked how much of the legacy had been used towards the Marwood Room. The Treasurer explained that £377,000 had been contributed from the legacy. The Room would not have been built without the legacy. The Chairman added that the Room would generate increased income as a result of increased lettings. Malcolm Armstrong recommended that Trustees consider expanding beyond Kew, and consider supporting younger people. He wondered whether Trustees would be holding a strategy day in 2018. Janet Kingston made the point that Sheila Marwood's wish when deciding to leave the legacy to the Trust was to put the Avenue Club on a sound financial footing and it was important to keep sight of this. Valerie Booth added that it was correct for Trustees to wait until after the Council's forthcoming commissioning process before making major decisions. John Cooke commented that he had sympathy for the Trustees. The increased capital represented a big change, but did not offer that much income. He did not think the level of donations and legacies, other than the Marwood legacy, was that high. The Treasurer commented that the Trustees did value the donations and legacies, and the Chairman added that it might be harder to ask for more donations in view of the Trust's changed financial position. The Trust had to operate within its income levels and if it started to accumulate income, then decisions could be made as to how to spend it. Robert Guy thought that it was important to try to persuade people to donate, and the Treasurer agreed.

Approval of the Report and Accounts was proposed by Serge Lourie and seconded by John Cooke. Approved unanimously.

4. The Meeting was then asked to authorise the Management Committee to appoint P K Group as the Trust's reporting accountants and to agree their remuneration.

The Treasurer confirmed that she was happy with the work done by P K Group, and hoped that their level of remuneration would be lower next year.

This was proposed by Mark Boyle and seconded by Lucinda Evans. Approved unanimously.

5. Re-election and Election of Trustees

It was noted that Linda Skuse had stood down in January 2017 and Serge Lourie would be standing down this year.

The following Trustees were due to retire by rotation, and offered themselves for re-election: Margaret Marshall and Steve Robinson.

Shiona Williams had been nominated to become a Trustee and offered herself for election.

The Chairman explained that Shiona had lived in Kew for 40 years and the last 29 of those had been in the Avenue, as one of the Trust's close neighbours. She had been aware of the work of the Trust and the Avenue Club for many years. About 10 years ago, Shiona and friends Kathy Philpott and Sue Cole thought up and organised the first two Grand Kew Dinner Parties. These fund raising efforts made a huge difference to the Trust and were continued after the original organisers signed off. Shiona had recently retired from the career development consultancy that she had run for more than 30 years and so she now had time to give to the Trust. The Chairman was sure that the skills Shiona had acquired when advising companies on how to manage change would be useful to the Trust.

The Chairman asked that all the above should be approved under one proposal: ***this was proposed by Valerie Booth and seconded by Janet Chesterton. Approved unanimously.***

6. Any Other Business – Serge Lourie thanked the Chairman for all her hard work. She had led the Trustees through a period of extreme change. He commented that she handled the questions at this meeting very well. He led the meeting in giving her a standing ovation.

The Chairman declared the formal part of the Meeting finished, and welcomed the guest speaker: Michael Lowe, former Chairman of the Trust. Michael entitled his talk: "A glimpse into the history of Kew Community Trust and the Avenue Club".

Following Michael's talk, the Meeting was declared closed.

