



NORTON SUB HAMDON COMMUNITY LAND TRUST LTD.  
**A Community Benefit Society**  
FCA Registration No. 31698R

**Minutes of The Board of Directors**

held on Tuesday 19th June 2023 at 7.30pm in Norton Sub Hamdon Village Hall Meeting Rm.

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

**Attendees: -**

Colin McDonald (CM)	Chair
Jane Naughton (JN)	Chair. Shop Committee
Simon Harris (SH)	Minutes Sec.
Ian Murray (IM)	Secretary & Marketing
Jennie Harris (JH)	NsH PC rep
Lindsay Higgins (LH)	Treasurer
Brian Wickins (BW)	Chis.PC rep

1. **Apologies received:** Niall Clifford (NC) & John Forsyth (JF).

2. **New declarations of interest**

None

3. **Minutes of Board meeting (23rd May)**

agreed with then signed by CM.

4. **Secretary / Action Log**

This had been previously circulated by IM & current outstanding actions were visited, discussed as to their state of play & updated accordingly.

As an aside, JN confirmed that she was undertaking a Personal Licence course in connection with the Designated Premises Licence qualification.

## **5. Shop Roof**

LH gave an update - The unwritten quote from the roofer is £5000 with the scaffolding at £1200 +vat.

This information has been passed onto the the landlady (Lynn Orchard) but she is not in a position to proceed until she has sold an additional property to help finance the costs. The idea of a rent holiday had been previously suggested by NC whereby the CLT pays for everything up front & in turn no rent is charged by the landlady for the required period until it had been paid back (June 2024). The concern was though that it would have a negative affect on the finances between October & June with the biggest dip being in November.

IM commented that the upside would be that we would have a dry roof & insulated. LH did point out that only one side of the roof was needed to be repaired. JN asked if some form of agreement would be needed. LH agreed as the project would need access on John Bailey's roof. Potentially by paying for it the CLT could assume the risk for the work being carried out & if any extra work/repair was required then we would inform Lynn that we would need to extend the rent holiday.

CM pointed out that paying for work up front in lieu of a rent holiday is just like lending the money to Lynn for her to do the work. JN mentioned that we would need a legal agreement for example, to prevent a change of mind by the landlady.

CM asked that the board considered for agreement, that offering to pay up front in lieu of a rent holiday is a way forward or not. LH stated that she would go back to Lynn & without prejudice she would reinforce that it is her responsibility but that we are considering ways to help her so that we can get it fixed. Action with LH.

## **6. Finance Report**

LH explained that overall on the month a loss was made of £1581. The gross profit was positive as usual, but only enough to cover the salaries. The P&L section in comparison to last last year is better by nearly a £1000. Less had been paid for electricity, card machine charges are reduced due to the deal made by Claire.

Pledges are about £360 pm despite some dropping off. Currently not all the money has been used. LH said she'd contact all those who are pledging & explain how well the reduction on the consumed electricity is going, that the energy bills are greatly reduced & ask if it would be ok for their funds to go towards helping generally for the shop.

The energy unit price has been stable for the last 2 -3 months with Scottish Power.

The shop air con has had to be used due to the excessive hot weather & the donations were there to assist with that extra cost if needed. The consensus was that the air con would be used when needed & that the unit above the biscuits would probably be the best to use as it was not then competing with the fridges & freezer.

LH stated that the best energy deals checked were with Scottish Power, who we are already with. It was agreed by all that LH would pursue a new 2yr deal.

The bank balances are healthy & holding steady. Post Office roles; LH is now the Responsible Person (RP) as Liz Maunder has informed her that she is now no longer the RP. LH is also going to ask Nicola Rusling to become Postmaster.

It was unanimous that LH was RP & that Nicola was asked by LH.

Draft budgets were put together by Bob Taylor for this year & next. A loss is still projected for this financial year of just under 15k although no donations have been factored in.

Funding for the field solar array; there are grants available, or we borrow from a specialist lender or we borrow from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb). With regard to the PWLB this would have to be sourced through a local authority. Enquiries would need to be made to Norton PC or Somerset Council to see if either could assist with accessing the funds. Another potential option could be to raise capital via a Community Share scheme. Overall, potentially a combination of fund raising would be worth considering. If the array is going to go ahead then a £5000 grant from Power to Change would need to be applied for. If successful this then would be used towards the help for putting together a prospective. That prospective would then be used for evidencing the fund raising. Further discussion took place about the general benefits of the array & that a volunteer was needed to put the application for the grant forward.

Chalmers have been in contact & have confirmed a corporation tax refund of £1387 which has already been received.

An anonymous donation has also been received for £250 to go towards the redecoration of the PO area, which has been much appreciated.

## **7. Shop & PO Committees**

JN explained that there had not been any recent meetings to report on however, Bob & Annie Taylor had kindly volunteered to host a CLT Volunteers Thank You evening at their home. 3 dates were offered & it was decided on the 1st September. JN would reply to the Taylors & inform all volunteers about the invite.

Claire with help from Cheryl have been working hard with the orders as they come in checking the pricing margin to ensure we are at 30% or more. Occasional promotions will be the exception. LH asked if JF could possibly look at how the pet & diy sales have been going as it's been 3mths since they were introduced. JN said she'd speak with him.

## **8. Solar**

CM read out NC's pre-prepared report which he had sent earlier by email & this was then discussed.

In brief - the fund raising needed was now between £56 - £66k; the idea of installing a battery at the shop; in addition to the shop, the estimated Energy Club numbers needed would be between 15 - 20 members to use up the additional output; the potential of offering investors a % return.

## **9. Marketing**

IM had previously circulated his report. Social media numbers are up, emails will now be sent out to the shareholders, volunteers & donors to keep them informed of progress. There are 4 fund raising events coming up. BW will update the Chiselborough email explaining that the shop & post office are tied together & are not a separate. Also he will endeavour to provide a monthly update making use of the Norton Newsletter monthly report supplied by IM. NC was thanked for his input that he gave Chiselborough PC.

## **10. Away Day**

Friday 28th July 9am - midday was agreed on. CM explained that Martyn Morris has kindly agreed to oversee as facilitator for the day & will get in touch with the Board members individually for personal views about the future of the shop.

It was put forward by IM that perhaps the Reading Rm wasn't the best venue. 2 further locations were discussed, the church rooms at the old George pub in Martock or Chiselborough Village Hall. IM said he'd make enquires with Rachael Reid re the George & BW agreed the same with Chiselborough hall.

LH felt that Claire should be kept in the loop about the day & JN said she'd be looking for Claire's input to take forward to the meeting.

## **11. A O B**

None

Meetings -

July 18th (apologies from JN)

August break

Sept 12th 7.30pm R/Rm (TBC)

Meeting concluded at 9.06pm