



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ANGMERING

COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (8781)

VENUE – Angmering Community Centre

Tuesday 19th July 2023 @ 7.15pm

MINUTES

Present: Jan Welch (JW), Tony Cross (TC), Kristina Yates (KY), Arthur Trewhella (AT), Steven Mountain (SM),

1. **Apologies for absence** Robin McDonald (RM), Gareth Cornford (GC)

2. **Minutes of previous meeting (accuracy)** Agreed

3. **Matters Arising**

The Audit took place on 10th May 2023 at the Community Centre and is presently being finalised by the auditors.

The Trust has now changed the names of its 5 bank accounts as approved by the Board.

4. **New Declarations** (Pecuniary / Non-pecuniary Interest) - No new declarations

5. **Swallows Gate**

JW had presented the catalogue of remedial works required at SG, some relatively minor, others more serious and requiring action by the Board. She has found the standard of work relatively poor although commercially acceptable in many cases. Of particular concern are the patio doors in numbers 16, 17 & 18 and underfloor leaks which also need urgent attention. Despite several messages and emails to Atelier Homes (AH) they are not responding to us and appear to have stopped spending any money on remedial works at SG, concentrating on their other developments in order to secure sales.

The Board took the view that as Landlords we have a responsibility to our tenants and that a formal complaint must be made to AH as they provide the warranty for all remedial works in the first two years of occupation. In addition, the Board agreed that a claim should be made to NHBC who oversee the warranty process.

The Board also has concerns over the Management Company that AH has engaged to carry out routine works and maintenance of SG and the costs that arise together with the need for a meeting of said company.

Rents – AT pointed out the need to consider an increase in rents from April 2024 if the Base Rate remains high. Although we are on a fixed rate at the present, there is a need to make provision incrementally over the next few years so that tenants are not faced with a large increase all at once. It is also important that ACLT is financially viable at all times and it was noted that the Housing Allowance for tenants has not been increased and there is no certainty that it will be increased next year.

At present the debt cover service ratio on our borrowing is 110% which is slightly below what Triodos normally insist upon. After our fixed rate ends in July 2027, we are likely to have a debt cover of 110-115% at the current based rate and incremental annual rent increases of 5% which is likely to realise about 50K in the bank.

The Board agreed to review the situation in January 2024.

Action: TC to formalise and submit complaint to AH and JW to prepare & submit NHBC claim

TC to write to the management company for an explanation of their duties and costs.

6. **Mayflower Way**

The discussions with Worthing Homes regarding some form of partnership / collaboration with ACLT have failed to find a way forward. Although they felt a collaboration was possible, financially at this time it was not possible for them. Such a move would also require ACLT to transfer the land to them or rent it to them on a long lease with ACLT remaining as the Freeholder. Neither options would be particularly favoured by ACLT but would increase affordable housing in Angmering. There has been no response from ADC regarding any collaboration with them despite several emails requesting a response.

Contact had been made with three modular construction companies as a possible way forward to complete the MW project. The provisional prices quote would appear to be higher than the current standard building costs which in any event were not viable at the present. Some companies require scale to make their modular builds viable and 12 houses was below their threshold. Additionally, a contractual warranty difficulty would arise where any other company taking on the project would have to certify the previous foundation works. This was likely to prove insurmountable.

AT pointed out that an all-shared ownership arrangement at MW with shares pitched at 36% would be viable but would not be recommended in the current financial climate where house prices are falling and mortgage rates rising leading to house sales also falling.

The question of the monies required for installing water and electricity to MW arose as the earlier quotes would now have expired. It was also possible that the new development in Roundstone Lane (Mayflower Meadow) which has its own sub-station may improve the options for MW. In any event funds for these works should remain with ACLT.

Action: SM to contact our Agent.

TC to seek response from ADC

7. **Treasurer's Report**

RM had circulated the full Management Report to all Trustees and all agreed the new software package has made the Management Report more understandable.

8. **Any Other Business**

SM would be moving away from the area in due course but expressed a view to remain as a Trustee of ACLT. A similar situation has arisen with RM. The Board agreed that it would be in the Trust's best interest to make some form of accommodation to enable remote participation and that greater use of available technology would facilitate such matters.

9. **Date of Next Meeting** Thursday 20th September 2023 @ 7.15pm at the Community Centre.

Tony Cross
Chair, ACLT

Tony Cross