

RUSS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024: MINUTES

Date and time Saturday, 23 November 2024, 14.00 – 15.00
 Location RUSS Community Hub

1	Welcome from Anurag Verma, Chair of the Board
1.1	RUSS Trustee Joel Simpson (JS) welcomed RUSS members to the AGM, ran through the housekeeping rules and handed over to the Chair to start the meeting.
1.2	RUSS Chair Anurag Verma (AV) outlined the agenda for the meeting.
2	Minutes of 2023 Annual General Meeting
2.1	AV proposed that the minutes for the 2023 RUSS Annual General Meeting be agreed as true and accurate.
2.2	Members agreed to record the minutes as a true record.
3	Last year’s achievements and the year ahead
3.1	In 2023 RUSS made the following appointments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lauren Lapidge (LL) was appointed as Resident Sales Contact. • Sarah Boyd and Harry Bridgeman were appointed as the Self-Build Management Team to assist the self-builders. • Amalia Syeda Aguirre was appointed as volunteer manager on a fixed term contract which was funded by a small grant from the Coop Foundation.
3.2	AV outlined the key activities, appointments and achievements in 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sales of shared ownership and fixed equity homes have been completed, with all rental homes filled and residents moved in. • RUSS sold eight flats to CDS Cooperatives and entered into a management agreement with CDS. • RUSS repaid its primary loan to Triodos Bank, the largest part of our development loan. • Rebecca Sainsot-Reynolds (RS) was appointed as the Housing Management Coordinator, managing health and safety schedules, issue reporting, and working alongside CDS. • RUSS received a landscaping grant from Veolia Environmental Trust. • Works are ongoing and AV thanked residents for their committed work to complete the landscaping. • Sue Luxton was appointed to coordinate the landscaping works. • Unit 38 was appointed as playground designer.
3.3.	AV presented the plans for the year ahead:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RUSS aims to become a Registered Provider (RP) of housing, a regulated role for providers of social rented homes. • RUSS is in the process of finalising a long term loan. This loan will include approximately £50,000 to support the RP application process. • Fundraising efforts this year will support capacity building for the organisation and future sites. • The appointment of a Company Secretary is near completion after a successful recruitment process. • Plans to restart the RUSS school in 2025. There are many learnings to document from the past period. • The Pratt Institute (New York) is using RUSS as a case study, conducting research and evaluation to generate useful data that can be used by RUSS. • There are ongoing discussions with the aim of formalising a resident body to better represent residential interests on the board. • RUSS is looking for future sites and actively recruiting for a new chairperson.
3.4	<p>AV introduced LL, the Resident Sales Contact, to reflect upon her previous and future work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarised her responsibilities answering queries and supporting Church Grove residents through the sales process. • Thanked residents for their continual patience and cooperation through the various delays to practical completion. • Since then, LL has been supporting with general administrative tasks including loan administration and has picked up Allocations and Membership responsibilities from Jennie Graham (JG). • There are ongoing discussions with other CLTs about a collaborative approach to lenders. • Reviewing the allocation policy and streamlining the membership process.
3.4	<p>AV introduced RS, the newly appointed Housing Management Coordinator and resident at Church Grove to reflect on current work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working closely with CDS and the resident working groups on matters such as the health and safety schedule, maintenance and repairs.
4	Statement on 2023 Accounts
4.1	Due to ongoing discussions about the long-term loan, presentation of the 2023 accounts was deferred.
4.2	The AGM will then be reconvened to approve the accounts.
5	Introduction to Trustees
5.1	Trustee, Joel Simpson (JS) presented the role of the board and the nomination process and began a round of introductions from board members. These were:

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5.2	JS supports communication, fundraising and event facilitation.
5.3	Daniel Hugill (DH) sits on the Finance and Audit Committee and has been handling a lot of the finances to do with the handover from ROOFF to RUSS and is the link on landscaping and gardening.
5.4	Jon Broome (JB) was coopted to the board in August 2024. His principal interest is in future projects.
5.5	Louis Worthington (LW) is a resident who was coopted to the board in June 2024, He described his focus on improving the link between trustees and current Church Grove residents.
6	Election to Board
6.1	Current trustees Phil Morris, Jon Broome, and Louis Worthington stood for election after previously being co-opted and were unanimously elected for three-year terms.
6.2	AV welcomes the returning Board members.
7	Questions from members
7.1	A resident of Church Grove asked for the timeframe for the reconvened AGM to sign off the accounts. AV responded that the timeframe would be subject to a meeting with the GLA, the progress of the loan agreement and settling the final account with ROOFF. At this point RUSS will be able to report to the auditor and call an AGM to sign off the accounts.
7.2	A RUSS resident asked if a person could join the board before the next AGM. JS explained that trustees can be co-opted before formal election and that the recruitment of additional board members is ongoing. The resident commented on the lack of female representation.
7.3	A RUSS resident asked how many seats are available on the board. AV advised that the current board size is six members, with a maximum allowed of twelve.
7.4	A resident asked if residents of CDS-owned flats could join the board and if they had been encouraged to do so. JS confirmed that residents of CDS flats could join the board but there had been no formal invitation sent yet.
7.5	AV commented that the board aims for balanced representation: one-third RUSS members, one-third residents (including renters), and one-third external expertise.
7.6	DH highlighted the importance of the residents' body that is being formed and how it would formally represent residents collectively on the board.
7.7	Another resident asked how long the tenure is for trustees. AV confirmed the tenure is for three years (and is renewable) and that at each AGM a quarter of the board must step down.
7.8	A member asked for clarification around how RUSS is organised and how residents interact with the board. A resident responded, providing an update on their efforts to formalise a residents group.

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8	Close
8.1	AV thanked JS for organising the AGM and members for attending. The meeting closed at 3pm.