

# RUSS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025: MINUTES

Date and time      Saturday, 22 November 2025, 14.00 – 16:00  
 Location            RUSS Community Hub  
 Attendees          Jessica Barker-Wren, Jonathan Broad, Kareem Dayes, Annie Fatet, Mike Freed, Andreas Goldner, Collet Hunter, Nick Kelly, Ayesha Lahai-Taylor, Ed Mayo, Dermot McKibbin, Nicola Monique, Phil Morris, Tony Rich, Andy Rutherford, Rebecca Sainsot-Reynolds, Jake Sherwood, Joel Simpson, Anurag Verma, Sophie Watson, Ethan Williams, Louis Worthington, Chris Wykes Driver

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome</b>
1.1	RUSS Trustee Joel Simpson (JS) welcomed RUSS members to the AGM, ran through the housekeeping rules and outlined the agenda for the meeting.
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of 2024 Annual General Meeting</b>
2.1	Minutes of the November 2024 meeting had been made available to members on the RUSS website and via the newsletter. There were no queries.
2.2	JS proposed that the minutes for the 2024 RUSS Annual General Meeting be agreed as true and accurate. Members agreed unanimously.
<b>3</b>	<b>Presentation of 2023 Accounts and Comment on 2024 Accounts</b>
3.1	<b>PM talked through the 2023 Accounts</b> PM said that the accounts consist of the trustees’ report for the year, an organogram of the organisation and then the accounts that have been audited by RUSS auditors Third Sector Accountancy. The auditors accept that RUSS is a going concern and will continue to fulfil its responsibilities based on what has been reported. We have explained RUSS has not settled its final account with Roofff for the building of Church Grove. At the date of the accounts it had not been signed off by the underwriter and so it was an incomplete development as far as the accounts are concerned. RUSS has not completed the final account with Roofff but the auditors are happy that we have enough in the bank to pay what we consider we owe Roofff.
3.2	<b>PM responded to members’ questions:</b> Q What was the £5,000 on marketing used for? PM: Partly a consultant fee and an event to promote the completion and launch of Church Grove. Some of it was given by CDS – the purchasers of the rented dwellings - who paid for the event. RUSS had to sell these to a Registered Provider of Social Housing to be eligible for the grant from GLA. When our loan with Big Issue Invest was refinanced in May 2025 it included £50,000 towards preparing RUSS to register as a RP. Q. Why was the disputed sum not covered by insurance? PM: Insurance only kicks in after practical completion. The discussion is about what Roofff spent and the time they took during construction. Q Does the oldness of the accounts affect the ability to raise funds? PM: Not specifically but RUSS would have to get permission from BII as the only remaining lender until their term ends in 2029 but hopefully by that time RUSS will be a RP. Q. Could mediators help? PM: Possibly but at this point Roofff are still considering our offer. Q. How is the RP registration being progressed? PM: The board has had a report on the process, the new board will take it forward.
3.3.	The 2023 accounts were approved unanimously.
<b>4</b>	<b>Statement on 2024 Accounts</b>
4.1	PM said that since the Roofff settlement is still outstanding RUSS will have the same issue with the 2024 accounts. They should be completed by the end of 2025.
4.2	Q about CDS rents - PM said that CDS only collect rent for the shared ownership properties they own on a long lease. They also received 2.75% of the original purchase price collected.

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<b>5</b>	<b>Appointment of Auditors</b>
5.1	PM proposed a formal resolution for members to appoint the same auditors to do the 2025 audit. This was approved by 15 members.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Vote of Thanks</b>
6.1	AV proposed a vote of thanks to PM for all his work on the accounts.
<b>7.</b>	<b>Milestones and Celebrations</b>
7.1	<p>JS introduced a short presentation about RUSS's milestones during the year. He invited residents and others to join in with any stories they would like to share.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GLA support for RUSS via the BII loan for 5 years to take on 8 homes currently owned by CDS and £50,000 towards RP application</li> <li>• Chris Wykes Driver started in May to support RUSS with the RP application alongside society secretary support. She has been working on governance, policies and scoping the registered provider application. Landscaping and playground works are now finished and there will be a launch event – a big thank you to Rebecca Sainsot for taking on that as voluntary work alongside her paid role.</li> <li>• Sharing the RUSS story via public events - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In June RUSS joined Lewisham and Greenwich Citizens alongside other organisations at a joint event titled 'public land for public good'. 40+ participants were introduced to the model of a CLT.</li> <li>○ Over 80 people visited Church Grove during September's Open House event</li> <li>○ These events have been good for spreading the word and attracting volunteers, including one of our new trustees</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>We have been working hard on growing the board – some new trustees are joining today. Others have provided ad hoc legal advice and other support.</p>
7.2	<p><b>Qs and contributions</b></p> <p>RSR – the planting has been a labour of love from residents and other volunteers. Jon Broome has been putting together a research base, and someone wrote their dissertation on RUSS. It includes resident interviews which can be used for educational purposes. EM said he was struck by the safe play available for the children who live here. RSR said 3 workshops were held on play for young people of different ages. The children now have a sense of ownership of the space and some of them helped with construction.</p> <p>Q on the relationship between GLA and BII – GLA underwrite the loan</p>
<b>8</b>	<b>Thank you to Anurag Verma</b>
8.1	JS reported that after much hard work, AV is standing down today. Mike Freed gave a tribute to AV whom he described as an excellent ambassador for RUSS who had served two terms with vigour, motivating everyone involved and helped solve complex problems with wisdom, energy, hard graft and humour. RSR also thanked AV for allowing her to be able to live in this community and to learn about how boards work. AV replied that he was very proud of what had been achieved. He said that for something to be sustainable it must be socially sustainable. "Thank you to everyone involved, it's been amazing."
<b>9</b>	<b>Elections to the Board</b>
9.1	JS reported that the board sets out its remit for those standing for election and at every AGM not less than one third of trustees retire. This year Anurag Verma is standing down. Phil Mitchell is standing down but standing for re-election. Existing trustees remaining on the board are Jon Broome, Joel Simpson and Louis Worthington.
9.2	Ed Mayo is standing for election as chair. Proposed by JS and seconded by JB. Election approved by 14 members. EM introduced himself. He has a background in co-operatives and non-profits. He said he will be helping to shape the new board and will rely on the support of existing

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	trustees. The board will need to put a lot of governance in place but without becoming slow and bureaucratic. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to stand for this role. His focus will be on what next. This is an extraordinary community that has achieved great results, but what more can we do now and where do we want to be in 5 – 10 years' time?
9.3	PM Treasurer and Society Secretary standing for re-election. Proposed by JB and seconded by LW. Election approved by 14 members.
9.4	Co-opted since last AGM Jessica Barker-Wren has a background in facilitating public education tours and engaging youth groups. She is looking forward to next steps with the RUSS School and the Playtower Project. Proposed by LW and seconded by JB. Approved by 14 members.
9.5	David Robinson a development finance analyst for Hyde Housing with experience in financial modelling and asset valuation grew up locally. David was unable to attend this meeting and sent his apologies. Proposed by JS and seconded by LW. Approved by 14 members.
9.6	Sophie Watson, Professor of Sociology with the Open University, is keen on developing community engagement and the RUSS school. Proposed by JS and seconded by JB. Approved by 14 members.
9.7	PM wanted to formally thank Daniel Hugill who stepped down as a trustee recently. He took on the demanding role of sorting out the utilities for all 36 flats for which PM was very grateful
<b>10</b>	<b>The Year Ahead</b>
10.1	<p>JS outlined some key areas of work for the year ahead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and scoping for becoming a Registered Provider of Social Housing</li> <li>• Developing a strategy and business plan for the next 3 – 5 years</li> <li>• Growing and diversifying the board with a focus on residents and representatives of local organisations joining the board</li> <li>• The Future Projects Working Group has a lot of work around preparing an Expression of Interest for development of Ladywell Playtower</li> </ul>
<b>11</b>	<b>Final Questions from Members</b>
	<p>Q. Chair of Bromley CLT said they are only interested in Bromley but found a site in Croydon – will pass on details. He is also part of SELCE who get grants from GLA for installation of renewable energy and use surplus to fund energy advice plus retrofitting.</p> <p>Q. Becoming a RP – you're at initial stages – how does it fit ethically?</p> <p>CWD said this was explored a few years back. Conversations to be had by the new board.</p> <p>Q. At the National CLT AGM this morning there was a lot of talk about preparing RP applications as a collective rather than as small individual providers. Noted for follow up.</p> <p>AV proposed a vote of thanks to JS for his amazing work on recruiting new trustees.</p> <p>Q. Tony Rich said he is working with LBL on the application process but would be happy to talk to the FPWG especially around making sure the community gets what it needs from the development. RSR said she would liaise with him.</p> <p>Q RUSS could build the housing, but the heritage side would need funding and a commitment to keeping it as a heritage asset. A social requirement has been added to the EOI weighting.</p> <p>Ayesha Lahai-Taylor introduced herself and thanked EM for inviting her and Collet Hunter. She is the Ladywell candidate for the Labour party. Collet Hunter is also a candidate for Labour she is vice-chair of the Lewisham Safer Neighbourhood Board and an independent advisory group for scrutinizing the police. She is also CEO of an organization that works with young people</p>
<b>12</b>	<b>Close</b>
12.1	JS thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 4pm.