Brighton & Hove Community Land Trust

Annual General Meeting 2025

Tuesday 15th September 2025, 6.30 - 8.30 pm

The Railway Club, 4 Belmont, Dyke Rd, Brighton & Hove BN1 3TF

Registration and arrival (quorate members 33 - total attendance 24; x9 members via proxies)

Chair: Anke Schwittay.

1. **Approval of 2024 minutes**

No issues raised. Minutes approved. Agreed and signed off.

2. **Appointment of Directors (see statements below)**

Denise Elliot & Georgina Baxter stepped down. The members thanked them for contributions over the last three years.

- Katie Reily presented her statement
- Nicola Thomas has been co-opted during the last year and stood for election, and presented her statement.
- Chris Roche stood as a new applicant, and presented their statement.
- Sandy Barnett stood as a new applicant, and presented their statement.
- Benjamin D'Montigny stood as a new applicant, and presented their statement.

All re-appointed and new Directors were voted in.

3. **Appointment of Secretary**

Katie Reilly was re-appointed.

4. **Appointment of Treasurer.**

Helen Bartlett was re-appointed as Treasurer. Ideally, this role will be taken up by another Director within the year.

5. **Approval of accounts.**

Helen Bartlett presented the accounts (see attached treasurers report).

Helen thanked Paul Chandler, who volunteers as an administrator and helps keep the administrative ship afloat and supports the running. Helen explained the status quo of BHCLT: the ownership of 46 Appledore Road property (the main part of our balance sheet) which we lease to SEASALT Housing Coop. The financial model that enabled us to buy the property was described, and how it has changed with rising interest rates. We have invested in the property, with £10k of repair work this past year, and we support SEASALT to sustain themselves, but the financial model is quite challenging. The financial projections for the SEASALT property are looking viable, we have managed to keep rents affordable as planned and have not yet passed on the stresses of rising interest rates to SEASALT.

Then there's our core operational costs. We reverted to a volunteer org in 2023, with a turnover of about £5000 per year, plus specific project funding. E.g. Who Owns Brighton (£20k).
Turnover this year was :£57,000
Tangible assets: £561,000.
We ran a deficit of £4,509 on our profit and loss, due mainly to the insulating and re-roofing of Appledore Road.
Final position on our balance sheet: £275,000. This is a positive position especially given the financial context.

Q&A:

What kinds of grant funds have we tried to access?
We have applied to about x10 organisations, to a number of grant making bodies (National Lottery, Socialist Education, Sussex Community Foundation, Pebble Trust, Chalklift Trust). We have had success with Who Owns Brighton, but not for core funding for the running of BHCLT. The operational costs are challenging to get funding for. We have been able to mobilise some funding with Universities of Sussex and Brighton, small amounts. Co-application for a large research grant with UoB has not yet proved successful.
Do we have any corporate sponsors?
None so far. Chris thought this could be a fruitful source of potential funds.
We have the funds to cover running costs for this year, but beyond that we will need to choose to either raise
Helen proposed that we accept the accounts (with 3 mistakes: Peter Clarke resigned in 2024; Paul Chandler resigned 3/9/2024; on our detailed revenue accounts - £1305 interest payable on 'other loans', but this needs attributing to our main loan).

There were no further questions, and the accounts were approved (subject to amendments described above). The meeting also agreed to re-appoint Third Sector Accountancy as our accountants and to disapply the requirements for a full audit, as allowed within in the Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

6. **Review of BHCLT activities for year April 2024-March 2025.**
    a. Be a creative and productive freeholder through our partnership with SEASALT.

Andrea described the past year's work with SEASALT (see Annual Report).
Helen described the work underway to train and promote exchange and knowledge sharing between the UK housing and student housing coops, an exciting new partnership. The outputs from the workshops Andrea described include posters, documents, and a video is planned. The next workshop planned is about strengthening their networks of support.

    b. Creating a more active and involved member network, through which learning and knowledge flows.

Sara gave a big shout out to Who Owns Brighton project (WOB). The website has good material on it and has been a method of reaching out to new members and wider communities of interest. These focused projects are great for recruitment. We have 1700 followeres on Facebook.

    c. Working with BHCC to create a more positive framework for CLH in the city.

Chris raised the difficulties of bringing about affordable housing in the city and his hope that BHCLT may be able to take on this role, given the failure of BHCC to deliver much. Nicola responded by describing the history of work that BHCLT has undertaken, with BHCC and independently, to try and

secure sites to develop truly affordable housing. From the x10 site offer made by BHCC for community led housing in 2020, to the reality of the mainly unviable sites that were actually made available. In the last 10 months, meetings have taken place with key players in BHCC and the councillors and the Chair of Housing. One positive working group is to consider BHCLT taking over BHCC Guardianship properties, which is currently contracted to private organisations. Further discussion about these issues and the history of what has been tried by both BHCLT and Sussex Homeless Support took place.

d. Ensuring BHCLT runs well as an organization

Katie described the work undertaken this year to keep BHCLT a healthy organization. We have moved from monthly meetings, to quarterly meetings, relying more on working groups that meet more regularly and focus on the specific issues.

The full annual report can be read here: Annual report

Who Owns Brighton and the crisis of housing affordability.

Helen described the work of the WOB project this year. It focusses on the development of the Circus Street development, Since January 2024 the project has investigated this development, engaging 50 volunteers who researched the logic and genesis of the development and the outcome for the people living in around the site. What emerged from this community research has been well documented (see WOB on BHCLT webpage). https://bhclt.org.uk/whoownsbrighton/

A rich set of resources has been generated from this work, including a history of the housing crisis, engagement with the construction industry about the 'promises' and how they fall away. We are seeing exactly the same pattern of failure enacted on subsequent large sites. So a key goal for BHCLT is to step in and challenge these processes wherever we can.

Brighton General Hospital site.

This is a long-running site up for re-development with x500 homes proposed. The People's Campaign has a meeting tomorrow evening to try and secure some
6.30pm at the Edge Community Centre. Tuesday 16th September.

The issue of the King Alfred Leisure Centre was raised by Chris, questioning the community benefit from the development. An important site which is important to see developed, but we must ensure the community engage with this project.

This concluded the official business of the AGM.

7. Presentation

Appendix Statements from Applicant Directors

Benjamin D'Montigny, MCPara

I am a paramedic and community champion with extensive experience in neighbourhood regeneration, tenant-led projects, and building sustainable community organisations that tackle a wide range of social challenges. In East Brighton, I have developed from a disused council storage hall, into a thriving community centre, and manage the continuous development of the area by lead on funding, governance, and service development, helping residents shape their own futures. I have also provided a strategic delivery on new spaces, most recently Moulsecoomb Place, working alongside an anchor partner to create a creative hub.

I currently serve as a director on several organisations and boards, including:

· East Brighton Trust

· Bristol Estate Leaseholders & Tenants Association

· Brighton Natural Health Foundation

· East Area Panel / EDB Panel

I want to bring this energy and experience to BHCLT to help grow our housing ambitions, strengthen partnerships with the council and social lenders, and secure the funding and capacity needed for more affordable homes in Brighton & Hove. My focus is on practical delivery and long-term sustainability, ensuring the CLT can continue to provide secure, affordable housing for future generations, and to grow and expand through a grantfunding strategy, partnership working, and capacity building.

Chris Roche

By way of introduction please find below a brief summary of my experience and interests.

General: Left wing socialist Architect with 20 years+ experience as lobbyist and community leadership on planning and development proposals.

Influenced the £100m+ redevelopment of Archway as community leader assisted by local MP Jeremy Corbyn. Including saving Archway Library.

Led campaign to successfully save Muswell Hill Library.

Interested in self-build communities. Currently engaged on Artopia-101, a proposal for an artist's community in Brighton.

Academic: Graduate of Manchester (pt1); Oxford (pt2); and Westminster (pt3). Taught at Universities in London, Leeds, Manchester and Brussels.

Professional: Founder(1991)/Creative Director of 11.04 Architects – Award winning practice with 300+ projects in UK, Europe, and Africa.

£35m housing project in Bratislava.

$100m+ projects in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Founder DIY Lofts, Hoxton London. (Self-build community Project)

Prior experience with CZWG; John Miller (Head of RCA) and BBG, New York – on projects up to £400m.

Consultant to Manchester Airport plc 3 years.

Retired Nov. 2024.

RIBA Chair of RIBA Camden 3 years.

Deputy Chair RIBA London

RIBA Council 5 years (resigned due to institutional racism within RIBA London/Council)

Author Property Developer's Handbook (Haynes Publishing)

"Working Lunch" – OnOffice magazine. Monthly column on the future of the workplace.

Resident Manchester, Oxford, London, New York, London, Brighton & Hove (2020)

Katie Reilly

I am a qualified architect with experience in both the private and public sector, specialising in community-led housing, people-centred design, energy efficiency and affordable housing for tricky urban and rural sites.

Currently working as a Strategic Asset Manager for Housing at a local authority, I bring experience of strategic asset investment of social homes, putting energy efficiency at the heart of asset management and including residents in this process. I am a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing and bring experience in stakeholder engagement to the CLT.

For the past 4 years I have volunteered as a Board Director of the CLT. Alongside my fellow directors, I take an active role in the SEASALT project, carrying out asset management, budgeting and ongoing workshops to support the students to run a housing coop they are

proud of. As well as developing feasibility studies and business plans for potential development sites and organisational activities such as director recruitment and being the Secretary. I enjoy campaigning for high-quality housing solutions and supporting policy and solutions for community-led housing projects in the city with our members and city council.

I bring to the Board skills in community-led housing, asset management, design and retrofit knowledge, running similar organisations and alternative governance structures. I love being a part of an organisation, in the city I live in, that is proactively working to build connections and knowledge in community-led housing and to bring forward the types of places and spaces that people want and need with the people that will live there. I hope to continue to offer these skills to the Board going forward.

Nicola Thomas

I am a retired architect with 30 years of practice specialising in housing and sustainability. I worked almost exclusively in Brighton and Hove and am a Brightonian by birth. I had my own practice until 2018 when I joined BHCLT as Land and Property Enabler. During that time, I helped to purchase and renovate the house where SEASALT now live as well as forge connections with local agents, building professionals and the Council.

I have been part of the BHCLT Board since January this year and would now like to have this formalised by the AGM. I am passionate about the CLT and the work it does. I want to be part of an organisation that can improve the lives of people in the city by offering them an alternative to the insecure, expensive and often unhealthy living conditions found in the private rented sector.

I think I bring the following to the Board;

- My connections with the planning, housing and estates departments in the Council plus connections with councillors.
- Local land and property knowledge.
- Site finding and experience of guiding the process of building development / renovations.
- Green / sustainable building knowledge.
- Knowledge of the SEASALT house.

My other volunteering roles include;

Founder Member of Green Sea - a Brighton based collective of property and construction professionals, 2009 - present

Committee member and Vice Chair of Brighton and Hove Planning Agents Forum, 2000 - present

Wildlife Rescuer for WARS (Brighton and Hove Wildlife Advice and Rescue Service), July 2024 - present

Task Force member for Goodgym – a running and community group, June 2023 - present

Brighton and Hove Hockey Club captain, September 2022 - present

Sandie Burnett

After retiring some years ago, I moved to Hove to see more of my family. It's a great place to live but I was saddened by the number of homeless people and the incredibly high prices of both property and rental accommodation, so I felt if a chance came along to help make a difference to people's lives I would take it. That opportunity arose when I saw the notice seeking new directors of BHCLT and I hope you may consider me suitable for this role.

I have been involved in secondary schools for most of my working life, either as a teacher, a boarding house mistress or an alumnae co-ordinator, organising events and producing magazines. Back in the day I also worked as a bookkeeper and manager of a complementary health centre. All of these roles have required different skills which I could now bring to the Directors role...communication, numeracy, literacy, IT and organisational skills I think would be especially relevant.

I am very fortunate in that I now have time which I could devote to helping other people have a better life and a home of their own to live in.