

# THE GARDENERS REST COMMUNITY SOCIETY LTD



AGM RATIFICATION MEETING  
21 October 2023  
At the Gardeners Rest

## PRESENT

Dominic Rice  
James Crowe  
Janet Ridler  
John Stannard

Josette Knowles  
Kevin Bonnet  
Lawrence Whyte  
Mark Beckles Willson (chair)

Mark Ewerdine  
Maureen McCredie  
Pete Smith

## APOLOGIES

Andy Crowther  
Andy Parsons  
Dominic Ridler

Eleanor Stillman  
John Ashworth  
Richard Emery

Tim Stillman

## PRE MEETING NOTE

**The Chair explained that, under the Plunkett Foundations Model Rules for Community Ownership which are effectively the constitution of the Gardeners Rest, a quorum of 10% of the membership, ie 41 members, had to be present for the AGM to proceed in its usual form. The AGM held on 25 March 2023 was not quorate so this second meeting was required to ratify any decisions taken. The Model Rules state that the quorum for the second meeting is 'the number of Members present'.**

### 1 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 25 MARCH 2023

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 25 March 2023 were agreed as a true record.

### 2 ADOPTION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The meeting ratified the decision to adopt the annual accounts *nem con*.

### 3 ELECTIONS TO THE BOARD

The meeting ratified Paul Truin's re-appointment to the Board *nem con*.

The meeting ratified Andy Parsons and Lawrence Whyte's appointment to the Board *nem con*.

### 4 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS FOR THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR

The meeting ratified the decision to appoint CJ Woodhead as the Independent Examiner for the current financial year *nem con*.

## 5 SHARE INTEREST RATE FOR 2021-2022

The meeting ratified the decision to pay interest to members for the sixth year of the Society's operation at a rate of 1.75% for all investments *nem con*.

## 6 OTHER BUSINESS

### 6.1 Chair's report

Yesterday was another of those nervous ones. 48 hours ago, the Met Office was predicting higher levels at Lady's Bridge than we had in 2007 when the pub was completely flooded. Andy Crowther and I put out sandbags out for the second time this year and I spent the rest of the day nervously watching the river levels on line. Fortunately it didn't turn out as bad as originally predicted and we are still here and reasonably dry.

Andy Chaplin was a director for five years and is the guy we should thank most for getting us on an even keel financially. When I first got involved here, no one had any grasp on the finances of the business and we were effectively funding the operation of the pub with grant money which was intended for other purposes. Andy, a retired accountant, sorted all that out, put proper systems in place and is responsible as any individual for ensuring that we have a sustainable business. He also covered a lot of other bases, particularly on the HR front and had an intriguingly off the wall sense of humour. We all owe him a lot.

Going forward, Andy Parsons, who can't be with us today, has taken on the role of finance director. His partner Jaki Booth (the other half of Andy and Jaki) is also helping on the more technical side so we are well covered there, I think.

Looking to the future, I have some exciting news. As I am sure you all know, our manager Shaun is retiring. In fact, he had planned to retire at the end of September but has held on for a few weeks until we could appoint his successor – which we have now done. Chris Ludlam is joining us on Monday and will be taking over as licensee from then. Chris has been managing pubs for True North in Sheffield for some years but is keen to work in a more independent setting. I am looking forward to working with him as we take the Gardeners forward.

### 6.2 Finance report

See attached report.

### 6.3 Vote of thanks

A vote of thanks to the management board was proposed, seconded and passed *nem con*.

Mark Beckles Willson  
25 October 2023

# Gardeners Rest

## Financial Commentary

Presented to Gardeners Rest Community Society AGM October 2023

### Introduction

The figures below represent the confirmed and audited position from financial year 1 Oct 2021-30 Sept 2022 and the equivalent numbers for the year just ended 30 Sept 2023.

The most important message is that we have **maintained a sustainable financial position throughout that period and for the directly foreseeable future.**

We can be particularly proud of reducing our dependence on grant funding demonstrating the pub is capable of paying its own way and maintaining a good level of activity.

The full accounts financial year 2021-22 are available on the website.

### Income and Expenditure

The Board is very aware of substantial increases in major expenses as a result of inflation and other factors that have cut in as the year progressed. Inflationary increases in the cost of beer and other bar supplies, wage increases to meet the Real Living Wage, and energy costs as our long-term deal expires all present challenges now and for the future.

During the course of this year the Board was forced to increase prices to respond, but we have also been successful at reducing buying and overhead costs and this process will continue to make sure we are getting best value whilst maintaining quality and range on the bar.

We have re-introduced budgets, following the pandemic which made prediction impossible, these systems will be developed further, building on the more stable year which has just been completed.

### Balance Sheet

The balance sheet remains very strong with net current assets of c£70k supplemented by the value of the building which has a very modest book value of less than £300k. This supported by the pub's ongoing decent profitability confirms our strong and sustainable financial position.

### Risks and challenges

The pub has many strengths.

- A broad client base, confirmed by the recent survey work, a wide range of ages, frequency of visit and home bases with locals, long term clients and tourists all featuring strongly.
- Freehold premises and therefore no rent to pay and no rent inflation.
- A strong, committed and capable staff team.

There are risks and challenges to match:-

- Turnover must be threatened by ongoing inflation and the cost-of-living crisis as incomes are squeezed, people are likely to go out less often as an economy, we are therefore in a shrinking overall market.
- Our premises are a great strength but we need to invest consistently to maintain them at an excellent standard and reduce costs, especially energy costs.

- Paying good staff properly and investing in ongoing training is good business and aligns with our values but has a cost which also is call on our resources.
- Changes to the road layout round the pub may have an unpredictable effect on the pub's client base and turnover.

## Conclusion

The Gardeners Rest remains a remarkable success story and is highly financially successful, but it is important that we do not become complacent as there are real and substantial risks that confront us.

Our medium-term plan seeks to address those risks and opportunities. Our strong current financial position provides a good opportunity to fund those developments to ensure that the Gardeners Rest responds to the times but maintains the essential qualities that we love.

A Parsons, Director, 9 October 2023

## Financial Headlines

	<i>Confirmed and audited</i>		<i>Estimates (subject to change)</i>		
	<i>Prior year 2021-22</i>	<i>% of sales</i>	<i>This year 2022-23</i>	<i>% of sales</i>	
<b>TURNOVER ex VAT</b>	<b>325,960</b>		<b>363,361</b>		11% Increase in sales
Sales less Stock Purchases (GP%)	179,579	55%	200,113	55%	
Grant Income	10,243		105		
<b>Total income</b>	<b>189,822</b>		<b>200,218</b>		Income maintained
Wages	105,551	32.4%	114,717	31.6%	
Other cost of sales	18,478	5.7%	24,186	6.7%	Inflationary increase
<b>Operating Profit</b>	<b>65,793</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>61,315</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	
Other expenses	34,147	10.5%	31,138	8.6%	
Depreciation	7,193	2.2%	7,905	2.2%	
Shareholder interest	3,470	1.1%	3,470	1.0%	No decision yet taken on 22-23
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>44,810</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>42,513</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	
<b>Net profit Before tax</b>	<b>20,983</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>18,802</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	