ALFORD CORN EXCHANGE COMMUNITY GROUP
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT THE ALFORD CORN EXCHANGE 7.30PM FRIDAY 24th OCTOBER 2025

Present: N O'Farrell (Chairman), J Hynes (Vice-Chair), H Dewick-Eisele, J McHamilton, J Husband, M Vickers, N Calvert and A Taylor

In attendance: Andrew Hill, Janet Taylor, Joe Taylor, Chris Vickers, Cecile Large, Ronnie Robinson

J Hynes welcomed all those present

1. **To record attendance and receive apologies**
   Apologies were received from Lucy Laquaniello, Den Husband, Graham Hounslow, Neil Riley and Kate Walsh

2. **Approve the minutes of the previous AGM held on 25th October 2024**
   It was proposed, seconded and resolved that the minutes as presented be approved.

3. **Receive the annual audited accounts for the years ending 31st March 2025**
   Copies were made available to all present and noted. Thanks were given to Jenny Cooper for auditing the accounts and to Caroline Wheatley for preparing them and for providing book keeping services for free throughout the year.
   The accounts were approved
   It was noted that the accounts showed a profit this year of around £5,000

4. **Receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Update from the Chairman**
   Nick started by reading last year's minutes to familiarise himself. "It has been a good year at the Corn Exchange and the outlook going into the New Year is good." He was able to repeat that for this year.
   We have finally installed the new stage lighting and upgraded the sound which completes the renovation of the hall. We think are now justified in calling the Corn Exchange the premier function room of the area. We are attracting a growing number of musical events from folk to opera and varied theatrical evenings
   Thanks go to my fellow trustees, especially John, my vice-chairman for his continuous support. We have a great team but we can always find room for more and we may have two new Trustees joining us who will hopefully bring new ideas and fresh impetus.
   A big thank you to our team of volunteers. We wouldn't be here without them. A special thanks to Caroline Wheatley who is completing her first year as our bookkeeper
   We now have three members of staff. Paddy has settled in well as our caretaker and Andrew continues to prove he is indispensable.
   Apologies to anyone we have missed.

5. **Manager's Report**

   Every year since lockdown was lifted the hall has been getting more and more busy and this has been reflected in the accounts with a surplus of around £5,000 this year compared with a shortfall of around £700 last year. Part of this is thanks to fund raising including the Lincolnshire Day Lunch put on by Janet and the Craft Market cafes (of which we have four

next year)
Alongside this has been an increase in the variety of different event types for example sound baths and Jenna G, drag queen bingo. We have a number of regular bookings such as bingo, bowling and dance classes as well as a new youth theatre group.
There are also a number of events that are central to Alford such as the local elections, the National Grid consultations, and VE and VJ related events.
As mentioned we are also trying to increase the number of theatre and music events with the following taking place over the last year – the relaunch of the Acoustic Society with two events taking place so far, some Live & Local events, music events put on by Andrew Skinner (with the next one taking place tomorrow), Rhythm and Steel, Silver Band and Elizabethan Singers.
We are also focusing on having more events for the younger members of the community through our Youth Arts events.
This has enabled us to continue expenditure on the maintenance of the building as well as improvements such as a new back door, new signage at the front of the building, new stage lighting (thanks to the generosity of the NFU and a grant supported by East Lindsey) and a new sound system (thanks to the generosity of our line dancing social group).
We were recently paid a food hygiene visit and thanks to our volunteers, particularly Janet and Helen, we achieved a 5 rating.

6. **Retirement (and re-election) of one third of the trustees.**

John Hynes, election officer explained that as per the constitution 1/3 of the trustees were required to stand down. June Husband, Nick O'Farrell and Harry Dewick-Eisele retired as Trustees. It was proposed, seconded and resolved to accept their retirement. It was further proposed, seconded and unanimously voted that they be re-elected with Nick remaining as Chairman.
The remainder of the Trustees also confirmed that they we happy to remain as Trustees.
It was also noted that we have two new Trustees, Andy and Emma Carolan (their backgrounds have been placed on the chairs). As part of the AGM, we are seeking to find out if everyone is in favour and to invite them to the next Trustee meeting where they will hopefully be ratified, subject to DBS checks. The attendees of the meeting indicated that they were in favour of this.
This will bring the number of Trustees up to 12.

7. **Any other business appropriate for an AGM.**

A question was made from the floor around the closure of the Sessions House and the upcoming auction of their equipment, and whether it was worthwhile finding out if they had anything useful for the Corn Exchange. It was confirmed that this has been noted by the Corn Exchange and it was agreed that this would be worthwhile attending.

Harry made reference to the Acoustic Open Mic Nights which have recently been relaunched at the Corn Exchange. They have been going for around 26 years at the Half Moon until they stopped in January. The Corn Exchange have now taken these on and they have been really successful with around 40 attendees at the first event and around 70 at the second. Such has been the success that there have been challenges accommodating all artists over the 7.30pm to 11pm slot.

Everyone is welcome though for the first few months the timing is a bit irregular due to other events at the Corn Exchange.

Andy provided an update on the Live & Local events.
This is an arts council funded organization to back artists at a reduced rate. The main aim is to bring some good artists into Alford. We're not aiming at making a profit but aim to break even. During the year we have had The Tim Kliphuis Trio performing, for which we had some great feedback as well as Watson, a one man show put on by Tim Marriott.
As the calendar is so busy we just have one show for this season – Jack's Ashes – which is due next April.
It was also noted that Andrew Skinner has three excellent acts performing in the hall tomorrow.

The meeting ended by thanking everyone for coming out and everyone responsible for helping out at the hall; everyone is very passionate about the hall; it is a wonderful venue and with everyone's' help we can keep it going.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.56pm