

Lauriston Farm Limited Charitable Community Benefit Society
Sixth AGM Minutes
Sunday 18 June 2023 11am

1. Farm Prayer read by Odilia Kirst

2. Attendees and Apologies

Members present: Monika Curry (Chair), Jenny Chittenden (minutes), Alison Bond, Andre Kleinjans, Anne-Marie Sinclair, Chris Pudney, Christiane Mills, Colin Corbey, Gerhard Petri, Gilly Lutton, Guy van de Walle, Helen Hardwicke, Hilary Gallo, Jenny Wilson, Joanna Ellis, Jonny Aldridge, Katharina Baiter, Maike Windhorst, Martin Lutton, Monique Kleinjans, Odilia Kirst, Richard Adams, Richard Kleinjans, Rob King, Sandra Bond, Spencer Christy, Tracey Farthing-Clee & Ted

Non-members present: Adam Cohen, Josa Pepper, Karon Stubbs, Roy Hardwicke, Sarah Lutton, Steph Valentine

Apologies: Ann-Marie Briggs, Hazel Morgan, Jackie Barber, Jacky Hems, Jan Brown, Jon Scott, Karen Wallace, Malcolm Brown, Mike Turner, Miranda Welton, Naoya Tatsuzawa, Pat Willis, Roger Smith, Sue Berger, Susan Roche

3. Minutes of last AGM

- Acceptance of minutes proposed Spencer Christy, seconded Tracey Farthing-Clee and agreed by all present. The minutes were signed by Monika Curry

4. Receipt accounts and auditor's report for 2022-23 – Adam Cohen

- Turnover increased by c£32,000, produce increased by a greater percentage than services, having no covid restrictions had a positive impact
- Cost of sales comparable to last year
- Grants in line with last year. Harder to win grants this year as granting bodies have more calls on their funds
- Expenses up compared to last year. Wages the biggest increase which is to be expected as we employ more staff. Motor expenses also increased
- Overall profit £15,986, a fivefold increase on last year which is huge given the increases in the cost of living
- Good trading this year
- Acceptance of accounts proposed by Richard Adams, seconded by Maike Windhorst and agreed by all present

5. Appointment of independent examiner / auditor for 2023-24

- Appointment of Adam Cohen of Maynard Heady LLP proposed by Monika Curry, seconded by Helen Hardwicke and approved by all present

6. Farm Director's report

- The farm has a good team of staff, volunteers, interns, co-workers, college groups. Up to 40 people visit the farm each week. Everyone knows their jobs. Co-workers look after chickens and check sheep. Daniela came from Kent for her degree work placement and ending up

moving her boat and her degree to Essex. She has just started at Lauriston full time. She starts a biodynamic apprenticeship in September, the farm's first BD apprentice.

- Niels and Aaron went from Supported Interns to staff
- Our new ram Neville came from Devon, one of his great-great-great-grandmothers was born at Lauriston. There are lambs back on the farm after the oddity of not lambing in 2022
- New bull Diamond Oak, intelligent, gentle, six heifers in calf
- Grant income good including National Lottery (£3,000 per month), grants help with people we don't get funding for such as college groups. We've hit our NL funding targets
- Markets have reopened which is helping income
- Supplying Manningtree Wholefood Store
- Supported Interns are taught by a job coach which we provide as we found that job coaches from outside didn't know enough about our work or environment to do the job effectively
- There's been a pause and a change – we didn't make horn manure last year, the barn owl and the bees left, but things are returning now
- Kate left earlier this year to work on her family farm
- Jenny W is leaving. She started as a volunteer, became an employee and got us through the pandemic. The co-workers group brings amazing warmth. Jenny is currently handing over to two replacements who will do two days each. One of our co-workers presented Jenny with a gift from the farm
- A member asked about environmental stewardship. We've been doing this for 20 years through successive government funded schemes. We've currently part way through a five year programme and have recently signed up to the Landscape Recovery programme which is looking at the whole Blackwater coastline and working out how to join up habitats
- Our land will be moved to the Biodynamic Land Trust in due course. On the 85 acres we rent from Blackwater Wildfowling Association, they are paying to reinstate ditches and dykes as part of a long term plan. this is already pulling water from the fields into ditches. Lapwings and oystercatchers and love it and are nesting
- Recent RSPB survey looked right along the Essex coast for breeding waders. Lauriston had the second highest count of them in Essex. Farms that aren't open to public can have better wildlife count as undisturbed by visitors. BD work brings good atmosphere for animals and people.
- Working with the Camphill Alliance and the Association of Camphill Communities to progress the ambition to have a Camphill community at Lauriston
- Working with Willow Hall Farm (where we buy straw, chickens and feed) on their succession to their son. Their land has been BD for 20 years, we would like to help to keep it that way if we can
- Spencer was thanked for all his work

7. Farm staff reports

Jenny Wilson

- Thanked the co-workers for their contribution to the farm which helps in small important ways – doing rubbish, laundry, cleaning hen houses, egg processing from collection to ready for sale
- Tuesdays are now a craft day working with cleaning, carding and dyeing our wool with our experienced volunteer Lois who brings enthusiasm and knowledge
- Lauriston won the Ashford International Textile Award for 2023 giving us NZ\$5000 to spend on Ashford spinning and weaving kit to expand our crafts. Jenny thanked Lois and Jenny C for their work preparing our entry

- Good that chickens have been released from their bird flu confinement, also good to have lambs on the farm again
- Thanked everyone for her time at Lauriston which she feels privileged to have been part of, it's a brilliant project which shines out and deserves to thrive. Keep shining

Monique Kleinjans

- Last year was very dry followed by a wet spring this year
- Produced seed for the Seed Coop
- New staff Niels and Daniella started
- Ploughed and harrowed a large area of the garden
- Second polytunnel went up after long delay from covid
- Grateful to all our volunteers who make the work lighter and more fun

Steph Valentine

- Sales going well including Manningtree Wholefoods and Farm Direct
- New refill store near Colchester also getting us veg bag customers
- Worked on marketing and updating our website, thanked Jenny C for her help with this
- Veg bags ran well last year, hoping for more this year, hubs help and we work well with Manningtree and Maldon wholefood shops
- Steph now job sharing with Hannah, energy of new person coming in is great
- Farm is special because people are excited about the atmosphere

8. Elections to the Board

- Phil Culley has resigned as a trustee, Phil works at Thornage Hall and brought good knowledge and experience to the board
- Richard Adams was co-opted onto the board in December. Richard lives in Maldon, he plants trees and manages woodlands, mainly in Suffolk. He's enjoyed his first few months on the board and hopes to continue helping the Society
- Richard proposed by Helen Hardwicke, seconded by Christiane Mills and duly elected

9. Any other business

- Moni closed the meeting with thanks to everyone for their work and support

Signed:

Date: