

Sustainable Arnside
Minutes of AGM 17 September 2025



1. **Welcome from the Chairman** – Paul Bates warmly welcomed all those present at our AGM. Those present were Paul Bates, Helen Thompson, Dan Lucy-Lloyd, Rachel Dutfield, Alison Sandford, Alistair McKinnon, Val Stevens, Liz Bolton, Martin Metcalfe, Anne-Marie O'Neill, Ann Kitchen, Janet Talbot, Sue Gibbs, Vivien Mautner, Mary Hamilton, Sue Weldon, Bill Grayson, Cath Grayson, Claire Philpott, Michelle Bates, Helen Chaffey, Moira Greenhalgh and Edith Brunswick.
2. **Apologies** - were received from Steve Porter, Nick Pearce, Tim Tranter and Rebecca Ladell.

We had a last minute guest from National Landscapes, Caz Howard, who came to the meeting to explain about the **Sustainability Conference** which is being held in the EI on the **15th of November**, all day. The conference is being headed by NL and the Bittern Trust CCIC. Different groups, involved with sustainability, will be attending and Caz is asking if Sustainable Arnside would also like to get involved. The idea behind the conference is that the different groups and organisations will become more aware of one another and as a result, have a more joined up approach. There will be talks in the morning and workshops in the afternoon. PB suggested that SA would be interested in giving a talk and/or providing a workshop. We will talk about this in more detail at our next meeting on the 15th of Oct.

3. **The Chair's Report** – **PB** spoke about the group's identity, our aims, what we have done so far in particular this year, plus what we are planning to do next. To see the detail of what was said, the PowerPoint slides will be attached in the email with these minutes.
- **Thermal Heat Imaging** – **DLL** suggested that the number of homes already surveyed with the thermal heat imaging camera, was significant. **BG** asked if we currently ask for feedback from our clients. **PB** answered no, not yet. Also he said that the client fills in a form to describe the spaces being surveyed, while the survey is being done. This way they are able to recognise the rooms shown in the survey. **DLL** asked if we had found a method of knowing what changes had been made as a result of the survey. He pointed out that feedback about any progress, as a result of our surveys, would look good and be very helpful for interested viewers on the website.
 - **Repair Cafe** – **AS** gave some statistics about the repairs with 75% of items fixed, 10% needing another expert and the rest being unfixable. She pointed out that sometimes a client just needs to know from someone with more expertise, that the item needs to be thrown out. **PB** praised the success of the RC which offers Arnside a great service and has a friendly and cheerful atmosphere. **HT** pointed out that sometimes a client leaves the RC with the name of a spare part that can be ordered online. The item is then brought back for repair later.
 - **Big Green Well-being Week** – As stated in the title, the event was a week long and included many different activities. These included talks on Community Composting, Growing Well at Sizergh Barn, a Swift Walk and Talk, Clothes Swap, Well-being Dance and Movement, Fabric and Yarn Swap, Plant and Produce Swap,

Young Peoples Craft Workshop based on Moths and 'Dark Skies' followed by a Nature Trail and Self-guided walks through Ashmeadow for families. The finale was at the end of the week on the 14th of June in the WI Hall and the EI. Here all the different groups in Arnside gathered together to celebrate what they do in the village and to share and swap ideas, the atmosphere was buzzing, with Jazz Offline at the Sailing Club in the evening. Prior to the event, leaflets were handed out to every household in Arnside explaining what we do to help residents in the village. This, along with the posters and social media posts, has raised the profile of Sustainable Arnside.

- **Water Butts (United Utilities)** – **PB** reported that after a tip off from a resident in the village, we applied to United Utilities for a grant of up to £2500 for water butts. The water butts come in 3 different sizes, 100l 200l and 270l. After receiving approval from UU, we opened up the offer to our members and had a hugely positive response. The water butts have been ordered and we are now waiting their arrival. UU have agreed to send just 6 first as a test run. Storage for the water butts will be at the cemetery chapel (behind the building), agreed by the APC and on some land at NL by the station. **HT** said how grateful SA are for the help of the APC and NL and that it was great to see the village working well together on this project. After contacting UU recently they have explained that they are still waiting for approval of the application. **VS** asked if the water butts came with fixings for the drainpipe? The answer is yes although we can't be sure it will be perfect in every case.
- 4. **Treasurers Report** – **RD** reported back on our current financial situation. Her report will be attached in the email with these minutes. **RD** spoke of how we only have one account but that in her report it is broken up in different sections to account for the different grants we have been awarded. She explained that the account had been independently examined. **MH** asked about the amount of donations that seemed to be significant. **RD** explained that we had made some money at the Jazz Offline event plus people have been generous at the different events we have held such as the Big Green Well-being Week. Often when people pay their subs of £18, they give an extra £2. These small donations all add up and have made a difference. The Repair Cafe donations are kept separate and will be used for upcoming expenditure at the RC. **DLL** asked if there was any pressure to spend the money such as the Community Grant 25, given by Future Proof (CCGM25) to help us set up the website. **PB** explained that this money had only partly been spent and some decisions now need to be made as to the best way to fulfil the grants requirements. There is a deadline from Future Proof of 15 Nov 25. **VS** asked what 'Services' meant in the report. **RD** explained that it was the design work and printing we had done for our logo, posters, banners and leaflets. As we are now getting very close to having a turnover of over £5000, we are legally obliged to report to the Charity Commission. Although we can remain an Unincorporated Association, we may want to revisit whether we become a charity or a CIC. In addition, our bank, Santander, have said that they will charge us over £60 a year if we don't change to a charity or CIC. **VS** and **AK** said that being a charity required extra reporting and could be quite restrictive. A CIC gives advantages while not being so restrictive. The Bittern Trust have become a CIC for those reasons. **PB** said that we could discuss this at the Sustainability Conference and discuss at our next meeting.

5. **SA Focus for 2025-26** – The notes, written by **PB**, for this section are attached to this email. Here are the items discussed during the meeting.
 - **Website Development** – We agreed that this was an important focus for the year. Our website is now up and running, it just needs more content. We have plans to add case studies that detail personal experiences of installing solar panels or heat pumps and the purchases of electric cars. News items of interest and links to websites. There is a lot of potential to engage the public in climate change by using our website.
 - **Youth Program** – **PB** - We have already made some links with Arnside primary school and the Youth Group. We feel that engaging with the youth in our village is important. **HC** said that we should invite Carla Hartropp from the ECO Club at school, to give a short talk about what they are doing in the club. **AK** suggested that we could take the Thermal Heat Camera into school. **CG** has made connections with the Youth Group leader and says that we could go into sessions there. The youth leaders would be keen on her opinion. **HT** suggested that we could go into sessions, perhaps once a month. **JH** added that Brownies should be contacted as well, they most probably do an Eco badge. **DLL** suggested keeping in touch with FOANS (Friends of Arnside School).
 - **Business in Arnside (Big Green Week)** – **PB** – another focus for next year could be to connect with businesses in the area, helping them to make positive changes for the environment however small. The changes would help them lower their carbon output and their expenditure as well. **HC** said that we should move forward with sensitivity in this area, it is important that businesses don't feel targeted. We could look more holistically at the village and include groups, clubs and other organisation as well.
 - In addition to the proposed planned focus for next year, it was noted that **HC** would like more people to engage with the wild flower growing. Perhaps SA could help to expand that program. **DLL** is concerned about the infrastructure in and around Arnside, in particular, transport is a concern. W&F council has some progressive ideas and it is important to make sure Arnside doesn't miss out. **HC** said she could set up a speaker from W&F to give us a talk regarding transport.
6. **Plant Produce and Seed Swap 20th Sept** - **HT** – everything is now in place for this event. We have a timetable for helpers, and a big thank you to everyone who has or will help on the day. Home-made cakes are required for the Fair Trade team who are helping us in the kitchen. It is a great event for celebrating the season. This year there is so much fruit around, in Ashmeadow and in all the gardens and hedgerows. We have **Eddie Albert** coming to the event to display some of the apples he grows in his own orchard, he grows over 100 varieties and has a significant amount of knowledge about them all. Next Year it is the plan to have an **Apple Day in September**, where SA, the Barnes Trust and National Landscapes will get together. **Eddie Albert** has also promised to get involved, he has helped to run Apple Days before and he has an Apple Press of his own. The Plant Swap will run on the same day alongside.
7. **Water Testing in the Kent Estuary** – **MH** gave a presentation to the group to explain what the water testing group have been doing, what they have achieved and discussed. The presentation is attached to the email with these minutes. It was explained that there are a lot of difficulties when trying to test the water in the

estuary but also lots that can be done. It was felt that we could have a link on the website to an interactive map, showing the recent sewage discharges. These are especially apparent after heavy rain.

8. **The Great Big Green Week 2026 – advance planning and ideas** – PB praised the success of the Big Green Well-being week which had certainly raised the profile of SA. We might plan a smaller event or program for 2026 as it had really been an extraordinary amount of work to organise which was on the shoulders of 4 people. Next year the national event is from the 6th - 14th of June. SA proposes to focus on the businesses in Arnside and it would be great if we could launch our previous idea of having a kite mark for business and organisations to display when they have achieved certain goals regarding carbon reduction. Ideas could be shared. **BG** asked what their perception of sustainability might be? **VS** said that we should look at public transport. **DLL** suggested a conversation with National Rail. **DLL** emphasised that it wasn't about shaming anyone but discussing about how SA might help them navigate the changes that need to be made. **AS** suggested that the website would be good for sharing advice. **JH** said we should include Helpways when discussing transport in the village as they were such an asset. **HC** said that it should be bigger than just businesses. It should include all organisations and groups as well. **DLL** asked, what assets are available to residents, we should help to spread the word? **HC** asked, beyond households, who else can we help?
9. **Election of Committee 2025-2026** – **PB** was pleased to tell the meeting that all committee members wanted to remain. **VS** proposed in favour, **AK** seconded and the Committee was re-elected for a further year.
10. **Closing Remarks** – **PB** closed the meeting by thanking everyone for coming to the meeting.

Things to Action

1. **HT** to finalise everything for the Plant and Produce swap on the 20th of September.
2. **PB** and committee to decide on talk or workshop for Sustainability Conference.
3. **HT and CG** to discuss possible Youth Program at Sustainability Conference and make some plans for the year.
4. **HT** contact everyone on the Community Composting list to inform about Tom Phillips's suggestion.
5. **PB** to liaise with DLL and AM about website training.
6. **PB** to complete report for Community Grant 25 from Future Proof for development of website.
7. **PB and Committee**, follow up the idea of our group becoming a CIC or Charity.
8. We focus, as a **whole group**, on getting content onto our website.
9. **HC** contact W&F to ask if SA could have a speaker from the council to talk about public transport in our area and opportunities available to us.
10. Looking forward to The Great Big Green Week, we focus as a **whole group** on formulating a plan to work with businesses, clubs and organisations.

The next meetings are on the 15th October, 19th November and then on the 17th December.