

THE BUCKSTONE ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE 45TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 11TH MARCH 2025
AT BUCKSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welcome to the annual general meeting of the Buckstone Association. Thank you all for coming, it is very much appreciated. I would also like to welcome any new members to the meeting who have moved into Buckstone in the last year and to any members who have joined us this evening for the first time.

I am Kim Coates, Chair, and I'd like to introduce other committee members present this evening: George Symonds, Secretary; Lindsay Walls, Treasurer and the other committee members: Kenny Page, Dorothy Brydon, Angela Brodie and Albert Muckley.

Barbara Dick, our administrator, will be taking the minutes of the meeting.

I hope everyone has picked up a copy of the projected Budget for 2025.

I would like to remind everyone that there is only one vote per household, so if there is more than one person from a single house you will have to decide between you who should vote. If there are any comments from the floor during the meeting, please give your name and address.

1. Firstly, Apologies for absence – Mr. Dickson, Mounthooly Loan, Mrs Selby, Buckstone Loan, Mr Morrison, Buckstone Place, Mr Ralph, Buckstone Place and Mrs Maudsley, Buckstone Loan.
2. Minutes of 44th AGM for approval. The minutes have been available on our website and a summary is on page 9 of the Annual Report. The Chairman asked if there were any comments to be made; none forthcoming. Approved.

3. Annual Report

MIB Services are contracted to cut the grass on a weekly basis during the months of June, July and August and at the beginning and end of the season the grass is cut every 10 days or so. We feel that this practice works extremely well, and the contractor will continue to do this in the coming year.

Greaves Gardening continue to attend to the flower beds on the estate on a monthly basis from March to October and we are happy to continue with this service. They also did work for us on trimming the shrubbed areas at various amenity areas.

The trees at The Knoll and the woodland behind Buckstone Place have a Tree Preservation Order on them and we have to seek permission from the Council if any work requires to be done on them.

A pine tree on The Knoll was felled in October and some damage was done due to the two big storms in November and January. We hope to have all debris cleared by our contractors this month.

Every three years we get a Tree Survey done on all the trees on the estate. This will take place in June this year, when the trees are in leaf. All trees under a Tree Preservation Order will be tagged and recorded, as it is nearly 20 years since this was done previously.

The amenity areas are for the enjoyment of all, and we would ask that all members ensure that if their children want space to play, they do so at the park or the field and in particular not to play football or other ball games on amenity areas, especially if the children are over the age of 7. We would like to ask the members present if we can continue with this ruling. All agreed.

We have been seeking legal advice on updating the constitution, which was last done in 2005, to bring it more up to date with various procedures that are in place, to ensure the smooth running of the Association. For this reason, there is a higher than usual legal cost for the coming year.

Administration

There were 7 assessments outstanding for 2024 and so those members will be asked to pay £50 this year as well as this year's assessment. We are also chasing members who paid after 31st July for late payment fees. 7 members paid between 1st and 21st August but did not include the late payment charge. However, 3 other members paid in October, and they paid all the late payment charges due. We stipulate in every letter to members that late payment charges will be added to the assessment if it's not paid on time. Two members who failed to pay in 2023 and 2024 will be served through Simple Procedures to recover the £100 debt along with any legal costs that arise.

The Chair asked if there were any comments or questions relating to the Annual Report. None forthcoming.

4. Treasurers Report and Approval of Accounts for 2024

The accounts for the year to 31 December 2024 are given in the Annual Report, and our surplus is now just over £11,000. Two thirds of this amount is approximately the cost of our outgoings in the first three months of the year, so that will cover us until the assessments become due.

Does anyone have any questions/comments? None forthcoming, so the Chair then asked that the Accounts for 2025 be approved. All agreed.

5. Appointment of Charlotte Tucker at Prime Numbers to review the accounts.

We would again like to appoint Prime Numbers to review this year's accounts. Proposed and Seconded by the Committee. All agreed.

Assessment for 2025

Copies of the 2025 budget were distributed on arrival. The net cost per member is £29.55 however with the surplus we have, we again propose to set the assessment at £25 this year. The Chair asked if anyone had any comments in relation to the budget for this year; none forthcoming.

So motion 6. is:

"That the assessment for 2025 be set at £25.00 (twenty five pounds) per house payable by the owner at 1st April 2025." Proposed and Seconded by the Committee. All agreed.

7. I would like to bring your attention to the "late/non-payers" list in the AGM Notice. On this list we put in those properties whose owners have failed to pay on time. So Motion 11 is:

"That this meeting instructs the Committee to publish with the Annual Report in March 2026, a list of those assessments for 2025 not paid by 31st December 2025."

The motion is proposed and seconded by the Committee. All agreed.

Our next motion is in relation to those members who do not pay their assessment on time and within a reasonable period. This motion was brought in 2012 to try to encourage owners to pay on time, as then there were often about 30 members on the list.

We issue the Assessment Notice in March to all properties and a reminder to those that have not paid by the end of May and then a final demand in mid-July. Sometimes members may get a further reminder letter in October. However, if an owner is known to be a consistent late payer, then no further communication will be forthcoming after the July final demand. If payment has not been received by 1st August (and there always seems to be some ambiguity on this, so the Assessment Notice will state 31st July) then as from 1st August the late payment charge of £5 per month or part thereof will become due.

So, motion 8. is "That this meeting agrees that non-payment of the assessment by 31st July 2024 will incur an additional fee of £5 per month or part thereof until settlement is made. Any legal costs incurred will be additional to that sum." Proposed and Seconded by the Committee. All agreed.

Moving on to motions 9, and 10. We come on to the appointment of the committee and office bearers.

Those present are happy to continue in their roles on the committee, although I would like to ask for one new committee member to volunteer their services and come and join us, so that one of the current committee members can step down. The committee meet about 5/6 times a year. Many of us have been on the committee for quite some time and it is important for the future of the Buckstone Association that we have a team on the committee that are invested in our neighbourhood and community.

Can we please ask for the meeting's approval to appoint the office bearers and the committee members? All agreed.

11. Motion: “That this meeting authorises the Committee to pay each Committee Member an attendance allowance of £25 to attend Buckstone Association Committee Meetings – the amount to be set annually at the AGM”. Proposed and Seconded by the Committee. All agreed.

12. We never take on the option of taking members to Court lightly but some members insist on not paying unless forced to do so. The Committee still feels that any precedent where payment is avoided could mean many on the estate not paying. A judgement against any member for not paying is recorded for several years and will reflect their credit rating.

We still however need the Authority from the AGM to pursue claims even though the cost may exceed the amount recovered.

So, the motion is:

"That this meeting authorises the Committee to follow such procedures as they consider necessary to ensure that all members pay the assessment including raising such action in court through Simple Procedures, regardless of the fact that the cost may exceed the amount recoverable." Proposed and seconded by the committee. All agreed.

13. “Those members attending an AGM which fails to have a quorum will be eligible for a discount off the assessment of £25”. There are 898 members in the Buckstone Association and yet this evening, we only have 34 members present, including those on the committee, so that’s just under 4% of the membership.

A couple of years ago we felt that if 24 members turned up and we could not hold the meeting, then they should be rewarded for their effort. This Motion is proposed and seconded by the Committee. All agreed.

14. Any Other Business

Two members present brought up the issue of the planters installed in Buckstone Loan East (to prevent all traffic) and Buckstone Circle (to curtail traffic at certain times) that had been installed in February 2021. There had been no consultation with residents from the Council at any time and although they had been installed at the time of the Covid 19 pandemic as part of an “Emergency Road Traffic Order”, they now seemed to be a permanent fixture, which is not what residents wanted. The Administrator explained that this issue should be raised at a forthcoming Fairmilehead Community Council meeting.

This brings us to the conclusion of the AGM and I would again like to thank everyone for coming.

Meeting ended 7.50pm