



Minutes of the Newtown Residents Association Annual General Meeting Part One - 15 September 2025

7.30pm St Thomas's Church Community Lounge, 200 Riddiford St.

Present: Rhona Carson (Chair), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Cheryl Robilliard, Kevin Lethbridge, Don McDonald, Eleanor Carr, Tom Law, Merio Marsters, Kerry Finnegan, Jane Patterson, Hilary Watson, David Jenkins, Andrew Wilson, Warwick Taylor, Robin Payne, Tolis Papazoglou, Penny Sturgess, Michelle Wolland.

Apologies: Sam Somers, Marion Leighton, Leonie Walker, Daphne Pillar, Keith Powell, Martin Hanley, Graeme Carroll, Jan Gould, Jane Kichenman, Kassie McCluskey, Stephen Pritchard, DM Laurie Foon.

Laurie Foon: Passed on her thanks and congratulations for the running of the candidates debates

AGM

Minutes of last year's meeting were taken as read: That the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record. Steve Cosgrove / David Jenkins. Carried.

Matters arising: Last year the Association ran several events for the Wellington Heritage Festival. Rhona commented that the Festival is on again this year, from 18th October till 9th November. Paul Forrest is doing another walk and talk about the Town Belt, and the Association is putting on photo exhibitions at the 24/7 Gallery and at SubCulture - the refurbished Electricity Substation.

President's Report: Rhona reflected on some of the items she has documented in her report.

- The Owen St Park has been redeveloped and is now open
- Development of the Newtown Consortium
- Parking plans that have been implemented
- Carrara Park toilets have been agreed - Don noted the need to be maintained carefully
- Newtown's recognition at the Wellington Awards Evening
- Wellington South Community support groups (and Regional meetings)
- Thanks to the wide range of people who have worked to support Newtown community, which together builds a collective of people supporting the suburb.

Warwick Taylor/Steve Cosgrove: That this meeting accepts the report and thanks Rhona for her contribution to the Association during 10 years as Association President. Carried by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Sam Somers has not been able to complete the Treasurers Report, so this will be presented next month.

In summary:

- We have over \$2000 in the current account
- We have had few expenses
- The income includes significant donations from members
- We have a reasonable interest income from the term investment

Election of Officers:

President: Merio Marsters - Nominated Rhona/Steve - elected unopposed.

Vice Presidents: No nominations. (Jane indicated that she does not want to stand as Vice President)

Immediate Past President: Rhona Carson ex officio

Secretary: Rhona Carson: - Nominated Dave/Jane

Treasurer: Sam Somers: - Rhona/Michelle

Executive: Martin Hanley: (Rhona explained that while Martin doesn't often attend meetings, he contributes a lot in other ways and is administrator for the Association online banking) Rhona/Robin;

Steve Cosgrove: Dave/Hilary; Marion Leighton: Rhona/Steve C; Hilary Watson: Rhona/Jane; Steve Dunn: Rhona/Jane; Carol Comber: Hilary/Rhona; Andrew Wilson: Rhona/Steve C.

The nominees for all positions were elected unopposed. (**see below for an update*).

Other business:

Constitutional changes.

Rhona noted that the new draft constitution hadn't yet been circulated to members, and Stephen Pritchard who drafted it wasn't able to be at the meeting, so this item should be discussed and voted on an adjourned AGM on 20th October.

There are some issues to consider -

The Common Seal. The Association has a common seal (i.e. a rubber stamp containing the society's name used to formalize and demonstrate commitment to legal documents and contracts). This is optional under the new rules, but if a society chooses to have one, its constitution must outline how and when the seal is used, and who is responsible for its custody and affixing it to documents. It has been written into the new constitution, but it is something members can decide.

Voting by Proxy. The draft constitution includes permission for written Proxies to be used for voting at General Meetings. Rhona has reservations about this. Our Association rarely has the need for a contested vote, decisions usually being made by consensus. If we did have a vote it would probably be about an important and contentious issue. The person whose vote is being cast by proxy wouldn't be at the meeting to participate in the debate. There is the potential for proxies to be misused to stack the vote in a particular direction. Tom mentioned that this happened in Kāpiti a few years ago. The meeting agreed, but this can be debated further before a decision is made.

The draft rules do allow for remote attendance at a meeting.

Moved Tom Law, seconded David Jenkins: That the Annual General Meeting be adjourned until 20 October to complete the AGM agenda. Carried.

The AGM was adjourned at 8:17, to be reconvened on 20 October.

**After the AGM it was realised that Jane Patterson had inadvertently been left out of those nominated for the Executive. Also, Stephen Pritchard, the Executive member responsible for drafting the new constitution, was unable to be at the meeting but subsequently agreed to continue on the Executive. Jane and Stephen were both co-opted as members of the 2025-26 Executive.*

Minutes of the Newtown Residents Association Annual General Meeting

Part Two – 20 October 2025

7.30pm St Thomas's Church Community Lounge, 200 Riddiford St.

Present: Merio Marsters (Chair), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Rhona Carson (Secretary), Kassie McLuskie, Sam Somers (Treasurer), Andrew Wilson, Penny Sturgess, Michelle Wolland, Daphne Pilaar, Keith Powell, Eleanor Carr, Kerry Finnigan, Hilary Watson, Carol Comber, Lainey Cowan, Gavin Jolly, Stephen Pritchard, Adam Awad.

Apologies: Warwick Taylor, Sam Chandler, Steve Dunn, Martin Hanley, Jane Patterson, David Jenkins, Cr Laurie Foon.

Merio Marsters opened the meeting and noted that it is her first full meeting as President.

Resumed Annual General Meeting

The 2025 AGM on September 15th received the President's Report and elected the Officers of the Association, then was adjourned until this October meeting.

Treasurer's Report and presentation of accounts for 1 July 2024- 30 June 2025.

Treasurer Sam Somers presented the Income and Expenditure and the Statement of Financial Position.

It was noted that previous prudent spending by the Association has resulted in us having a term deposit which provides a significant addition to our income by way of interest.

Moved: Sam Somers, Second: Steve Cosgrove - That we accept the Treasurers Report.

Motion Carried - with thanks to Sam.

Sam then moved a series of motions about the operation of the Newtown Residents' Association bank accounts.

Background, outlined at the meeting by Sam and Rhona.

The people who have been making payments from the Association accounts in recent years are Rhona Carson, Martin Hanley, Jane Patterson and Michelle Wolland. We now want to add Sam Somers and Merio Marsters, and remove Michelle as she isn't currently an executive member.

Sam was elected Treasurer at the 2024 AGM, then filled in the necessary Westpac Making Changes to Accounts form, got it signed by Rhona Carson and Peter Frater (the designated account holders) and went to the bank to sign up as a signatory to the Association bank accounts. He found that Peter Frater's ID was out of date, and because Peter was in a poor state of health and no longer on the association executive it was unrealistic to update this and reinstall him as an account holder.

Sam discovered that the beneficial owners/account holders were Claire Pettigrew, Peter Frater and Rhona Carson, and no one else was able to approve him to be a signatory. This dates from 2014 when Peter was Treasurer, Claire was elected Association President, and Rhona was elected Secretary. However we hadn't previously realised that these people had been given greater authority over the accounts than other signatories. Account holders are the only people with authority to approve new signatories.

Most of the Association banking is done online, and the Business Online process is different again. For online banking the people who manage the Business Online access of the other users are called Administrators. Martin Hanley and Peter Frater were both Administrators, but now Martin is the only one. We have a 'Dual Administration' rule, which means that two administrators are required to approve new Authorisers, i.e. people who can authorise payments from the accounts. As we only have one administrator it is impossible at present to give Sam, and now Merio as the new President, the authority to use online banking on behalf of the Association.

The following motions are designed to approve a series of new roles for managing the accounts, which we can then take to the bank.

- Motion to reset all signature authorities on the Newtown Residents' Association Westpac Business One Account - **Moved: Carol Comber, Second: Michelle Wolland**
- Removal of Peter Frater and Claire Pettigrew from NRA accounts - **Moved: Carol Comber, Second: Michelle Wolland**
- Remove Michelle Wolland as past Treasurer from being an Authoriser of Transactions (Michelle is no longer on the executive) - **Moved: Carol Comber, Second: Steve Cosgrove**
- Retain Martin Hanley as Business Manager (Administrator) on the accounts for online banking and add Rhona Carson, Sam Somers, Merio Marsters and Jane Patterson as addition online banking Administrators - **Moved: Keith Powell, Second: Kassie McKluskie**
- Motion to appoint Sam Somers (Treasurer) and Merio Marsters (Current President) and Martin Hanley as beneficial owners / account holders of Newtown Residents' Association accounts
(*Each appointment to have a separate move and second)
 - Sam Somers: **Moved: Kerry Finnigan, Second: Daphne Pilaar**
 - Merio Marsters: **Moved: Hilary Watson, Second: Keith Powell**
 - Martin Hanley: **Moved: Keith Powell, Second: Michelle Wolland**
- Appoint or confirm Sam Somers, Merio Marsters, Rhona Carson, Jane Patterson and Martin Hanley as signatories to Newtown Residents' Association accounts - **Moved: Kerry Finnigan, Second: Hilary Watson**

All Motions were Carried

It was noted that the terms used in our draft constitution (clause 27) with regard to payments were not consistent with the terms used by the bank. This will be changed for consistency. The overall object of the clause remains the same.

Review of Constitution changes, as required by the Incorporated Societies Act 2022.

The proposed new constitution was circulated in the Newsletter on 17 Oct 2025.

- It was agreed that we will retain the suggested wording to give executive members control over admitting members.

- There was much discussion about the number of executive members, as defined in clause 23. “The Executive will consist of at least 3 Officers and no more than 9 Officers.” The wording of this needs refining to make it consistent with the list of officers later in that clause – a) President b) Up to three Vice-President c) A Secretary d) A Treasurer e) The immediate Past President f) Up to nine members elected at the Annual General Meeting. This brings the potential number of officers to 16. There was discussion about the pros and cons of having such a large executive. However as these Executive positions have been in our current constitution for a long time and were the basis of our elections at the earlier part of this AGM so it was agreed to continue it for now. There can be further discussion and possible amendments in the future.
- Clause 12 has an erroneous reference to ‘committee’ which should be ‘executive’.
- After discussion about whether to allow proxy votes Rhona Carson /Steve Cosgrove moved -The constitution will not allow proxy votes. Carried

Keith Powell /Steve Cosgrove moved - That this meeting thanks Stephen Pritchard and others who have worked on the constitution. Carried by acclamation.

Rhona Carson /Adam Awad moved -That this constitution, with the wording changes as discussed, should be processed as required. Carried

The Adjourned AGM was concluded at this point and we moved on to the October Meeting business.
