Annual General Meeting -8 September 2025

1. Introduction

The Annual General Meeting was held on-line on Monday 8 September 2025. The meeting was facilitated by Jackie Littlewood of ABCUL and started at 1 p.m. There were 22 members present at the start of the meeting raising to 38 during the meeting itself. The meeting was thus quorate as it was above the minimum of 15 members.

Due to technical difficulties the Chair, Philip Turnbull, was delayed in logging on, and the meeting was initially opened by The Acorn Chief Executive, Clive Henly who presented the agenda.

2. Minutes of the previous member meetings

Philip Turnbull took over after this and explained that he would like to start by paying tribute to our previous Chair Nick Gallop, who continues as an active the Board, and is up for re-election today. Over several previous years' Nick was instrumental in putting Acorn on a growth and profitability path and professionalising the work of the Board.

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 12 September 2024, and the Special General Meeting held on 22 May, had been placed on the website for members to view and were also available to download via the Webinar app for those attending the meeting. The minutes were both agreed as a correct record - 73% in favour and 26% abstaining as not present for the meetings.

Concerning the questions and concerns raised at the end of the 2024 meeting; the new smartphone app was now in place; member communications and cyber-security were being addressed and would be covered by the later presentation by the Chief Executive.

3. Annual Report and accounts - April 2024 to March 2025

Philip Turnbull summarised the year as one of mixed results and of consolidation, following the two mergers which took place in 2023. On the plus side we saw: a growth of our active membership; an improved capital ratio, and several new initiatives to improve our services to members. However, this was offset by: increases in bad debts; and no growth in our net loan book or savings/shares.

The end result was a disappointing financial surplus of only £12,000; limiting the amount we can return to members in dividends.

Details from Annual Report and Accounts for the period April 2024 to March 2025 were then presented the Chief Executive, Clive Henly. He also updated the meeting on new initiatives being put in place for the current financial year. Details of his presentation are shown in the slides annexed to these minutes.

Key points of note included:

- Growth in the numbers of active members engaging with savings and loans on a regular basis.

- Improvements to our savings and loan products and our services to members, including a new website and a new smartphone App.
- An expanded staff team to ensure a continuing high-quality service to members.
- A new grant funded Financial Inclusion Project based in Salisbury and providing face to face financial help and guidance to vulnerable people referred to the service by partner organisations
- Further improved member services during the current year including the facility to pay cash into Acorn accounts via “PayPoint” terminals in local shops.
- The planned merger with Connection Credit Union.

4. Dividend

The Chair explained that the Board recommendation for a dividend of 0.25% of savings was less than we would like to give back to members; but was constrained by the regulatory maximum of 80% of any financial surplus.

The proposed dividend was agreed by members with 94% voting in favour.

5. External auditor

Lindley Adams our existing external auditor was proposed for re-appointment for the current financial year – this was agreed by 97% of members voting.

6. Changes to our Common Bond Rule.

At the Special General Meeting held in May we approved a new common bond to cover our planned merger with Connection Credit Union. Unfortunately, the Financial Conduct Authority have advised that this now needs to be corrected and replaced to conform with the correct names of the companies associated with Tyco Electronics (UK) Ltd.

The new wording now proposed is:

- Any individual who is employed by Tyco Electronics UK Ltd or Seacon (Europe) Limited.
- An individual who is associated with other members through receiving a pension from the following employer - Tyco Electronics UK Pension Plan.

This change of wording was agreed by 100% of members voting.

6. New directors

The following previously elected directors would therefore continue in post to see out their three-year term:

- Philip Turnbull (elected in 2023)
- Sue Gurney (elected in 2023)
- Chris Pollard (elected in 2024)
- Neil Cosburn (elected in 2024)
- Gael Decoudou (elected in 2024)

One existing Director, Nick Gallop, has served out his three-year term but wishes to stand for re-election. The percentage of members voting yes was 100%

The following Directors, co-opted by the Board during the year, are now proposed for election by the membership (percentage of members voting yes shown in brackets):

- Richard Laval – Previously a housing association board member for 14 years and chair for 10 years. Professional and business experience at Management and Director level in the IT/Networking and Cyber security sectors (100%).

- Diane Hockley – Has extensive experience as a trustee with Epilepsy Action and Mediation Buckinghamshire. She was a previous board member and volunteer for Aylesbury Credit Union, prior to its merger with Swan (and now Acorn) (97%).

- Robert Coxhead – An existing Director of Connection Credit Union and an employee of Tyco Electronics Ltd (100%).

- Andy Fox – An existing Director and Treasurer of Connection Credit Union and an employee of Tyco Electronics Ltd (97%).

Before the final item on the agenda, Philip explained that Acorn Community Bank also have a need for volunteers other than Directors to assist with our work. Specifically, we need one or more volunteers to assist with internal audit. This involves conducting short independent reviews of specific aspects of our operations.

We also need volunteers to assist with promotion and with other aspects of our work. if you would like to help, whatever your skills, please get in touch via our office address.

8. Members' questions and responses from Acorn

Q1- How are we managing credit risk given the very large increase in provisions for bad debts during the reporting year?

> This has been a major problem in the reporting year and the bad debts over 12 months in arrears are unlikely to decrease in the future. However new additional provisions for bad have decreased in the current year; to levels consistent with the industry norm for community-based credit unions. This is much better news for the current and future years.

Q2 – How are we planning to pay back the subordinated loan from Swindon Borough Council?

> This loan terminates in 2029. We have started to pay it back gradually at 20% for each of the next 5 financial years.

Q3 –What percentage of members use the internet and are we missing out on members who would prefer to use a face-to-face branch office?

> About 95% of our members use the internet. We have our office in Swindon and a few cash collection points elsewhere, but very few members use them, and we have difficulty finding volunteers to staff them. It is not cost effective to use paid staff for such facilities. However, we will advertise for more volunteers in the coming year and see if it is possible to set up more community based collection points around our common bond area.

Closing Remarks

The Chair closed the meeting at just after 2 pm and thanked everyone for giving up an hour of their lunch time to participate and help us move forward with our agenda. Member involvement in our work and development was a key objective for the credit union and we would continue to work on it for the future.

Philip Turnbull,
Chair of the Board of Directors
September 2025

Annex: Annual Report and Accounts: slides from the presentation by Clive Henly

Membership Statistics – July 2025

	Total	Active (last month)	Active (last 12 months)
Berkshire	67	33	58
Buckinghamshire	711	326	468
Milton Keynes	1969	867	1289
Oxford	777	224	324
Oxfordshire	609	243	375
Reading	37	20	33
Swindon	2926	1484	2278
Wiltshire	2625	1033	1385
Other	484	197	298
Total	**10205**	**4427**	**6508**

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What's been happening ..

Improving our Service to You

Improved Direct Debit system, to make loan repayments easier
Now can accept other forms of benefit (e.g. UC, PIP) for loan repayments
Our new phone app, including
- biometric sign-on
- Flexible savings pots

Redesigned website to help navigation and readability
Building the team to provide faster responses
Improved telephony system

Junior Membership Relaunch

Junior member accounts can now be linked to adult members, to help regular saving

What's been happening ..

To help you save

Acorn Saver – for first-time savers

Uniform Saver – for savers preparing for the new school term

Xmas Saver – a cashbuilder leading up to Christmas

All supported by IMLT – the Stop Loan Sharks Team

Prizesaver – no-risk free prize draw each month

More flexible lending

Family Loans, based on Child Benefit payments, up to £1,000 for established members

Acorn Personal Loans for new borrowers up to £5,000

Loyalty Loans for members who have been saving regularly, up to £15,000

The Salisbury Financial Inclusion Project (April 2024 – May 2025)

Objective: To provide a service to vulnerable people in Salisbury who are facing financial challenges, by ensuring they are receiving the right financial support and helping them budget for the future.

Funding: We were awarded funding from the Wiltshire Council Health Inequalities Fund, on the basis that financial stress can worsen health issues.

How it worked: We worked with over 30 organisations in the city who referred clients to us. We then met with clients several times to help them with their finances and budgeting, signposting them for further help where necessary. The funding was sufficient for two officers to be employed to provide the service.

Outcome: We helped over 240 people during the period with over 450 meetings. We also established a wide network of referral organisations to identify financially vulnerable people.

What next? We are now seeking long-term funding to continue the project. We have established the need and value of this service, and would like to put this on a stable, long-term footing.

New members of our Team

George	- Joined as an apprentice in October 2024
Jade	- Joined as Financial Inclusion Officer in October 2025
Lahana	- Joined as Member Services Assistant in May 2025
Sarah	- Joined as Loans Officer in June 2025
Lindsey	- Joined as Member Services Officer in July 2025
Julie	- Joined as member Services Officer in July 2025

Continuing members of our Team

Bridget	- Chief Operations Officer
Gemma	- Member Services Manager
Lisa	- Finance Manager
Maria	- Lending Manager
Phoebe	- Communications and Marketing Manager
Amy	- Senior Loans Officer
Feyi	- Loans Officer
Emma	- Member Services Officer
Kayt	- Loans Officer
Marion	- Loans Officer
Karen	- Finance Officer
Julie	- Financial Inclusion Officer

Financial Position, March 2025

Annual report, including accounts, available on the website

Net surplus for year:	£12,082
Proposed dividend @ 0.25%	£8,750

Balance Sheet

Assets		Liabilities	
Net loans	£2.33m	Member shares	£3.54m
Invested money	£1.53m	Reserves	£0.30m
Other assets	£0.04m	Other credits	£0.05m
Total	£3.89m	Total	£3.89m
Loans/assets	60%	Capital/assets	7.7%

What's Coming Up Next?

Merger with Connection Credit Union

- Employer-based credit union based at Tyco Electronics in Swindon
- Members transact through payroll, with some members through their pension scheme
- Long history of good savings and lending
- Will be beneficial to us as we grow our payroll schemes
- Target merger date is October 2025
- We will need to bring our common bonds into line – vote later in meeting

What's Coming Up Next?

- Online payments through website
- Cash In/Out facility using PayPoint terminals
- Building partnerships with more employers for payroll savings/loan schemes
- Working with local authorities to support tenants and communities
- Further flexibility to loyalty loans, to give members opportunities to improve their lives through careful borrowing
- introduction of fixed-term savings bonds for longer-term saving