# Director Nominations – ELC AGM 2022

## Chris Maughan – Investor Member

I am currently an Assistant Professor of Agroecological Knowledge and Innovation Systems at the Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, Coventry University. I am a transdisciplinary researcher with a background in sociology specialising in sustainable food systems. My work draws on years of experience as a community food grower and training in horticultural production.

I believe our food and farming systems must fundamentally change. In part, this means getting more small-scale agroecological producers on the land in ways that can be supported and governed by the wider community. In this respect I see ELC's work as extremely important, and believe I could support it in a variety of ways. In my professional life, I have many years of experience of participatory research with organisations like the Landworkers' Alliance and European Coordination Via Campesina, most recently examining the role of farmer-centred research in agroecological transitions.

As I understand it, ELC has built-in ambitious monitoring and evaluation requirements into its tenancy agreements; I would be particularly interested to support and develop that side of operations. In my personal life, I am in the very early stages of planning a communal ecological smallholding, so understand some of the challenges associated with this.

## Dawn Muspratt – Investor member

I have a diverse background having worked in the not-for-profit, public and private sectors focusing on sustainability and inclusion. I began working as a community development worker in central London working with young people and communities from very diverse backgrounds and this work evolved into redeveloping community buildings to improve access and local resources. From there I joined a consumer organization working on organizational development before engaging more in environmental sustainability, developing renewable energy and energy supply with a focus on fuel poverty.

I bring experience of organizational development, business planning and implementation, governance, and diversity and inclusion.

As a current non-voting member of ELC Board, I have taken an active role in the Board development and change programme including the engagement process for the change programme and review of the rules. I am also a director of the Heat Trust which is an organisation set up to provide a framework for heat network providers prior to implementation of a scheme of regulation.

I am also currently part of a team undertaking an eco-build project set in a small-holding and am learning the challenges of both building projects and land management; and am also working as part of a team to develop an electric truck

project for sub-Saharan Africa to enable small-holder farmers to transport their produce to market in an affordable and sustainable way.

**Dylan Lindo Jones – Worker member**

I joined the ELC as Finance and Administration Manager in February 2021. Prior to this I had worked as a number of years as a community musician, teaching and running workshops across Bristol and the West Country. When the farm I get a monthly delivery from was looking for a new delivery driver I took on the job alongside my music work and quickly became convinced of the benefits and necessity of small-scale, regenerative farming.

In my role at the ELC, I manage the accounts and am part of the Finance Sub-Committee which meets monthly ahead of the board meetings. I carry out a lot of admin tasks that contribute to the successful running of the ELC. I also manage all communication with investor members and organise meetings and events. I take minutes for the board meetings and provide administrative support to the board as needed as well as being heavily involved throughout the Organisation Development process.

I currently live in the UK's first zero-carbon social housing development for young people at risk of housing crisis – Hope Rise - as a Community Builder. This role involves developing relationships with the young people I live alongside and liaising with Bristol City Council and the other organisations who set up the scheme. We have recently been given the keys for an old park-keeper's yard next to the development and are in a collaborative design process with the young people to turn this into a community garden.

In 2020, my wife, 2 close friends and I set up a Community Land Trust seeking to create affordable housing for young people leaving care. We have secured 2 rounds of funding from Community Led Homes West to develop a thorough business plan, which we have presented to funders with whom we are in further discussions currently.

In my spare time I enjoy cycling, swimming and playing rugby and I try to get in the sea as much as possible!

**John Whittick – Steward member**

I am 45 years old, the 4th son from a local farming family, married to Sarah, with 2 sons: Josh, 22, Fred, 21. I was born and bred in Sherborne, Dorset and have lived in South Cadbury, Somerset. I have been a self-employed gardener for many years (RHS Advanced qualified) and in the last few years worked for a restoration builder on old houses/new timber frame projects. I developed my carpentry and learned other useful housebuilding skills.

I grew up on a mixed farm (including a goose hatchery) and started looking after animals at a young age. I currently own a small flock of 16 sheep, (Jacobs/Black Welsh Mountain); 3 Pilgrim Geese;16 chickens; 20+ quail. I have previously milked

cows and kept my own Berkshire pigs. I am also involved in seasonal work: forestry; hedge/tree planting; coppice work; drystone walling and goose plucking (the month before xmas!).

Over the last 20 years I worked part-time for Cider Apple Trees, grafting; budding; pruning; planting and training 1,000's of apple trees. My wife and I had the opportunity to take over the remaining young trees 4 years ago, on my predecessors' retirement. We deliver all over the west country, working with estate owners, farmers, newcomers, gardeners, wildlife trusts, schools, local councils and other different individuals/organisations. It is a specialist apple tree nursery, propagating over 100 heritage southwest cider varieties and over 50 traditional eating/cooking apples. We also hold collections of Dorset/Hereford varieties.

We are currently tenants of 2 acres on Wyvern Fields, Sparkford and with temporary planning granted (once 22 conditions have been discharged), we will move onto the 10 acres later this year to continue expanding the nursery and farm the land with our animals around us. I ceased to use all chemicals, sprays and pesticides 2 years ago. We will be adopting a natural, biodiverse method of nursery production with additional tree/herbaceous planting between the rows and mobile, pastured, egg laying hens.

I am very happy to be part of the cooperative as a steward. It was a wonderful opportunity, when it was looking like it was impossible to find a small farm for our nursery and animals. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of the cooperative's future endeavours and hope you will consider me suitable to represent the stewards and be further involved with the work of the ELC as a member of the board.

**Ruth O'Brien – Steward member**

I have been an ELC Steward and tenant since 2014, running a Community Supported Agriculture veg-box scheme and fruit tree business in Devon, with my partner Alex, and two children (9 and 15yrs old). I have eight years of actively participating in the ELC, and can offer the perspective of being a tenant steward and land worker. I also have 12 years of experience of living and working in co-operatives and community organisations before joining the ELC.

After realising that I wanted to work outdoors with plants and people, whilst working as a receptionist at a city farm, I re-trained in organic gardening at college and on the job at Hartcliffe Health and Environmental Action Group, HHEAG, 2004-6. I then worked part time for CSV Environment in Hartcliffe as a School Grounds officer, redesigning school grounds in consultation with the school communities, whilst studying Sustainable Land Use before returning to Windmill Hill city farm in community gardener and volunteer support roles. In 2010 I returned to HHEAG to work for four years as the Community Market Gardener, before leaving Bristol to become a tenant of the ELC. At HHEAG I worked with local people of all ages to produce food for their local community kitchens and food coop in an area of extreme urban deprivation. Throughout this time I lived and participated in the management of the still expanding Somewhere Co-operative Housing Association Ltd (2003 - 14). I was also actively involved in the Willow Tree Kindergarten, including being a Trustee between 2012-13.

In 2004 I started to study, practice and later teach on affordable Permaculture design courses through the grass-roots Bristol Permaculture Group. This has led me to be involved in other projects trying to address community access to land for food, craft, fuel, medicine and social benefit, and to set up and organise Bristol Seed Swap for its first six years. I continue to teach, although very occasionally, mostly for SHIFT Bristol's practical sustainability course, taking student tours of our land project at Steepholding.

I grew up near Bristol and studied Social Anthropology with African and Asian studies at Sussex University which helped me to understand people, power, society, culture and my natural instincts towards equality, inclusivity, diversity and human rights far better.

**Sonia Sinanan – Worker member**

I have been working for the Ecological Land Cooperative for the last five and a half years, first as Operations Manager and more recently as the Coordinator. I have seen the organisation through 2 successful share offers, 3 land purchases, several new funding relationships, and a number of organisational development challenges as we have grown from 3 farms to 15; from a staff team of 3 to 12 and from a membership of 117 to 445.

Prior to working at the ELC I specialised in operations and organisation development and have been working at director level in non-profit organisations since 2001. I was a founder member of the charity Computer Aid International, Deputy CEO of the Association of Charitable Foundations and Operations Director at Conciliation Resources. I have also been a board member at Computer Aid International, Coda International and Webgathering Ltd. and was co-chair of the board at Computer Aid International for several years. All of this work has given me an insight into the operations, governance and strategic development of non-profit organisations which I have used to guide my work for the ELC. I am passionate about land justice and food security and sustainability, and I am very happy to be able to pursue this in my work for the ELC. In my own time I am a mum and grandma, an aromatherapist and a grower of lavender on the allotment that I share with my husband.

**Holger Westphely – Worker member**

Holger has been Treasurer of the ELC since 2014. In his day-job he runs the social investment team at the Charities Aid Foundation, where he has worked with hundreds of charities and social enterprises to finance growth projects, new businesses and transitions. Holger has a background in charity consulting, charity finance and an early career in investment management. He holds an MBA from INSEAD and a Diploma in ESG investing.