LALG

LETCHWORTH ARTS & LEISURE GROUP

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

Monday 6 October 2025 at 10.30am
Kincaid Hall, The Settlement
Letchworth Garden City SG6 4UB

Committee Members present:
Jackie Harber (Chair), Jackie Sayers (Vice-Chair), Tessa Palfreyman (Secretary), Hetty Smith (Treasurer), Trevor Lynam (Membership Secretary), Judith Gower (Data Protection Officer, EDI Officer), Phil Morgan (Volunteers Coordinator), Amy Wilson (Publicity Officer), William Armitage, Charles Chong, Jo Viscusi

LALG Members present:
Munir Ahmad, Sheena Atkinson, Tony Atkinson, Peter Barnes, Stella Barnes, Christine Butt, Grant Cameron, Anne Clarke, Robert Clarke, John Cox, Andrew Dear, Patricia Edge, Elisabeth George, Geoffrey Green, John Gregory, Suzanne Gillian, Alan Gower, Lyn Hayes, Philip Hilditch, Chris Hobbs, Hazel Irwin, David Jones, Tim Jurdon, Diane Jury, Linda Letford, Ian Martin, Tony Maynard-Smith, Susan Mellor, Frances Mills, Gary Mills, Mary Mills, Ann Moate, Kate Pape, David Parnwell, , Brian Noble, Ann Pegrum, Jas Phugura, Graham Pointon, Linda Procner, Philip Sayers, Nigel Schofield, Jo Schurch, Praful Soneji, Keith Sparrow, Hilary Spiers, John Spiers, Neil Stevenson, Joy Stroud, Keith Stroud, Keith Taylor, Susan Taylor, Brian Tipping, Stephen Turner, Grazyna Tutak, Christine Vincent, Nick Viscusi, Ella Webb, John Webb, Elaine Wigglesworth, plus one illegible signature

Guest: Yvonne Sage

1. **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting noting how pleased we were to see so many members present.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Kim Baker, Kate Thompson and Paul Wilding.

3. **Approval of Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 21 October 2024**

The minutes of the 2024 AGM have been available on the website. No comments, corrections or additions have been received or were made at the 2025 AGM. Due to an oversight, the approval of the minutes went straight to a vote without a formal proposer or seconder. The minutes were approved.

4. **Matters Arising not covered under other agenda items.**

There were none.

5. **Chair's Report**

Jackie Harber outlined what has happened over the last financial year:

- We launched "the Directory" a new shorter version of the Newsletter for the public
- A small charge of £12 per year was introduced for our Linked Organisations to cover our advertising and promotional costs
- We continue to have email issues to certain domains such as btinternet and ntlworld. There has been a rise in spam emails claiming to be from Jackie; she advised members to be suspicious of unexpected emails from personal, i.e. non lalg.org.uk, email addresses
- The cost of printing and publishing the Newsletter has increased over the last year so household membership with the Newsletter delivered will rise to £25 in December. It is 3 years since we last increased this membership fee.

Jackie then highlighted the wonderful work of our volunteers and showed some photos of our recent volunteer gathering at the Broadway Gallery.

Our future plans were then outlined:

- Introduction of the Community Benefit Initiative which is a new category that will allow us to continue to include LALG groups that confer a specific community benefit even if they have non-LALG members
- The committee will start planning for our 40th Anniversary in 2027
- Our Strategic Aims were listed:
  - We aim to be open to all adults
  - Maintain the number of members and groups at a viable level
  - Increase diversity
  - Attract and nurture volunteers
  - Adapt to changing needs of our membership
  - Continue to rebuild our financial reserves

Committee members
Jackie welcomed Phil Morgan to the committee as our new Volunteers Coordinator, and notified the members that Judith Gower has taken on the role of Safeguarding. Jackie thanked Steve Green who had held the role for many years.

Jackie thanked Aman Dhillon who has stepped down from the committee and Jackie Sayers, Vice Chair, who is stepping down at this AGM for their contributions to the work of the committee.

Ann P also personally thanked Jackie S for all the work she has done. Jackie S explained that she would continue to be part of our Publicity Team, Group Support Team and as an editor of the Newsletter.

A member asked a question about membership numbers, Jackie confirmed that membership continued to rise and the numbers would be reported in the Membership Secretary's Report. There were no other questions.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

Hetty Smith displayed the accounts and made the following points:

Looking at the overall headline figures for this year compared to last:

	End of July 2024	End of July 2025
Lloyds (Current account)	£13,969.12	£13,367.49
Redwood (Savings account)	£10,000	£17,000.00
TOTAL	£23,969.12	£30,367.49
Which breaks down as follows		
Money held on behalf of Groups	£3,496.15	£4,373.09
LALG Funds	£20,472.97	£25,994.40

It can be seen that LALG Funds increased by almost £6,000 compared to last year. Resulting from:

- A donation from the Social Committee of £1,000
- Newsletter postage is £2,213 less than last year as we produced bimonthly newsletters
- As the number of newsletters editions reduced the printing costs fell by £1612.

Significant income items were:

- Largest income by far was membership at £23,194
- 56% of membership payments (£13,265) were via Stripe costing £356 in fees
- Newsletter adverts gave us an income of £615
- Bank interest resulted in an income of £379.

The largest items of expenditure were:

- Newsletter printing cost (£4,303)
- Newsletter postage (£3.787)
- Publicity (£2,829)
- Insurance (£2,807)

Last year we handled the money for 14 groups, this year it is 17, reflected in the increase in the funds we hold on their behalf. The groups we hold the most funds for are

- Local History (£1958)
- Transport and Heritage (£800)
- Steve Green Groups (£292)
- Reading Group (£159)

Out of the 17 groups we managed funds for, five were inactivate this year and we hold £116.41 as their closing balances, see below. This underlines why groups should 'bank' with LALG as no money is lost in dormant accounts when groups close.

- Walking Groups £50.00
- Sally Cannon Group £41.41
- First Aid Course £25.00
- Garden City Singers £0.00
- Paddle Boarding £0.00

The last two with no funds will be removed from the accounts next year, but we will keep the others on the books in case they start up again.

We have increased our contingency savings in the Redwood account, up from £10,000 at the start of the year to £17,000 now. The breakdown of our savings is:

General Contingency	£8,000.00
IT Reserve	£5,000.00
Running Surplus	£4,000.00

Increased transfers to Redwood account result in extra monthly income to Lloyds current account.

7. **Formal Approval of Accounts for the year ending 31 July 2025**

The accounts were approved following their proposal by Patricia Edge and seconding by Grant Cameron.

8. **Membership Secretary's Report**

Trevor Lynam presented his report via PowerPoint.

- He has been Membership Secretary since August 2024
- Membership numbers have increased by 1% from last year
- While the majority of members are aged in their 60s and 70s, 20% are in the 50s or younger
- 728 of our current households have been with us for up to 3 years; 984 households have been members for between 4 and 25+ years

Trevor thanked all the members and the Membership Team of Frances Sly and Colin Hume.

Trevor answered questions on the household numbers and lapsed members.

9. **Election of Committee Members**

Name	**Proposer**	**Seconder**
William Armitage*	Tessa Palfreyman	Jackie Harber
Kim Baker*	Tessa Palfreyman	Jackie Harber
Judith Gower*	Charles Chong	Tessa Palfreyman
Hetty Smith*	Jackie Harber	Kim Baker
Phil Morgan^	Ann Warner	John Vaziri
Jo Viscusi^	Celia Lord	Tessa Palfreyman

* Retiring by rotation and standing for re-election
^ Co-opted during the year and now standing for election

The names of the nominees were read out and their election en bloc approved unanimously.

There are four vacancies on the committee: we would welcome more members.

10. **Proposed addition to the LALG Constitution under '2. Object'**

> *LALG may also promote the formation of Community Benefit Initiatives open to both its members and non-members where the purpose of the Initiative is to confer a benefit upon the wider community as a whole. Community Benefit Initiatives shall be run by LALG members. Individuals who wish to join the Initiative in order to contribute to the community but do not wish to join LALG, may join Community Benefit Initiatives as non LALG members.*

The above wording for the proposed addition to the Constitution was shown on screen and read out to the audience. The reasoning was explained: the Blitz an Open Space group receives regular offers of help from non-LALG members who wish only to collect litter and do not wish to pay £10 to join LALG. Without these offers there would not be sufficient people to carry on the group's activities. The Committee has explored various ways in which we might continue to support this group that works for a specific purpose which benefits the local community and decided to create a new category of Community Benefit Initiative (CBI). Should the CBI wording be added to the Constitution, the Committee will draft the criteria which any proposed new CBI must then meet. If the new category is felt to prove unsuccessful over the next 12 months the members will have an opportunity to amend it at the 2026 AGM.

Following discussion, the members present voted on the proposed amendment and it was approved by a large majority.

11. **Any Other Business**

i) Philip Sayers made a suggestion that the members consider whether a name change for LALG would be helpful. The rationale is that Letchworth Arts and Leisure Group is not **one** group but many and to that end, Phil proposed Letchworth Arts and Leisure Organisation (LALO) as an alternative name. (Letchworth Arts and Leisure Association is not a possibility as Associations have their own set of rules.)

Several members expressed their opinions. It was acknowledged that a name change would affect website domain name, stationery, templates, website content etc. An alternative suggestion is simply to stay as LALG but change the full name to Letchworth Arts and Leisure Group**s**. The meeting accepted Phil's suggestion to consider the idea over the next few months.

12. **Date of 2026 Annual General Meeting**

The date has not yet been chosen for the 2026 AGM as the Committee wanted to judge the appeal and success of a daytime meeting first.

It was agreed that the committee would consider the options and agree a date as soon as possible.

The Chair thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and declared the formal business closed at 11.15am.

Members were invited to stay for the talk Graham Pointon on the Origins of Writing: how alphabets emerged from drawings.

These minutes were approved and signed by the Chair at the 2026 Annual General Meeting held on 5 October 2026 at Letchworth Settlement