

## Copyright Policy

### Purpose of this policy

To ensure that Letchworth Arts and Leisure Group (LALG) complies with the legal framework of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, as amended, which governs copyright protection in the UK.

The policy outlines the principles and legal requirements surrounding copyright in the United Kingdom. It is intended to ensure compliance with UK copyright law and to protect intellectual property rights while promoting lawful use and access to copyrighted materials.

### Scope of policy

The policy applies to all people who could be engaging with copyrighted materials within Letchworth Arts and Leisure Group (LALG). The term 'LALG' below refers to all LALG groups and members who reproduce, copy or use original literary, artistic, musical, and dramatic works, films, sound recordings, broadcasts, and software. These individuals should read this document in full to check that they are complying with the legal framework of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, as amended.

### Statement of policy

Appendix A explains the background to each of the following:

1. LALG will seek to comply with copyright protection measures as outlined in item 1 of Appendix A.
2. LALG will credit the creator when required, even for public domain works.
3. LALG will observe the duration of copyright.
4. LALG will observe the permitted uses and exceptions outlined in Appendix A.
5. LALG will seek permission to show film or TV shows in public.
6. LALG will observe Crown Copyright.
7. LALG will follow the procedure for Orphan Works if a copyright owner cannot be identified or traced.
8. If copyrighted material is to be used beyond permitted exceptions, LALG will seek proper licensing or permission from the copyright holder.
9. LALG will observe the legal requirements concerning digital copyright and online content.

10. LALG notes that unauthorised use, copying, distribution, or adaptation of copyrighted materials without proper permission may result in legal action and/or removal of infringing material.
11. Any copyright concerns or suspected infringements should be reported to the Chair or Secretary of LALG.
12. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with any changes in UK copyright law and industry best practices.

## **Appendix A**

**1. Copyright Protection Measures** Group contacts, Web editors, content creators and anyone else who is using images, videos, films, music, documents, and articles should ensure they are aware of copyright compliance issues. Copyright protection measures include:

- Using your own images or copyright free images found on the internet.
- Using the “Share” option on a newspaper article or sending out the link to the page on a website or article.
- Using watermarking and metadata tracking for digital works.
- Conducting regular audits to ensure compliance with copyright policies.

**2. Copyright Ownership** Copyright protection applies automatically to original literary, artistic, musical, and dramatic works, films, sound recordings, broadcasts, and software. The creator or author of a work is typically the first owner of copyright unless otherwise stated.

**Credit the creator when required, even for public domain works.**

### **3a. Duration of Copyright**

- Literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works: Life of the author plus 70 years.
- Sound recordings: 70 years from the date of release.
- Films: 70 years after the death of the last surviving main creator.
- Broadcasts: 50 years from the date of broadcast.
- Typographical arrangements: 25 years from publication.

**3b. Copyright for historic images follows these general rules:**

Copyright Duration

- Photographs (before 1 June 1957) – Copyright lasts for 50 years from creation if unpublished, or until 31 December 2039 if unpublished before 1989.
- Photographs (after 1 June 1957) – Copyright lasts for 70 years from the death of the photographer (life + 70 years).
- Illustrations, paintings, drawings – Copyright lasts for 70 years from the artist's death.
- Published works with unknown authorship – If the author is unknown, copyright expires 70 years after publication or 120 years after creation (whichever is earlier).

#### Public Domain & Free Use

- Works out of copyright (e.g., very old photographs or paintings) are in the public domain and free to use.
- Some archives, museums, or libraries may claim reproduction rights, but these are not legally enforceable under UK copyright law.

#### Using Historic Images Legally

- Check the copyright status before using an image.
- Look for free-use sources like the UK National Archives, British Library, Wellcome Collection, or Wikimedia Commons.

**4. Permitted Uses and Exceptions** UK copyright law allows limited use of copyrighted material without permission under the following exceptions:

- **Fair Dealing:** Includes criticism, review, news reporting, research, and private study.
- **Educational Use:** Limited copying for educational purposes in schools, universities, and libraries.
- **Parody and Caricature:** Limited use for humorous or satirical purposes.
- **Time-shifting:** Recording broadcasts for personal viewing at a later time.
- **Text and Data Mining:** For non-commercial research purposes.

**5. Showing films and TV shows in public will need permission if you want to show films or TV shows in public.** Public spaces or events may include:

- entertainment venues;
- one-off events;
- film clubs;
- social groups that put on 'film nights' in their communities;
- You still need permission whether you sell tickets or not.

**6. Crown Copyright applies to works created by UK government employees as part of their official duties.** This includes photographs, maps, reports, and other government-published materials.

Duration of Crown Copyright

- Standard Rule: Crown Copyright lasts 50 years from the end of the year the work was created.
- Parliamentary Copyright: Works created by or for Parliament are protected for 50 years from publication.
- Unpublished Works: If not published, they are protected for 125 years from creation or until 2039 (whichever is later).

#### Using Crown Copyright Materials

Most Crown Copyright materials are freely available under the Open Government Licence (OGL), which allows you to:

- Copy, publish, and adapt the work.
- Use it commercially or non-commercially.
- Modify the material.
- You must credit the source properly.

#### Where to Find Crown Copyright Images

- National Archives ([nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk))
- GOV.UK ([gov.uk](http://gov.uk))
- UK Parliament Website ([parliament.uk](http://parliament.uk))
- UK Ordnance Survey (for maps) ([ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://ordnancesurvey.co.uk))

### 7. Orphan Works

If a copyright owner is unknown or cannot be traced, you may apply for an Orphan Works License via the UK Intellectual Property Office (See 11).

**8. Licensing and Permissions** If copyrighted material is to be used beyond permitted exceptions, proper licensing or permission from the copyright holder is required. Common licensing frameworks include:

- Creative Commons licenses.
- Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) permissions.
- Orphan Works Licensing Scheme.
- Many films are available through one of these bodies:
- Motion Picture Licensing Company Limited (MPLC)
- Filmbank Distributors Limited (Filmbankmedia)
- Audiovisual Licensing Alliance (AVLA)

### 9. Digital Copyright and Online Content

- Copyright applies to online and digital content, including websites, blogs, and social media.
- The use of images, videos, music, and articles must be properly attributed and comply with licensing agreements.
- The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) takedown requests apply to online copyright infringement.

## **10. Infringement and Consequences**

Unauthorised use, copying, distribution, or adaptation of copyrighted materials without proper permission may result in:

- Legal action, including fines and damages.
- Removal of infringing content from online platforms and publications.

## **11. Contact and Reporting**

Any copyright concerns or suspected infringements should be reported to the Chair or Secretary of LALG. For further information, refer to the UK Intellectual Property Office (IPO).

Review date: March 2027

**This policy was reviewed by the Committee and approved without changes  
at its meeting on 18 March 2026**