

## LALG Information Technology Strategy Summary - 2025 update

### Introduction

The Letchworth Arts and Leisure Group (LALG) IT strategy outlines the organisation's approach to information technology in support of its goals. It acknowledges the increasing importance of online IT facilities and aligns with the LALG Information Technology Policy.

### Background

- LALG operates a website, social media, and a printed newsletter which also appears online.
- Membership is (as of 2025) about 1,664 households and about 2,800 individuals, with most revenue spent on newsletter distribution.
- IT systems were developed in-house by volunteers, which poses a continuity risk.
- LALG Members are mostly 50+ years old but are increasingly tech-savvy.
- The strategy seeks mainstream, user-friendly IT solutions, avoiding cutting-edge complexity.

### Technology & Social Trends

- Growth in mobile technology, social media, and cloud-based services.
- Shift from expensive proprietary software to open-source, community-supported solutions.
- Subscription-based communication (email/newsletter) to give users control over their preferences.
- Strategy to use cloud services, mainstream open-source software, and low-cost hosting.

### Strategic Goals

1. **Cost Efficiency** – Use free/community-supported software and affordable hosting.
2. **Availability** – Ensure services are accessible but allow occasional downtime.
3. **Ease of Use** – Prioritize user-friendly platforms for both members and administrators.
4. **Mobile Access** – Improve mobile-friendliness for growing demand.
5. **Integration** – Connect website and membership systems for seamless interaction.
6. **Information Management** – Generate content once and distribute across multiple channels.
7. **Flexibility** – Avoid vendor lock-in; use standard platforms (e.g., LAMP stack).
8. **Software Versioning** – Maintain security updates but avoid unstable pre-releases.

9. **Functionality Enhancements** – Enable online membership renewal, data updates, personalized subscriptions, and member communities.
10. **Internal Operations** – Support document sharing and records management.

### **Resourcing**

- IT efforts rely on volunteers with limited expertise.
- Some outsourcing for specialized tasks may be needed within budget limits.
- Collaboration with other voluntary organizations may be beneficial.

### **Target Architecture**

- **Subscription Model** – Members select communication preferences across web, email, and social media.
- **Architectural Model** – Uses open-source tools: Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP, Drupal, and CiviCRM.
- **Packaged Components** – Prioritizes stable, long-term support software versions.

### **Future Roadmap**

- **Enhanced Services** – Further improvements and additional functionality.
- **Enhanced Group Member features** – targeted emails, private group areas
- **Interactive messaging** – “who wants to walk today?”

Chris Wheatley  
Web Development Team  
May 2025

**This document was reviewed and approved by the Committee  
at its meeting on 19 May 2025.**