



MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

**Monday 21 October 2024 at 7.30pm
The Cloisters, Barrington Road
Letchworth Garden City SG6 3TH**

Committee Members present:

Jackie Harber (Chair), Jackie Sayers (Vice-Chair), Tessa Palfreyman (Secretary), Hetty Smith (Treasurer), Trevor Lynam (Membership Secretary), Amandeep Dhillon (EDI Officer), Judith Gower (Data Protection Officer), Charles Chong, Jan Gates

LALG Members present:

Paul Ansbro, Nicole Ashbrook, Linda Carson, Marion Cowdray, Elizabeth Dun, Alan Ephgrave, Alan Gower, John Gregory, Bryan King, Malcolm King, Stefan Lerche, Celia Lord, Judith Lynam, Jehangir Pocha, Meher Pocha, Hugh Pollock, Rosemary Richards, Stephen Richards, Jocelyn Rowe, Praful Soneji, Kate Thompson, Veronica Tomkins, Johanna Viscusi, Chris Wheatley, Paul Wilding, Ez Williams.

1. Welcome

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

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from William Armitage, Kim Baker, Amy Wilson, Steve Green, Angie Lockyer, Brian Noble and Ann Pegrum.

3. Approval of Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 17 October 2023

The minutes were approved unanimously and signed by the Chair.

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:

"A copyright issue with one of our group icons. All published icons were checked and system in place to reduce the risk of this happening again.

Bulk email issues. This is caused by some email domains such as btinternet, virginmedia, ntlworld "bouncing" emails sent from our system. We are unable to resolve this issue.

Following our trial of bi-monthly newsletters, and reviewing feedback from our members, the committee have decided to permanently change to bi-monthly Newsletters.

I would like to formally thank Fiona Lennox for her contribution, particularly in redefining the risk register and Jan Gates who is stepping down from the committee. We welcomed Charles Chong and Trevor Lynam.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Report

Thanks to Aman, our EDI officer for her work throughout the year and for compiling a detailed EDI report.

Some of you will have seen the summary of the report on page 13 of the October/November Newsletter. The report was based on the June Survey, members' feedback and from workshops throughout the year.

Recommendations included

- ways to better understand the diversity of our membership via workshops,
- give regular information about EDI on website and Newsletter
- and to encourage open discussions about EDI.

The full report is available on our website. lalg.org.uk/EDIreport

Our future plans

The committee has held workshops and feedback from members which has helped the committee to develop a Strategy for the next few years. Our Aims are to

1. maintain membership. So far our membership continues to increase slightly but we recognise we need to continue to publicise LALG.
2. increase diversity among the membership
3. volunteers. We have over 200 volunteers that enable this wonderful organisation to flourish. If any of you would like to help out or join us on the committee, please let me know.
4. Adapting to your needs
5. Increasing our reserves."

There were no questions.

6. Treasurer's Report

Hetty Smith made the following points:

- Overall, a good year, we started with £9,209 in the Lloyds account and finished with £13,969.
- Looking at the **Central Fund** rather than money held on behalf of the Groups, we finished with a surplus of £3,620 compared to last year's (2022/23) deficit of £842.
- Looking at few specific items, firstly the **membership** income. This remained largely the same as last year. It was £21,321 this year and £20,292 in 2022/23, representing a 5% increase.
- Looking at the **newsletter**, this year, with a reduction in editions produced compared to last, there was a reduction in costs which meant membership fees did not need to be increased.
- As a result of the reduced number of issues the income from **newsletter adverts** fell from £1,145 last year to £875 this year. A drop of 24%.
- The **insurance** increase this year was only 8% higher than last year. The 2023/24 cost was £2,644.
- This year we spent £432 on **capital equipment**, namely a projector, screen and case.
- Other notable activity was the **Monday Open Meetings** which netted an income of £489.
- We currently hold the funds for 13 **LALG Groups**, totalling £3,496, although only 10 of these groups were active in the year. Last year we had eight groups and held £2,356.
- Our **deposit account** at the **Redwood bank** remains constant at £10,000 and was untouched during the year. The yearly interest raised £320, which was added to our Central Fund.

There were two questions; the first concerned what makes up our reserves. These comprise general contingency reserves of £5000 held to support unexpected or unplanned expenditure and designated reserves of £5000 held to support unexpected expenditure on the IT structures on which LALG depends. The second question asked about the interest rate on the reserves account (held at Redwood Bank). The rate over the last year was 3.2%.

7. **Formal Approval of Accounts for the year ending 31 July 2024**

The accounts were approved unanimously.

8. **Membership Secretary's Report**

Membership numbers

Jackie Harber displayed a chart showing membership numbers from 2012 to 2024.

Membership continues to rise, at year end there were 1667 households and about 2700 members.

We have increased our membership since last year by 69 households and 202 members

Membership cost held

Membership fees continue to be:

£10 for household membership

£20 for household membership plus a printed copy of the Newsletter.

Each Newsletter costs just under £1 to print and another £1 to post out. Newsletters are now bi-monthly.

New Membership Secretary

Welcome to Trevor who is now our new membership secretary. Other members of the team are Francis Sly and Colin Hume.

Jackie then thanked the membership team and Jackie Sayers who has helped out through the year as well as David's Bookshop, the publicity and events teams and all our members for their continuing support.

There were no questions.

9. Election of Committee Members

Name	Proposer	Second
Jackie Harber*	Trevor Lynam	Tessa Palfreyman
Jackie Sayers	Katie Maynard-Smith	Pauline Cocevar
Tessa Palfreyman*	Mel Cherry	Sue Redmond
Aman Dhillon*	Tessa Palfreyman	Jackie Harber
Charles Chong^	Tessa Palfreyman	Jackie Sayers
Trevor Lynam^	Judith Gower	William Armitage
Amy Wilson^	Jan Gates	Jackie Sayers

* Retiring by rotation and standing for re-election

^ Co-opted during the year and now standing for election

The nominations were read out and their election en bloc approved unanimously.

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

11. Any Other Business

i) Veronica Tomkins asked the committee why LALG has lost the Black Squirrel Investment Group (BSIG). Jackie explained that it was because the group had their own separate constitution and funds, but that we were pleased they had moved to become a Linked Organisation. Veronica Tomkins and Celia Lord conveyed the upset that this had caused the members of the BSIG and that not all members were aware of the LALG constitution. Tessa Palfreyman expressed the committee's regret that this was the case as it had not been the intention to upset or offend the members of the BSIG. Jackie Harber undertook to send a copy of the Constitution to Veronica.

12. Date of 2025 Annual General Meeting

Jackie Sayers sought the audience's views regarding holding the AGM during the day, possibly as an addition to an existing event, such as a Monday Morning Meeting, subject to the agreement of the Social Team. Malcolm King observed that the AGM used to be tagged onto a Quiz Night which was always well attended. A suggestion was received that it could be held at the weekend, but several committee members said they themselves would find that awkward. A further suggestion was made that the AGM could be arranged as a hybrid event, with in-person attendance and live streaming via Zoom.

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 8.15pm.

Members were invited to stay for the talk by Professor Karen Humm on her experiences as an emergency critical care vet.

These minutes will be approved at the 2025 Annual General Meeting, date to be confirmed.