



Letchmore Heath Village Trust

GUARDIANS OF THE RURAL AMENITIES OF LETCHMORE HEATH

FOUNDED IN 1971

www.letchmoreheath.org.uk

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting

3 November 2022

LHVT Committee

Alan Lambert	Chairman
Alison Rose	Hon. Secretary
Linda Lambert	
Janet Engels	Treasurer
Michael Pickford	
Greg Rogers	
Naz Mohammed	

Apologies

Derek Moran
Gareth Tinsley
Jo & Simon Letts
Rochelle & Richard Cohen
Nila Simon
Pauline McNicholas
Karl Mahon

Sixteen villagers (excluding LHVT but including the Village Hall Committee) attended the meeting. Drinks and nibbles were provided.

1. Introduction and Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the Annual Village Meeting (AVM) and AGM of the Letchmore Heath Village Trust. Having been formed in 1971, the Trust is 51 years old!

The Trust meets every month and communicates through the village website (www.letchmoreheath.com), the village drum, the Newsletter and by posting flyers.

2. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that the Trust has a positive bank balance of £919.58.
There were two main items of expenditure this year:

- £400 for the Village Christmas tree
- £1,000 to the Solar Plant Appeal

Trust membership is open to all villagers and has increased this year from £5.00 to £10.00 per annum per household. This is the first time the subscription has increased for many years.

3. Election of New Committee

Under LHVT rules the Committee is elected annually by paid up members of the Trust. Derek Moran has resigned from the committee. There being no new applications, and as all other Committee members were willing to serve for 2023, all were re-elected. The Chairman thanked Derek for his work and support during his period on the Trust Committee.

4. Brief Reports from Trust Committee Members.

Trust members gave brief reports on activity in their areas of responsibility:

(i) Greg Rogers: Bhaktivedanta Manor and Traffic.

The Trust continues to have a good working relationship with The Manor. The Janmashtami festival was ticketed again this year and thanks to the Manor's good planning and effective management the village was completely protected from traffic issues.

The Trust's objective is to address the amount, speed and type of traffic in the village. While we continue to grapple with increasing amounts of traffic, we have applied for and received approval for a reduced speed limit in the village of 20 mph. Implementation may take some time. Enforcement of the new limit will be the responsibility of the police and especially trained villagers who will be able to use radar equipment to identify speeders for police action. "Not Suitable for HGV Traffic" signs have been erected around and within the village but need to be repositioned to move control of this traffic to the borders of the village.

ii) Linda Lambert: Aldenham Parish Council (APC).

LHVT liaises with Peter Evans at APC. The Council is looking into clearing the pond and reinforcing the island. APC are contacting a company to contract out this work.

The large puddle next to the pond has been reported to the Council.

The children's park has been upgraded.

The Christmas Tree will be erected at the beginning of December. The Manor has again made a generous donation towards the tree.

(iii) Gareth Tinsley and Mike Pickford: Planning and Elstree Aerodrome.

There were 12 planning applications during the year - seven were granted, none were refused, two were withdrawn and two are pending.

Since 2014 there have been 92 planning applications. 63 were granted, 13 rejected and 11 were withdrawn.

(iv) Naz Mohammed: LH Website.

The website has been updated with the Solar Plant Appeal during October and November.

(v) Alison Rose: Fly-Tips and Rubbish

Alison reported that there were quite a few fly tips at the beginning of the year. All fly tips are immediately reported. It also helps if other villagers also report these problems.

Fly tips continue to be a shocking national problem. Last year 1.3 million fly tips were reported costing taxpayers an estimated £150 million to remove.

The Chairman thanked Alison and Linda for their continuing and frequent litter picks, seeking to ensure that the village is kept free of litter. Others are always welcome to join them.

(vi) Mike Pickford and Derek Moran

The Trust works with HCC to seek to maintain better roads in and around the village – like Common Lane, it's an uphill task!

(vii) Alan Lambert: Aldenham School and Other Issues.

Ross Whear, Head of Planning at HBC came to talk to LHVT earlier this year. The resulting input and discussion were helpful in creating a greater understanding of roles and process.

The Trust continues to enjoy a good working relationship with Aldenham School, who in turn support the local village community.

The redeveloped Three Horseshoes opened in March 2022. LHVT will continue to assist the new owner and management whenever possible. A successful and thriving village pub is an essential part of local life, which merits and deserves the active support of the village. Use it – or lose it! The Pub continues to liaise with locals and is now introducing new events. eg Pub quiz and £5.00 supper evenings.

(viii) Janet Engels - The Solar Plant Appeal

Janet Engels has been working full time on this appeal for the last six months. She said that the appeal has gone very well and had the Combined Objectors Group (COG), not been involved, the case against Enso would have been much weaker. The Public Inquiry concludes tomorrow, 4 November 2022.

The Inspector will write and submit her report and recommendations to the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, for a final decision. This is likely to be in the spring of next year.

The Public Inquiry has cost the local community £110,000. Radlett Society and Green Belt Association (RS&GBA) pledged support up to £50,000 for which the COG is extremely grateful. Without this significant contribution the impact of the case against development would have been massively weakened. As of this evening, the COG is about £1,500 short of target. Janet thanked all those who have contributed, and specific thanks were offered to Rosamund Gray (Chairman RS&GBA) who attended the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Janet for her extraordinary work over the last few months. Without her efforts the success of the appeal would have been greatly diminished.

5. Questions

- a) Pete Henderson asked what would happen if the Secretary of State throws out the appeal. Janet explained that they cannot reapply with the same application, but they can put in another application.
- b) Martin Shaw explained that in 2004, the pond was dead and a major refurbishment took place. The pond was drained and the mud was scraped out and the banks were reinforced. This was done by the Countryside Management Organisation, which sadly no longer exists. Since then all the debris from the village continues to fall into the pond. Martin asked if APC could sort out the pond. He said that there should be a trap to collect the debris. He thinks there should be a consultation about the pond. David Lambert said that the pond has been like that for years. Linda said part of the problem is all the bread that is fed to the ducks. Ian Southern said that we need a base document and ideally APC should commission a report as to what needs to be done. Danielle said that it is worth asking in the village if there is a structural engineer who could help us? Linda (for LHVT) is in touch with APC about this problem.

- c) Martin Shaw also said that he had called out Thames Water 12-15 times over the past years because the sewer has overflowed in Hilfield Farm. He said that the problem is that the sewer is not big enough and the junction from The Manor is also too small. Martin said that he thinks APC needs to talk to Thames Water. David Lambert said that Thames Water should be looking after the drains. David suggested that Martin write to Oliver Dowden and Thames Water and to copy the correspondence to the three councils.
- d) Danielle Alexander thanked The Manor for offering villagers free yoga sessions. The Chairman commented that good relations with the Manor are thanks in part to the efforts of Greg Rogers.
- e) Ian Southern again brought up his proposition to build a hard surfaced path up Common Lane from the village to Battlers Green Farm. He said he had spoken to Adam and Alex as the path would encroach on their land. Lorraine and Amanda both said they disagreed with urbanization of the footpath. Danielle and Lou said they would support having a path. This caused some discussion. David Lambert said it was a County council problem. He said that if a path was agreed it would also need to become a cycle way and would have to be a wide path. The Chairman commented that although previously considered, the Trust will review current proposals for an improved longer pathway.
- f) Stuart Robinson suggested that the pub could be used to ask villagers for their membership subscriptions to LHVT.

On closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked all those who take an interest in the village and particularly to those villagers taking the time to attend the Annual Village Meeting. He also expressed thanks to the Trust Committee for voluntarily contributing their time and commitment to Letchmore Heath.

A. H. Lambert.

Chairman – Letchmore Heath Village Trust.

Date: 11th November 2022.