



# Letchmore Heath Village Trust

GUARDIANS OF THE RURAL AMENITIES OF LETCHMORE HEATH  
FOUNDED IN 1971  
[www.letchmoreheath.org.uk](http://www.letchmoreheath.org.uk)

## Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting

22 November 2021

### **LHVT Committee:**

Alan Lambert                      Chairman  
Alison Rose                      Hon. Secretary and Treasurer  
Linda Lambert  
Michael Pickford  
Gareth Tinsley  
Greg Rogers  
Derek Moran  
Naz Mohammed

### **Apologies:**

Ian Southern

Seventeen villagers (excluding the 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 50 this year!

Due to the pandemic, the last AVM was on 2 October 2019, since when two members of the committee have moved on - Jon Rose and Andy Cappuccini. They were thanked for their commitment and service to the village. Derek Moran has joined the committee. Outlining the agenda for the meeting, the Chairman emphasised the importance of the local community in setting priorities for the Trust. The meeting was structured to assist this process, with each Trust member commenting on key local issues followed by an open forum.

The Trust meets every month and communicates through the village website ([www.letchmoreheath.com](http://www.letchmoreheath.com)), the village drum and the newsletter.

The Chairman thanked Councillors Caroline Clapper and David Lambert for their active support of the village and their crucial input into the recent Council rejection of the Solar Plant planning application.

### **2. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer reported that the Trust has a positive bank balance of £2,767.50. There were three purchases this year:

- poppy wreath for Remembrance Sunday

- duck sign
- domain name

Trust membership is open to all villagers and still costs just £5.00 per annum per household.

### **3. Election of New Committee**

Under LHVT rules the Committee is elected annually by paid up members of the Trust. There being no new applications, and as all Committee members were willing to serve for 2022, all were re-elected.

### **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 Manor has been very active during Covid. The festival marking Janmashtami was again ticketed this year.

The Trust's objective is to control traffic levels and reduce speed by introducing a village limit of 20 mph. The amount of traffic through the village has nearly doubled since 2016 – on an average morning about 400 cars come through the village. Traffic calming measures will be considered. In an effort to reduce the number of heavy vehicles, HGV prohibited signs were agreed with the support of Caroline Clapper. Unfortunately these have not been located correctly, and this will be followed up and addressed.

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

LHVT liaises with Peter Evans at APC. The Council is looking into clearing the pond and if possible reinforcing the island.

There will be no Christmas tree this year as the pub remains a building site and there is nowhere else safe and appropriate to locate it. The Christmas tree will be back next year!

#### **(iii) Gareth Tinsley: Planning and Elstree Aerodrome.**

There were 11 planning applications during the year - eight were granted, one was refused and two were withdrawn. In 2019 there were 16 planning applications.

The Trust continues to work closely with Elstree Aerodrome via the EACC (Elstree Aerodrome Consultative Committee) to ensure agreed protocols and routes for both helicopters and fixed wing aircraft are respected.

#### **(iv) Naz Mohammed: Faster Broadband, LH Website.**

Naz outlined an eventful couple of years with the village being fortunate with the timing of both planning and implementation of faster broadband. Other communities were now contacting him and the wait is now long and precarious. On behalf of the village, the Chairman thanked Naz for his sterling and determined work to ensure that villagers enjoy a faster broadband service years ahead of others. Without the initial work and vision of Jon Rose and the planning and follow up of Naz, this would not have been delivered.

#### **(v) Alison Rose: Fly-Tips**

Alison reports all local fly-tips – a process which should be simple, but isn't. She explained which Council is responsible for the different aspects of removing a fly-tip:

- The Borough Council removes fly-tips from the verge.
- The County Council removes fly-tips from the roadway
- Private landowners are responsible for removing fly-tips from their land

Although inefficient, this is the structure that has to be used when seeking solutions to fly tipping.

#### **(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! Mike and Derek outlined what is done to fix potholes, repair roads affected by flooding and to clear and control roadside vegetation and trees.

#### **(vii) Alan Lambert: Aldenham School**

The Trust continues to enjoy a good working relationship with Aldenham School, who in turn support the local village community. Karl Mahon, the bursar, was unable to be at the meeting but Mrs. Gocher (headmistress of the primary school) was present. The Chairman thanked the school Governors and Bursar for their continuing support. The School managed the replacement and cost of the new Letchmore Heath village signs on Aldenham Road.

The Trust and the school will continue to seek to minimise school traffic flow through the village.

### **OPEN FORUM**

#### **HBC Draft Local Plan**

There was a full and detailed debate on the merits, concerns and objections to the Local Draft Plan.

The Trust has made two submissions to HBC, highlighting concerns and objections to:

1. HEL509 - the proposed building of 10 houses at the end of New Road.
2. Broader issues of concern in the Local Plan:
  - unacceptable loss of green belt.
  - residential overdevelopment of Hertsmere.
  - infrastructure shortcomings.
  - industrial creep within the green belt.

The two LHVT responses are available to read on the village website. The Chairman encouraged all present to **submit their concerns, comments and objections to HBC before the cut off date of 6<sup>th</sup> December.** He will post a reminder on the Village Drum to remind those unable to attend the meeting to also respond.

#### **One way System in the Village**

The Chairman explained that Caroline Clapper came to the Trust's October meeting and suggested that the village should reconsider the benefits to be gained from a one way system to access Letchmore Heath. It was agreed that the Village Meeting provided an excellent opportunity to gauge local views and opinions. AL stressed that there was no current or secret plan and the Trust recognised that this issue is not new.

The views of the Trust were not declared prior to an open and active discussion by attendees.

General concern was expressed mainly centred on the effect such a system would have on speed of traffic, particularly given the objective of bringing speeds down to 20 mph through the village. Issues relating to safety of walkers and other road users were expressed as well as the inconvenience to local residents. There was little confidence that this system would bring any benefits to the village.

The mood and sense of the meeting was clear. Following a comprehensive discussion, the Chairman asked if anyone wished to speak in favour of a one way system. Nobody wished to do so. When he suggested on behalf of the Trust that there could be benefits from a trial period, this was also rejected.

In closing, AL said the LHVT had voted against the scheme although some members recognized there could be benefits from a trial period.

Gary Yardley reminded the meeting that we should not deter Councillor Clapper from her long standing support for the village. Accepting this, the Chairman said he would report back to Caroline Clapper.

*Action: AL to report back to Councillor Clapper and assess any necessary follow up.*

## **5. Questions**

- a) Martin Shaw asked if Aldenham School could have more buses as the number of pupils was growing. Mrs. Vicky Gocher (Headmistress of Aldenham Primary School) assured the meeting that the school would not grow any bigger. She said that primary school age children would not use buses and if there were best practices to be learned from other schools (like Habs) she would follow these up with the Bursar.
- b) Sean Wilson said that 1,750 pupils come to Habs every day and he thinks the school has done as much as they can to encourage the use of buses. He said that traffic through the village was more complicated than just parents bringing their children to school. There were many other users who use the village as a rat run.
- c) Jo Letts said that some cars parked outside her house were owned / driven by sixth formers at Aldenham. She asked if the school could give them parking spaces or come to an alternative arrangement with them. Mrs. Gocher said that she would follow this up.
- d) The Three Horse Shoes will hopefully reopen in February 2022. Gary Yardley said that with the possibility of the pub having 90 covers, this could create parking problems. Restricted non-resident parking in the village was suggested, but warnings were also given that urbanization should be resisted. The point was made that when the pub had been busy and thriving in the past, people had always managed to park and that there were more spaces than many realised. A thriving pub was a key and welcome village asset which may bring parking problems which would have to be faced.
- e) Councillor David Lambert gave some context to the HBC Draft Local Plan, and emphasized the importance of comments, concerns and objections being submitted to HBC. The Council is bound by law to present a plan, and there was a standard formula for assessing future housing needs. Oliver Dowden MP is in discussion with Michael Gove and others in reviewing this formula to assess its current relevance. The Draft Plan is the first stage, and this will be reviewed and revised based on feedback and response.

There are proposed sites for a new medical centre and a school. He said that although Hertsmere has a high proportion of green belt land, the borough still has to meet their target which will mean some of it being lost – all offered and usable brown field sites had been included.

- f) Jo Letts asked for a definition of “affordable housing”. DL said that there is a formula dependent on the income of residents and the cost of housing in the area. He said that 40% of new houses should be affordable.

- g) Land put forward for development at Round Bush, (including the site of Brian Hyde's garden Centre) is owned by the diocese of St Albans. Objectors to these sites being developed should write to / petition the Bishop of St Albans.
- h) Nicky Weisfeld commented on potholes in Common Lane which although filled then quickly deteriorate. Derek Moran said he would follow this up, and write to HCC. (*This pothole has now been repaired*).
- i) Simon Letts asked for an update on Elstree Aerodrome. Gareth Tinsley, who sits on the EACC said that that was little to report, and currently there was little disturbance from air traffic in the village. Problems and concerns of aircraft noise and disturbance should initially be addressed directly by phone to the aerodrome by calling 020 8953 7480.

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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.**

**30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.**