

Summary of Minutes of the 321<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting of Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at One Garden City

**Board Members Present**

Gareth Hawkins (Chair) GH  
Joanna Dew JD  
John Hillson JH  
Kevin Jones KJ

Michael Collins MiC

Simon Franklin SF

Terry Hone TH

Ian Mantle IM

**Apologies**

Chris Pattison (Vice-Chair) CP

Lucy Gravatt LG

Sir Tim Wilson TW

**Foundation Officers Present**

Graham Fisher (CEO) GF  
Mark Coles (ED Property) MaC  
Matt Peak (ED Finance) MP  
Stuart Sapsford (ED Communities SS  
Culture & Heritage)

David Ames – ED (Stewardship DA  
& Development)

Kerry Kyriacou (ED Regeneration KKy  
& Growth)

Jo Walker (Governance Support JW  
Executive)

Kris Karslake (Sustainability KKa  
Manager)

**Others Present**

Joseph McCann (Beevers & JM  
Struthers)

Rebecca Steele (Beevers & RS  
Struthers)

1. The Chairman reported that notice of the Meeting had been given in accordance with the Rules of the Foundation and that a quorum was present. Apologies were noted as above.

The minutes of the 320<sup>th</sup> meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were agreed and signed.

2. **Declarations of Interests** SF – LG1/resident of the Grange, IM – LG1 councillor for the Grange, KJ – Nigel Squibb (Governor appointment)

3. **The minutes and decisions of the Grants Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> May were noted by the Board.**

The 2024 budget for the Grants Committee was summarised.

Meeting Date	Starting Balance	Amount Awarded	Remaining Balance
January 2024	£120,000	£0	£ 120,000
15 March 2024	£120,000	£18,776	£ 101,224
10 May 2024	£101,224	£40,608	£60,616
26 July 2024	£60,616		
		Total Remaining	£60,616

### **3.1 Grants awarded by the Heritage Foundation**

#### **LGC Bowls Club** – Installation of stairlift

- The stairs at the club are very steep and prevent some less able members from accessing the club room on the first floor.
- NHC have granted £2.5k towards the project and the club will be contributing towards the project.
- Part of the project will be to put steps down to the green for easier access.

The Committee awarded the grant in full, £1,500, under object ii, Recreation and Leisure.

#### **Wilbury Community Café** – Support of running costs.

- Wilbury is one of the most deprived areas in Letchworth.
- The café is very popular with children's activities and free food and refreshments.
- Sign posting for local support groups is also available.
- The group has very limited income with the main sources being voluntary donations and the bric-a-brac stall.

The Committee awarded the grant in full, £1,176, under object iv, Health, and Wellbeing.

#### **Cauldwell Youth** – funding to support and mentor 10 young people in Letchworth with their mental health and other issues.

- John Cauldwell set up the charity to mentor young people and he has pledged 30% match funding with everything they generate. The grant request is for 25% of the total cost.
- This isn't just a mentoring programme, it's about the person holistically and developing their skills and is far more involved than the usual 'business' type mentoring.
- HF have limited interaction with 18–24-year-olds and this could provide a wider opportunity.
- Those on the programme could be referred by a variety of agencies or self-refer.

The Committee awarded the grant in full, £5,000, under object iii, Education and Learning and recommended monitoring the group for a six-month report with a view to a further grant.

#### **North Herts Ladies Choir** – funding to assist in establishing a lady's choir.

- An initiative led by the Head of Music at St Christopher's School
- Most choirs locally are mixed but it was felt it would be great to have a ladies choir.
- To build a repertoire of sheet music costs between £75 and £150 per song.
- After costs, any money the choir makes goes to charity, which could be up to £3,000 pa.

The Committee awarded the grant in full, £1,100, under object ii, Recreation and Leisure

#### **St Pauls Church** – funding to support repairs and maintenance to church roof.

- The quinquennial inspection found several problems with the roof which would cost c£300k to repair.
- The users of the church raised a phenomenal amount themselves, £188k, and the church had a reserve fund and the works commenced.

- After commencement it was discovered more work was needed but the church was reluctant to fund works already started.
- Although it's a church and our rules don't allow HF to promote religion, the church building is used extensively for community projects that aren't exclusive to its parishioners.

The Committee awarded the grant in full, £10,000, under object I, Heritage, and Environment

**Letchworth Town Twinning Association** – Support the costs of residents visiting from Wissen.

- The twinned towns take it in turn to host a visit and in France and Germany they're given funding by the local mayor or council.
- This application is funding a visit and an evening meal for people from Wissen.
- The question is to ask what benefit there is to the town as the visit comprises of an arrival day, visit to London, meal in LGC and departure day.

The Committee refused the grant but suggested other support is offered in showing them attractions such as the museum, farm and others in LGC.

#### **4. The minutes and decisions of the Heritage Advisory Committee were noted by the Board.**

##### Decisions March 2024

Netley Dell, Business licence – Approved.

Norton Way North, Extend Garden room, alterations to roof – Approved.

##### Applications to the HAC 2024

March – 64

Annual Total – 225

##### Decisions April 2024

Pasture Road, felling of cedar tree – Deferred.

Spring Road, Conversion of one property to two – Refused.

Shott Lane, two storey side extension, single rear extension, dormer windows – Approved in principle.

Eastholm, two storey rear extension, replacement windows – Approved in principle.

##### Applications to the HAC 2024

April – 79

Annual Total – 304

#### **5. Report of the Executive Director – Finance**

##### 5.1 Management Accounts

A similar pattern to rent collection being paid within the 90 days. Rental owed is at its lowest since March 2020. Support costs within budget. Slight underspend for property maintenance.

## **5.2 Annual Accounts Report for 2023 by External Auditors Beever and Struthers**

Introduction by JM – Very positive audit from Beever and Struthers point of view. No observations or audit adjustments or issues raised.

Key audit areas presented by RS.

- Significant risk with the macroeconomic conditions, taking this out resulted in a positive movement of funds. No impairment in the year regarding management.
- Bad debt is as expected, c6%.
- Valuers reviewed 68% of properties, confident of a fair value of the remaining properties. No impairment identified.
- Pensions is a significant risk. Assumptions were tested and found to be reasonable.
- Depreciation tested and no areas of issues found.

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2023 can be found on the Foundations website [here](#)

The Trustees Approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements and authorised the Chair, Vice-Chair, CEO/Secretary to sign.

The Trustees Authorised the Chair to sign the Representation Letter on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

## **6. Executive Director – Stewardship and Development**

The Revised Strategic Masterplan was submitted to NHC for approval, and it's hoped the agreed masterplan will be signed off by NHC in July.

## **7. Sustainability Update – KKa**

The Trustees approved the mid-term organisational objective of Net Zero Carbon emissions by 2035. This will create an organisational imperative to schedule improvements to our buildings.

## **8. Chief Executive Report**

- The Trustees approved the draft vulnerability policy as presented by GF.
- The Trustee agreed the recommendation that Kieran Khangura and Jane Perry be Appointed Trustees for a term of four years.
- The Trustee agreed the recommendation that Jenny Heaton and Nigel Squibb be General Governors for a term of five years.
- The Trustees agreed the award of a grant to Garden Shed for their rent.

## **9. Executive Director – Property**

The Trustees agreed to delegate the disposal of several properties to the Property Team in line with strategy 2028 and our goal of improving our financial resilience.

#### **10. Executive Director – Communities, Culture and Heritage**

It was agreed that a Nature and Wellbeing Manager would be appointed to the Foundation to provide additional leadership capacity for delivering strategy 2028.