

## **LGVA Chairman's report 2018**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Good evening and thank you all for coming tonight. Our annual report to the Charity Commission is available together with the accounts on the table by the doors if you don't already have one. A copy can also be requested from the Office later. This report runs from 1st September 2017 to 31 August this year (2018), and doesn't cover the last 2½ months. Also as a reminder this report relates to the first year of our new charitable status. It should also be remembered that the LGVA area of benefit is much larger than the political ward for Leverstock Green. A map showing this is on the wall in the Buglass room and can also be downloaded from our website.

You will recall, I'm sure, that at a Special General Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> July last year members unanimously agreed to transfer all the old unincorporated Association's assets to the newly formed Charitable Incorporated Organisation (or CIO as it is known) and to close the old Association when the trustees were happy that the transfer had been completed. As our Treasurer, Dominic, will explain shortly the bulk of the assets were transferred at the start of the financial year 2017/2018 but the formalities for the transfer of the lease of the Village Hall took somewhat longer. This necessitated obtaining formal approval to assign the lease from DBC (who own the freehold of the hall), carrying out the legal formalities to transfer the title to the lease out of the names of the holding trustees of the old Association into the name of the CIO, and then registering all of this at the Land Registry. I am delighted to be able to tell you we have received confirmation from our solicitors that this has now all been successfully completed, and the old unincorporated Association with the Charity Number 266940 has been removed from the Charity Commission Register.

### **TRUSTEES**

Our main management committee is made up of both elected and nominated Trustees. Up to 15 Trustees can be elected to the committee, and the elections for the coming year's trustees will take place later on this evening. The five Officers are Margaret Rayner Association Secretary, Sue Brind, Chair of Hall Management, Dominic Tang our Treasurer (who took over from Iris Parish during this last year), Colin Gage Vice Chairman and myself Audrey Weightman Chairman.

At the AGM last year (2017) 14 Trustees were elected and a further 5 Trustees were nominated by various organisations.

ALL our Trustees are unpaid volunteers, and together with other members of the community who give their help in a variety of ways, we all give a great deal of our time and energy to the Association, and I would like to this opportunity to thank EVERYONE for all their hard work over the last financial year. Without you all there the many fund-raising activities wouldn't happen.

### **EMPLOYEES...**

We also have 6 employees. Our administrator Lesley continues to give a warm welcome to everyone and efficiently deals with any queries. All our other employees, the caretakers and cleaners have remained the same over the past financial year and I would also like to thank all our employees for all their hard work.

## **HALL MANAGEMENT**

All 3 rooms at the hall see 36 regular hirers from Monday to Friday each week. Weekend bookings for parties and gatherings are still popular. Although we lost four regular bookings during the last 12 months, due to insufficient numbers attending their activities, we have now 3 new weekly hirers.

Of course our caretakers and cleaning staff continue to attend efficiently to the care of the rooms and amenities.

The upgrade to LED lighting in the building was completed with very little disruption to hirers. Some updating of equipment for the office and renewal of items has also taken place.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

The Environmental Sub-Committee (ESC) is made up of members of the main committee and other local residents. Its function is to examine all planning applications and proposals while seeking to protect and preserve the local environment, amenities and Green Belt from encroachment or inappropriate development. The ESC also examines all National, Regional, County and Local Plans to establish the possible effect on the environment and amenities of Leverstock Green and its immediate vicinity.

This year again much of the ESC's efforts have been devoted to the latest developments for housing on the East Hemel site off Westwick Row. St Albans have issued a new draft plan which has increased the number of houses they wish to build on the site very substantially – something that is clearly totally unacceptable to LGVA and we believe the vast majority of village residents. The ESC, have submitted detailed objections to these proposals with the help of a firm of Planning Consultants, Troy Planning and Design, which LGVA have retained for this purpose. Members of the ESC will be giving a short presentation later in tonight's meeting and will be happy to deal with questions on the topic.

On a more local issue, our efforts to improve the parking situation in the village centre have borne fruit and work has recently been completed to expand the car park at the side of the hall to increase the number of spaces significantly. Steps are also under way to deter and limit longer term parking in front of the shops although this may take a little longer to achieve.

## **FUND-RAISING AND OTHER EVENTS.**

The twelve months to the end of August this year were as usual extremely busy.

**Our annual Fireworks display** took place on Sat 4th November 2017 (i.e. not the one we attended earlier this month!). Once again, the fireworks were enjoyed by many families from Leverstock Green, as well as some from outside the village. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Helen and Matthew Glass, and the rest of the team for making it such a memorable occasion.

After the previous year's success, we held another highly successful **Winter Fayre** on 11th November. My thanks go especially to Sue, Lesley and Iris along with support from many others on the committee (and families) who organised the Fayre. The Winter Fayre was immediately followed by the official switching on of the Christmas Lights in the village by our Member of Parliament the RT Hon Sir Mike Penning. Once again, the lights added to the atmosphere in the Village Centre in the run-up to Christmas, and our thanks go to the sponsorship from local businesses which made this possible.

We were again supported in the event by the Holy Trinity Church Choir, starting the Christmas season off with some great music.

**Our Spring Quiz**, now with Bernadine and Roy Makins and Phil Gore at the helm, took place in March. These events have proved extremely successful and well-attended. I'd like to thank Roy and Phil for their hard work in developing and putting together the questions, and the other committee members who worked hard on the night to make it a huge success.

**The Royal Wedding**- We collaborated with Holy Trinity Church and the Leverstock Green Football club to support this event. Our thanks to Rev. Lizzie Hood and all involved for making it a lovely event.

**Big Band Concert** this year was held again on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and has now by popular demand become a regular annual feature and another great fund-raising event. I would like to thank Colin and the other committee members that helped in making this great fun.

The final events of the financial year were the **Summer Fete** on 14th July, and the annual **Arts & Crafts** show, held once again on the day of the fete, in the Westwick Room. My thanks go to Fete sub-committee for once again organising the fete, and to Bernadine Makins for organising the Annual Arts & Crafts exhibition.

Again, the weather was excellent which certainly which always helps! The theme this year was Ocean World, which went down well with the stall holders that entered the best dressed stall competition.

All this could not have taken place however without the hard work of not just the fete committee, but many others as well. There are too many to thank individually, but my grateful thanks go to the many other individuals and groups who helped in one way or another both beforehand and on the day; whether it was producing the programme, getting the field ready, manning the gates, running a stall or providing and selling the teas. I would also like to thank our sponsors The Centurion Club, whose contributions are very much appreciated.

**Photographic Competitions**, run by Ralph Rayner, continue to prove popular and the entries, which were displayed in the entrance hall make an interesting display for visitors. Ralph is very grateful to Tom Derbyshire and John Marshall from the HH Photographic Society for continuing to judge these competitions. The winning pictures were published in our newsletter, website and in the entrance to the hall.

## **OTHER ASPECTS OF LGVA WORK**

Of course, running the hall and organising events is only a part of the work that we do.

We continue to produce our glossy, full-colour newsletter. I'd like to thank Martin Chapman as Editor for the magnificent job he does. We also have a small sub-group committee who help Martin in deciding on priorities etc. and to act as additional proof readers. I'd like to formally thank the group for the work they do on this. My thanks must also go to the collators/counters and the army of distributors who deliver the newsletter to well over 3000 households, and of course to the newsletter's sponsor Dave Clarke, our local butcher.

We are also very grateful for the support and donations we receive from The Parish Trust towards maintenance; without their help our work would be even more difficult.

Thanks too must go to John Ayling who does a wonderful job as our "in-house" photographer.

I would also like to thank Ralph Rayner who produces the advertising posters for our events and where appropriate, the tickets. He has also produced the Fete Programme for many years which involves obtaining advertisers and undertaking art work.

In addition to our website, we also have an LGVA group page on Facebook which many of you are signed up to. In order to join our Facebook page you must answer 3 questions. We also have a web-shop portal (Easy Fund Raising) which allows those of us who shop online to earn extra income for the Association.

## **500 CLUB**

One of our regular fundraisers is the 500 Club. I would like to formally thank everyone who contributes to this scheme, and particularly Bernadine Makins, and of course Lesley our administrator, who manage the scheme with great enthusiasm, the money raised is a valuable part of our annual income.

## **TRUSTEES/VOLUNTEERS**

As mentioned earlier, we have a very strong and lively LGVA committee all of whom work hard to ensure that events in the village are well organised. We have some 18 members currently on the committee, made up of elected Trustees and representatives of various organisations in Leverstock Green. From time to time we inevitably lose members through retirement or relocation so we are always on the lookout for volunteers. If you live or work in Leverstock Green and would like to join us as a Trustee on the LGVA please let us know. There are volunteer forms on the table by the door – please feel free to fill in a form if you wish to volunteer or just speak to myself or one of the trustees here this evening. This is a chance to help your local community and you would be made very welcome.

Of course as well as helping with our various activities we also need people to support what we do by attending our various events. Sadly, where support is not forthcoming, we may have to drop these activities, which in turn leads to less income. We get no financial help from DBC, so continued fundraising and the support of the community is essential.

THANKYOU Audrey Weightman, LGVA Chairman 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018