



The Lopping Endowment Chairman's Report for the 139th Annual General Meeting 2024

This report covers our financial year to December 31st2023.

Hall usage (Room bookings)

Revenue from our room bookings in 2023 amounted to £74,096.38 as against our budget of £75,000.00.

Our revenue in 2022 was £65,388.01.

In 2019 (Pre-pandemic comparison) the revenue was £53,982.00.

Room lettings rate review.

The Board of Directors agreed that the modest increases to our room letting rates that came into effect on January 1st, 2022, would remain in force until January 1st, 2024.

There have been some large increases in direct and indirect overheads, during 2023, especially utilities. We expect that our utilities costs will reduce by the end of the year when contracts are negotiated.

Given these cost issues, we decided to increase rates by 10% from January 2024 which amounts to around £1.50 to £2.00 per hour.

At that time, the previous rates will have been active for 24 months.

Discounts for a small number of "historical users" were reduced from 50% to 40% on January 1st, 2022, and were to be reduced to 30% at the following review date in 2023. This reduction was delayed and came into effect on January 1st, 2024.

Commercial Tenants.

We continue to receive rents from Whitney's Carpet Shop, Waterlows News Agents and Hunter Biscuit and Wolf Ltd (Hobo Club), who are operating a 45 seat cinema (night operation) and a mixed use workspace (Day operation) in the unit that was previously occupied by HSBC Bank Plc.

Our total income from commercial rents should increase to £93,000.00 in 2024/25.

I would like to thank our Board member Pesh, for handling the new lease for Whitney's Carpet shop.

Marketing.

We are currently marketing Lopping Hall activities using our website, the two High Road facing monitors, together with social media and other advertising spaces on the internet, such as "Halls for Hire".

Our monitors and website not only advertise LH rooms to rent, but also theatre events (and ticketing) and the activities of all our users. This is a free of charge service to our regular users.

We continue to see an increase in booking levels.

It is gratifying to note that many of the bookings are a result of recommendations.

The building is now firmly associated with entertainment given that activities cover Theatre, Cinema and the twenty or so Classes running dance, fitness, and Yoga for both adults and children.

These activities have also expanded to include pre-school classes, mental wellbeing, counselling and back to work clubs.

Works Completed 2023 and 2024

- **Increased theatre lighting.** We thank Terry Tew Sound and Light Co. Ltd. for the generous gift of a further eight lighting units. There are now twenty flood or spotlights permanently available at Lopping Hall.
- **Air conditioning** and a new ceiling ventilation system was installed **in the Large Hall** (Theatre auditorium) and the small hall in mid 2023.
- **Air conditioning in the Willingale room** was completed on 3rd July 2024, together with an outside ventilation system
- A new quiet and more efficient **extraction motor** has also been fitted in the main hall / theatre to vent hot and stale air. This avoids using the air-conditioning units to cool hot air.
- **Front and interior door security** has been improved by placing digital locks on certain doors. The front door is set to lock automatically at a certain time in the evening. Regular, trusted users of the Hall can access using a specified code. This system is taken off-line at times when parents and theatre goers are using the front entrance.
Internal doors are locked as and when absolutely necessary.
- We have now installed a **basic digital touch pad stage lighting control board** that is sufficient for small performances to include such things as comedy and jazz nights and can also be used by Schools. This is a chargeable service, but avoids users having to employ outside contractors.
- We now have four large **wheeled mirrors** for use in this hall which allows larger dance groups to use Lopping Hall and reduce the dependence on the other two smaller halls.

- We have now **upgraded the old Strand stage lighting patch panel** which used three pin round sockets to control stage lighting via a DEMUX controller. The system had become unreliable. We no longer require a DEMUX controller, and the new kit allows us to use LED lights when required.
This was an expensive upgrade costing £5,500.00 and we thank one of our Directors, Pesh for facilitating a large grant and LADS for their generous gift. Additionally, Terry Tew Sound & Light did not charge us for installation costs, which took two days to complete and test. This continues his generous support of Lopping Hall.
- The two old electrical **RCD distribution boards** supplying power and lighting to the main hall and theatre stage lighting, have been upgraded. This should make the system more resilient and avoid the random loss of power. In at least one case, this was just before a performance.
- Automatic **LED safety lighting** has been installed in several areas
- The old main **stage curtain track** and pulley system was removed, and a new system installed. The old track and hangers were very worn, making the closing and opening of this heavy curtain very difficult, with a failure inevitable.
- **Repairs to Stone, brickwork, and Terracotta - Station Road entrance and brickwork repairs in the basement.**
Stone and brickwork restoration, mainly around the large rear door on Station Road was essential maintenance. Mortar and brickwork had crumbled, letters on the 1883 foundation stone were indecipherable and the carved terracotta needed careful cleaning together with some repairs to the two columns.

We have received £3,000.00 from The Essex Heritage Fund specifically to replace the foundation stone, originally laid by the Lord Mayor of London in 1883 and a further £1,200.00 for Loughton Town Council. We were able to reduce the cost of the Brick and stone renovations to £16,896.73 and basement works to £1,300.00 + vat.

Work commenced on May 29th and is has now been completed.

I would like to thank our Board member Jon Riley, who has professional; experience in this area, for controlling this project.

FUTURE WORKS

CLOCK TOWER REPAIRS

The clock tower needs repairs to guttering, lead flashings and woodwork, together with painting. A drone survey was carried out that indicates that the tower is in a reasonable state but needs attention in 2024/25. We will be requesting quotations for scaffolding and works and will decide when we should go ahead based on financial reserves and whether this can be completed in the summer months.

Financial reserves.

Our end of year (2023) reserves were good. The Board of Directors consider that this, together with increased earnings in 2024 will enable us to fulfil most of our upgrade commitments and allow us to continue to operate one of the best activity and entertainment centres in Loughton and the surrounding area.

Board and Hall Management.

I would like to thank my fellow Directors, our Secretary and Hall Management for their help and support over the past year.

Jessica Ford resigned in February 2024 due to increased work commitments.

Jayna Jogia resigned in May 2024 as she has relocated to the UAE.

Since the last AGM, we have welcomed one new Director to the board.

Cllr Jon Riley who joined us at the end of 2023.

Given his previous experience in the building sector, he has agreed to handle large projects such as the renovation of the Station Road entrance and the Clock Tower. Others on the board will give him support as required.

Jon is also the Loughton Town Councils representative on the Lopping Hall Board.

If there are no objections, I would like to move that Jon be formally elected to the Board.

We do not have any Directors for re-election this year.

We are looking for two new Directors to join us in 2025.

As noted at the 2022 AGM, I decided to resign as Chairman of the Board at this AGM.

However, due to circumstances outside his control, Gabriel Ostend, our current Deputy Chairman, will be unable to take up this position until January 2025 and has asked me to remain as Chairman. This request was agreed by the Board of Directors.

Current Directors (AGM 2024)

Alan Martin	Chairman. Estate Management Group (EMG)	Elected
Gabriel Ostend	Deputy Chairman.	Elected
Martin Howarth	Treasurer	Assumed
John Orgar	Estate Management Group.	Elected
Lindon Barr	Social media management, Deputy Website Editor.	Elected
Pesh Kapasiawala	Funding (Grants) and Estate management (Leases)	Assumed
Cllr. Les House	Safety and security.	Elected
Cllr. Jon Riley	Major maintenance projects. LTC Council representative.	Elected

Company Secretary

Stephen Radley

Hall Managers (Employees)

John Mahoney	Hall Manager
Les House	Deputy Hall Manager (Health & Safety, Security and Child Protection).
Diane Peters	Assistant Hall Manager

Alan Martin. January and updated for the AGM July 2024.

Chairman.

The Lopping Endowment Corporate Trustee Ltd.

The Lopping Endowment.

Charity 228236