



The Lopping Endowment Chairman's Report for the 138th Annual General Meeting 2023 (Updated for AGM)

This report covers our financial year to December 31st 2022.

Hall usage (Room bookings)

Revenue from our room bookings in 2022 amounted to £65,388.01.

As it happens, £65,000.00 was our budget for 2022.

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

Assuming that the economy remains stable and that there are no further increases in utility costs that might affect user booking levels, we would expect that earnings for 2023 might amount to £75,000.00

Room letting 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 at least August 2023. We would review these rates during Q2/2023, taking into consideration such things as the cost of living, and the large increases in direct and indirect overheads at Lopping Hall, especially utilities, that could add £15,000.00 to overheads during 2023.

Considering these issues, we have decided to increase rates by 10% from January 2024 which relates 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 next review date.

We have decided that this discount rate will in some cases be reduced and depend on the user. Discussions are or will be taking place.

Commercial Tenants.

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

Some major structural changes have been made to open up this space (191 High Road) to include soundproofing. It is expected to open in September.

Our total income from commercial rents will amount to approximately £85,000.00 pa in 2023.

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

We continue to see an increase in both enquiry and booking levels.

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

Now that activities available on the Lopping Hall estate cover Theatre, Cinema and the twenty or so Classes running dance, fitness, and Yoga for both adults and children, the building is now firmly associated with entertainment.

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

Bookings for parties using the relatively new kitchen and bar, together with the main hall have increased.

These parties are mainly organised for younger children and certain adult celebrations.

Works Completed

As previously reported, in December 2021, and additional works carried out in 2022 and early 2023, we completed the following:

- **Changing rooms and toilets.** A complete strip out and refurbishment.
- **Defibrillator installed.**
- **PA System for the Theatre and first floor rooms installed.**
- **Stonework to the front of 191 High Road - replacement and cleaning.** (Previously HSBC Bank).
- **Increased theatre lighting.** We thank Terry Tew Sound and Light Co. Ltd. for the generous gift of a further eight lighting units.
- **Internet.** Improved access points for high-speed connections.
- **Baby changing facility.** On the ground floor.
- **Major replacement of central heating pipework and CCTV inspection and cleaning of all soil pipework on the ground floor of the estate (189 and 191).**

Forward Works

Air conditioning – Main Hall / Theatre.

This was completed recently and is installed in the main hall (auditorium) and the small hall. Temperatures in the auditorium had been reaching 80 degrees during performances in the summer months.

These units have heat pumps and can be used to heat these areas, when we do not require the central heating system to heat the entire building.

A new extraction motor will be fitted in the next few weeks to vent hot and stale air from the main hall. This avoids cooling hot air that could otherwise be removed.

We will also be insulating and part boarding the main loft above the main hall, to retain heat in the winter months. This will happen when we have allocated funding for this.

[Repairs to Stone, brickwork, and Terracotta - Station Road entrance. 2023 – 2024.](#)

This area, mainly around the large rear door on Station Road, is now considered to be essential maintenance as this has deteriorated further. Mortar and brickwork have crumbled, and the 1895 terracotta needs careful cleaning together with some repairs to the two columns and the replacement of the foundation stone.

Given that this is the original entrance to Lopping Hall, and is of historical importance, we are trying to obtain funding for this project estimated to cost up to £35,000.00.

The cost for this has expanded as it now includes the replacement of a stone cornice on the front of Lopping Hall and the brickwork at the rear of 191 (Station Road and the unit previously occupied by HSBC).

[Front door upgrades \(2023\) and Motorised sliding front door \(2024\)](#)

Due to some security issues, we have now upgraded the older door set. This now has an automatic locking and entry system, and the old broken door closure device has been changed. The front door is now much more resilient.

Dependent on how this new system works, we might put back the sliding door installation.

If we go ahead, the entrance will be re-designed to include an automatic sliding door. This upgrade is desirable, if not essential, given the difficulty of accessing the property using the swing doors, especially for those with children, prams and the infirm.

The window and door set will be moved further out towards the pavement, and the cost is therefore considerable.

[Stage Lighting and sound. 2023 - 2026](#)

Because of the costs involved, this will happen in several stages.

2023.

The first part involves the installation of a basic lighting set and control board that will be sufficient for small performances to include such things as comedy and jazz nights.

This will allow LH staff and those so authorised, to quickly set up and operate stage lighting, without the need to bring in a professional lighting and sound company. **This has now been completed and is operating effectively.**

2024 - 2026

The second part will involve the upgrading of the old lighting patch panel which uses 3 pin round sockets to control lighting via a DMX controller, and replacing this with a modern lighting control system. This will integrate with the system installed in the first stage upgrade.

Full lighting and sound set-ups for major stage performances will still be handled by outside contractors, such as Terry Tew Sound and Light Co. Ltd.

This may well mean that we take this opportunity to upgrade and extend the stage and make room for under stage storage (trolleys on tracks). It may also be necessary to install a three-phase electrical circuit in the main hall / theatre.

Theatre main curtain track and pulley system 2023.

The pulley system was very old and even though we had cleaned and oiled this several times, it was still difficult to open and shut and occasionally it might not completely close.

We have now replaced the track, track hangers and pulley system and is working effectively. When the track was taken down, the hangers were found to be so worn, that I was surprised they were usable.

Financial reserves.

Our end of year (2022) reserve was good. The Board of Directors consider that this, together with increased earnings in 2023 will allow 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.

Since the last AGM, Mr Paul Mercer and Mr Garrett Fitzgerald have left the Board of Directors.

We now have three new Directors:

Gabriel Ostend, Pesh Kapasiawala and Les House.

If there are no objections, I would like to move that these individuals to be formerly elected to the Board.

According to our Articles of Association, we also have two Directors for re-election this year, these being Jessie Ford and Lindon Barr. If there are no objections, I would like to move that these individuals be elected for a further three years.

We now have a full Board of Directors at Lopping Hall.

However, as noted in Board minutes, I have decided that I will resign as Chairman of the Board at the 2024 AGM. This is to allow me more time in my retirement.

As is still the case with our former Chairman, Mike Walker, I will be available to advise others and assist with projects after that time.

Succession planning is now well advanced with some Directors taking up specific roles, such as Technical, Estate etc.

Current Directors (AGM 2023)

| | | |
|------------------|---|--------------|
| Alan Martin | Chairman. Estate Management Group (EMG) | Elected |
| Martin Howarth | Treasurer | Assumed |
| Jayna Jogia | Website designer and Editor. | Council Rep. |
| John Orgar | EMG. | Elected |
| Jessie Ford | Website Editor, Theatre operations & EMG. | Elected |
| Lindon Barr | Social media management, Deputy Website Editor. | Elected |
| Gabriel Ostend | | |
| Pesh Kapasiawala | | |
| Les House | | |

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. March and amended for the AGM June 2023.

Chairman.

The Lopping Endowment Corporate Trustee Ltd.

The Lopping Endowment.

Charity 228236