

For Launton Annual Parish Meeting April 2022

Report from the Launton Community Communications Group for the period May 2021 to April 2022.

I am pleased to report that the Launton Community Communications Group (LCCG) had a largely successful year. Our financial position has remained stable and, if needed, we will seek extra funding from the Parish Council as the new houses in Launton Mews are completed and occupied (as at April 2022 we have added 30 new distributions to the total for *Launton Lines* from Launton Mews). Our aim over the long term is to break even, recognising that we are not a profit-making organisation. However, recent years' exceptional conditions have proven the value of having a financial safety net to withstand financial shocks so we will try to keep a reserve fund for such purposes.

We aim to keep the percentage of commercial advertising space to under 20% of total pages, which is relatively low for a publication of its type. Even in these unusual times, advertising revenue has held up relatively well (many thanks to all advertisers who have stayed with us) and, thanks to the work of our Advertising Manager, Jenni Walker, we've even managed to add some new advertisers as local activity recovers from the pandemic. From our issue-by-issue records, income has exceeded outgoings each month since we moved to Lonsdale printers in August 2021, partly as their print costs have been lower than our previous supplier.

I'd like to highlight that the continuing success of the LCCG is due to the dedication of everyone involved, including:

- ♦ the regular team who have made the production and distribution of each issue go smoothly
- ♦ the distributors, coordinated by Shirley Johnson, who regularly deliver *Launton Lines* to their neighbours
- ♦ our advertisers, some of whom have supported us for many years
- ♦ our printers, Lonsdale, who have managed some fast turnarounds since we joined them in August 2021
- ♦ Steve Webber and others who maintain communications on the online channels
- ♦ Launton Parish Council, without whose grant we would struggle to continue; and
- ♦ the contributors, both regular and occasional.

Summary of the past part-year

- ♦ We kept going throughout the Covid-19 pandemic!
- ♦ We subscribed to a financial management tool (Xero) last year to help us track and manage advertising which is coming from an increasing number of organisations.

- ♦ We reorganised responsibilities, with the Advertising Manager focusing on recruiting advertisers, and the Treasurer taking on invoicing and chasing advertisers, as well as managing the payment of printers' bills. Unfortunately, just as this was about to go live in November 2021, key committee members were struck down with Covid-19. The effects have lasted quite a while, so we have fallen behind with invoicing advertisers, and with chasing payments. All are now on the road to recovery and thankfully we have enough financial cushion to manage in the meantime.
- ♦ Matthew Hill joined us as a co-Editor from November 2021 and has been concentrating on improving the graphics and adverts and setting up layouts for our new DTP program.
- ♦ February 2022 saw the 100th contribution from Tony Jeacock, the ex-Launton Boy. We have also added to our rota of regular contributors.
- ♦ We have had some interesting data from Issuu about the online version - more on that below.
- ♦ In the year ahead we will consider registering LCCG as a charity

As always, we would welcome help from anyone who would like to be either regularly or occasionally involved with our projects. In particular, we would welcome applications for the role of Secretary, a committee role which is currently vacant.

In the reporting period we produced 12 issues. They were all produced and distributed within our target of "around the first of each month".

Below is summary information:

Total number of pages produced: 540. Issues varied between 40 pages and 48 pages in extent. Of these pages, 180 were in colour (we introduced colour adverts in May 2021 and they rapidly became popular).

Approximate number of words of editorial content: 128,500.

Total number of adverts: 297. These took up 115.76 pages, or just over 21.5% of the total pages.

Total number of paid (commercial) ads were 261. These were just over 17.5% of the total page count. The balance were ads for village organisations or events which we have not charged for. We have always had a target that no more than 20% of each issue should be made up of commercial adverts.

In July 2021 we produced our last issue with OUP (OxUniPrint). Fortunately, we were able to transfer to a printer based in Wellingborough (Lonsdale Direct) on the recommendation of other village newsletters. Lonsdale took about a day longer in production and we then had to wait a further day for delivery, but their prices were considerably lower than OUP.

From October 2019 we have also made *Launton Lines* available online through issuu.com (www.issuu.com). From July 2021 we started collecting data on downloads and usage. Here is a record for the 9 months July 2021- March 2022.

Total “Reads”: 2,213 (note some of the reads will be from earlier issues)

Total “Impressions”: 31,418 (note some of these will be from earlier issues)

Average Read time: 4.23 minutes per read

65.5% of access was from phones, 34.5% from desktops.

In the nine months we have had access from 21 countries. The UK has the largest number (1,863 or 87.7% of all Reads) followed by the USA (118 Reads or 5.6%). No other country had more than 2% of Reads. Other countries listed (in order of Reads) are South Africa, Italy, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, France, Sweden, Spain, Greece, India, Philippines, Russia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, French Guiana, Canada, Malaysia, South Korea, Mexico. I have to say that we have doubts about some of these – but you never know where there may be people interested in Launton!

Jon Spinage, Chair, Launton Community Communications Group