

Report from Launton Community Communications Group for Launton Annual Parish Meeting

18 April 2024

LCCG is made up of the village newsletter ***Launton Lines***, the **Launton Community Facebook Group**, and the Launton website **Launton.org**. The three projects are run separately.

The long-term aim of the Group is to break even, and to hold sufficient reserves to cover six months of operations and costs. The largest cost is the printing of *Launton Lines* each month, and the two main sources of income are advertisers in *Launton Lines* (about 80% of costs) and a grant from the Parish Council (about 20% of costs).

Our current finances are very positive under the direction of our new Treasurer, Carina Collins, who has been successful in migrating all our banking arrangements with Lloyds to online delivery. We have also been able to build our advertising base through the work of Jenni Walker, and through the introduction of colour advertising. We have lost some long-term advertisers as businesses have closed, but Jenni has been successful in recruiting new ones. About a year ago the Parish Council grant increased to £170 a month to reflect the increased number of houses in the village with the completion of Launton Mews. We currently print 675 copies of *Launton Lines* each month, and expect this to increase as the development at Grange Farm is built.

LCCG is run by a small group: The current Chair is Jon Spinage but he has said he wants to stand down in 2025; the Treasurer is Carina Collins. ***Launton Lines*** has joint editors (Robert Cornford and Matt Hill), an Advertising Manager (Jenni Walker) and a Distribution Manager (Shirley Johnson) who is supported by a group who handle distribution every month. The Editor of the **Launton Community Facebook Group** is Steve Webber, supported by two recently-joined moderators. LCCG has been recently joined by Lesley Thompson from the Parish Council.

As always, we would welcome help from anyone who would like to be either regularly or occasionally involved with the LCCG. So we are looking for volunteers for the roles of Chair and Secretary, and for people who want to work on the village website: please let us know if you are interested and we can provide any training or handover needed.

Financial report

At the end of 2023 (the close of our most recent reporting year) our Lloyds accounts held a combined positive balance of £7,391.25. This is high as we get in a lot of our advertising money at the beginning of the year, then have to pay the printing bills through the year.

Report for Launton Lines for period April 2023-March 2024

In 2023 we published 11 issues as the Editor spent much of July 2023 in and out of hospital and so produced a combined issue for the months of August and September 2023. We started the year printing 665 copies and now print 675 as Launton Mews has filled up.

In the 11 issues, we produced 504 pages of which 180 were in colour. Issues were either 44 or 48 pages in extent. The copies contained about 115,000 words of editorial content and had 262 adverts which took up just over 110 pages, or about 22% of the total pages in the period. There were just over 85 pages of paid (commercial) ads (17% of all pages). The balance were ads for village organisations or events which we do not charge for. We have always had a target that no more than 20% of each issue should be made up of commercial adverts.

We have been very fortunate to have Matt Hill as a joint Editor who has produced covers and insert sections, and with his skills we have been able to offer a design service to advertisers.

Through the last year we have also had the services of our Staff Photographer, Ella Rayner, who has contributed to nearly all issues while revising for her GCSEs.

The total cost of printing the 11 issues was £5,610: we have seen printing costs stabilise to around 75p per copy.

Launton Lines online

Launton Lines has continued to be available online through issuu.com (www.issuu.com). In the period we had just over 2,920 Reads and just under 39,000 Impressions, with an average read time of just under 4 minutes. About 80% of these reads (2,246) were from the UK: The other significant countries were the USA (190), Australia (48), South Africa (33) , and France (10). There was a total of 40 countries reading online.

Social Media

The Launton.org page has 911 followers.

Launton Community Group has 2700 members and is very active. The Community Group was getting spammed but now all posts are moderated by three administrators. It's a lot of work but as a result posts are much more relevant than before. Thanks to the other moderators, Adam and Jean, for their help.

Robert Cornford