

Report from Launton Community Communications Group (LCCG) for the Launton Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 16 April 2026.

LCCG manages the village newsletter - *Launton Lines* - the village facebook page and group, and the Launton.org website.

On Wednesday 25 March it held its AGM in the Parish Hall: here are the highlights of its past year (the reporting year is January – December).

LCCG had a successful year in 2025, and at the start of the year was in its strongest financial position in at least a decade. We owe thanks to the Parish Council for their financial support which enables us to plan long-term. However, during the reporting year we have seen a significant drop in advertising income (it seems that the attraction of “free” social media advertising on the likes of Facebook have lured some of our advertisers away). We have enough money in the bank to carry us through for another 12 months, during which time we will need to work out a financially sustainable way of funding *Launton Lines*. Advertising is responsible for 79% of our total income: please support our advertisers..

The Treasurer, while flagging up issues with advertising income, reported strong finances. At the end of the year we had £11,758.25 in the bank. This includes revenue from advert bookings into 2026 which we will be spending this year on publishing costs. In 2025 we had a surplus (income less costs) of £2,149.17 over the year.

The Advertising Manager thanked all our advertisers many of whom have been with us for many years. She particularly identified Nolan Oils who have always been big supporters of *Launton Lines*.

We have a team of 15 who deliver to their neighbours, organised by Distribution Manager Shirley Johnson. The Parish Council has agreed that the voluntary work of the distributors can be covered by the terms of the Council’s insurance policies.

In the 11 issues (January and February were a joint issue due to editorial illness), we produced 528 pages (264 in colour) with about 105,000 words of editorial content and 246 adverts which took up just over 101 pages, or just under 21% of the total. There were 77 pages of paid (commercial) ads (15.9% 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 through the whole year: he 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 studying for her A levels.

The total cost of printing the 11 issues in 2025 was £6,101: we have seen printing costs stabilise to around 80p per copy, depending on extent and the number of colour pages.

Launton Lines has continued to be available online through issuu.com (www.issuu.com) as a free offer. In 2025 we had just over 2,980 Reads (3,891 in 2024) and just over 21,200 Impressions (41,128 in 2024), with an average read time of 2.75 minutes (3.5 minutes in 2024). About 76% of these reads (1,843) were from the UK (2,713 in 2024). The other significant countries in 2025 were the USA (221), Brazil (71), Ireland (58), India (40), and Singapore (36), with a total of 62 countries reading online in 2025, compared with 49 countries in 2024. I have to suspect the data for Brazil and Singapore, as for each country there was a single large figure in a single month: possibly a bot-herd at work?

Steve Webber manages our social media offer – mainly the Facebook Group and the *Launton* page. The Group has about 4,100 members and has a lively (sometimes over-lively) engagement. There are four volunteer moderators who run the Group. We have 916 followers on the official *Launton* Facebook page, with 4100 members and 5000 people look at the page regularly. We have reviewed our policies on the content we allow: Any political posts are not allowed, but anything (non-political) which is of interest/benefit to the people of *Launton* will be allowed.

We have explored the possibility of recovering some of our lost advertising income by only allowing advertisers on the facebook channel who have taken print advertising in *Launton Lines* – but this has proved to be too complicated to implement.

We managed to operate through 2025 without a formal Chair after Jon Spinage stood down from the role last year, but as we face our funding challenges we need the role to be filled. Are there any offers?

We also lost our Treasurer (Carina Collins) and Advertising Manager (Jenni Walker) at the 2026 AGM: we want to thank them for their contributions to the success of *Launton Lines*. We have already had an expression of interest from a villager about the Advertising Manager post. And the different channels we use offer opportunities for people, especially new arrivals in the village, to join as reporters, picture editors, moderators and editors. Contact us at launtonlines@launton.org

Robert Cornford – Joint Editor, Launton Lines.

(878 words)