

Minutes of Lee Manor Society Meeting, 10 April 2024

PRESENT: Charles Batchelor (chair), Barbara Bird (minutes), Mary Donovan, David Ford, John Higgins, Frances Migniuolo, David Plumer

APOLOGIES: Simon Bucks, Helen Carr, Rita Craft, Mike Haste, Karen Pratt, Veronica Simmons

1. Minutes of previous meeting The number attending the AGM was confirmed as 40 in total, including officers and the speaker.

2. Finance update In Simon's absence Charles estimated our balance as ca. £8,000, including £2,400 for trees. There will be expenses associated with the Plant Mart, including the banners (£75 including shipping), flyers and insurance.

3. Plant Mart and Garden Party planning John reported on the progress with this. Local businesses are being approached for raffle prizes, and we also need 40 items for the Tombola. An Email will go to our list of supporters asking for plants, books and bric-à-brac. There will be face-painting (Lorraine), guess the sweets in a jar (Frances), and Dan will open the community garden.

4. Planning update No report, but Charles referred us to the Streetscape Design document, which covers car parking, street trees, etc. We could look for local roads where this could be useful, including planting new trees 60cm from the kerb. The poor state of many planters was discussed, and maintenance could be carried out by residents, as is happening in some cases.

5. Street Trees The tree walk is postponed until Charles can lead it. Funding for tree planting initiatives continues to be pursued.

6. Ice House reopening David reminded us of the procedure. A notice pointing out that donations to Lee Manor Society are welcome, but without putting pressure on visitors. The Ice House will be opened and an information table about the Society will be provided during the Manor House Gardens Festival depending on the availability of volunteers.

7. Manor House buggy shelter As the shelter is damaged again as a result of the high winds, Mike Haste will be consulted about strengthening it further, or going for the second option, involving purchasing panels for about £560. It was also noted that the cannons have been restored, but still require an information panel. The Society could fund a leaflet on the cannons. Not much more can be done to improve the garden at present.

8. Communications We have permission to put up a notice-board on the platform at Lee station. One with an aluminium frame large enough for 6 x A4 sheets would cost £200 - £300.

9. AOB

a) Summary of management committee meeting (from Charles): As part of our response to the death of Ralph White, chairman, we have re-constituted a committee, largely without formal titles, to steer the Society's activities. For this committee to have meaning, we decided it should meet on a regular basis outside our regular monthly members' meetings. Committee members held their first meeting on March 15 at 105 Burnt Ash Road. Members attending were Simon Bucks, Karen Pratt, Frances Migniuolo and Charles Batchelor. Karen updated the meeting on plans for this year's plant mart and garden party. Charles reported on his meeting with Southeastern Trains leading to approval for a Society noticeboard on platform 1 at Lee station. We considered options for repairing the buggy cover at the Manor House library. We reaffirmed the Society's long-term strategy 'to enhance/improve the built and natural environment of Lee including but not limited to the Lee Manor conservation area.' We considered options for fund-raising to plant more street trees. We debated the frequency of committee meetings to avoid any reduction in the value of our regular full monthly meetings though no decision was taken. It was decided to invite Mike Haste, who contributes to our planning work, to join the committee. (He later agreed).

b) Regarding the use of the Community Centre, where our full meetings are usually held, it was pointed out that all leases at Leegate are up by 1st October, when it will close. No funding or other support is forthcoming from the council. Other potential venues, such as St Peter's Church, are being considered.

Our next meeting will be on 8th May.