LEE MANOR SOCIETY

1976  2026

Lee Manor Society meeting and AGM, Sept 30th, 2026.

Present Charles Batchelor, Frances Migniulo, Mike Haste, Karen Pratt, Simon Bucks, Barbara Bird, Mary Donovan, David Dannreuther, David Plumer, David Ford, Jan Ford, Rita Craft, Tim Crossley, Grace Blyth, Linda Hawkins, Paul Lowndes, Martin Kicks, B Mooney, Celine Dehaene, Cllr Laura Sessions, Julian Hawkins.

AGM

1. Charles Batchelor explained that in a new format the AGM business would precede the regular meeting. He opened the AGM with a report on the range of activities undertaken by the Society during the previous financial year (August 1st 2025 to July 31st 2026). He covered planning applications, Leegate, the Big Bed project, street trees, the Plant Mart, and the 50th anniversary of the Society.
2. Simon Bucks (Treasurer) reported on the finances for the year, which showed a closing bank balance of £9,225. The Plant Mart raised a record £2,314. Donations, grants, website savings, and Ice House income also supported the society.
3. The management committee of Charles Batchelor, Frances Migniulo, Mike Haste, Karen Pratt, and Simon Bucks was re-elected by the meeting.

Regular meeting

Karen Pratt chaired the regular meeting which followed the AGM.

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 29th April were approved.
2. The Treasurer reported that the finances in the current financial year had involved income from Ice House donations but very little expenditure.
3. Karen opened by reminding the meeting about the success of the Plant Mart, and that next year's would be on May 8th.
4. Karen reported that the tree planted in memory of the former Chair Ralph White, in Manor House Gardens, had died. It would be replaced. There was some discussion about choosing a location where it would be less likely to be damaged.
5. There was a general discussion about trees in the area and in Manor House Gardens. There was concern that fallen trees in the lake provided a bridge for predators to reach the heronry on the island. Paul Lowndes of the Friends of Manor House Gardens acknowledged the problem.
6. There was some concern about cyclists in Manor House Gardens who might be a danger to pedestrians. Paul Lowndes said this issue and the fallen trees would be raised at the next meeting of the Parks Forum.
7. Cllr Laura Sessions reported that the Council was rolling out the latest phase of its policy on electric bikes for hire including Lime bikes. She said there would be three designated spaces in Lee Green where users would have to leave the bikes. By using these spaces riders could end their rides and therefore payments, otherwise the payment would continue.

8. Michael Haste reported on the Society's work in scrutinising planning applications and reminded the meeting that the details were put on the website every month. He said he had reviewed 33 planning applications and objected to ten during the reported year. The main matters included Leegate development, including construction traffic, conservation-area alterations, and plans submitted and then withdrawn for housing on the back garden of 53 Leyland Rd, although it wasn't clear why they had been.
9. Simon Bucks outlined the latest moves involving the proposed Community Centre in the development on the former Leegate site including finding an organization able to run the Centre. He explained that Jim Mallory as Chair of the Lee Green Consortium had held a meeting of various local community groups, including the Lee Manor Society. The next step is a meeting with London Square, led by Jim, and a public meeting to test local opinion on the options. Mike Haste noted that the Section 106 agreement under which the Community Centre will be offered only requires London Square to provide "Shell and Core" – which means it would not be fitted out with a kitchen or toilets.
10. Charles Batchelor reported on the new booklet being produced by the Society to replace the existing leaflets created 20 years ago. He said the draft look, done by a local designer, was very colourful. Charles said the Society would be seeking sponsorship for it.
11. The proposal for Christmas Tree sales in Manor House Gardens was raised. Paul Lowndes explained the proposal had come from the same group which sold trees in Hillyfields last year. A portion of the profits would be donated to the Friends of Manor House Gardens. There was some concern it would impact local retailers who sell Christmas Trees. Paul Lowndes agreed that would need to be assessed, although other charities and voluntary groups also sold trees to raise funds.
12. Karen Pratt reminded the meeting about two upcoming events by Paul Wright: a walk around Lee "New Town" and an evening talk "Rock around Lee" on 10 Nov at the Old Tiger's Head Pub. These events were free and details could be found on the Society's website.
13. Simon Bucks and Paul Lowndes updated the meeting on the Big Bed Rescue project. Paul explained that the project now had the support of local landscape gardeners Holly and Hayley, who were giving their time and expertise pro bono to work up a plant list and design. He said that Hűgel mounds to retain moisture were being installed in parts of the bed. The aim was to start planting over the autumn. Lucy Anne Bishop, who is also working on the project, was engaging with a local secondary school about its involvement in the project and also working on how the project will support the educational aspect of the project generally.
14. Karen Pratt asked the meeting for suggested locations for new street trees. The meeting supported the idea of match funding trees with money raised by residents and the Society. It was suggested Cambridge Drive would be a suitable road for the next tree planting effort. Other roads were also discussed as possible projects for the future.

15. Karen said the Society was keen to recruit new members onto the management team, especially people with an interest in subjects like transport.
16. Karen said the management committee was proposing to have four meetings per year, in January (20) , April (21), July (7) and October (6) with the dates advertised at the beginning of the year. There were no changes suggested to this plan. She said that additionally, there would be events: talks, walks and socials. The next meeting would be 20 Jan 2027 at the Parish Room, Church of the Good Shepherd, Handen Rd., SE12 8NR.
17. **AOB** The need for more volunteers to help open the Ice House in Manor House Gardens was raised and it was agreed that running an induction session with experienced volunteers explaining what was involved would be helpful.
    NB Please note dates for next year: January (20) , April (21), July (7) and October (6)