

Minutes of the A.G.M. of the Levens Institute held on Monday 19th February 2018

Present: Stephen Read, Chair; John Wood, Treasurer; Alan Miller, Secretary plus 10 committee members and 18 members of the public.

1] Apologies: Susie Bagot and Chris Riley

2] The minutes of the 2017 AGM, having been previously circulated, were approved as drawn.

3] Matters arising. The committee had discussed the fitting of a post box, as all the Institute's mail is sent direct to the relevant officer, it was agreed there was no need to install box.

4] Chair's report

"At last year's AGM I repeated the refrain of the last few years, namely that it seems that we will still be using this building for some time, as the PC's project for a new village hall has not yet produced a sale of land to fund the new build, although the issues relating to Sizergh Fell Quarry are resolved. The PC has expressions of interest from potential buyers, but no contracts have been exchanged. As a result, we have not agreed the formal terms of the Joint Venture Agreement and the modernisation of our constitution that was reported at last year's AGM, as we are reluctant to incur any professional fees until we are certain that progress is being made. At the 2017 AGM I made a plea for volunteers to assist in drawing up those documents, and as no-one stepped forward then, may I ask those of you who are keen to share in that review to make yourself known after the meeting.

In the meantime, until the PC can deliver that new hall to us, it remains our duty to maintain this building for the benefit of the village.

My most important task is to publicly record this committee's appreciation of the many hours of voluntary work carried out behind the scenes, both by committee members and supporters. Foremost are Hugh Connor and Peter Wood for all the minor repairs and the gardening that has been done, and Peter Smith for his expert handling of the 200 Club, our vital fundraiser. If you are not a member see me later. Hugh and his team at LAFS are also vital in raising income for us. I thank Sheila Watson and Alan and Helen Miller for their constant attention to the daily routine of running this building. As you perhaps know, Alan is our caretaker/cleaner, and he also shares the responsibility of managing and obtaining bookings with Helen. Bookings have remained steady under their care, so once again we can report a good income in excess of expenditure. I thank Linda and Tim Fletcher for their audit of our accounts. Finally, I thank Simon Doddrell for the gift of the wine glasses, which are to put to good use shortly.

Our challenges for the year have been added to by the new Data Protection Act provisions, which bite from mid-May, as our Government failed to bring in an exemption for small charities such as ourselves, as was first promised. We are now devising our policy and formal procedures to deal with these additional regulations.

At last year's AGM a plea was made for new members of this Committee, which I repeat again now. Ideally, this hero figure should be someone who may wish to be involved in running the new hall, and who, by serving an apprenticeship with us, can get an idea of what is involved, which should allow a smooth transition to the new village hall, ensuring the essential retention of all the current users and customers."

Hugh Connor added thanks to Naomi Capstick for her management of the Institute's Facebook page.

5] Secretary's report

There was nothing unusual to report from the secretary's correspondence and duties. However, on the bookings side, he thanked Helen Miller who dealt with the day to day computer bookings. The following was a broad-based list of the bookings for 2017

Coffee Mornings:	11
Artists (x2 per week):	87
Appalachian Dancers:	19
Monthly Draw:	12
Toddlers:	32
Mere Quilters:	44
W.I.:	11
Brownies:	32
L.L.H.G. (History):	8
L.O.L.S.:	8
Windermere Anglers:	6
Crook Rappers:	6
L.A.F.S.:	5
Children's Parties:	5
Other meetings:	45

The W.I. and Young Farmers will not be using the Institute in 2018.

6] Treasurer's Report

The report was circulated to the meeting for its perusal. The treasurer thanked Mr and Mrs Fletcher for auditing the accounts. The poor rate of return upon the funds invested through the Charity Commission's Charities Investment Fund (COIF) was bemoaned. The treasurer will investigate whether a better return can be found elsewhere. Hugh Connor asked why LAFS' contribution seemed less this year than it actually was. The treasurer pointed out that this apparent anomaly arose in last year's account when some income had been incorrectly noted as general rather than LAFS' income. The issue was noted but would resolve itself in next year's accounts.

7] Election of committee

As the Chair had not heard from any of the current committee members saying that they were not prepared to stand for re-election (Young Farmers and W.I. will not have a place on the 2018 committee as the first no longer meet in the Institute and the second had ceased their meetings), nor had anyone else put their name forward for election, the existing committee could be re-elected en bloc. Their names were read out: Stephen Read (LLHG), Helen Miller (Bookings), Alan Miller, John Wood, Sheila Watson, Susie Bagot (P.C.), Kath Dawson, Mary Orr (P.P.C.), Hugh Connor (LAFS), Chris Riley (Appalachian Dancers) Sarah Dickinson (Brownies), Frank Routledge, Wendy Mobbs (Toddlers) and Naomi Capstick (LOLS). John Watson proposed, and Kevin Holmes seconded that they all be elected, which was carried without objection.

8] A.O.B.

Mr. G. Bramwell asked what proposals there were for improvements to the Institute. It was clear that the proposed new hall was still at the planning stage and this hall must be made attractive to guarantee use by the community. He felt that the lighting could be improved; it was tired looking, and new L.E.D. lighting would be more efficient. The Chair agreed that this committee's job was to maintain the Institute for the community and this they had done and would continue to do so. No major works were deemed necessary in 2017, though a new toilet had been fitted and the lighting kept in repair, thanks to the efforts of Hugh Connor and Alan Miller. Sheila Watson explained that, with regard to the lighting, several ideas had been put forward in the past, including the provision of L.E.D. lights, but if that required rewiring it would become a major project and may require closure of the hall. Kevin Holmes and others agreed that L.E.D. lights would be an economic solution. John Watson added that he believed the committee should consider some expenditure for the improvement of the Institute, particularly the lighting, but should not be swayed by the imminence or not of the proposed new hall when reaching decisions about repairs and the need for improvements, especially as that new building could not foreseeably commence and be in use for many years. These points were accepted, and an assurance was given that they would be borne in mind (as they always have been) when areas for repair and improvement came up for consideration.

The meeting closed at 20.05 with the Chair thanking all those present for their attendance and input. He then welcomed Simon Doddrell who gave a brief history of B4RN (Broadband for the Rural North) and a detailed and informative presentation of the progress that was being made in bringing it to all areas of the village.