

**MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OF THE LANGDALE OWNERS' CLUB  
Held at THE LANGDALE ESTATE  
At 2.00pm on SUNDAY 15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2009**

**Present** Chairman of the Committee: Fred Crouch  
Members of the Committee: Ian Hamilton Andrew Collier  
Joe Longmuir Nick Lancaster  
Also Present: 188 owners and their guests

**Item 1 Introduction**

Fred Crouch, as Chairman, welcomed everyone to the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Langdale Owners' Club, and commented on the unusually high number of people attending. The Langdale venue had obviously proved very popular, and the support said a lot about the loyalty of Langdale owners to the Estate and their Club. A de-brief would take place to decide on whether future meetings should all be held at Langdale, or to still have every third meeting in the south.

He re-iterated what Dale Watler had said at the shareholders' meeting that morning that the social event held the previous evening had been fantastic and the meal superb, and he wished to pass on his thanks on behalf of all owners to the Executive Chef, Graham Harrower, his brigade and all the staff for their tremendous efforts to make the evening such a success.

The Chairman then introduced the members of the Committee: the three elected members being himself, Ian Hamilton and Andrew Collier, and the two members appointed by Langdale Owners PLC - Joe Longmuir, Managing Director, and Nick Lancaster, Director of Resort Operations.

Apologies for absence had been received from Carolyn Bedford, Richard & Delia Baker, David Fairs, Ian & Liz Fox, Neil & Janet Boggon, Mrs Lisa MacDermid, Mrs A J R Churchill, Ian & Annette Lines and Peter Carlile.

**Item 2 To approve the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (Resolution 1).**

The Chairman went through the minutes of the last AGM held in Oxford page by page for any inaccuracies and none were found. He asked for a proposer and seconder to approve the minutes.

*Proposer:* Alan Taylor Elterwater Hall 3, Week 48  
*Seconder:* Dale Watler Lodge 5, Week 6

On a show of hands in favour, the Chairman declared the Resolution carried unanimously.

**Item 3 Matters arising from the minutes**

There were no matters arising.

**Item 4 Reports from the Committee**

**Committee Report**

The Chairman highlighted some items of the report already circulated to owners:

He said that he had received an e-mail from Colin Lister asking for his thanks to be passed on to all those who had kindly written to him on his departure, wishing him a long and happy

retirement. The Chairman wished to note the Committee's thanks to Colin for all his work over many years at Langdale.

The Chairman said that Adam Sharrock had fitted very well into his liaison role as Owner Relations Manager. Adam was now the main contact for owners during their time at Langdale, providing information and dealing with any issues that may arise.

The structure of the Company had been printed on the back of the Financial Statements document for owners' information. Since this was produced, Graham Harrower had been moved up to the Senior Management Team, alongside Dan Visser, Nick Lancaster, Sarah O'Boyle and Anne Durnall. Graham was in charge of all the food outlets across the Estate, including Wainwrights' Inn, reflecting the Company's view of the importance of the quality of food to the whole business.

The approach to refurbishment had developed further to secure cost-effective good designs. Kitchens and lounge areas were being considered together, different contractors were being used for bathroom installation, and Joe had utilised his enormous experience gained at Cameron House to enable us to buy many items directly from manufacturers rather than retailers.

The Chairman hoped that many owners had taken the opportunity of viewing the two lodges with the new kitchen and lounge designs, which were the result of extensive consultation over several months. Feedback was welcomed on which design was preferred. Subject to analysis of owners' views the refurbishment programme would be rolled out over the next five years.

The Chairman then asked Nick Lancaster to give more details on what had been happening at Langdale and plans for the future.

Nick said that several changes and re-organisation of personnel had taken place as part of Joe's commitment to improving lodge owners' experience at Langdale. These included appointing Nick himself to look after all aspects of the Estate, Adam Sharrock to liaise with owners on a daily basis, and a dedicated Hotel Housekeeper which had enabled Ruth Hodgkinson who had been Estate Housekeeper to focus completely on the lodges with her own team.

Following on from the announcement at the last AGM, the Owners' Privilege Card scheme was introduced in June 2009 and had proved to be immensely popular. It had already saved owners in the region of £42,000 on their purchases at Langdale.

Joe had given details at the shareholders' meeting that morning of planning applications being submitted for the possible future construction of some new lodges and also additional Hotel bedrooms. This was to take advantage of the current relaxation in planning constraints by the National Park Authority, but no new building would take place without the support of the owners and a solid business case to put before the Board. Such developments were important to the long-term sustainability of the business.

Nick said that he and Joe had been working very closely with the Committee to accelerate the lodge refurbishment programme and produce an itemised five-year plan. Feedback from weekly guest questionnaires, the Monday evening meetings, specific consultation surveys and individual meetings with owners had all been taken into consideration. The consultation document asking for comments on the three suggested colour schemes for the lodge lounge and kitchen areas was mailed out to all owners early in the summer, and 1900 responses were received. The results showed that 46% of owners preferred scheme A and 39% preferred scheme C, therefore it was decided to refurbish Lodges 3 & 79 in one of each design as a trial. Over 300 owners had visited them in two days, and the feedback had been very positive. Provided that one or both designs met with general approval, more lodges would have their kitchens and lounges refurbished during the forthcoming maintenance

period. Another 39 bathrooms would also be completed over the winter – double the amount done over the previous two to three years.

Throughout the summer 52 new leather suites were installed. These were manufactured specifically for Langdale, again as a result of long consultation with owners, and were designed to complement the new living area concept.

New Freesat-enabled and HD-ready Panasonic TVs were installed in all properties. These were voted best product by Which magazine and were a vast improvement. The aim was to install a new signal distribution system with Freesat in the Spring of 2010, which would provide around 120 TV and radio channels. In the meantime, due to the digital switchover, no Teletext service was available. As many people used this for weather forecasts, up-to-date information was available from Reception or via the internet connection in The Terrace.

Nick then demonstrated the new interactive map on the Owners' Website, which enabled owners to see what refurbishment had already been done and what was planned in their lodges for the next five years. For those without internet access, a hard-copy could be supplied on request.

With regard to the waterways, the lower tarns by Lodges 57 to 70 were being re-lined and a pump installed to re-circulate the water. This would be supplemented by water from a bore-hole in that area. If this proved successful, other areas would be tackled in the same way. Work was also being carried out on the sluice gates by Lodge 4 and Becksides to improve the water supply on that side of the Estate.

Finally, Joe had reported at the last AGM that grey squirrels had been eradicated. A few individuals were still being sighted, so Nick had taken over responsibility for getting rid of them, and was pleased to report that a couple of reds had been spotted on the Estate.

The Chairman thanked Nick, and confirmed that the Company and Owners' Club were committed to finding a way of preventing the Estate waterways from drying up. He also thanked Dan Visser, Director of Sales & Marketing, and the in-house technology people for setting up the interactive facility. Langdale was very fortunate to have staff with such skills. He then asked Ian Hamilton, who had vast experience with TV and IT issues, to explain in more detail the plans for these systems.

Ian said that the provision of good TV reception and WiFi access around the Estate was a considerable challenge, and involved replacing the underground telephone network copper cabling with fibre-optic cable to allow full internet connectivity. The project launch meeting had taken place and the work was planned for Spring 2010.

The Chairman said that the Club owed Ian a great debt of gratitude for all his work on this project and for managing to obtain a good price.

The Chairman moved on to the subject of access for the disabled, and said that at least one of the new lodges in the planning application would have full facilities for the disabled facilities if built. He introduced Andrew Collier to say a few words on the subject.

Andrew referred to page 6 of the Committee Report that had been circulated prior to the meeting, which set out the Committee's approach to accessibility for those who were less mobile. Several temporary aids were available for use during an owner's week, and should be requested on the Langdale Order Form or by phone prior to arrival. Full details were on the website. Any ideas on other improvements that could be made would be very welcome.

The Chairman thanked Andrew and moved on to the subject of communication. More than 2,000 owners were now registered on the Owners' Website and the aim was to use this method to circulate information as much as possible in the future. This would save a considerable amount of money and provide faster communication.

The Chairman urged owners to request a username and password for the website via [www.langdaleownersclub.org.uk](http://www.langdaleownersclub.org.uk).

The Chairman continued to sit on TATOC – the Association of Timeshare Owners' Clubs, which was highly respected and liaised with government and Interpol. The major concern continued to be with the activities of scam resale and legal companies and the dubious selling techniques of holiday clubs. He urged owners to take extreme care not to be taken in by these scams, and pointed out that holiday clubs were not the same as timeshare. In July and August there was increased activity by one group, under a number of guises. Owners were invited to attend a meeting where they were persuaded to part with thousands of pounds in a complex deal involving giving up their timeshare in return for membership of a club, plus cash-back. TATOC were very concerned about this and would be happy to give advice on what to do and what not to do. Many of these companies operated from outside the UK, usually in Spain, and regularly changed their name and number after duping people out of a great deal of money.

Joe stressed that Langdale never shared owners' details with any other organisation, as these details were private and belonged to the Landale Owners' Club. He strongly advised owners not to enter into any agreement without first checking the company's credentials by contacting TATOC, the Office of Fair Trading, or Langdale. If owners did need to sell their lodge, the Sales Office at Langdale would do their best to find a buyer.

The Chairman said he would be happy to offer advice if owners wished to contact him.

He reported that his wife, Sheila, had been busy arranging internal swaps, and those present showed their appreciation of this additional service provided for Langdale owners with a round of applause.

The Chairman said that, although it was planned to spend around £2.5 million over the next five years with the refurbishment programme, it was hoped that management fees would not have to be increased by large amounts. There had been a significant increase some six or seven years previously, which ensured a steady income to the Reserve Fund. It was hoped to keep the annual increases reasonably steady with no more than an increase of 2% above inflation. This of course was dependent upon the economic situation and our continuing ability to achieve competitive contracts.

In response to requests from owners, alternative methods for payment of management fees were being considered, such as one-off or monthly payments by direct-debit.

The Chairman reported that a new account had been opened with Barclays Bank with a deposit of £50,000.

Consultation had been taking place to update the Management Agreement between the Management Company and the Owners' Club, to the benefit of both parties and to provide the best value for owners' money. The Chairman said that the change in the Management Company's performance over the past couple of years had been amazing, and there was now a positive "can do" attitude and a real buzz throughout the organisation, for which Joe, Nick and the rest of the team were owed very grateful thanks. He also wished to record his thanks to all his colleagues on the Committee who put in a tremendous amount of work, and also Sarah O'Boyle, the Management Accountant, and Anne Durnall, the Human Resources Manager. Finally, thanks to all the staff at Langdale.

The Chairman then asked for questions from the floor.

*Mr Trevor Tuckley – Lodge 80, Week 31:* What is the preferred way to use the Privilege Card? Should we use them on each occasion or, as most of us book things to the room or lodge, do we use it on settling the account?

*Chairman:* You must present it every time you make a purchase. If you just give it to Reception on checking out, you will not get the Privilege Card benefits.

*Mr Malcolm Coward – Elterwater Hall 3, Week 26:* If it is decided to take both refurbishment designs forward, how will you decide which lodge is fitted out in which scheme?

*Chairman:* Some lodges are lighter than others, and that might affect the decision.

*Joe:* I think we will just wait and see what the results are and make a call at that time. The majority of people, although they seem to be favouring one over the other, have also said that they wouldn't mind either.

*John Mullin – Lodge 6, Week 23:* While I can understand your waiting to see the results of the surveys on Lodges 3 & 79, the bathrooms are ongoing – why can't information be published on the net of when you are going to refurbish the bathrooms?

*Joe:* This will be on, so that you will be able to see exactly what is happening in each lodge. If the kitchen/lounge designs are rejected, we will still publish the bathroom programme.

*Mr H Weir – Chapel Stile 7, Week 1:* Is the problem with the waterways as a result of the weir having been breached and making the level of the water upsides of the weir wrong so that you can't get water down onto the Estate?

*Chairman:* Yes.

*Mr Weir:* In which case, a simple and probably quite cost-effective solution to the problem may be to install a siphon. Has this been considered?

*Nick:* We have looked at taking water from higher up the Beck, and we would need to put in a pipe up to about 500 metres up the Beck at a cost of around £1,000 per metre.

As the discussion became quite technical, Mr Weir and Nick agreed to discuss it in detail after the meeting.

*Miss Dawson – Lodge 47, Week 14:* I'm probably in a minority and I don't know if you can do anything now, but the level of the microwave in the new kitchen is far too high – I'm 5' and it would not be safe for me to lift a casserole out of the microwave.

*This was supported by other members of the audience.*

*Joe:* That is why we went ahead with the two trial lodges so that you could see what was there and give us feedback. Any comments that you have will be taken into consideration. We're not going to install that design if there are faults and if they are unpopular.

*Mr Dawson:* As a general comment, to me, the lodges now have a warm, welcoming and comfortable feel, reflected in the colour of the settees and the dining room furniture, whereas the proposed new designs seem to have a clinical feel. I also query as to whether or not the dining room furniture needs replacing. Thank you.

*Mr Mike Smalley – Lodge 62, Week 21:* Are there any plans for tree management? In the last 25 years they have grown a bit and views that we used to enjoy have disappeared.

*Joe:* I think this goes for all owners in all lodges. Andy Dawson, our Head Groundsman, will more than happily come round and have a chat with you about the trees. It is very difficult to give a general answer because each lodge is specific. The problem is that other owners of the lodge may be upset by the loss of a tree.

## Financial Report

The Chairman gave a presentation on the Accounts:

Total Owners' Club income for the year to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009 was £658,798 against £747,738 the previous year, the difference being mainly as a result of a one-off Rates rebate of around £120,000 in 2008. Total expenditure for the year was £645,486 resulting in an increase in funds of £13,221 as opposed to a loss of £33,183 in 2008, even with the extra £120,000 in that year, which was a good performance.

The latest figures for the current year showed the Reserve Fund standing at £365,690 at the end of October, but of course this would start to fall as the maintenance period had just started and would continue through to the end of March, which was the time of major expenditure.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions on the Accounts. There were none.

He then moved the meeting on to the formal Resolutions.

### Item 5 Resolutions 2, 3 & 4

#### Resolution 2

**To receive, approve and adopt the Financial Statements for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009, together with the Reports of the Committee and Auditors thereon**

*Proposer:* John Dearden Lodge 21, Week 35  
*Seconder:* Dale Watler Lodge 5, Week 6

On a show of hands in favour, the Chairman declared the Resolution carried unanimously.

#### Resolution 3

**To re-appoint Scott & Wilkinson LLP as Auditors of the Club and to authorise the Committee to fix their remuneration**

*Proposer:* Malcolm Coward Elterwater Hall 3, Week 26  
*Seconder:* John McCubbing Lodge 42, Week 46

On a show of hands in favour, the Chairman declared the Resolution carried unanimously.

#### Resolution 4 To re-elect Ian Hamilton as a member of the Committee

The Chairman explained that Ian Hamilton was standing unopposed.

*Proposer:* Neil Marsden Lodge 9, Week 9  
*Seconder:* Jean de Kretser Lodge 54, Week 10

On a show of hands in favour, the Chairman declared the Resolution carried unanimously.

### Item 6 To transact such other business as may be properly transacted at an AGM

The Chairman announced that the 2010 AGM would probably be held at Langdale on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November – a week later than this year in order to avoid Armistice Sunday. Discussions would be held to see if it would be possible to seat the expected high number of attendees together, rather than in two rooms.

That concluded the formal business, so the Chairman threw the meeting open to the floor.

*Mrs Helen Schofield – Lodge 78, Week 49:* It may seem a small request but please could we have some hooks on the back of the bedroom doors. *This received applause.*

*Graham Vine – Lodge 37, Week 27:* I would like to second the request for more hooks on the doors. Some lodges have hooks and others don't, and certainly some are very deficient in having somewhere to hang up a dressing gown or towel or whatever.

*Nick Lancaster:* We will take this on board as a general request for all lodges.

*Susan Lees – Lodge 21, Weeks 44 & 45:* Another query regarding the cutting down of trees and vegetation as mentioned earlier. Andy I know is excellent. We have a beautiful hedge that is beginning to grow but the beech tree was decimated. Is it possible to put the wildlife hedge first and let it grow before too much is cut down?

*Nick:* I think the fact is that the tree has been trimmed and the hedge is in place. We might have done it differently in hindsight, and will take these comments on board for the future.

*Mrs Margaret Taylor – Elterwater Hall 3, Week 48:* I don't know what the current situation is, but it would be good to have food all day in Wainwrights' on Saturdays and Sundays – I'm sure there would be a lot of trade picked up from people outside Langdale, and it would be lovely to arrive at about 2 o'clock and have a meal before checking into our lodge at 4.00pm.

*Joe:* For the first time this year, food was served all day in Wainwrights' right through the summer, because you are absolutely right - owners were asking for it. We have reduced the content for the winter months, but you will still be able to get food in the afternoons. It will then revert to a full menu during the peak season.

*Mrs Vivienne Pickering – Lodge 76, Week 10:* Having spent yesterday with Our Man at the Top and seeing the tremendous work they have been doing, could I urge those who do give a donation to please Gift Aid it. Perhaps it could be arranged for a Gift Aid form to be sent out with the invoice. It would make a considerable difference, both with regards to tax and Heritage Lottery Fund match-funding.

*Nick:* I think we would be happy to do that, and will make sure that the Accounts Department sends out Gift Aid forms.

*Mr David De Rycke – Lodge 63, Week 47:* I was concerned to hear that you are taking business away from the local economy and giving it to contractors from out of the area. I understand doing that if there is a huge economic benefit, but I would urge that every effort is made to let the local people re-quote to keep the business locally if you can.

I would also like to add my weight to the earlier comment that the lodges now are warm and the new design is rather turgid. Could we have a bit more colour and preferably some sofas that are as comfortable as the existing ones. Thank you.

*Joe:* The contractors from Scotland have given us a price for the bathrooms that is half what we were paying before, allowing us to refurbish 39 bathrooms this year at a cost that we would have incurred for half of that number. We don't exclusively use the people from Scotland - there are two major contractors on site, and the other one is from the local area.

*Chairman:* It all comes down to getting the best value that we can, and also the speed at which they can carry out the work.

*Mrs Susan Round – Lodge 59, Week 41:* Are there any plans for us to pay our management fees over the internet instead of by cheque?

*Joe:* Sarah is looking at the subject of management fee payment and is bringing a paper to the next Board meeting.

*Sarah:* You can already pay your management fee directly into our bank account.

*Mrs Margaret Brooks – Lodge 70, Week 8:* I would just like to say that we went to an excellent presentation yesterday morning about Our Man at the Top. We weren't able to go up to Stickle Tarn but they were very good with their presentation and explained how they repair the paths. I just felt that they should have a mention.

*Mrs Rosalind Peach – Lodge 30, Week 7:* I don't know if anyone else feels the same, but the bed linen has a high polyester content and is not nearly as comfortable as the previous linen. So much so, that we bring our own.

*Joe:* The problem with the duvet covers is that they were fire-treated and that is why they feel a bit starchy. We are looking at changing the bed linen, hopefully in the next 18 months or so, because they are coming to the end of their life, and we will move towards something rather more sleep-friendly.

*Mrs Janette Freeman – Chapel Stile 1, Week 45:* I've just had my very first week in my apartment and had a lovely time. The bathrooms are fantastic, especially the shower and Jacuzzi. Just one thing I would like to comment on is the amount of condensation on the windows first thing in the morning, as we have to let all the heat out to clear the windows.

*Chairman:* I have an apartment at Chapel Stile with a similar problem. We will check all the windows and take action as necessary.

The Chairman thanked all the owners for coming and hoped they had enjoyed it. He wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and a safe journey home.

The meeting closed at 3.40pm.