

LANGDALE OWNERS CLUB COMMITTEE

Held at Langdale on Saturday 11 May 2019 at 1pm

Present: Mr I Hamilton (Chairman) (IH)
Miss J Walker (JW)
Mr K Bird (KB)
Mr N Lancaster (NL)
Mr I Murray (IM)

In Attendance: Ms S Spencer (SS)
Mrs A Durnall (ALD)

MINUTES

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies.

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st Feb 2019

The minutes were approved.

3. Finance

a. Management Accounts

SS reported that Period 12 accounts had not yet been finalised but there was nothing exceptional to report. A small rebate on the rates would appear on the P12 accounts and this was in the region of £6k.

KB asked with regard to bedrooms whether there were any further costs to come through and SS confirmed that there was nothing substantial. KB also asked about utilities, in particular the water at Chapel Stile and SS confirmed that from next year the costs for water would be back on track.

b. Reserve Fund

Nothing to report

c. Management Fee

Nothing to report.

d. Management Fee Apportionment Model Review

LOC-065 On-going action. IH and Graydon Jones will discuss with SS at a meeting in July and IH will then report back to the rest of the committee.

e. Shared Costs Review

LOC-069 On-going action. NL updated LOC with regard to the shared cost review having met with auditors and agreed a trial methodology and a trial week. Subsequently undertaken 2 trial weeks using 2 different methodologies. NL and SS to meet with the auditors again to continue to refine the process, the methodology being the important factor. Some staff have found it difficult to differentiate between lodge/hotel guests as they see no difference.

However, for these purposes it will be necessary to demonstrate the divide between guests in order to be able to analyse the data.

4. Services

a. Performance indicators

NL reported that the overall score for lodges is 90% as opposed to 88% last year with a considerable increase in “good” comments although these appear to be at the expense of “excellent”. NL felt that there was a trend of comments about furniture. JW had noticed comments about sofas. NL felt that when no refurbishment is taking place, comments do appear to increase.

b. Owner Correspondence

NL reported that 2 letters had been received, one from Mrs Reid addressed to the Chairman which is now resolved and an email from Mr Griffin addressed to JW. JW will respond and include an explanation of how the Reserve Fund is managed and allocated year by year dependent upon what is required at the time and not allocated specifically per lodge.

JW felt that articles written for Views on behalf of the committee should be from the committee and not bear committee member names as she felt this was more appropriate. LOC agreed.

Gary Dixon new Owner Relations Manager, since taking over, has been responding to correspondence very quickly and NL felt that this was already having an effect on helpfully managing owner comments.

KB asked whether Gary would be preparing a report for the committee which could take the form of a summary of comments received. LOC agreed that they were interested in a summary of noticeable trends. NL will discuss and garner Gary’s suggestions **(NL)**.

c. Employee Report

ALD presented the employee report which confirmed that long term absences had improved, dropping to 5.99% as opposed to 8.55% in Nov 2017. There is also a growing number of LOC staff that have never had an unauthorised absence. The report overall was positive.

d. Owners Data – security and management.

Nothing to report. 2800 owner records have now been scanned. Ex owner files have now been sent for secure shredding.

e. Business Continuity

Nothing to report.

5. Maintenance

a. Health and Safety

Nothing to report

b. Property Maintenance

Nothing to report

c. Estate Maintenance

IM reported that some tree works have been undertaken, notably at Lodge 50 and at Chapel Stile.

Action LOC-088 – the installation of handrails at CS10 and CS1 remain outstanding.

Action LOC-052 – work continues on the options for metering. With assistance from Robin Welsby 2 companies have been identified and IM reported that his preferred option was EL Component. Their proposal would incur installation costs of £70k with an on-going annual cost of £7k (all excluding VAT). IM will simplify the EL proposal and circulate for comment however the proposal would provide smart metering on every meter including gas and electricity and provision for water. Gas meters have been changed and are now in a consolidated location at Chapel Stile **(IM)**.

d. Inventory

NL referred to some comments regarding the provision of radios in lodge bedrooms. Every lodge has an internet radio in the master bedroom however 2nd/3rd bedrooms don't currently have clock radios.

JW stated that there have been a number of requests for baking sheets and place mats and coasters. NL would provide costs for baking sheets. NL will instruct Lodge Housekeeping to check the quality of placemats and coasters **(NL)**.

KB raised a query with regard to kitchen equipment and reviewing the inventory in kitchens. LOC will review at the next meeting. NL will identify a lodge to be available for inspection by LOC **(NL)**.

6. Projects

a. Project Programme Implementation 2018 – 2019

- Power Board Replacement

Nothing further to report other than that the project was a success.

- Bedroom programme – second bedrooms

IM confirmed that the programme had been completed as agreed, with 6 second bedrooms being refurbished in January. IM has identified the next set of second bedrooms to complete and will put forward a programme for the next meeting **(IM)**.

- Chapel Stile refurbishment project

The project was completed on schedule with some inevitable and significant snagging due to the amount of work undertaken in a short space of time. All snagging has now been completed. There were some significant issues with the pull-down beds due to a manufacturer supplier issue. IM reported that he was still waiting for 2 units. 2 windows had been changed which IM felt significantly improved the entire feel of the rooms. IM will review whether further windows could be changed to affect an improvement.

KB asked whether the pull-down beds installed at Chapel Stile would provide a solution on the main estate and IM confirmed that they would.

New signage would appear in the car park in due course.

LOC congratulated IM and the team for the successful completion of the project under the circumstances at the time and considering the challenges and the pressure the team were under.

- Access Point replacement and repositioning
Replacement and repositioning of all access points is now complete.

b. Project Programme Planning 2019-2020

- Balcony Replacement
LOC-100 - IH confirmed that the report circulated by IM was a first look at the challenges and options for balcony replacement with options for timing. IM's report prioritises old type Windermere and old type Ullswater lodge balconies and also identified a health and safety risk due to the fixings to these lodges. LOC agreed that remedial works should be undertaken as soon as possible to make safe and mitigate any risk and a further proposal to be circulated as soon as possible **(IM)**.
JW asked IM to consider other structural items that ought to be reviewed from a general health and safety perspective.
- Soft Furnishings EWH/Barn/Cottage
LOC-098- IM had requested a local company, Route ID to progress soft furnishings.
- TV Licensing
- LOC-099 – based on IH's research LLL will apply for a hotel licence for TV's in timeshare units (main site, EWH and CS) which would effect a significant saving. The current timeshare licence fee is approximately £15k and after investigation, the indication is that, provided the TV Licencing authority accept a change in the purchasing profile, the saving could be in the region of £12k. LOC agreed that once this change had been implemented then it would be appropriate to contact TV licencing again to seek a refund.
- LOC-0101– IM has been in contact with TMS regarding tandem drawers.
- Waterways - LOC agreed to proceed with these works at the February meeting, the costs confirmed recently at £85k.
- All tree planting has been completed (758 plus 2 apple trees) by Andy Dawson and the grounds team.

7. Committee

a. Cancelled Members

There were no members to consider for cancellation this meeting.

The committee ask that ALD review what legal fees have been incurred in relation to TESS, Praetorian and ABC Legal.

b. Property re-sales

DV's report had previously been circulated with some good sales recently.

c. Property rentals

Rentals are steady at 20% week on week apart from Easter this year which was very late. Rentals are trading well considering the current market, ie there is a declining occupancy of self-catering properties in the Lake District. The new online rental system is now live.

d. Succession Planning and Committee Support Activity

ALD confirmed that to date, no nominations for new committee members had been received. JW is due for re-election this year and JW was considering whether to do so.

IH asked LOC to consider how to utilise the 2 interested members who recently attended an orientation session at Langdale and wanted to be involved in committee work. There may be opportunities for the interested members to participate in LOC activities following further consideration.

e. AGM 2019

LOC agreed to meet before the AGM on the morning of Friday 15th November at Langdale. LOC-038 - On-going item.

f. Constitution - Surrender Policy

NL reported that he was currently working on a draft surrendered weeks rental process. NL was waiting for advice as to any constraints or limitations there may be in terms of the timeshare property lease.

A Working Group has been set up by LOP to develop ideas and make recommendations for a "surrendered weeks rental process". The initial ideas will be shared with LOC for discussion the intention being to have developed the process sufficiently to be able to make a formal statement at the LOC AGM 2019.

As an aside Gary Dixon attended a Dial and Exchange event and returned with an observation that many resorts as a first step exit strategy would accept weeks back on the death of an owner. LOC felt that this was a sensible and reasonable approach, and this would be given consideration as LOC develops its approach to the surrendering of weeks by members.

NL will report back at the September meeting after the Working Group had met (**NL**). However, it is anticipated that initial thoughts from the LOP Working Group on the parameters of the surrendered weeks rental process will be communicated to LOC in June 2019 – July 2019 timeframe.

g. Week Swap Service

Nothing further to report since the last meeting.

h. Exchange Organisations Relationships

Gary Dixon attended the Dial an Exchange event who have recently been bought by RCI. Gary would keep a watching brief.

i. Owner Specific Facilities

Nothing further to report other than LLL will be considering Brimstone Spa revenue which might include an update to the Fitness and Leisure area.

NL reported that Gary Dixon was settling in well and had negotiated a number of discounts for owners, via local partners.

The Trampers (off-road all-terrain mobility scooters) are now on-site and provide better access for owners who have limited mobility.

LOC would re-visit the list previously submitted by NL with regard to facilities for owners and would consider undertaking some benefits. JW will put a note together and circulate **(JW)**.

j. Management Agreement

KB will start to look at the Management Agreement in anticipation of undertaking a review **(KB)**.

NL to request the board to consider rolling the Management Agreement fee for another year on the same basis **(NL)**.

k. Insurance – Directors and Officers

LOC agreed to increase the cover to £1m **(ALD)**.

LOC-097 KB confirmed that having had sight of the insurance policy wording (business interruption) this would guide LOC's approach with regard to any situations in which access might be denied. KB to circulate a note on this **(KB)**.

8. Communication

a. Views

KB suggested that Gary Dixon might want to write an article for Views as Adam Sharrock used to **(GD)**.

b. Owners Website

A review of the Owners website is on-going.

c. Communication to Owners

Nothing to report

d. Electronic Communication

Nothing to report

e. Industry Developments

Nothing to report

f. Regulatory issues

Nothing to report

9. Any other Business

JW – NL agreed to write to the owner who brought their dog into their lodge during their last visit. NL would make such contact when the owners management fee letter was ready to be sent **(NL)**.

KB – Reported that he had attempted to undertake the Lancaster University survey, but the link wouldn't allow him to do so and he had reported this. LOC felt that if surveys are to be conducted then it should be clear that it is a legitimate request to owners.

NL – Having received comments from owners with regard to climate change and food waste NL would keep this under review and was already in correspondence with a particularly interested owner who was helping with that research.

NL – NL brought to the attention of LOC, the correspondence from one of the trustees of Litterol Arts Trust based at the Merz Barn opposite the estate entrance, sent to some owners on site, having been either pushed through letter boxes or put on car windscreens regarding concerns about the level of noise from the cattle grid at the main entrance. No action to take.

SS – Reported that the Maximiser licence is due for renewal in July 2019. and that a cloud-based application is now available from Maximiser as an alternative to the current on-site server-based version that we use today. DV to be asked to outline the options available **(DV)**.

SS – Gave her apologies for the next meeting.

Signed by

Prepared by

**Ian Hamilton
Chairman**

**Anne Durnall
Committee Secretary**

Dated

Dated