

Loch Neaton Management Committee Report

The charity is required, under the charter, to hold an Annual General Meeting, normally in July, for the purposes of reporting the activities of the charity and to allow the people of Watton to elect new trustees. Anyone over the age of 18 who resides in Watton may vote.

It is a requirement of the charities governing document that all trustees stand down at the AGM and then seek re-election if they wish to serve again. Trustees are unpaid and may not sell any commercial services or goods to the charity.

The board is comprised of four elected trustees and up to three additional trustees who may be elected or seconded. There are also four local organizations who are each permitted to appoint an additional trustee if they choose to do so.

The present trustees were elected at the last AGM, on the 9th August 2018, when the previous trustees resigned and did not stand for re-election. At the same meeting the four elected trustees seconded three appointed trustees bringing the board up to full strength.

The bodies entitled to appoint trustees did not choose to take up this option.

Prior to the election of the present trustees there had been a period where, following the untimely death of the chairman, physical maintenance of the Loch grounds and financial matters had been somewhat neglected. The result was that by the summer of 2018 the Loch environs were looking very shabby, litter was not being collected and several debts remained unpaid. These mainly involved money owed to previous trustees who had paid bills directly and not been reimbursed.

The existing trustees were all-in full-time employment and did not have the time needed to carry out all the work required.

Upon election the present board set about tidying up both the Loch and getting the accounts straight. It should be stressed that there is no suggestion of improper behaviour with regards to the accounts simply admin issues.

Our short-term targets were:

Financial

- To set up new signatories for the bank and identify the charities financial position
- To pay all unpaid bills
- To identify and appoint a commercial waste collection contract

Physical

- To carry out emergency maintenance on the grounds to make them more attractive and accessible to potential users in line with the charity's prime objective.
- To reinstate the picnic benches and litter bins

During August the accounts and bank issues were resolved, and existing debtors paid. By early September working parties had cleared up much of the overgrowth and reinstated both the picnic tables and litter bins. We received some financial help from a local builder with the cost of rebuilding the benches.

We appointed Business Waste as our refuse collector, and they supply and empty the green 1100 litre Euro Bin located by the Sport Centre gate.

Emptying of the dog and waste bins into the Euro bin is undertaken by volunteers.

Since tidying up the Loch we see far less evidence of people dropping waste and the bins are well used. The adage that if somewhere looks like a tip it will be treated as such and if it looks tidy it will probably remain so seems to run true. That is not to say that we get no littering and sadly in school holidays it does increase sharply.

Vandalism is relatively low level and tends to be annoyingly time wasting rather than expensive.

In September we also received a generous donation of £2000 from Dereham Plant and Transport Engineering for which we are extremely grateful. We have also received sundry donations from the public and, in September, a grant of £500 from Watton Town Council to install two additional Lifebuoy Stations. These, and the existing cork lifebuoy we replaced, are of polypropylene manufacture so do not deteriorate with age.

Unfortunately, the Loch has, like most similar lakes, a large infestation of Canadian Pond Weed and we are endeavouring to tackle this but, sadly, it is impossible to eradicate. This weed, introduced by the Victorians as an ornamental pond plant, has become endemic in our lakes as it has no natural enemies in the UK and is spread by wildfowl and even fishing tackle.

At the present time the trustees are working on two additional sources of funding to finance the replacement of the damaged board walk at the Dereham Road end of the Loch and to replace the picnic tables with modern vandal proof metal tables.

In addition to the picnic tables if this bid is successful, we hope to add some adult outdoor exercise equipment.

One of the joint activities promoted by both the Loch and the Sports Centre is the Park run. This is held every Saturday morning at 9.00 am and attracts, on average, about 130 runners for the 5 Kilometre run. It is free to sign up and enter and is suitable for all ages and abilities whether you are a super-fast runner or a slow plodder!

Accounts

The financial Year is April 1st to March 31st but for this report we have produced figures from the point of hand over to the new board to 29th July 2019 although detailed information for both Financial Year and Trustee Year will be published on our web site following the AGM.

Cash on Hand @	Aug 9, 2018	Jul 29, 2019
Petty Cash	£339.00	£15.07
Current Account	£220.31	£1,105.22
Savings Account 1	£5,386.63	£5,389.09
Savings Account 2	£56.00	£0.00
Total	£6,001.94	£6,509.38

As can be seen for the first time in several years there has been a positive cash flow due largely to the generous donation from Dereham Plant and Transport Engineering.

Detailed accounts are available to view on request, but a summary of expenditure is shown below:

CATEGORY	VALUE
2017 / 18 Trustee Board Accrued Debts	£451.90
Insurance	£436.60
Lifebuoy Stations	£496.32
Refuse Collection	£591.56
Web Services	£53.95
Sundries	£38.69
Total	£2,069.02

In line with the charter of the charity the existing board will now resign and anyone wishing to seek re-election or seek to be newly elected should make themselves known.