

Summary of Minutes of the 324th Board Meeting of Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation held on 26th November 2024 at One Garden City

Board Members Present

Gareth Hawkins (Chair)	GH
David Adam	DA
Jane Perry	JP
John Hillson	JH
Kevin Jones	KJ
Kieran Khangura	KiK
Michael Collins	MC
Simon Franklin	SF
Sir Tim Wilson	TW
Terry Hone	JH
Ian Mantle	IM

Foundation Officers Present

Graham Fisher (CEO)	GF
Mark Coles (ED Property)	MaC
Matt Peak (ED Finance)	MP
Stuart Sapsford (ED Communities Culture & Heritage)	SS
Kerry Kyriacou (ED Regeneration)	KyK
Corrina Windsor (Governance Support Assistant)	CW
Emma Santos (Finance Partner)	ES
Claire Pudney (HAS Manager)	ClP

Apologies

Chris Pattison (Vice-Chair)	CP
Jo Dew	JD

1. The Chairman reported that notice of the Meeting had been given in accordance with the Rules of the Foundation and that a quorum was present. Apologies were noted as above.

The minutes of the 323rd meeting on 17th September 2024 were agreed and signed.

2. Declarations of Interests

None

3. Matters Arising

Placemaking Strategy to be considered by the SPC.

The Trustees agreed to appoint KiK as member of the R&IAC.

4. Papers to Note.

Grants Committee minutes for October 2024 were Noted by the Board

Grants awarded by the Heritage Foundation Grants Committee

Howard Garden Day and Social Centre – £10,000 awarded under object iv, Health and Wellbeing towards assistance with building improvement costs.

Love Letchworth – Bicycle Marking Project – £250 awarded under object iii, Education and Learning towards working with the police for a bicycle marking event.

Herts Musical Memories – £6,344 awarded under object iv, Health and Wellbeing towards establishing a group to provide a musical group for sufferers of dementia.

Stand By Me – £8,000 partial award under object iv, Health and Wellbeing towards teacher training in schools for pupil bereavement.

Active in the Community – £350 partial award under object iv, Health and Wellbeing towards marketing costs with assistance from the HF marketing team if required.

A presentation was given by Acorns Activities of the latest programme, working with the Jackmans Early Years Partnership. Following the presentation, the Grants Committee agreed to continue funding Acorn Activities in the 2025 financial year, recommending ratification by the HF Board.

The Grants Committee agreed to continue funding to the following organisations for the 2025 financial year, recommending ratification by the HF Board:

- Citizens Advice North Herts
- Letchworth Family Support
- Letchworth Foodbank

The minutes and decisions of the Heritage Advisory Committee were Noted by the Board.

Decisions September 2024

- Baldock Road: Blocking up front first floor window, insertion of Velux rooflight to front elevation (retrospective) – Refused
- Haselfoot: Alterations to roof structure, hipped roof to gable roof and rear dormer – Refused
- Lawrence Avenue: Single storey side extension, first floor side extensions, two storey rear extension, front porch and frontage alterations (revised scheme) – Refused
- Blackmore: Demolition of garage, erection of part double, part single storey front extension and associated works – Refused
- Paddock Close: Replacement windows and doors, insertion of 2 rooflights to rear single storey roofline replacement SVP – Approved
- Nortonbury Farmhouse: Plot Split – Approved subject to Trustees approval.
- Standalone Farmhouse: General maintenance and repairs, replacement timber window to side elevation, infill of existing rear porch and external drainage to front and side elevation – Approved
- AOB: Air Source Heat Pumps – The HAC agreed to revisions to the guidance.

Decisions October 2024

- South View: part single, part two storey rear extension, new side first floor windows, front garage door and alterations to garage door opening, insertion of rooflights – Refused

- South View: External Wall Cladding – Refused
- Wilbury Road: Erection of side fence to frontage between neighbouring property (retrospective) – Refused
- AOB: AMC were of the opinion HF’s guidance is too lenient in the Modern area. The HAC agreed to reference other Section 19 towns’ principles in HF’s guidance.

Applications to the HAC 2024

September – 78

October – 96

Annual Total – 714

5. Report of the Executive Director – Finance

2025 Budget Proposals were discussed

MP reported inflation had dropped from a year ago to 2.3% and wage inflation is currently higher at 4.8% due to rising employer NI and wage inflation, which would impact HF to c£70k in 2025.

The Trustees approved the staff pay award for 2025.

Voids are stable at 11% overall. Property yields are challenged as is annual income. Two site sales are due for completion in 2025. Cash flow is ahead of the minimum at the time of writing.

The outline aims and approach to the 2025 budget were agreed at the Board meeting in July 2024.

The Trustees agreed to adopt the budget proposed for 2025.

A core budget for 2025 has been held steady in terms of total Planned Property Maintenance. Detailed expenditure and income budgets for 2024 (actual) and 2025 were reviewed.

The Trustees agreed the 2025 operating budget

The details of the capital expenditure for 2025 were reviewed and agreed.

The Trustees agreed the capital expenditure budget.

Land investment proposals for 2025 were discussed, including sales, design principles and technical reports.

The Trustees agreed the land investment budget.

Management Accounts up to September 2024 were presented and discussed. It was highlighted that there is a better than forecast performance in some income areas.

Some underspends are giving a better than budgeted end of year.

Total expenditure on investment property maintenance of £1,504k is in line with YTD budget.

Net investment in the Farm is £163k more than budget and income is down 10%, mainly due to the bad weather at the beginning of the year and over Easter.

Overall income for the Foundation is broadly in line with budget.

The Trustees noted the management accounts for the first nine months of the year.

The Financial Regulations / Delegated Authorities Annual Review document was considered and the changes approved by the Board.

6. Chief Executive Report

Gareth Hawkins was reappointed as a General Governor for a second and final term of five years.

Judith Nash was reappointed as the Nominated Governor for Educations for a second and final term of five years.

It's planned to produce a 'Who does What in the Garden City' guide in conjunction with NHC and the BID.

The Trustees Approved the Draft Business plan for 2025.

7. Executive Director – Property

CLP presented the HF Sustainable Heritage Policy. The policy is a working document for Sustainable Heritage, which is a challenge due to moisture and ventilation in the buildings. Research and comparisons have taken place with other Section 19 towns (those that operate a Scheme of Management). A funding application has been made to carry out a feasibility study on parts of the Rural Estate.

The Trustees Approved the Sustainable Heritage Policy

The Board were pleased to note positive progress on future lettings in Spirella.

The Trustees Approved the debt write-off of £63.5k

8. Executive Director – Communities, Culture and Heritage

Following the Grants Committee recommendations to continue funding, Acorns Activities, Letchworth Family Support Team and North Hertfordshire Citizens Advice, the **Trustees ratified the following grant awards:**

Acorns (Jackmans Early Years Partnership)	£ 79,250
Letchworth Family Support Team	£120,000
North Hertfordshire Citizens Advice	£150,000

9. AOB

The NHC Sports Facility Strategy was discussed and it was noted that community use in LGC (66 hours) is far behind that of Hitchin (1,000 hours) and Baldock (524 hours). The Chair requested a paper to enable further discussion.