

LTG Minutes 78th AGM, 23 June 2024

Sutton Arts Theatre, Sutton Coldfield



National Committee members:

Jo Matthews	Chairman	The Questors Theatre, Ealing
Nick Morley	Vice Chairman	Sinodun Players, Wallingford
Brian Stoner	Treasurer	Bingley Little Theatre
Anne Gilmour	National Secretary	The Questors Theatre
Mike Smith	National Liaison Officer	Durham Little Theatre
Emyr Rhys-Jones	N Region Secretary	Theatr Fach, Llangefni
Jackie Blackwood	C Regional Secretary	Crescent Theatre, Birmingham
Ralf Togneri	S Regional Secretary	Kelvin Players, Bristol
Sheila Cooper	Regional Representative	People's Theatre, Newcastle
Debbie Hibberd	Regional Representative	Rugby Theatre

Vacant:

Public Relations Officer

1. Jo Matthews opened the 78th LTG AGM at 09:30 at Sutton Arts Theatre, Sutton Coldfield. At the request of Jo Matthews, delegates stood to remember with a round of applause those who had died during the year, especially Sandra Simpson and Kevin Spence, longstanding members and LTG Reps.

a. **Theatres attending** – there were **37 theatres attending** as follows:

Barn Theatre; Bingley Little Theatre; Bolton Little Theatre; Caxton Theatre; Chelmsford Theatre Workshop; Chesil Theatre; Company of Players, Hertford; Cotswold Playhouse; Crescent Theatre; Durham City Theatre; Grove Park Theatre, Wrexham; Harborough Theatre; Herne Bay Little Theatre; Highbury Little Theatre; Ilkley Playhouse; Joseph Rowntree; Kelvin Players; Lace Market Theatre; Lancaster Grand; Maskers Theatre; Medway Little Theatre; Miller Centre, Caterham; Nantwich Players; New Venture Theatre; Oldbury Rep; People's Theatre; The Questors Theatre; Richmond Shakespeare Soc; Royalty Theatre, Sunderland; Rugby Little Theatre; Sinodun Players, Corn Exchange; Southport Dramatic Club; Thame Players; Theatr Fach, Llangefni; Venture Theatre, Ashby, Wharf Theatre.

2. Anne Gilmour noted that **apologies had been received from LTG Reps from 61 Member theatres**. These were: Abbey Theatre, Company of Ten; Altrincham Little Theatre; Apollo Theatre; Archway Theatre; Bear Pit Theatre; Blackfriars Arts Centre; Bournemouth Little Theatre; Brighton Little Theatre; Bromley Little Theatre; Chads Theatre; Chester Little Theatre; Chorley Theatre; Courtyard Theatre, Chipstead Players; Criterion Theatre; Dewsbury Arts Group; East Lane Theatre, Wembley; EPPIC Theatre, Ecclesfield Priory Players; Farnworth Little Theatre; Folkstone-Hythe Tower Theatre; Formby Little Theatre; Geoffrey Whitworth Theatre; The Grange Playhouse; Green Room Theatre Dorking (DDOS); The Green Room Theatre, Wilmslow; The Guild of Players, Theatre Royal, Dumfries; Halifax Playhouse; Hebden Bridge Theatre; Highbury Little Theatre; Ilminster Entertainment Society, The Warehouse Theatre; Incognito Theatre Group; Lantern Theatre; Leicester Little Theatre; Little Theatre, Cleadon; The Loft Theatre Company; Louth Playgoers Society; MADS, Macclesfield; Market Theatre, Ledbury; Moulton Theatre; Nailsea Little Theatre; Nomad Players; Oast Theatre Tonbridge; Oasthouse Theatre (Rainham Theatrical Soc); Penrith Players; Priory Theatre; Progress Theatre, Reading; Queen Mother Theatre; Robin Hood Theatre; Romiley Little Theatre; Rose Theatre (Nonentities);

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South London Theatre; Stevenage Lytton Players; Stockport Garrick; Studio Theatre, Salisbury; Talisman Theatre; Teddington Theatre Club, Hampton Hill Theatre; Todmorden Hippodrome Theatre; Tower Theatre, Stoke Newington; Westovian Theatre Society; Weymouth Drama Club; Wickham Theatre Trust, Theatre 62; Wokingham Theatre; Workington Playgoers.

3. Anne noted that **26** LTG Members had not responded either with an acceptance or apologies to her emails about the LTG National Conference.

Announcement of proxy holders – there were none although Anne noted that some LTG Reps had delegated the voting role to another member of their theatre who was attending the conference.

4. **Approval of the Minutes of the 77th AGM held at The Questors Theatre 3 June 2023.**

Anne noted that The Courtyard Theatre, Chipstead should be added to the list of Members who had sent their apologies for not attending. The minutes were proposed by Debbie Hibberd and seconded by Sheila Cooper and approved.

a. **Matters arising from the Minutes** – there were none.

5. **Chairman's Report** – Jo initially touched on licensing of play reading performances. Mike Smith confirmed that, apart from the Director, if there was one person in the room not reading the play it should be considered a performance for which a licence is required. It also appears that publishers are treating any infringement far more robustly. Martin Pritchard, New Venture Theatre asked if a theatre had a licence for a production 6 months ahead, would this requirements still apply? Mike Smith again confirmed that if someone comes to listen to a reading that is a performance.

b. Jo noted that her report had been circulated with the AGM Papers, but she wanted to highlight a few aspects. She had had a fabulous tour of office and perhaps would be known as the COVID Chair. The COVID period had not been easy for anyone and she congratulated Members on how well they had done to emerge on the other side, as strong, if not stronger than before.

c. She urged all LTG Members to talk to each other, to stay in touch, to visit each other and to copy all the good things that LTG Members did. She also urged members not to be afraid to stand for office in the LTG. She stressed that it is not a massive commitment with around four meetings a year, some by Zoom. The Committee needed new blood and new ideas.

d. She urged delegates to sign up for training opportunities. The next opportunity was a one-hour free Zoom with Creative Lives on Wednesday 26 June at 19:00 with Clare Appleby from Theatres Trust who will talk about sustainability in our theatres. She will give you hits and tips on quick and easy wins. Jo said to delegates, if you cannot be there, do ask someone from your theatre to sign up and join.

e. Jo also stressed the need for members to ensure that their theatre's policies were up to date and that they should be on every subject they can think of! She noted that the least favourite subject, but sometimes the most crucial, was dealing with people. LTG always suggested that Members look at the policies on the website of [The Criterion theatre, Earlsdon](#) who have exemplary policies.

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f. There was a need for Members to stage cutting edge work. Although the tried and tested 'classics' mostly did not need a licence, if Members did not push the boundaries they will stagnate and not become outward looking adventurous theatre. She urged members to stay in the zeitgeist and stay up with new developments. The lighting session yesterday had been great and was a good step on this path.

g. Jo offered a huge thank you to the committee, both past and present and mentioned the huge help she had received from the late Kevin Spence and from Margaret Mann who had been unable to attend the conference. And she offered big thanks to the Hon Sec Anne Gilmour who had got her involved in the first place and had stuck with her to help her through. It had been a treat to serve as the Hon President and she was delighted to now pass the baton, and the badge of office to her Vice Chairman Nick Morley who she knew would be a brilliant Chairman. She handed him the badge of office. Much applause from delegates.

6. Treasurer's Report – Brian noted that the Accounts were in the LTG Yearbook and these figures had been reported to the Charity Commission. The major expenditure was the cost of producing the LTG Yearbook and he noted that membership income continued to grow. He offered his thanks to the LTG Reps who so promptly responded to his pleas for funds and noted those theatres who had failed to pay will shortly be contacted. He was pleased that the transfer of the Bank Account from Virgin to CAF Bank had mainly gone well apart from a few outstanding issues and he offered his thanks to Sandra McGuire for efficiently auditing the accounts and to the National Committee for their care over expenditure. There were no questions.

7. Approval of Accounts as printed in the LTG Yearbook 2023-2024 – Brian proposed that the accounts were accepted. Caroline Chapman agreed and Jackie Blackwood seconded and they were unanimously approved.

8. Election of Officers – In his first formal role as Chairman Nick asked that holders of the roles confirm they were content to be elected for another year. These were Hon Sec, Anne Gilmour, confirmed; Treasurer, Brian Stoner, confirmed; NLO, Mike Smith, confirmed. He noted that no one had come forward to fill the PRO role formerly held by Kevin Spence and urged delegates to consider standing. Ali Warren, from the S Region had been co-opted as S Region RCM (Representative Committee Member); Sarah Clarke confirmed she would stand as Central Region RCN and would replace Debbie Hibberd who was standing as Vice Chair. In the N Region, the committee had just heard that Emyr Rhys-Jones wished to stand down as the Regional Secretary for personal reasons but he was willing to support a Regional Secretary and stand as the N Region RCM. Caroline Chapman had kindly agreed to stand for a limited period as the N Region Secretary. Delegates confirmed they were content to agree all these appointments *en bloc* and they were passed unanimously.

9. Appointment of Auditor – Brian proposed that Sandra McGuire be reappointed as Auditor and this was approved.

10. Resolutions – there were none.

11. Future Conference Dates

a. *National Conference: 2025 – 27 – 29 June, Royalty Theatre Sunderland. The evening production will be The Wedding Singer.*

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- h. *Regional Conferences 2024*
- i. *N Region:* Caxton Theatre, Grimsby 18 – 20 October: evening performance *The Dresser*
- j. *Central Region:* Priory Theatre, Kenilworth – one day conference Saturday 26 October but attendees will be able to see the evening production on the Friday of *The Addams Family*
- k. *Southern Region* – Medway Little Theatre, Rochester, Sat 5 October with the evening performance of *The Lion in Winter*.

Nick offered thanks to Jo Mathews for her tenure and thanked Sheila Cooper for her work as the N RCM and Debbie Hibberd for her work as the Central Region RCM.

The AGM closed at 10:01

For the benefit of delegates Nick offered a little information about himself. He was from The Corn Exchange, Wallingford the home of the Sinodun Players. Not an actor, but a techie and he would try and represent all LTG Members the best he could. For some more background he suggested delegates should read his section in the LTG Yearbook. One aim was to encourage attendance at LTG conferences.