

**Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 5 December 2023
The Strand Suite, The Law Society
5pm – 5.30pm**

Minutes

1. Welcome:

MCC welcomed attendees to the AGM.

Present: Mark Chick (MCC), Colin Cohen (CC), Mark Loveday (ML), Mark Wilson, (MW), Henrietta Hammonds (HH), Eleanor Murray (EM), Elle Corfield (EC)

2. Apologies:

John Midgley (JM), Anna Favre (AF), Clare Grove (CG), Lisa Carter (LC)

3. Approval of Minutes of last AGM:

The minutes were reviewed and, with no amendments or comments from the meeting, they were approved unanimously.

4. Directors' report:

Last year ALEP celebrated its 15th birthday; today, in a time of increasing challenges for the sector, we stand at 258 members. Regional numbers are growing, and we are delighted to see more firms take up additional office listings.

In 2022, we invested in a new ALEP website the benefits of which have been evident this year: a clearer structure for users, which has resulted in a higher level of enquiries. We continue to invest in Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising campaigns, as well as direct advertising on Facebook.

Our social following remains steady, and we would encourage all users to continue to engage with us on LinkedIn and Twitter.

We retain firm links with our sponsors – Kerry London and Zurich, who continue to support all our events, providing financial support – and service to our members. We are also pleased to receive the support and sponsorship of members and other non-member organisations for our event programme.

The sector has a growing conference market, and we welcomed a sell-out 240 delegates to our annual conference in October, which was held at One Great George Street. This followed our lecture in March, where 150 delegates joined us online. We have also delivered online training events, a panel session on the subject of the King's Speech, and networking events including ALEP on the Towns in London and Brighton.

Members and guests travelled to Hertfordshire for our golf day in May and, as usual, team ALEP ensured that the sun shone! The Seasonal Drinks Reception – always an ALEP highlight – is taking place tonight, and we look forward to raising a glass together.

Along with other key goals, we met two specific objectives in 2023: establishing PR and Regional Working Groups.

The ALEP PR Working Group has been established by the ALEP Advisory Committee with the core aim of helping to identify newsworthy topics, issues and events with which ALEP

should be engaging, or on which it should be providing expert insights to the media and, where applicable, to other stakeholders and elected representatives.

In the regions, our active group is tasked with engaging with professionals – both members and non-members – and are planning events and in-person training for those who live and work outside of PCL. Our thanks go to our PR chair, Mark Wilson, the rotating regional chairs and all members who contribute to these groups.

We also engaged the services of Penny Norton, a new PR consultant in October, and this is already bearing fruit with a number of key headlines and interviews in recent weeks.

This year has seen a gear-change from Mr Gove and his commitment to leasehold reform as we have seen with the King's Speech, announcement of the Ground Rent consultation and, just last week, the introduction of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill.

As an association with members who act for freeholders and leaseholders, our role is to act as the representative voice of the enfranchisement sector, influencing legislation to bring about positive change for all; as such we have always adopted an apolitical stance.

Mr Gove has signalled his intention to get the Bill passed by the next general election so we have a lot to consider in the coming months as the Bill progresses. ALEP and its members will continue to support DLUHC and the APPG, providing advisory and technical support on the key points of the Bill. It is vital that any reforms – and we agree that a degree of reform is needed – are workable in practice. Surveys on the consultation and reforms have been issued to all members.

We are very proud of all ALEP has achieved in the past 12 months and extend our thanks to Clare and the team that seamlessly manage the day-to-day operations and events. Our thanks also go to Lisa Carter who manages the finance and membership administration.

The successes and milestones achieved by ALEP in 2023 were made possible through the support of our members. Whether attending our events in person or online, actively participating in consultations and planning, or supporting the Association in various capacities, your commitment propels ALEP forward, ensuring its continuous growth.

As we draw 2023 to a close and wait with bated breath to see what 2024 brings, we would like to wish everyone all the very best and continued good health.

5. Financial report:

In our end of year report at the 2022 AGM, we commented that the previous trading year had seen the Association absorb a number of costs that had arisen as a result of a return to in-person events following the pandemic.

For the trading year ending 31st May 2023, the directors are pleased to report a much stronger set of figures. Our retained profit for the period was £25,973 compared to £1,037 in the year ending 31st May 2022.

As we reported last year, the final quarter of 2022 saw a return to 'normal' business for the Association in which we hosted a successful Autumn Conference. In the first quarter of 2023, we also had a successful Spring Lecture. In addition, sponsorships were maintained, and our membership continued to grow.

To put some detail on these numbers, turnover for the year 2023 was up by £40,662 on the previous year to £196,593 (from £155,931 in the previous year). Our gross profit was £142,556 which was up from £116,639 in the previous year.

During this period our overheads increased from £142,423 to £157,336 a change of £14,913. Deducting these from turnover and adding other income the Association made a surplus of £25,973.

Last year we reported on the change of personnel in our accounts team with Lisa Carter taking over in the in-house Accounts role. This is the first full financial year with Lisa in post and we can say that she now has her 'feet firmly under the desk' and is a fully integrated part of 'Team ALEP.'

The directors and Executive Committee continue to monitor financial performance and whilst there is never any room for complacency as we move into what may be new territory for the sector with the Leasehold and Freehold Bill and the prospect of reform in the offing, we have every confidence that the Association is in good shape financially.

Our future planning, whilst not the subject of the report for the year ending 2023, continues to be on a prudent basis and aims to put the Association on a strong footing to weather whatever the remainder of the current trading year will bring.

The Association has had a very successful October 2023 Conference and has put on online learning events. These have been well-received and have all generated revenue for us. We also continue to seek and receive sponsorship and advertising income.

The directors are therefore confident that the Association remains in good financial shape and is well set to move into 2024 and beyond.

The directors would like to thank Lisa and the Advisory Committee for all of their excellent help and input as we move forward into the next calendar year.

The accounts were approved unanimously.

6. Committee elections:

MCC announced that Anna Favre, Eleanor Murray, Mark Wilson and Henrietta Hammonds were re-elected to Advisory Committee.

7. Any other business:

None.

8. Next meeting:

Tuesday 3 December 2024. Venue TBC.