JOHN STORER CHARNWOOD

Annual General Meeting 2025

Monday 6 October 2025 at 2.30pm

MINUTES

1. Sandy Leong, as chair of the joint board of trustees, opened the meeting, welcomed everyone, and thanked the Mayor, Cllr David Northage and the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Colin Hamilton, for attending.

Welcome from the Mayor of Charnwood

Thank you for your kind invitation. The past 5 months that I have been Mayor has given me the opportunity not only to visit but to be part of so many institutions in our borough. John Storer Charnwood does an amazing job in enabling and supporting groups and individuals through a wide and diverse range of activities both at John Storer House and at the Shepshed Volunteer Centre. I am looking forward this afternoon to learning about John Storer and his legacy. I must confess I know little about him but he must have been a man of amazing vision to create this community centre that continues to inspire volunteers, trustees and staff alike. Thank you all for the work you do and thank you for letting me be a part of your AGM.

Sandy Leong thanked the Mayor and declared the meeting quorate.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Brahma Kumaris, Andy Hull, Mel Chaggar, Vivienne Holmes.

There were no notifications of AOB and no proxy votes declared.

3. Minutes of the combined AGM of John Storer Charnwood and John Storer House Foundation held on 7 October 2024

The minutes had been agreed by the Joint Board of Trustees on 4 December 2024 and were, therefore, recommended for approval.

Proposed by Sandie Forrest, seconded by Keith Pyne. Agreed.

There were no matters arising.

4. Annual Report on Activities and Services 2024 – 2025

SL outlined the different formats of the annual report; the formal annual report included in the accounts and available to view on the JSC website and the less formal, more colourful version, available to take away from the meeting or to be posted out on request.

No comments or questions

Vote to adopt the Annual Report:
Proposed by Wendy Smith, seconded by Elliot Harris. Agreed.

4a John Storer Charnwood – Sandy Leong (Chair)

(Full Text) As we gather for this AGM, it is fitting to pause and reflect on the remarkable legacy that underpins all our work today: the legacy of John Storer of Walton-on-the-Wolds and Loughborough, who in 1713 established a trust that was to serve this community for centuries to come. His vision was simple, yet profound: to ensure that those in greatest need might find some relief and dignity in life.

For almost two hundred years, the trust operated in its original form. Each week, bread was distributed to the poor of Loughborough, while each year coats were given to children whose families could not afford warm clothing. In an age before the welfare state, this was no small act. Bread was a staple that could mean the difference between hunger and survival, and for children, a warm coat was protection against cold and illness. Storer's charity offered not just sustenance, but a visible reminder that the poor of this parish were not forgotten.

By the close of the nineteenth century, however, society itself was changing. The Victorian era brought new ideas about poverty, welfare, and education. By then, the weekly doles of bread and the distribution of coats had become outdated. Children were embarrassed by the stigma of wearing what were known locally as "charity coats", increasingly refused them. It was clear that the trust, if it was to remain true to Storer's intention of practical compassion, needed to adapt.

And so, in 1891, the Charity commission issued a formal scheme to reshape the use of Storer's endowment. From that date forward, half the income was dedicated to the relief of poverty, and the other half was directed to the advancement of education of children of Loughborough. This was a profound moment of transition. It aligned the charity with the spirit of the age: with a growing recognition that education, as much as bread, was a way out of poverty, and that discreet assistance could preserve dignity better that the public dole.

Only a few years later, in 1899, the distribution of bread and coats came to an end. What began as an eighteenth-century act of almsgiving had, by the ed of the nineteenth century been transformed into a more modern form of social support. Not longer loaves and garments, but cash relief for those in hardship, and structured educational assistance for children. This mirrored a wider national trend: Victorian and Edwardian philanthropy was moving steadily away from the visible "charity hand-out" towards institutions, funds and foundations that could provide help win more lasting and less stigmatised ways.

The educational side of Storer's legacy was soon formalised. In 1905, the John Storer's Educational Foundation was constituted, with its purpose to provide bursaries, scholarships and "special benefits" to schools and under-25s. This remit was broadened in a 1957 scheme, reflecting the changing needs of students and schools in the mid-twentieth century. In 1972, it was administratively grouped with a allied local charities, part of a broader effort to rationalise and strengthen charitable work in Loughborough and the surrounding district.

While the endowment continued to serve in these ways, another branch of the legacy began to blossom. In the 1960s, a vision emerged for a community centre in Loughborough, a place that could bring together voluntary services, advice and support under one roof. In 1966, that vision became reality with the opening of John Stoerer House, named in honour of the man whose original gift had shown what difference a single benefactor could make. Over the decades that followed, John Stoerer House because a hub of community activity, voluntary action, and practical support for local people.

Today, the organisation based here, John Storer Charnwood, after various name changes, the umbrella organisation for community services across the borough. It stands as the living successor to John Storer's eighteenth-century bequest. The form has changed dramatically – from bread and coats to what we do today – but the spirit remains constant. Storer's original values of compassion, dignity and practical action are still the compass by which we navigate.

And so, as we reflect on our work over the past year – the services we have delivered, the people we have supported, the partnerships we have built – we do so with gratitude to John Storer, and with pride that his trust, now more than three hundred years old, continues to change lives. What he began 1713, continues today.

His legacy reminds us of something very simple: that generosity, wisely applied, endures far beyond a single lifetime. It adapts, it grows and it continues to serve. John Storer could not have foreseen today's world, but he would surely have recognised in our work the same values he held dear. And those values – compassion and practical action – remain at the heart of everything we do.

I would like to thank, our funders, CBC and LCC for their continued support and, as always, I would like to thank the amazing staff and volunteers that are involved, making it a vibrant, fun and caring place to be, whether it's the services run from John Storer House, Shepshed Volunteer Centre, or the Therapeutic Garden. I would also like to thank my fellow trustees for their knowledge, skills and wisdom and the time they so freely give to ensure we are always doing what needs doing in the 21st century! Thank you everybody, including John Storer.

5. Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025

Presentation by John West (Hon Treasurer JSC) of the

- Independently Examined Accounts of John Storer Charnwood (formerly Voluntary Action Charnwood)
- Treasurers' Report

Conclusion – John West on behalf of JSC

Thanks to everyone involved in the production and funding of the independently examined 24/25 Final Accounts which were approved by trustees at the Accounts Approval Meeting on Wednesday 1st October.

Richard Hassall then spoke as holder of Financial Strategy Portfolio.

Balance sheet
Reserves of £1.1 million. Healthy position, but includes fixed assets. General Free reserves of around £525k. Other is designated.

Income & Expenditure

Income of £941k. Grants from CBC, LCC and Shepshed Town Council. We are grateful for all of that. Account for 41% of our income. 59% we generate ourselves. We are trying to get away from depending on grants and are making progress. There will be some uncertainty going forward with the reorganisation of local government.

Energy Efficiency Scheme Grant
Received £88k. 117 solar panels, heat pumps and LED lighting. Since February we have saved £7,600.

We seem to have made a surplus of £75k for the year. This is not quite true, although it is in accounting terms. When you see this if you adjust for the energy grant, we actually had a deficit of about £4k, which is not a bad result. Page 8 of the accounts explains this in more detail.

Proposed by Ian Stewart, Seconded by Sandie Forrest. Agreed.

6. Appointment of Auditor or Independent Examiner

The members are requested to approve the appointment of The Rowleys Partnership as Independent Examiner of the accounts and to authorise the Board of Trustees of John Storer Charnwood to determine their remuneration.

Proposed by Ian Stewart, seconded by Sandie Forrest. Agreed.

7. Elections to John Storer Charnwood

7a President and Vice-Presidents

It was proposed to elect the Mayor of Charnwood, Cllr David Northage, to the office of President of John Storer Charnwood.

Proposed by Sandie Forrest, seconded by Madhu Khandelwal. Agreed.

It was proposed to elect the Deputy Mayor of Charnwood, Cllr Colin Hamilton to the office of Vice-President.

Proposed by Sandie Forrest, seconded by Madhu Khandelwal. Agreed.

7b Board of Trustees (membership list enclosed)

This year one trustee, Martin Mee stands down and may seek re-election. He has decided not to stand again so we would like to record our thanks to Martin for his last three years of service.

We received two nominations to the Board. One was not considered as it was submitted after the closing date.

The other was Peter Lenthall. A vote was taken as to whether Peter should be accepted onto the Board. Proposed by Elliot Harris, seconded by Madhu Khandelwal. There were abstentions (2), but the vote was carried.

7c Co-options – for information only to AGM

There are currently two vacancies for co-opted trustees.

We have one possible nomination who will be considered at December's Trustee Board meeting.

7d Charnwood Borough Council Nominees

Charnwood Borough Council is invited to nominate two representatives to be observers of the John Storer Charnwood Board. As such, they attend meetings of the board but may not vote on any matters.

At the moment, there are three nominees, Cllr Jenny Bokor, Cllr Jenni Tillotson and Cllr Sarah Goode. It was resolved to talk to CBC about rectifying the numbers, with a view to this being completed in time for June 2026 when all CBC's appointments to outside bodies are reviewed.

8. A short report on the year 2024-25

Including a presentation "How does the John Storer history impact what we do today?".

Karen Frostick gave a talk on John Storer, with details of his history and what we know about him. She related this to what John Storer Charnwood does today and that the organisation is, essentially, carrying on his vision in many of the same ways. More details are to be found in the Annual Review.

No questions.

Mike Jones thanked John Storer Charnwood for its continuing commitment to both Bloom and to Loughborough Mela. Also, for its continuing support of the Charnwood Stroke Club through the hire of the minibus.

Vote of Thanks by Sandy Leong
To Karen for her report, for those attending today and to Mr John Storer.

9. **Any other business** (items must be notified to the Chair of John Storer Charnwood, Sandy Leong, or the Director, Karen Frostick, by 9am on the day of the meeting).

None
Meeting closed 3.25pm.