HOLMER GREEN VILLAGE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION
Founded 1944

Annual General Meeting – Monday 8th November 2021, 8pm

Attendees (Committee Members)	David Avery	*Committee Member*	Meg Brinton	*Secretary*
	James Cadle	*Chairman*	Richard Chantler	*Membership Secretary / Trading Store Manager*
	David Cook / Jan Cook	*Treasurers*	Tony Harper	*President*
	Linda Meatyard	*Talks Organiser*	Terry Owen	*Outings Organiser*
Other members:	15			

Agenda

1 Apologies for absence
2 Approval of minutes:
- 2019 Annual General Meeting

3 Chairman's review of the year 2020/21 – James Cadle:
- Overview
- Membership
- Trading Store
- Shows
- Outings
- Talks
- Newsletter
- Catering.

4 Treasurer's report – David and Jan Cook
5 Plans for 2022, including subscriptions
6 Election of President
7 Election of 2022 Committee
9 Any other business.

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1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Kath Benians, Bob Dunning, David Kirby, Dorothy Kirby, Michael King, John Parslow, Peter Rawbone, Sue Rawbone, Lesley Shayler.

2. Approval of minutes of 2019 AGM

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th November 2019 were approved by the Meeting and signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's review of the year 2020/21 – James Cadle

James presented a review of the VPA's activities in the past two years:

Overview: James said that there was not much to report since, for the past two years, the dominant event had been the COVID-19 pandemic and the government's measures to deal with it, which had closed down most of the VPA's activities.

Membership: The membership to date totals 188 households, including 20 new members this year. This compared with a final total of 192 in 2019. James said, though, that the present figure may be misleading as no subscriptions were collected in 2021 and so members did not have to actively renew their membership; the true figure will emerge once memberships are renewed in 2022.

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Trading Store: James thanked Richard Chantler for keeping the Store going during 2020 and 2021, first using a 'call and collect service' and then more or less single-handedly more recently. The members present applauded Richard's efforts.

The Store had made surpluses in 2020 and 2021 which were discussed in more detail by the Treasurers.

The Store is now closed for 2021 and will reopen for business on Sunday 2nd January 2022.

Shows and Competitions: It had not been possible to stage Shows in either 2020 or 2021. An Annual Show had been considered in 2021 but England had only recently emerged from lockdown and it was thought that many people might be unwilling to attend an indoor event. Shows would re-start in 2022 (see later).

Outings: The pandemic had also precluded any outings during the past two years, initially because venues were shut and latterly because people would probably not be keen to travel on coaches..

Talks: Two talks had been provided in January and February 2020 but then the first lockdown intervened. In later 2021, it was unclear what the country's situation would be, so talks will not resume until 2022 (see later).

Newsletters: Only one newsletter was published during the pandemic, in December 2020, and another is planned for December 2021.

Catering: The last casualty of the pandemic had been the Harvest Home Lunch, which it had not been possible to stage in either 2020 or 2021.

James mentioned that the Committee role of Catering Manager has still not been filled.

4. Treasurer's Report – David and Jan Cook

David presented and explained the accounts to the membership. These been examined and approved by Jim Wilkie, a retired Chartered Accountant.

The full financial report is presented as an Annex to these minutes. The key points are:

- The Trading Store surpluses of £824.65 in 2020 and £677.78 in 2021
- Other activities incurred losses of £667.54 in 2020 and £73.43 in 2021
- The net surpluses were £157.11 in 2020 and £604.35 in 2021
- The Association's funds as at 30th September 2021 amounted to £15,567.90.

Linda Meatyard proposed that the accounts be accepted, this was seconded by Tony Harper and was carried on a show of hands, after which they were signed for the Association by David Cook and James Cadle.

5. Plans for 2022

James outlined the plans for 2022:

Membership: Members will be asked to pay their subscriptions from January 2022 and the cost will remain at £6 per household.

Trading Store: The Store will open for business on Sunday 2nd January 2022. Richard Chantler has proposed that payment cards be accepted and this has been agreed by the Committee. This will have an effect on who can serve in the Store as at least one person each Sunday will have to be familiar with the payment machine and the use of a smartphone.

Shows: The Spring Show will be held on Saturday 2nd April 2022 and the Annual Show on Saturday 10th September, both in the Village Centre. The schedule devised for 2020 will be used but Michael King will check it and have 2022 versions printed.

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Outings: Terry Owen will start to plan outings for 2022, including the 'free' trip to Wisley as part of our RHS membership. Cost may be an issue, as some coach firms have ceased trading and the costs of fuel and drivers' wages have increased.

Talks: The talks programme will resume in April 2022, when we should be clear of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will be necessary to find a new venue because the Chadwick Hall is now used by someone else every Wednesday evening (and other evenings besides. Linda Meatyard had provisionally booked the Church Hall but it was pointed out that the acoustics are poor. She will also investigate the use of the Rossetti Hall and the Baptist Church. James warned that the cost of speakers seem to have risen but David and Jan confirmed that the VPA's reserves could stand some losses for the time being.

Newsletters: A Christmas newsletter will be published in December 2021, setting out the plans for the next year. Consideration will then be given to resuming the bi-monthly format, provided there is enough to report.

Catering: The Committee will examine the feasibility of reinstating the Harvest Home Lunch. As previously explained, the last one in 2019 made a loss and there will be a need to find a caterer who can provide the requisite quality of meal at a price VPA members are prepared to pay.

James reiterated the need for someone to step forward and take on the Catering Manager role.

6. Election of President

James said that Tony Harper had been re-elected as President in 2016 and therefore his five-year term was now at an end. James Cadle proposed that Tony be re-elected and this was seconded by Brian Rogers; Tony was re-elected on a show of hands.

8. Election of 2022 Committee

Tony Harper took the chair and asked for nominations for Chairman for 2022. James Cadle was proposed by David Cook, seconded by Terry Owen and duly elected on a show of hands.

James Cadle now resumed the chair and announced that all existing Committee Members were prepared to stand again:

Position	Nominee
Secretary	Meg Brinton
Treasurers	David and Jan Cook
Membership Secretary	Richard Chantler
Trading Store Manager	Richard Chantler
Newsletter Editor	(covered by James Cadle)
Talks Organiser	Linda Meatyard
Outings Organiser	Terry Owen
Show Secretary	Michael King
Committee Member	David Avery
Committee Member	Sylvia Giles

Pam Barnett proposed that the Committee be re-elected, it was seconded by Linda Meatyard and the proposal was carried on a show of hands.

Brian Fisher had offered his services to the VPA after the 2019 AGM and he had been co-opted onto the Committee in December 2019, where he has taken on a new role of Horticultural Adviser. James now sought a proposer (Linda Meatyard) and seconder (Tony Harper) and Brian was duly elected to the Committee on a show of hands.

9. Any other business

James Cadle explained to the meeting that it had not been possible to award the RHS Banksian Medal for points scored at the show in 2020. Instead, it had been awarded to Richard Chantler in recognition of his work in keeping the Trading Store functioning during the pandemic.

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The Banksian Medal could not be awarded for the shows in 2021 either, so the Committee had decided to give it to Brian Fisher for his work for the Village Society and also for the charitable funds he had raised through opening his garden to the public.

On behalf of Dorothy Kirby, Pam Barnett asked what had become of the proposal to pay for one or two seats on the Common to commemorate the VPA's 75th anniversary in 2019. James Cadle explained that there had been negotiation with the Parish Council but that these had petered out due to problems within the Council itself. Then, the pandemic had intervened. James said that discussions would now be recommenced.

A member asked what was happening with the VPA website. James explained that the site is currently hosted by LCN and was developed using a website builder package they provided. In mid-2020, LCN had withdrawn support for this package and there was currently no way of updating it. However, James had found another provider and proposed to create a new website using their package and a new domain name. Jan Cook suggested that the new provider should be asked to migrate the existing domain name and James will investigate this approach.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8:48pm.

Approved …… Date……

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Annex: Treasurers' Report for the Holmer Green VPA AGM – November 2021

In view of the circumstances that we have found ourselves in, and the fact that there was no AGM last year, we are reporting on both the financial year from 1st October 2019 and the most recent financial year ending 30th September 2021.

The 2019/20 financial year started with a major change. After 18 years of stalwart service from our predecessor, Jan and I jointly took over the role of Treasurer of the VPA at the last AGM. However, none of us on the Committee could foresee the major changes that would be enforced on us during that year – cancellation of the monthly Talks programme, no Spring or Autumn Shows and no outings – a complete shutdown. Well, almost. In what was seen as a service to the local gardening community, a decision was taken to re-open the Store early in the COVID-19 Lockdown, on a pre-booked ordering system with payments, where possible, made online. Thanks to Richard Chantler's hard work through this period, he has ensured that members could continue to actually get out and do something in their gardens or allotments and ensure that the VPA's finances continued to remain healthy.

Following a review of the Association's figures at the beginning of the 2019/20 financial year, we restated the previous year's accounts – that's the accounts for the year October 2018 to September 2019 – to properly reflect the true financial position. Looking at the 2019-20 figures, there is little possibility of making meaningful comparisons with the previous year's accounts as income from Talks, Shows and Outings along with corresponding expenditure in those areas as well as hall hire were substantially affected by COVID-19. Other items such as the utilities and insurance of course remain unchanged and the activities of the Store were ongoing.

So, the key highlights in the 2019/20 accounts were:

- Despite the severe restrictions of COVID-19, Richard's sterling efforts saw a 4% increase in turnover at the Store for 2019/20 (up from £4,861 to £5,055). In turn this led to an increase in Net Profit from 6% to 16% (after adjustment for Insurance premium apportionment). Additionally, the end of that year saw an increase in stock held to £3,454 giving the Association a good platform from which we hoped to begin fully trading again in January 2021.

- We felt that various aspects of the VPA's activities should be split out to reflect their correct financial position:

    - A revised stance has been taken by Committee on the cost of our Insurance with this now more correctly showing a split across the Store, the Shows, the Outings and the Talks.
    - Hall Hire has been split so that the Shows and Talks could be separately costed, hence a new heading for Committee Meeting Hall Hire (only £66 as the Committee hadn't met since February in that year).
    - However, for obvious reasons the Talks cost figure doesn't reflect a full year but does include Talks Hall Hire, Speaker Fees and Refreshments for those evenings that did run.

- Neither Show was able to take place that year. The Show costs (£240) include printing of the Show schedules (which had been committed to before lockdown) and cost of a new trophy. This also includes the hall hire for the Autumn Show in September the previous year – the accounts are presented on a cash basis and hence this amount was paid and shown in that financial year.

- Printing, Copying and Postage are noticeably down due to lack of activities that year.

- The charity donation (£500) was made to the Holmer Green Boys Brigade at the previous year's AGM. The Committee decided not to raise charitable funds going forward. The balance of the Charity Account was incorporated in general funds.

- There were a number of non-renewals on the Membership front but lockdown seemed to encourage more allotment and garden activity in the village resulting in 19 new members in the 2019/20 year. We ended the year with 174 members (195 in 2019).

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- Due to various issues with the Harvest Home meal a loss of £201 was incurred mainly due to the cost of waiting staff.

- The Store profit for the year of £825 again ensured that the VPA as a whole broke even in this year showing a small overall profit of £157. Excluding the Store profit, the increased loss is mainly attributable to the Harvest Home loss and reduced membership.

- Overall the VPA remained in a stable position, having cash balances of just over £11,500 in addition to the stock held by the Store.

Members will recall that the Committee decided, in view of COVID-19, to waive subscriptions for 2021 for existing members. The finances of the VPA have been well managed in the past and our reserves were more than adequate to allow this to happen.

Turning then to the accounts for the 2020/21 financial year. Clearly overall income was always going to be down as membership income only shows new members that have joined during this year. Membership now stands at 188 at the end of the financial year.

So the key points for the most recent financial year are:

- The trading Store Income of £4,799 gave rise to a gross profit of 21% and after apportionment of other costs, a net profit of 14%.

- Stock balance for the end of the year was a healthy £2,332.

- Of the Other Store costs, the Electricity contract came up for renewal this year but we were unable to better the offer from the existing supplier, Eon, and therefore renewed with them.

- The RHS provide insurance packages for gardening groups and as this was substantially cheaper the Committee agreed to change our insurance to the RHS this year.

- On the main Income and Expenditure account there was obviously very little activity this year and with no membership renewal income there was a loss on general activity of £109 but adding back in the Trading Store profit of £677 the net overall profit for the year was £604.

- General Funds have increased to £15,567.90 of which £12,177 is cash reserves.

Finally, we would like to thank Jim Wilkie our new Examiner for the Accounts who has approved the accounts for 2019/20 and 2020/21 as presented to this meeting, and we recommend them for approval by members.

David and Jan Cook
VPA Joint Treasurers

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