



THE HOLMER GREEN GARDENING ASSOCIATION
Founded in 1944



Newsletter No 4, December, 2025



President: Tony Harper, 4 Darvills Meadow, Holmer Green, 01494 718180
Secretaries: Terry and Val Owen, 4 Clementi Avenue, Holmer Green, 07587 124729

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

A SEASONAL MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members

We are coming to the end of our 81st year of the VPA. It was formed to help people grow vegetables and fruit to supplement the shortage of food at the end of World War Two, so it's nice to see some of the younger generation now using the allotments to grow and enjoy eating their produce. Some of them are also entering our two yearly shows and getting some exercise at the same time.

You cannot help but notice that Christmas is on its way; we have been bombarded with Christmas adverts on television from the beginning of November, nearly two months before the event, and as you drive around some people have already switched on their Christmas lights! As a child, I remember going to bed on Christmas Eve and when we awoke on Christmas morning we found that our parents had put up the tree and decorations. To us, that was magical and, true to tradition, they were taken down 12 days after Christmas.

As I was walking home from the VPA AGM the other night it was about minus five degrees and I thought what it must be like to be homeless on the street. We are lucky that we can go home to a nice warm house and bed; why can't room be found for these homeless people? So let's spare a thought for those who, through no fault of their own, will be struggling at this time of year.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.



Tony Harper

REPORT OF THE 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM took place on Thursday 20th November and here are the main points from the meeting:

- Minutes of 2024 AGM:** The minutes of the last AGM, held on 21st November 2024, were approved by the members present and signed by the Chairman, James Cadle.
- Membership:** Membership currently totals 166 households, including 28 new for 2025. This compares with the final total of 155 in 2024.
- Trading Store:** The Store had made a trading surplus in 2025 and with no major repairs required this was carried forward into the main accounts. Sourcing products had become more difficult because of the relatively small quantities we buy (compared with garden centres and supermarkets) but Richard Chantler works with the Amersham Allotment Association to place larger orders and get better discounts.
- Shows and Competitions:** Two shows were held, on 5th April and 6th September. The number of entries was down for the Spring Show but up for the Annual Show compared with 2024.
- Outings:** Only one outing had been possible in 2025, to the RHS Garden at Hyde Hall. We still need someone to volunteer as Outings Organiser.
- Talks:** A full talks programme had been delivered this year and Linda Meatyard was congratulated on providing a varied and interesting set of speakers and topics.
- Newsletters:** Three newsletters had been published so far in 2025, with one more planned for December.
- Catering:** The position of Catering Manager remains unfilled on the VPA Committee.
- Finance:** The Trading Store had produced a surplus of £1,058 in 2025 and, unlike in 2024, no major expenditures had been incurred. The VPA as a whole made a small surplus of £175 for the year and the Association's funds as at 30th September 2025 amounted to £14,151.

Plans for 2026 include:

- Membership:** Members will again be asked to pay subscriptions from January 2026 and the rate will remain at £6 per household.
- Trading Store:** The Store will open for business on Sunday 4th January 2026. The rota of helpers will be distributed shortly.
- Shows and Competitions:** The Spring Show will be held on Saturday 28th March 2026 (a little earlier in the year than normal because of Easter) and the Annual Show on Saturday 5th September 2026. Both will be at the Holmer Green Village Centre and show schedules will be available at the Trading Store at the end of January.
- Outings:** Whether any outings, other than a trip to the RHS Garden at Wisley, take place in 2026 depends on someone coming forward to fill the role of Outings Organiser on the VPA Committee (see below).
- Talks:** Linda Meatyard has planned a programme of talks in 2026 and information appears later in this newsletter and on the website (www.hgvpa.club).
- Newsletters:** Four or five newsletters will be published in 2026.
- Catering:** At present, we still have nobody in the role of Catering Manager.

(Report continues overleaf)

The following were elected to form the 2026 VPA Committee:

President:	Tony Harper	president@hgvpa.club	01494 718180
Chairman:	James Cadle	chair@hgvpa.club	07889 732291
Secretaries:	Terry and Val Owen	secretary@hgvpa.club	07587 124729
Treasurer:	Jeannette Robertson	treasurer@hgvpa.club	07833 474801
Membership Secretary:	Richard Chantler	membership@hgvpa.club	01494 864643
Show Secretary:	Michael King	shows@hgvpa.club	01494 715229
Trading Store Manager:	Richard Chantler	store@hgvpa.club	01494 864643
Talks Organiser:	Linda Meatyard	talks@hgvpa.club	01494 715805
Newsletter Editor	James Cadle	newsletter@hgvpa.club	07889 732291
Outings Organiser:	Vacancy		
Catering Manager:	Vacancy		
Horticultural Adviser:	Brian Fisher	guru@hgvpa.club	01494 711896

The full AGM report (and those for earlier years) is available on the 'AGM' page of the VPA website: www.hgvpa.club.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Subscriptions become payable from 1st January 2026. The rate remains at £6 per household.

You can pay at the Trading Store on Sunday mornings from 4th January using cash, cheque or debit/credit card. Or, better still, you can make an online payment to the bank account below and then collect your membership card from the Store:

Bank sort code: 60-11-01

Account number: 15516148

Account name: Holmer Green Village Produce Association

Please quote your name and your membership number as a reference.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Honorary Life Memberships are awarded from time to time to members who have made a significant contribution to the VPA over many years and I am sad to report that three of them have passed away this year.

Alex and Margaret Weddell were our Catering Managers for many years, and were famous for their wonderful cups of tea. Margaret passed away first, followed by Alex a few months later and we mourn their passing. **David Kirby** was for many years one of the foremost competitors in our Shows and one of the few people who could give the late Roy Mason a run for his money. His wife, Dorothy Kirby, who had held many Committee roles, had died a couple of years ago and now David has sadly followed her.

On a brighter note, the Committee was pleased this year to recognise **Michael King**'s hard work for the VPA as our Show Secretary for ten years now by making him an Honorary Life Member. Congratulations and thank you Michael.

James Cadle
Chairman

NEWS FROM THE TRADING STORE

The Trading Store opens for business again on Sunday 4th January 2025.

We take payment using debit and credit cards as well as cash and even, if you insist, cheques.

The Dobies catalogues (and their 50% seed offer) were available at the AGM but, if you didn't get one, there is a link to it, and the discount code, on the 'News' page of our website: www.hgvpa.club.

Potatoes will be in stock from mid-January.

We look forward to serving you in 2026.

Richard Chantler
Trading Store Manager

CALENDAR OF TALKS AND EVENTS IN 2026

Linda Meatyard has now booked speakers for the whole of 2026 (thanks Linda!) so here are the details for your diary (all talks are on Thursdays). Talks and the AGM start at 7:45pm at the Church Centre in Featherbed Lane. Other key events of 2026 are also listed.

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| • 4 th January | Trading Store opens for 2026 | |
| • 15 th January | <i>Tales from 40 Years of Teaching</i> | Lin Instone |
| • 19 th February | <i>The Life of Edward Watkin</i> | Peter Healy |
| • 19 th March | <i>Horatio's Garden</i> | Nikki Blagg |
| • 28 th March | Spring Show (Village Centre) | |
| • 16 th April | <i>Kensal Rise Cemetery</i> | Richard Anderson |
| • 21 st May | <i>Russia</i> | Keith Muras |
| • 18 th June | <i>Life of a Honey Bee</i> | Meriet Duncan |
| • 16 th July | <i>Gardens to Visit from Near and Far</i> | Caroline Foster |
| • 20 th August | <i>Darwin's Galapagos</i> | David Dennis |
| • 5 th September | Annual Show (Village Centre) | |
| • 17 th September | <i>Ground-breaking British Artists of World War One</i> | Mike Grundy |
| • 27 th September | Trading Store closes for 2026 | |
| • 15 th October | <i>Matthew Flinders: The Man Who Named Australia</i> | James Cadle |
| • 19 th November | <i>Annual General Meeting 2026</i> | |
| • 3 rd January 2027 | Trading Store opens for 2027 | |

2026 SHOW SCHEDULES

As this newsletter goes to press, I am working on the Show Schedules for 2026. Printed copies will be available in the Trading Store by the end of January and will be available for download on our website at the same time: www.hgvpa.club.

Michael King
Show Secretary

GARDENING ADVICE

Finally, this is a reminder that one of the benefits of VPA membership is access to free gardening advice from our Horticultural Adviser, Brian Fisher. Brian is eminently qualified here as a holder of the Master of Horticulture Award from the Royal Horticultural Society. You can contact Brian by phone (01494 711896) or email (guru@hgvpa.club).