HOLMER GREEN VILLAGE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION
Founded 1944

Annual General Meeting – Thursday 16th November 2023, 8pm

Attendees (Committee Members)	James Cadle	*Chairman*	Brian Fisher	*Horticultural Adviser*
	Tony Harper	*President*	Michael King	*Show Secretary*
	Linda Meatyard	*Talks Organiser*		
Other members	21 (see attendance register attached)			

Agenda

1 Apologies for absence
2 Approval of minutes:
- 2022 Annual General Meeting

3 Chairman's review of the year 2023 – James Cadle:
- Overview
- Membership
- Trading Store
- Shows
- Outings
- Talks
- Newsletter
- Catering.

4 Treasurer's report – James Cadle (for David and Jan Cook)
5 Plans for 2024, including subscriptions
7 Election of 2024 Committee
9 Any other business.

1. Apologies for absence
Apologies were received from: David Avery (Committee Member); Richard Chantler (Membership Secretary and Trading Store Manager); David and Jan Cook (Treasurers); Terry and Val Owen (Secretaries);Lydia Wilkins; Lynn Wishlade.

2. Approval of minutes of 2022 AGM
The minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2022 were approved by the Meeting and signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's review of the year 2022/23 – James Cadle

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

Overview: James reported that the VPA had trundled on during the year. Membership was more or less stable and the shows had been better supported than in 2022.

At long last, the VPA seat had been installed on The Common and the VPA had paid for half of another seat to replace the one commemorating Elsie and Wilfred Stevens. The cost of these is largely responsible for the financial loss made during the year and which will be reported later.

The Open Gardens event on 11th June had been a great success with 200 people going round the 11 gardens on display. £990 was raised and was donated in equal shared to The Holmer Green Sensory Garden and the Rennie Grove Peace Hospice. James thanked everyone who had put their gardens on display, the WI for providing refreshments in the Rossetti Hall (and adding their proceeds to the donations) and he especially thanked his co-organiser, Jane King, for her hard work and enthusiasm.

Membership: The membership to date totals 159 households, including 26 new members this year. This compared with a final total of 161 in 2022. One of our lost members was Honorary Life Member Dorothy Kirby, who died in March and who had in the past served in many positions on the Committee and who had originally suggested the new seat on the Common.

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Trading Store: Due to the illness of Pat Chanter during 2023, Richard had been unable to manage the Store on a week-to-week basis, although he continued to order stock and otherwise keep the Store going. A rota of volunteers had been reintroduced to operate the Store each Sunday and James thanked the volunteers who had taken part in that.

The Store had made a surplus in 2023 and this was described in more detail in the Treasurers' report.

The Store is now closed for 2023 and will reopen for business on Sunday 7th January 2024. James said he would say more about this later.

Shows and Competitions: The Spring Show was held on 1st April and the Annual Show on 9th September and the number of exhibits in both cases was up on 2022. It was also pleasing that some new names appeared on the trophies this year. It was a continuing source of disappointment that so little interest was show in the junior classes nowadays and the Committee is considering whether it is worth continuing with them.

Outings: Only one outing took place in 2023, to the RHS Garden Hyde Hall on 24th May. Another Christmas outing is planned for 29th November, although it's not clear at the moment whether we will have sufficient numbers to run it. Both outings were organised by Terry and Val Owen, despite them relinquishing their positions as Outings Organisers last year!

Talks: A full talks programme had been delivered in 2023 at the Church Hall in Featherbed Lane. James reminded members that this is because the Chadwick Hall was now hired every Wednesday and Thursday by another organisation.

Newsletters: Four newsletters had been produced so far in 2023 and another would be sent out before Christmas.

Catering: The Committee role of Catering Manager remains unfilled, after some five years now. Partly because of this, and also the sheer difficulty of organising it, it had been decided not to stage a Harvest Home Lunch in 2023. James had asked for expressions of interest in reviving the event in 2024 but only a few members had responded in the affirmative.

4. Treasurer's Report – James Cadle (on behalf of David and Jan Cook)

James presented the Treasurers' report 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 were:

- The Trading Store surplus of £529.42 in 2023
- Other activities resulted in a loss of £1,632.14 in 2023
- The net surplus was therefore £1,102.72 for 2023
- The Association's funds as at 30th September 2023 amounted to £15,107.42.

James Cadle proposed that the accounts be accepted, this was seconded by Meg Brinton and was carried on a show of hands.

5. Plans for 2024

James outlined the plans for 2024:

Membership: Members will be asked to pay their subscriptions from January 2024 and the cost will remain at £6 per household.

Trading Store The Trading Store will open for 2024 on Sunday 7th January and a rota will be distributed to all those who have volunteered to assist at the Store. Richard Chantler continues to be the overall Trading Store Manager and to be responsible for ordering stock, sometimes in conjunction with other organisations such as the Hazlemere Gardening Club and the Amersham Allotment Association. Prices have inevitably gone up but we continue to offer very competitive prices, which can be viewed on our website.

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Shows: The Spring Show will be held on Saturday 6th April 2024 and the Annual Show on Saturday 7th September, both in the Village Centre. Michael King is working on the schedule and these will be available in the Trading Store at the end of January. The schedule will also be downloadable from the Show page of the VPA website.

Outings: Whether the VPA can stage any outings in 2024 depends on someone stepping forward as Outings Organiser. If someone is found, the RHS trip would be to RHS Wisley and ideas are sought for other destinations. One problem nowadays is that people seem more reluctant to undertake coach journeys of more than an hour or two.

Talks: Linda Meatyard has booked a full programme of talks for 2024, again using the Church Hall as the venue.

Newsletters: A Christmas newsletter will be published in December 2023, setting out the plans for the next year.

Catering: The Committee will examine the feasibility of reinstating the Harvest Home Lunch in 2024 but there does not at the moment seem enough interest to warrant the effort.

Brian Furner suggested that some other event, perhaps a tea party, could be staged in the summer months and James said that this would be considered by the Committee.

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

8. Election of 2023/24 Committee

James Cadle explained that Tony Harper was re-elected as President in 2021 and that his term of office lasts until 2026.

Tony Harper took the chair and asked for nominations for Chairman for 2023/24. James Cadle was proposed by Brian Furner, seconded by Linda Meatyard and duly re-elected on a show of hands.

James Cadle now resumed the chair and announced that all existing Committee Members except Meg Brinton were prepared to stand again, albeit with a change in role for Terry Owen:

Position	Nominee
Secretaries	Terry and Val Owen
Treasurers	David and Jan Cook
Membership Secretary	Richard Chantler
Trading Store Manager	Richard Chantler
Newsletter Editor	James Cadle
Talks Organiser	Linda Meatyard
Show Secretary	Michael King
Outings Organiser	No nomination
Catering Manager	No nomination
Horticultural Adviser	Brian Fisher
Committee Member	David Avery

Felicity Palmer proposed that the Committee be re-elected, this was seconded by Hilary Hide and the proposal was carried on a show of hands.

9. Any other business

James Cadle announced that David and Jan Cook will be standing down as Treasurers at the 2024 AGM, so if the VPA is to continue, someone will need to step up to replace them during the coming year.

Linda Meatyard asked members to contact her with suggestions for possible speakers in 2025, especially if they have heard any good speaker at other organisations.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8:30pm and members socialised over cheese and wine.

Approved ..... **Date** 21/11/2024

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Annex: Treasurers' Report for the Holmer Green VPA AGM – November 2023

We're pleased to present the accounts for the VPA for the year to 30th September which have been externally examined. The VPA's finances continue to remain stable and the following key points should be noted.

- Membership now stands at 159 which includes 26 new members this year.
- It is important to show the various aspects of the Association's activities separately and in doing so it is acknowledged that certain items will show a deficit as they are included in the membership fee of just £6, (that's the Talks programme, entry to the Shows and access to the Trading Store).
- Interest received from our NS&I investment account remains low at £6.71 (it used to be as high as £50 plus) although rates have increased a little in recent months – we are currently receiving 1% gross.
- The VPA's insurance arrangements continue to be with Sports Insure who remained competitive this year. In the accounts we have continued to spread the cost of Insurance across the various VPA operations including Store stock (which includes the Show cups and trophies).
- Trading Store:
    - Income for the Store this year amounted to £6126, an increase of £690 or 13% on last year.
    - Store Utilities of £702.55 cover insurance, Zettle commission on sales, water and electricity costs along with the cost of repairing water leaks and general improvements in the Store. The utility costs through E-on and Castle Water remain under regular review.
    - The closing Stock this year amounted to £2262 after making provision for written off stock of £300. Prices have risen across the board this year, in particular the cost of compost (especially with the move to peat free) which is the Store's biggest seller. However, the increased turnover has resulted in an improved gross profit of £1232.
    - The Store has again shown a healthy net profit of £529 or 8.5% of sales (7.5% last year) which is down to Richard's hard work and that of the team who man the Store each week.
- It had been a plan for some time to install a bench on the common to celebrate the VPA's 75th Anniversary and this came to fruition this year with a new bench on the school side of the common with a plaque to note this celebration. Additionally, we were approached by the village's regular magazine, Holmer Green Today, to share the cost of a further bench 50-50. The old bench on the common dedicated to Elsie and Wilfred Stevens had collapsed and so a replacement has been installed in the same position with a new plaque. The total cost of the VPA's donation to the village of a 'bench and a half' with the plaques as well, amounted to £1126. The cost of installation by the Council had not been invoiced at the end of the financial year but the sum of £450 has now been paid to the Council in this respect and is included in next year's accounts.
- In the Income and Expenditure account the figure of £1625 under Donations includes the costs of the 'bench and half' donation mentioned above but also includes a donation of £499.27 to Rennie Grove Peace Hospice Care (which includes a £10 donation made direct to Rennie Grove through the VPA). This resulted from the very successful Holmer Green Open Gardens event where this amount donated by the VPA to Rennie Grove (less the £10) represented half of the profit of that event, the other half going direct to The Holmer Green Village Society Sensory Garden account.
- As an aside on the Income and Expenditure account, the figure for Show Expenses is inflated as the cost of hall hire from last year's Annual Show was paid in this financial year – this was noted in last year's Report.
- Turning to the VPA's overall position then, the loss on general activities for the year of £1632 includes the donations mentioned above. Without these donations the loss for the year would have been £7. The proceeds of the plant sale, £117, (which should have taken place at the Music on the Common event that was sadly cancelled), the profit made on the coach trip to Hyde Hall (£224) and the Trading Store profit helped to achieve this position but bearing in mind the Association's overall financial health the Committee agreed to proceed with the donations.
- As mentioned above, members are able to enjoy the monthly Talks programme, including refreshments, as well as being able to take part in the two Shows and access the Trading Store all for the price of their membership fee. The cost of these activities is covered in part by the profit from the Store and other items mentioned above and resulted in a net reduction to General Funds of £1102.72.
- The Association's General Funds now stand at £15107.42. £7221 of this is held with National Savings and £5565 on the NatWest account. Stock and the small floats make up the rest.

Therefore, we are pleased to report that the VPA remains in a healthy financial position. As a result of this the Committee have agreed to maintain Membership Fees at their current level of £6 for the coming year.

David and Jan Cook
VPA Joint Treasurers

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VPA
THE HOLMER GREEN GARDENING ASSOCIATION
founded in 1944

Meeting attendance register

Event: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Date: 16 NOVEMBER 2023

Name	Name
BRIAN TURNER	
Felicity Palmer	
LINDA MEDYARD	
PAM BARNETT	
RICHARD BARNETT	
MEG BRIXTON	
[illegible]	
Hilary Hyde	
V.W. Dyer.	
VALERIE OVERTON	
PETER OVERTON	
JOY MOODY.	
Ann Rees	
Jeffrey and Lesley Orange.	
David MCMillan.	
Christine Kirby	
Malcolm Kirby	
PETER KILLINGBECK	
Rita Whitten	
BARRIE WHITTEN	
Michael Kirby	
A CHARPER.	
JHarper	
BN Tuke	

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