

RHSO (Rivers Heritage Site and Orchard)

Minutes from the AGM

Thursday 25th February 2021 @ 20.00 By Zoom

1. **Welcome** – Ruth welcomed everyone and explained the format of the meeting. Present were, Dave, Rob, Adrienne, Geoff and Officers Ruth, Hazel & Nickie. Neil joined at 20.15
2. **Apologies** were received from Eric
3. **Minutes from last year** – approval of these was proposed by Hazel, and agreed by all present. These will be signed when we are able to meet again. We also noted that the minutes from 18/2/20 and 19/6/20 and 27/8/20 were unanimously approved by all present and Rob will post them as such on the website.
4. **Chairs report** – Ruth welcomed everyone and explained that owing to the Pandemic we were able to hold AGM's virtually. Ruth gave a huge thank you to everyone who had either kept the maintenance of the orchard or had supported in some other way such as buying the juice. She hopes that once this pandemic is over we will see volunteers come back . A special thank you to Adrienne for how she has organised the maintenance in such difficult circumstances. A copy of the report is included in the appendix
5. **Maintenance Report** – Adrienne directed everyone to her report, and gave a summary including the thought that we are likely to have to work in a restricted way for the coming months. A concern is that the footfall has significantly increased and fruit is being taken. A core of 11 is continuing to come and Adrienne expressed her thanks to them all for keeping the orchard going. A copy of the report can be found in the appendix. We extended our thanks to Adrienne for her significant support
6. **Treasurer's report** – Hazel explained the balance sheet which had been checked and verified on 01/02/2021 by Jeremy Dickson FCA. The balance at the end of December 2020 stood at £3011.34 plus a cash float of £50. 158.64 increase on last year. The juice stall income from December will be shown in the January accounts. Juice sales at Full of Beans is very successful and all present extended thanks to Trula for all she does. The sale of books continues to be successful and thanks extended to Elizabeth Waugh. A summary of the signed accounts is in the appendix with the full accounts available on the website. A vote of thanks was extended to Jeremy Dickson and Trula of Full of Beans and Elizabeth Waugh and was agreed wholeheartedly by all present. Ruth thanked Hazel for all she does on behalf of RHSO.
7. **Election of Officers** – All three Officers are happy to stand again and were re-elected: Chair (Ruth), Treasurer (Hazel), Secretary (Nickie), Proposed by Adrienne and seconded by all from a show of hands
8. **AOB**
A discussion on the price of juice concluded that we will not increase to more than £3 a bottle
Juice stall was agreed for 3rd April
Safeguarding policy will be updated and Rob will post of website
Rob is updating all Covid policies on a regular basis and they are on the website

Ruth concluded by thanking those present for attending and closed the meeting at 2036

Appendix

RHSO chair report for AGM

Hello everyone

Thank you for coming you the Rivers Heritage Site and Orchard AGM.

This is the Chairman report for 2020.

It has been a strange and difficult year for many people including the volunteers of the Orchard group.

We started the year on a high with a very successful and enjoyable Wassail.

This event was attended by possibly two hundred people. It was safely organised by the committee and was reported on in the local paper.

We managed to hold a couple of maintenance days but then unfortunately COVID-19 arrived along with lockdown.

During the first lockdown people were encouraged to go out for exercise this led to an increase in people using the Orchard. There were many lovely posts of residents enjoying the trees and blossom. Some residents even hid painted stones among the tree for people to find. As much as this was a nice idea, I did have to explain about stones being left in the grass and damaging the mowers.

Eventually we were allowed back to continue with monthly maintenance. We kept this to our regular volunteers and chose not to advertise for others to join in. The volunteers worked on individual trees and only in their family groups or 'bubbles '. This continued during the summer months.

Obviously, we could not hold a regular Apple Day but again the regular group of volunteers met in October and spent the day picking this year's crop. The fruit picked was juiced by a professional company and we have over 700 bottles of this years juice to sell.

At this point in time we have almost sold all of 2019 crop and are hoping that some events will be able to be held this year to enable us to sell this years crop.

I would like to thank all the volunteers in the group for all their hard work and support in looking after the Orchard. I hope that one day soon we may all meet up again safely in person and be able to celebrate.

Ruth Buckmaster Chair

Maintenance Report 2020 – February 2021

The management of the Orchard has obviously been affected by Covid 19. Four maintenance sessions were cancelled and when we were able to restart we restricted assistance to regular volunteers only. Some of these were shielding and have not been able to attend.

Certain proposals in last years report, such as getting expert help re plum trees have been put aside for the future.

It has been a very wet year in contrast to the very dry spells of previous two years. Not yet evident if this will result in a spurt of growth of younger trees. However, looser roots could put pressure on the older, taller plums in combination with high winds. Three younger trees have been lost.

The Covid restrictions have seen a major increased footfall in the Orchard itself. Fortunately, only a few instances of human damage to the trees. General public are picking fruit more so than in past years. This has potential to damage to trees.

No evidence of deer activity but the rabbits are returning. We are leaving large apple tree prunings around in the cold months as advised last year and this is working well. We do still have many ant colonies, particularly under membranes.

In general maintenance of the trees has primarily been removing dead and diseased wood, maintaining and repairing membranes and guards already in place.

Apples

In February and March 2020 Rob instructed the volunteers on re shaping of the younger trees and we made a reasonable start on this before lockdown. We hope to continue this in the Spring. Pruning has been limited this season to the younger trees and the row of James Grieves. Apple crop was reasonable . More cookers than dessert varieties.

Pears

Little done except pruning of younger trees. Crop not as good as last year, but conference pears disappeared overnight!!

Plums

Younger plums fed and look in good condition. Expert opinion still needed for larger trees.

Cherries

Little done except tidying up dead branches. Seem in reasonable condition.

Meadow

Little done in this area. See last years report as to what needed.

Other maintenance

From April to September we continue to maintain the paths within the Orchard ourselves. However, this year we only mowed three times despite the wet weather, as the much increased footfall kept paths well trodden. In November and December we did tackle the ditch around the bridge and along the eastern boundary as the very wet weather had caused the ditch along the southern boundary to overflow. Working well now.

Volunteer Support

We have a core of 11 regular volunteers that have been able to attend since the Covid restrictions have been in place. We have averaged about 7 a session. Many thanks to all those who have helped maintain this site for its heritage value and for the community in these very trying times.

Plan for the coming year is to continue as best we can with standard maintenance.

RIVERS HERITAGE SITE AND ORCHARD

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE

I report on the accounts of the Rivers Heritage Site and Orchard for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out on pages 2 to 4.

Respective responsibilities of the Committee and the Examiner

The Committee is responsible for the preparation of the accounts. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

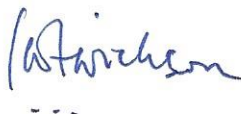
Basis of my report

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Rivers Heritage Site and Orchard and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as the Committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and my report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Jeremy Dickson FCA
1 February 2021
Sawbridgeworth



RIVERS HERITAGE SITE AND ORCHARD

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

Year ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	2020 £p	2019 £p
INCOME	2		
Sales of Apple Juice			
Through Full of Beans	3	682.50	510.00
Other		974.12	-
		<u>1,656.62</u>	<u>510.00</u>
Sales of apple juice, less associated costs, at:			
Wassail	4	212.20	(93.00)
May Fayre	5	-	246.80
St James Church High Wych Scarecrow Festival	6	-	405.90
Allotment Show	7	-	69.00
Apple Day	8	(94.33)	156.08
Lights on Event	9	-	215.00
Bell Street	10	-	212.00
Grants			
East Herts District Council		294.00	-
Hertfordshire County Council Locality Budget		-	300.00
Stansted Airport for equipment purchases		-	420.00
Sales of books		50.00	112.50
Insurance claim for loss of equipment in fire		-	961.98
Income from lecture to another Society		-	60.00
Building Society interest		-	7.75
		<u>2,118.49</u>	<u>3,584.01</u>
EXPENDITURE other than that included above deducted from income (see notes)			
Apple juice processing, bottling and labels		1,205.05	1,875.36
Equipment (2020 includes apple pickers; 2019 includes replacing equipment lost in fire)		395.94	1,613.43
East of England Apples & Orchards Project (2020 & 2019)		30.00	-
Orchard seat		-	237.60
Meetings		20.00	-
Card payment facility		49.00	-
First Aid course and supplies		259.86	-
Public liability insurance		-	99.31
		<u>1,959.85</u>	<u>3,825.70</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME		158.64	(241.69)
(2019, excess of expenditure over income)			
General Fund, brought forward		<u>2,902.70</u>	<u>3,144.39</u>
General Fund, carried forward		<u>3,061.34</u>	<u>2,902.70</u>

RIVERS HERITAGE SITE AND ORCHARD

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Notes	2020 £p	2019 £p
Fixed Assets			
Equipment	1	-	-
Current Assets			
Bank and cash balances			
Lloyds Bank		3,011.34	2,852.70
Cash float		50.00	50.00
		<u>3,061.34</u>	<u>2,902.70</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>3,061.34</u>	<u>2,902.70</u>
GENERAL FUND		<u>3,061.34</u>	<u>2,902.70</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	2020 £p	2019 £p
1 Accounting Policies		
The accounts are prepared on the cash basis; the cost of equipment is therefore written off in the year of purchase.		
2 Apple juice		
Total sales of apple juice	<u>1,958.82</u>	<u>2,197.95</u>
3 Sales of Apple juice through Full of Beans		
Sales of apple juice	712.50	510.00
Gratuity	(30.00)	-
	<u>682.50</u>	<u>510.00</u>
4 Wassail (January)		
Sales of apple juice	272.20	230.70
Equipment hire	(60.00)	(75.00)
Refreshments	-	(19.87)
Lights	-	(136.83)
Float	-	(50.00)
Liqueur licence (includes £21 re 2020)	-	(42.00)
	<u>212.20</u>	<u>(93.00)</u>
5 May Fayre (May)		
Sales of apple juice	-	246.80
Cost of stall	-	(31.00)
Cost of stall refunded	-	31.00
	<u>-</u>	<u>246.80</u>

RIVERS HERITAGE SITE AND ORCHARD

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	2020 £p	2019 £p
6 St James Church High Wych Scarecrow Festival (September)		
Sales of apple juice	-	420.90
Cost of stall	-	(15.00)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	405.90
7 Allotment Show (September)		
Sales of apple juice	-	69.00
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8 Apple Day (October)		
Sales of apple juice	-	293.55
Van hire	(94.33)	(107.45)
Equipment hire	-	(30.00)
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	(94.33)	156.10
9 Lights On event (November)		
Sales of apple juice	-	215.00
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10 Bell Street Stall (December)		
Sales of apple juice	-	212.00
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