

National Hedgelaying Society

Treasurer's Report for the Year Ended 31st December 2021

For the year ending 31st December 2021, I can present a more normal set of accounts, when compared to 2020, when we were unable to hold the Championship.

There were a number of developments during 2021; a change of accountant examining our accounts following the retirement of John Rogers, and a move to the Xero accounting software to improve the management of the accounts and enable us to accept payments, particularly recurring payments, for membership subscriptions via GoCardless which integrates with Xero. These changes have entailed a considerable amount of work, not least because until the year end the old and new systems were run in tandem which meant entering every transaction twice in addition to getting to grips with the new system. I must thank Margaret, our Membership Secretary and Jenny, my other half, for all their assistance with that. I can confirm that whilst we are still learning about Xero, all our financial management is being handled by it.

Chris Wade of Lealindis Limited, our new 'Independent Examiner' confirms, in his report to the trustees that, in so far as he can ascertain, the accounts have been kept correctly, in accordance with relevant legislation and provide a proper account of the finances of this Society.

With the change of accountant and accounting system, we have a slight change in the format of the financial report which I would like to take you through.

Page 4 provides the main headlines:

The total funds brought forward from 2020 amounted to **£165,691**. The funds then carried forward to 2021 increased to **£174,158**, an increase of **£8,467** which you will see on the line labelled 'Net Movement of Funds'. The righthand column on that page is a summary of the comparative figures from the previous year. Whilst on this page it is worth making a few more comparisons with 2020 which was an unusual year due to Covid.

If we look at the top set of figures, the 'Income and Endowments' and compare the 'Total' line for the two righthand columns, you will see a marked difference in the figures, **£43,312** for 2021 compared with **£21,051** for 2020. Looking above that you will see that the main element comprising those figures relates to 'Charitable activities' against which there is reference to '**Note 4**'. Looking at **Note 4** at the top of page 9 you will observe that the main contributor to the difference is the Championship, indeed, in 2020 the lack of a Championship. You will also observe that restricted income of **£5,000** was received during 2021. This was a grant from The Prince's Countryside Trust. The figure of **£5,500** the previous year relates to **£4,000** from The Prince's Countryside Fund (PCF), the grant awarded to support the establishment of the Lantra Awards Scheme and **£1,500** from the Wheler Foundation. During 2021 we received no further payment from the PCF and we remained in credit due to Covid having curtailed progress during the 2020/2021 hedgelaying season.

Referring back to **page 4**, looking at Expenditure, the 'Charitable activities' and the 'Total' lines show similar disparities. Once again it is the fact that the Championship was not held in 2020 that the expenditure under that item was considerably less than in 2021.

On **page 5** is a 'Debtors' item of **£2356**. Although the accounts are recorded on a 'cash' basis, it is a significant sum and relates to the Patron's Event. The invoice was issued in December 2021 and was paid in January this year. This is a change in our accounting practice and is explained in more detail on **page 6** under 'Accounting policies' where there is reference to 'Recognition of Income' which is where an invoice has been issued and there is a virtual certainty that the payment will be received.

Another change to our previous accounting practice is the depreciation of equipment, the gazebo being depreciated over three years and the trailer over five years. This effectively increases the expenditure as detailed in **note 9 on page 10**.

There are two other entries that particularly warrant explanation, and they are linked. Under 'Other gains and losses' on page 4, there is a figure of **£1107**. The Society's trophies were revalued for insurance purposes and that figure reflects the increase in the valuation. This leads me to 'General insurances' near the top of **page 14** which shows a substantial increase of almost **£1,000** in insurance premiums compared with the previous year. This arises due to a general increase in insurance premiums but also that the value of some trophies exceeded the single article limit and required to be specified items under the policy.

Finally, I am pleased to report that although there was a fall in our paying membership during 2020, they increased during 2021 to well above pre-pandemic levels and at the yearend was as follows:

As at Year End	2021	2020	2019
Individual	361	315	348
Affiliated	17	13	16
Contractors	112	107	105
Total Paying Membership	490	435	469

The increase in the number of paying members resulted in an increase in subscriptions from **£14,468** to **£16,853**.

The membership subscription rates remained as follows:

Individual £20

Affiliated £50

Contractor £75

There was also an increase in our Junior membership, which is also good to see.

In summary, the funds carried forward to 2022 amount to **£174,158** of which **£47,816** are restricted funds and the balance of **£126,342** are unrestricted funds, and the National Hedgelaying Society remains in good financial shape.