



**2013–2014 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
Year ended 31 December 2014**

and

**2015 Annual General Meeting (AGM), 27 June
The Priory Rooms, Quaker Meeting House,
40 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AF**

Doors open 12:30, AGM 13:00 to 16:00

Registered Charity No: 279228
Company No: 1468880

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2013–2014 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
Year ended 31 December 2014

Registered Charity No: 279228
Company No: 1468880

Company registered number 1468880
Registered charity number 279228



Financial Statements

for the year ended 31st December 2014

The Vegan Society

Report of the Council of Management for the period ended 31st December 2014

The Council is pleased to present the Report and Financial Statements of The Vegan Society for the eighteen months ended 31 December 2014 (referred to as 2014 in the report). These have been prepared so as to comply with the Companies Act 2006 and with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting and Reporting by Charities (revised March 2005) – SORP 2005.

1. Status

The Vegan Society is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee that does not have share Capital. The guarantee of each member is limited to £1. The governing document is the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the company dated 20 November 1979.

2. Objects

The principal objective of the Society continues to be the promotion of a way of life which seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose. It sets out to do this by:

- Furthering knowledge of and interest in sound nutrition and in veganism and the vegan method of agriculture as a means of increasing the potential of the earth to the physical, moral and economic advantage of humankind.
- Encouraging the development and use of alternatives to all commodities derived wholly or partly from animals.
- To relieve older vegans who are in conditions of need.

3. Public Benefit

The trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. Adopting a vegan lifestyle makes a major contribution to reducing animal suffering, achieving environmental sustainability, advancing health and saving lives. The Vegan Society's advice encourages and enables people to make this step in such a way as to benefit themselves, other people, animals and the environment. Recognising and supporting the needs of vegans can also advance the rights of humans and promote equality. Vegan diets contribute to the relief of poverty in the global south through enhanced global food security. The Society's educational material and advice are available to any member of the public, mainly without charge. Working with and valuing the contribution of volunteers' advances community development and engagement in society.

4. Structure, Governance and Management

4.1 Council of Management

The Society is a membership-based organisation governed by a Council of Management with up to twelve members. The members of the Council are simultaneously the Directors of the company and the trustees of the charity. Overall responsibility for The Vegan Society is vested in the Council, whose members are listed on page 11. Council is responsible for setting the overall strategic direction, ensuring funds are spent on charitable objects, overseeing employment of staff, purchase and disposal of property, and investment decisions.

There are two membership categories: full members, who have declared that as a minimum they adhere to a vegan diet, and supporters, who do not currently meet this requirement but who support The Society's objects. Full members over sixteen are entitled to stand for election to Council and to vote at General Meetings. An Annual General Meeting – to deal with statutory business, appoint honorary patrons and consider proposals from members or Council – is normally held in May each year.

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Sufficient trustees are required to stand down from Council each year to ensure at least four vacancies for election. No trustee may serve for more than four years without seeking re-election. All candidates must be proposed by two other full members. Election is by postal ballot shortly before the Annual General Meeting if there are more candidates than vacancies. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer roles are filled by Council by election from among their number. The Council currently meets six to eight times a year and holds one or more Strategy Days each year together with The Society's staff.

As part of trustee induction and training, new and co-opted trustees are provided with The Society's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Reports and Accounts for the previous two years, the current strategic plan and two years of minutes plus documents describing The Society's organisational structure, internal procedures and financial policies & procedures. All new trustees are encouraged to attend some form of agreed relevant governance training.

4.2 Risk Management

Protecting The Society against potential risks is a key part of Council responsibilities. The major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the trustees and documented in a risk register, have been reviewed and systems or procedures established to manage those risks. The following review highlights a few of the most important areas of risk and the overall approach to managing those risks.

The most fundamental asset of the society is its reputation as an authoritative voice on all matters concerning veganism. This reputation underpins The Society's ability to attract members and donations and to influence government, health professionals and the media.

Key risks to this reputation would be producing inaccurate or misleading information or incorrectly authenticating products as vegan. These are primarily guarded against through recruitment of professional staff and training. The Nutrition and Health Advisers may provide an experienced second opinion on topics within their remit. Council exercises more general oversight with the assistance of volunteer experts in different areas.

Investing resources in new areas always entails risk, so such decisions are especially carefully reviewed as part of the annual planning process. The potential impact of substantial new spending proposals is assessed against a conservative financial projection covering three years beyond the current financial year.

Income from legacies can vary greatly and should not be relied upon for core expenses but allocated to additional projects. The three-year forecasts assumes inflation on salaries, fixed costs, necessary investments and a small increase in major sources of income, while the return on all unproven projects is projected conservatively. This assessment allows Council to decide the amount of resources to allocate to annual operational budgets and projects.

All major new contracts or purchases must be approved by the Treasurer and Chief Executive before any commitment is entered into. With the exception of purchase orders for the nutritional supplement Veg 1, orders over £10,000 or those outside approved budgets must be approved by the Treasurer. Spending proposals over £20,000 must be approved by Council. Management accounts are produced every two months to monitor progress and are circulated to Council for review.

The resources thus released are allocated to activities discussed and agreed following an annual Strategic Planning process involving members of staff and Council so as to bring a broad collective judgement to bear.

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4.3 Reserves Policy

The Society has a reserves policy to retain assets (cash, deposits at bank, saleable investment funds, shares and property not used for The Society's offices) with a realisable cash value of no less than £300K. The society also seeks to avoid the average value of such assets exceeding £400K over a three-year period. The rationale for these amounts is that this fund will pay for all staff wages and essential overheads for a minimum of six months. The policy used to stipulate reserves kept would cover a minimum of twelve months, but was changed by Council in 2014 following the organisation's growth. A six months' period is in keeping with most other charities' reserve policies.

By careful use of current reserves and maintaining assets, together with the security of owning our own offices, we are able to strike a balance between protecting the society against future fluctuations in funding and releasing funds for immediate action in pursuit of our objectives. The reserves policy is reviewed annually to achieve this balance.

Note that reserves are less than the total funds reported in the accounts as the reserves exclude assets such as offices, computers and stock which are needed to continue operating, and restricted funds.

4.4 Operational Management

The trustees have delegated operational management of The Society to the CEO and senior staff, who report back to Council on progress against operational targets and projects. Council approved a new strategic plan in August 2012, which was outlined in the 2013 Annual Report.

The Society's staff work in three Departments:

- **The Finance and Resources Department:** As The Society has expanded so too has the need for financial and administrative support.
- **The Communications Department** is responsible for events, influencing policy and working with strategic partners, media and PR (including social media); working with volunteers, including those giving talks; advocacy on behalf of vulnerable vegans; the Vegan Pledge; responding to queries, preparation of The Vegan magazine, other printed material and websites.
- **The Business Development Department** is responsible for expanding the Trademark sunflower standard, advertising, sales and merchandise.

Staff

The bulk of the implementation of our charitable activities depends upon maintaining our agreed complement of staff and ensuring continuity of skills and experience. The job market is changing rapidly, and more flexible working arrangements and short-term contracts are increasingly becoming the norm.

Our staff complement in 2013-2014 varied due to staff movements. The society had an average of 13.3 full-time equivalent staff members throughout the 18 months. The staff complement at year-end 31 December 2014 was seventeen, several of whom worked part-time, including:

Finance and Resources Department:

- Chief Executive, Jasmijn de Boo
- Finance & Resources Manager, Heather Graham
- Administration & Finance Officer, Allan Oakes

Communications Department:

- Head of Communications, Peter Smith
- Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer, Amanda Baker
- Volunteer Development Co-ordinator, Alex Douglas
- Membership & Events Co-ordinator, Jessica Payne

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- Website & Digital Communications Officer, Ali Ryland
- Communications Assistant, Elena Orde
- Membership Assistant, Debbie Latham

Business Development (BD) Department:

- Head of Business Development, George Gill
- Business Development Assistants: Alix Meek, Abigail Stevens, Laura Faliveno
- Business Development Officers: Paul Philbrow and Grace Shuck
- Merchandise & Sales Officer, Spencer Harris

The Society also worked with a range of part-time consultants, including a Media & PR consultant, a Technical Director (website and database), a Graphic Designer and an Editor.

Volunteers make a substantial contribution to The Society's outreach work, and the number of office volunteers continues to increase. We are very grateful to all our volunteers.

We regularly review human resources policies and developments in consultation with HR advisers, and we monitor health and safety policies and practices for staff and volunteers to ensure a safe working environment and best practice in recruitment, training and appraisal.

4.4 Advisers

Nutrition and Health advisers are appointed by Council and these positions may be, but are not necessarily, filled by trustees. The trustee role of Information Consultant is no longer in place as governance and operations are segregated duties.

5. Strategic Objectives

A new strategic plan was agreed in August 2012. The Vegan Society's vision is a world in which humans do not exploit other animals.

The mission is to promote veganism by making it an easily adopted and widely recognised approach to reducing animal and human suffering and environmental damage by means of meaningful, peaceful and factual dialogue with individuals, organisations and companies.

In order to achieve the vision, people will ultimately need to desire that exploitation and cruelty to other animals end, and that respect for all life should be increased.

Working towards this vision, The Vegan Society's goals for 2013-2022 are two-fold:

1. Government, public and private sector demonstrate improved knowledge, practice and policies in vegan catering, nutrition, and agriculture, and reward sustainable and compassionate lifestyles.
2. An increased number of people adopt and sustain vegan lifestyles based on one or more of the following:
 - a. Belief that animals have a right to life and freedom
 - b. Belief that animal exploitation also negatively affects human justice (e.g. global food distribution issues)
 - c. Belief that strains on the environment and using up finite resources as a result of 'animal production' are unsustainable
 - d. Belief that balanced vegan nutrition is healthy

In order to achieve these goals, the society will focus on the following outcomes within the UK, and, where possible, worldwide:

1. We will influence policy and decision-makers to ensure effective implementation of food labelling and other legislation, regulations and policies relevant to vegans

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2. We will raise awareness so that wider society:
 - a. increasingly questions the use of non-human animals for human purposes
 - b. cares about the environment and sustainability issues in relation to food production and consumption and other forms of non-human animal use
 - c. demands action about human justice issues related to food production and consumption and other forms of non-human animal use
3. We will promote veganism as a positive lifestyle, and by encouraging the development and use of vegan alternatives to all commodities derived wholly or partly from animals, an increasing number of citizens will use more vegan products. Over time, fewer people will use non-vegan products.
4. We will build a strong worldwide organisation that is competent and pro-active in addressing vegan issues in an efficient and appropriate manner

6. Financial Review and Funding Sources

The financial year ending 31 December 2014 saw increased income and expenditure, as detailed in the SOFA, Balance Sheet and Notes to the Accounts. The format of presenting the accounts is more in line with that of other charities, and adheres to SORP Accounting guidelines. Further streamlining may occur in 2015.

The net movement in funds was a surplus of £101k. In this review, please remember that ***the 2014 financial year comprised 18 months compared to 2013, which was a regular 12 month period.***

6.1 Income

We seek where possible to manage our charitable activities so they generate additional income. Income from advertising in The Vegan, for example, reduces the net cost of the production of the magazine. Our Trademark registration scheme, and sales of the nutritional supplement Veg 1, books and other products serve our charitable purposes by increasing knowledge of and interest in veganism and promoting the development of alternatives to the use of products derived from animals. At the same time they provide income which offsets their own costs and contributes to funding other charitable activities such as advocating veganism to the public and in schools, prisons, hospitals, as well as in the private retail and catering & hospitality sector.

6.1.1 Primary Purpose and Non-Primary Purpose Sales

Income from sales of material promoting veganism was £263k in 2014 (£175k per annum), mostly comprising of Veg 1 nutritional supplement and The Vegan magazine sold to trade and individual subscribers (£190k, £127k per annum) compared with £183k in 2013. These materials are primary purpose products, as they promote our charitable objects directly. We have introduced a new category of activities for generating funds ('non-primary purpose'), which generated £12k in 2014 (£8k per annum). These promotional items raise the profile of The Vegan Society. A tax exempt limit applies up to a maximum income or proportion of income that can be derived from such sales. In 2015 we will increase the income from non-primary purpose sales whilst remaining below the tax limit.

Costs of materials and support costs associated with sales of material promoting veganism were £204k in 2014 (£136k per annum) compared with £135k in 2013. This activity therefore made a net contribution to the Society of £59k in 2014 (£39k per annum) compared with £31k in 2013. The profit margin on 2014 non-primary purpose items (clothing, bags etc.) was low (£2k), as this is a new line of income. We expect this to increase in 2015. Advertising income declined but is expected to increase in 2015.

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6.1.2 Trademark

Trademark generated income of £440k in 2014 (£293k per annum) compared with £191k in 2013. Costs to support trademark were £259k in 2014 (£173k per annum), compared to £106k in 2013. This activity therefore generated £181k to support other activities in 2014 (£121k per annum) compared with £84k in 2013. The Trademark expands awareness of veganism and the society, and we will continue to invest in facilitating the registration of vegan products applying for the Trademark to maintain the position of leading vegan product symbol in the world.

6.1.3 Membership and Donations

We would like to thank all our members and donors for their ongoing support. We are pleased to report that membership increased significantly to 4,252 in 2014 compared to 3,672 paid up members in 2013 (16% in 18 months). Due members or those recently lapsed are not included. Donations between July 2013 and June 2014 were lower than in the same period in 2012-2013; however, 2012-2013 included a one-off donation of £10,000. Donations increased between July and December 2014, and the total for 2014 was £42k including a £6K restricted donation (£28k per annum). A list of donors is on page 13.

The 2014 membership subscriptions increased to £106k (£71k per annum) compared to £67k in 2013. We will continue to grow the number of members and supporters. We have also seen an increase in life memberships, including those aged 65 or over who are subscribing to the discounted life membership fee.

Membership fees have remained the same for nearly 15 years, whilst ignoring inflation. Unfortunately, the costs to administer membership, the resources disseminated, and particularly costs associated with The Vegan magazine, have increased. This is due to increased design, printing and postage costs, staff costs to support a growing membership, changes to IT systems required to administer an effective database, general support costs, and AGM-related costs. Membership subscriptions effectively result in a net loss. This should be changed in 2015.

6.1.4 Legacies

We are very grateful to all who remember the society in their Will to support our work. Thanks to an exceptional number and high value of legacies received we achieved a healthy surplus.

Under SORP Accounting and reporting guidelines for charities, receipt of a legacy must be included in income when it is almost certain that it will be received. Other legacies, of which The Vegan Society was notified in 2013-2014 where the income is merely probable, are disclosed in note 18.

In addition to legacies received during the financial year (£188k, £163k in the first 12 months), one case was finalised early 2015 (£28k), which is included in 2014 legacy income and the 2014 'debtors'. One other case has been ongoing for a number of years. It is uncertain whether or when this estate will be finalised due to complicated litigation and legal actions involving professional legal bodies. It has been estimated that £40k could materialise, however, the probability of receipt is too uncertain to include as a contingent asset at this stage. Another case was brought to our attention in August 2014, which may or may not be finalised in 2015. This estate is estimated to be worth around £60k. We therefore disclose a contingent asset of £60k (note 18). However, it should be noted that these funds should not be relied upon in the short term for cash flow purposes. Only upon receiving the funds will the money be used for charitable activities.

6.1.5 Interest, Dividends and Investments

Interest and dividend payments on reserves are still low due to low interest rates, and 2014 payments (£4k, or £3k per annum) have not changed compared to 2013 (£3k).

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In 2004 we invested £30K in four ethical unit trusts, £10K of which was spent on the Insight Evergreen Fund, which was sold for a realised gain of £2K in 2010. The value of the remaining three funds was £39k in 2013 and increased to £47k in 2014 (£44k in the first 12 months).

In addition to our main current account at the Co-operative Bank, we have spread excess reserves over five deposit and investment accounts, which include the Triodos Bank, Ecology Building Society Charity Bank and CCLA Investment Management Limited (CCLA), and in 2014 we opened a deposit account with Nationwide. Spreading funds helps our deposits to be covered by government guarantees and reduces the risk of exposure to bank failure.

In general, our strategy is to use low risk, highly liquid financial investments to achieve a good return while remaining consistent with our charitable objects. We aim to invest excess funds in our own work to promote veganism and to this end set higher budgets, where sustainable, for new projects each year as part of our strategic planning processes.

Other incoming resources (£5k) include donations from affinity schemes such as The Phone Co-op, Ecotricity, and Triodos Bank.

6.2 Expenditure

With a growing organisation, and an inadequate infrastructure to support a medium-sized charity, such as proper office space, sufficient and effective IT equipment and network, telephone systems, etc. we had to invest a fair amount of funds in improving working conditions in 2014. This will continue in 2015. The support costs are allocated to all of the charitable categories (see note 4 in the accounts).

6.2.1 Communications and Outreach Programmes

The Vegan Society's profile has increased significantly over the past few years. In 2014 we reached an estimated 20 million people worldwide through online activities (website, social media and e-newsletter), the magazine, media and PR coverage, and through communications at events, by email and phone. The monthly website page views now exceed 300,000. As at year-end over 225,000 people 'liked' our Facebook page, and we attracted over 65,000 Twitter followers, which establishes the Society as the definitive authority on veganism online. A new website was launched in April 2014, which continued to be developed in 2014 and 2015. More information about our achievements can be found in the separate Annual Review.

As an educational charity, our UK and international information, events and engagement programmes make up a large part of the expenditure. In 2014 we spent £436k (£290k per annum) compared with £227k in 2013. This will increase further in 2015 as a result of organisational expansion. Communications expenditure includes the following:

- **Festivals and Events**

Attendance at vegan and non-vegan festivals and events increased in 2014 while costs were slightly lower than in 2013. We spent £5k in 2014 (£4k per annum) compared with £11k in 2013 (which included grants, whereas in 2014 these were shown as a separate category).

- **Grants**

Grants to support local vegan festivals, food fairs and other events are made only when they are seen to be a highly effective means of promoting The Society's objects. New grant application guidelines were developed in 2014. In the year under review fewer grant applications were received, resulting in £5k (£3k per annum) of grants and sponsorship being awarded to UK groups. In addition, £1300 was spent on supporting international vegan outreach. Grants awarded in 2013 totalled £6k.

- **Public Relations**

Media and PR coverage increased around five-fold in 2013 and 2014 compared to the previous year, including multiple national radio interviews, newspaper articles, stories in

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trade press and other magazines, and a live TV interview on Channel 5 Live News. This was aided by using PR tools that increase the reach of journalists and other press contacts.

Public relation costs (formerly categorised as 'external advertising') increased from £9k in 2013 to £32k in 2014 (£21k per annum). Categories relevant for the temporary increase include:

- Consultancy: the majority of the public relations expenditure consists of consultancy fees (£23k in 2014). In 2014 we employed a Media Officer only for a few months, and we used consultants for most of the 18 months following unsuccessful recruitment to replace the Media Officer. In January 2015 a new Media & PR Manager was appointed as a full-time staff member. This will increase the staff wages but reduce the public relations costs in 2015.
- Graphic design and photography costs, other than those associated with the magazine, were £3k in 2014.
- Design costs for the rebrand and development of brand guidelines were £4k.
- **The Vegan Magazine**
The costs of the magazine increased to £100k (£67k per annum) compared to £57k in 2013. The unit price for subscribers increased from £2.50 to £3 per issue. However, income through subscriptions (approximately 15% of copies), and advertising only covered one quarter of the total magazine costs.

6.2.2 Support Costs

Every organisation incurs support costs, such as office space, computers and management time. Support costs during 2014 were £263k (£175k per annum) compared with £110K in 2013.

While the costs of many categories such as heating, lighting, security, insurance etc. were comparable to previous years, several other categories within support costs had increased:

- IT expenditure includes website development and website costs, database development, IT network and hardware infrastructure and support, and IT licenses. Unfortunately, one IT project resulted in premature termination without a tangible outcome, which resulted in a disposal of a fixed asset of £8k (Note 11 to the accounts). Legal advice obtained suggested it was not worthwhile pursuing the matter. As a result, the database development project was significantly delayed, and will now be developed in 2015.
- Staff time involved in managing IT, HR, Finance and admin increased, as certain roles such as bookkeeping and finance management were previously carried out by consultants. This resulted in a higher allocation of staff costs (£60k) to support costs (£40k per annum in 2014).
- Professional fees include legal fees (including related to legacies), consultancy fees (including digital communications, website and database technology, and HR), and professional membership of other third sector organisations. Most consultants offered significant discounted fees for their services.
- The Society was represented at three overseas events, one of which was paid for by the hosting company. Staff visited 2 trade shows: BioFach 2014 and a British Embassy & UKTI vegan trade event in Dusseldorf. We also increased our presence at UK events, increasing the travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses. A specialist volunteer from Belgium was reimbursed for travel and accommodation expenses to help set up and train staff in using a new Intranet communications system.
- Depreciation costs within support costs were higher in 2014 (£21k, or £14k per annum) compared to 2013 (£8k) due to higher capital investment in the current year than in previous

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years. There was little depreciation in the year ending June 2013, as most assets bought prior to this had already been fully depreciated.

- Printing and stationery increased from £8k to £21k in 2014 (£14k per annum).
- Telephone costs increased from £2k to £6k in 2014 (£4k per annum), as we had to install a new telephone network system.

Accountancy costs decreased as we did not rely on consultants for most of the year but we employed a Finance & Resources Manager. Staff training costs also decreased in 2014, while some training-related costs were included in 'professional fees'.

6.3 Net Movement of Funds

The Statement of Financial Activities shows a net increase in funds of £101k in 2014 (£68k per annum) compared to a net increase of funds of £11k in 2012. The surplus includes income received in January 2015 (see 6.1.4 Legacies). The total incoming resources of £1.106k in 2014 (£737k per annum) compares with £533k in 2013, while total expenditure of £1.012k in 2014 (£675k per annum) compares with £530k in 2013. Total funds increased from £738k in 2013 to £839k in 2014.

6.3 The Serena Coles Fund

The second charitable object of The Vegan Society, which is registered with the Charity Commission, is 'To relieve older vegans who are in conditions of need'. This will remain in place, and the intention and commitment of The Society to help older vegans will also continue. However, following years of unsuccessful attempts to spend the restricted Serena Coles Fund (£65K), which scope was limited to helping older vegans in conditions of need, hardship and distress, Council obtained legal advice regarding the feasibility of lifting the restriction of the fund. The Charity Commission was satisfied with the evidence supplied that the society had been unable to spend the fund due to its restricted purpose, and ruled that the restriction could be lifted, thereby releasing the funds for general use.

7. Reserves

The former Serena Coles Fund of £65k became an unrestricted fund in 2014. This contributed to the increase in unrestricted reserves from £662k in 2013 to £824k in 2014. The unrestricted reserves include the designated fund set aside by the Council of management for specific purposes. This designated fund includes our current building at net book value and office equipment in use for operational purposes (note 16).

The overall increase in cash at bank and in hand is £171k, leaving £568k at the balance sheet date. Council confirms that these present funds can meet our medium-term obligations. The bank balance and investment assets exceed the reserves policy set by Council at £400k. This is due to exceptional income, particularly legacies. In 2015, some of this surplus will be invested by recruiting more staff to support the growth of the organisation, and to work on strategic plans.

Had we not received any legacies, funds would have fallen by £115k in 2014 (£77k per annum), which is higher than a comparable hypothetical fall of £29k in 2013. Going forwards, a higher level of expenditure compared to income would draw down our reserves in the absence of further exceptional income.

Our current reserves will enable us to maintain the provision of our core charitable activities in the short term. Whilst we still rely on legacies to enable us to do more and to expand, our success in generating income from our core charitable activities ensures that we can continue to operate and be in a better position to make more effective use of any legacies that we receive.

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8. Responsibilities of Council

Company law requires the Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements, the Council has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepared the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.

The members of the Council are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Council is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. So far as the members of the Council are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware and each member of the Council has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information. None of the members of the Council had any interest in the operational transactions of the Charity during the eighteen months to 31 December 2014, other than as disclosed in note 10.

9. Reference and Administrative Details of the Charity, its Trustees and Advisers

9.1 Trustees serving on Council between July 2013 and December 2014

Trustee name	Last appointment (years on council as at 31 December 2014)	Role
Paul Crouch (PC)	December 2012, co-opted October 2012 (2 years 2 months)	Vice-Chair
Una Gordon (UG)	December 2012, co-opted October 2012, resigned February 2014 (15 months)	
William Green (WG)	December 2013, resigned April 2014 (4 months)	
Menna Jones (MJ)	December 2013 (1 year)	Treasurer from July 2014
Alex Kapila (AK)	December 2013 (1 year)	
Ian Liddle (IL)	December 2012, resigned December 2014 (2 years 7 months)	Chair from November 2012 - December 2014
Jenny Liddle (JL)	December 2012, co-opted October 2012, resigned February 2014 (15 months)	
Nicola Martin (NM)	December 2013, resigned June 2014 (6 months)	Treasurer until June 2014
George Rodger (GR)	November 2010 (20 years)	Treasurer from January - November 2013
Rick Savage (RS)	Co-opted April 2013, resigned November 2013 (7 months)	
Kelly Somers (KS)	Co-opted April 2013, resigned April 2014 (1 year)	

Ian Liddle, Jenny Liddle and Menna Jones attended Trustee training in the year ending 2014.

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9.2 Overview of Council governance 2013-2014

Meeting	Main business	Trustee attendance / contribution
Council meeting 06/07/2013	Financial procedures and policies; Visual Identity project update; 2013-2014 project and budget approval; communication streamlining between staff and trustees; HR review/staff benefits	GR, IL, JL, PC, UG, KS
Council meeting 28/09/2013	Approval of draft year-end accounts, Trustee Annual Report and Annual Review; Council proposal for AGM re: 'Ambassadors'; project update including World Vegan Month	GR, IL, JL, UG, KS, RS
AGM 30/11/2013	See minutes included in 2015 AGM document	GR, IL, JL, UG, KS, RS (outgoing) MJ, WG (incoming)
Council meeting 15/12/2013	Role of trustees and timeline for meetings; Election & formation of sub-committees, election of The Vegan magazine editor.	GR, IL, JL, PC, AK, MJ, KS, WG
Council meeting 01/02/2014	Streamlining agenda and conduct at Council meetings; scope of sub-committees, HR policies	GR, IL, JL, PC, AK, MJ, KS, UG
Council meeting 05/04/2014	Engagement letter for instructing new Auditors Slade & Cooper signed; update on Chair meetings with staff; Serena Coles Fund (supporting older vegans); strategic plan	GR, IL, PC, AK, MJ, KS
Telephone conference 08/05/2014	AGM/EGM dates and timeline	IL, NM, MJ, GR
Council meeting 01/06/2014	Charity Commission outcome regarding Serena Coles Fund; Strategic plan; expanding trademark team to keep up with applications; project plans and 2014/15 budget	CR, IL, AK, MJ
EGM 28/06/2014	'To waive, once only, the requirements in Article 9 of our Articles of Association stipulating the holding of an AGM every calendar year and no later than 15 months after the previous AGM; and to hold the Society's next AGM in 2015 in order to allow for a financial year-end change from 30th June to 31st December (extending the current financial year to 18 months, once only)' See minutes included in 2015 AGM document.	IL, GR, MJ
Council meeting 03/08/2014	EGM outcome regarding financial year-end change; HR update; Change of accounting software, updating bank accounts with change of signatories	IL, GR, PC, AK, MJ
Telephone conference 16/09/2014	Co-option procedure	IL, GR, PC, AK, MJ
Council meeting 05/10/2014	Staff recruitment, cost-of-living review of salaries, updating bank accounts, delegation operational matters to CEO and senior management team	IL, GR, AK, MJ
Council meeting 14/12/2014	Resignation of Chair, change of reserves policy; planning future meeting dates	IL, GR, AK, MJ, PC

The Vegan Society
Report of the Council of Management
for the period ended 31st December 2014 (continued)

9.3 Officers as at 31 December 2014

Chair of Council: Ian Liddle

Vice-Chair of Council: Paul DA Crouch

Treasurer: George Rodger until November 2013, then Nicola Martin June 2014, then Menna Jones

Chief Executive and Company Secretary: Jasmijn de Boo

Ambassadors: Macka B, Freya Dinshah, Kerry McCarthy, Cor Nouws, Fiona Oakes, Roxy Shahidi, Wendy Turner-Webster, Benjamin Zephaniah.

Specialist advisers:

- Nutrition and Health Advisers: Stephen Walsh, Sandra Hood and Sarah Smith
- Research Advisers:
 - Dr Richard Twine (Chair)
 - Prof Claire Molloy
 - Dr Bob McKay
 - Dr Juliet MacDonald
 - Dr Lorna Marques-Brocksopp
 - Dr Samantha Hurn
 - Dr Tom Tyler
 - Dr Anat Pick
 - Dr Catherine Duxbury
 - Dr Kay Peggs
 - Dr Erika Cudworth
 - Dr Richard White
 - Eva Giraud
 - Jess Gröling
 - Nathan Stephens-Griffin
 - Sean McCorry
 - Natalie Joelle
 - Jeanette Rowley

Registered office: Donald Watson House, 21 Hylton St, Birmingham, B18 6HJ, UK

Tel: 0845 4588244 or 0121 5231730

Fax: 0121 5231749

Website: www.vegansociety.com

E-mail: info@vegansociety.com

Registered Charity no.: 279228

Registered Company no.: 1468880

Bankers: Cooperative Bank PLC, 13 New Road, Oxford OX1 1LG

Auditors: Slade & Cooper Limited, 46-50 Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1LE

A resolution proposing the reappointment of Slade & Cooper Limited as auditors will be put to the 2015 Annual General Meeting. This report has been prepared in accordance with the small company regime under the Companies Act 2006.

The Vegan Society
Report of the Council of Management
for the period ended 31st December 2014 (continued)

10. Thank You

Donations from members and supporters enable the society to help new vegans, support existing vegans, and influence those with a responsibility for vegans, e.g. in care homes, hospitals or vulnerable situations. Ultimately, of course, the more non-vegan products are replaced with vegan versions, and the more mainstream veganism becomes, the more we help our true beneficiaries, the millions of non-human animals exploited by humans. We are grateful to all who have helped us with donations and to volunteers giving a substantial amount of their time. Thousands of people donated between £0.01 and £99.99. Those individuals or organisations who made donations over £100 include¹:

Donations over £100

Michael Potter	£134	
David Roseveare	£136	
Matthew Sharp	£100	
Robert Platt	£170	
Robert Sheppard	£100	
Bill Palethorpe	£101	
Peter Gillard	£157	
Edward Coleman	£214	
Hugo Carpendale	£100	
Paul Price	£229	
Andy Fletcher	£130	
Terry Robinson	£223	
RichardGlenister	£108	
Chris Barker	£100	
Mark Meiklejohn	£198	
Marie Talbot	£106	
Sue Daniels	£151	
Mario Bravi	£110	
H Carpendale	£100	
Juliet Macdonald	£127	
Neil Williams	£100	
Fruity Nutters	£201	
Nainesh Patel	£150	
Rachel Xerri-Brooks	£167	
Andrew Morris	£100	
Daryl Booth	£100	
Sofia Sperber	£100	
D Pomfret	£100	via Just Giving
David Moulton	£160	via Just Giving
Anonymous	£100	via Just Giving
Anonymous	£100	via Just Giving
Keith Douglas	£200	via Just Giving
Anonymous	£100	via Just Giving
Anonymous	£100	via Just Giving
Anonymous	£100	via Just Giving
Anonymous	£100	via Just Giving

¹ Apologies for any accidental omissions – The Vegan Society has yet to upgrade its accounting software.

The Vegan Society
Report of the Council of Management
for the period ended 31st December 2014 (continued)

Donations over £250

Kate Wilde	£419
Tree	£250
Nicola Hankey	£258
Margaret Kitroeff	£329
Jason Nelson	£286
Jenny Calcoen	£357
Ray McDonald	£350
Oliver Tupman	£250
DJ Howard	£250
Anonymous	£150

Donations over £500

J. Revill Trust	£562
HannahEdge	£500
Mark Westcombe	£901
Myra Manns	£500
Dorothy Kemp	£528
Anonymous	£600 via Just Giving

Donations over £1,000

Stephen Watson	£1,050
Ian Davison	£1,000
Deirdre McGinn	£1,200

Donations over £5,000

Billy Russell	£6,000 (ringfenced for specific purpose)
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Just Giving Fundraisers

We are very grateful for everyone who has raised money in person or online, for example through Just Giving. Star online fundraisers include:

Funds raised over £100

Nicola C	£204
Rich Hall	£140
Neil Cant	£200

Funds raised over £250

Elena Orde	£288
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Funds raised over £500

Karen Varga	£836
Alex Douglas	£515
Jasmijn de Boo	£898
Grace Shuck	£755
Jonathan Duffield	£953

Funds raised over £1,000

Keith Douglas	£1,117
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Report signed, by order of Council,



Paul Crouch, Chair

Independent Auditor's Report To the members of The Vegan Society for the period ended 31 December 2014

We have audited the financial statements of The Vegan Society for the 18 months ended 31 December 2014, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (including the income and expenditure account), the Balance Sheet and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (Financial Reporting Standards for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities).

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 9, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's (APB's) Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

A description of the scope of an audit of financial statements is [provided on the FRC's website at www.frc.org.uk/apb/scope/private.cfm

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2014, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

(continued)

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Catherine Hall FCCA DChA

Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of

Slade & Cooper Limited
Statutory Auditors
Green Fish Resource Centre
46-50 Oldham Street
Manchester
M4 1LE

Date: 11th May 2015

The Vegan Society
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure account)
for the period ended 31 December 2014

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	18 months 2014 £	12 months 2013 £
Incoming resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds	2				
Voluntary income		375,439	6,000	381,439	153,984
Activities for generating funds		12,016	-	12,016	-
Investment income		3,944	-	3,944	2,899
Incoming resources from charitable activities	3				
Sales of material promoting veganism		263,429	-	263,429	182,600
Trademark (product authentication)		440,201	-	440,201	190,507
Other incoming resources		4,571	-	4,571	3,323
Total incoming resources		1,099,600	6,000	1,105,600	533,313
Resources expended					
Cost of generating funds	4	91,297	-	91,297	36,403
Charitable activities					
Communications and Outreach programmes		434,363	1,300	435,663	226,973
Sales of material promoting veganism		204,346	-	204,346	135,397
Trademark (product authentication)		259,173	-	259,173	106,257
Governance costs		21,754	-	21,754	24,478
Total resources expended		1,010,933	1,300	1,012,233	529,508
Net incoming resources before transfers	9	88,667	4,700	93,367	3,805
Transfers between funds		64,606	(64,606)	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains and losses		153,273	(59,906)	93,367	3,805
Realised and unrealised gains and losses on investment assets		7,997	-	7,997	7,219
Net movement in funds		161,270	(59,906)	101,364	11,024
Funds at 30 June 2013		662,405	75,160	737,565	726,541
Funds at 31 December 2014		£ 823,675	£ 15,254	£ 838,929	£ 737,565

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

The Vegan Society
Company no. 1468880
Balance Sheet
as at 31 December 2014

	Note	2014		2013	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		180,165		183,563
Investments	12		46,676		38,983
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			226,841		222,546
Current assets					
Stock		27,615		18,421	
Debtors	13	97,258		118,992	
Cash at bank and in hand		567,613		396,499	
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			692,486		533,912
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	14	(80,398)		(18,893)	
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Net current assets			612,088		515,019
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Total assets less current liabilities			£ 838,929		£ 737,565
			<hr/> <hr/>		<hr/> <hr/>
Reserves					
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	16	180,165		-	
General funds		643,510		662,405	
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Restricted funds	15		823,675		662,405
			15,254		75,160
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			£ 838,929		£ 737,565
			<hr/> <hr/>		<hr/> <hr/>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions available to companies subject to the small companies' regime of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Management Committee, and signed on their behalf by:

PAUL CROUCH Name

Signature

27/05/215

Date

The Vegan Society

Notes to the accounts

for the period ended 31 December 2014

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. They have been applied consistently during the eighteen month period, and in the preceding year.

a Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued in March 2005) and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

b Fees, subscriptions, donations, legacies

Credit for income arising under these headings is taken in the actual period of receipt.

- Membership subscriptions, including life subscriptions, are non-refundable and are in substance donations rather than payments for goods and services. They are therefore recognised as income when they are received.
- Legacy income which is not yet received, but which is measurable and certain to be received, is included in income.
- Other incoming resources are accounted for when receivable.

c Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis when a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is included as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in promoting veganism in accordance with the objects of the charity. It includes both the direct costs and support costs relating to such activities.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include its audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.
- Support costs are costs incurred which, whilst necessary to deliver an activity, do not themselves produce or constitute the output of the charitable activity. Support costs are therefore allocated to the relevant activity cost category that they support. They include general management, payroll administration, budgeting and accounting, information technology and human resources. The support costs shown have been allocated in proportion to the staff time spent on non-support activities in each year.

d Stock

Stocks of goods sold to promote veganism are valued at the lower of latest cost and net realisable value.

e Tangible fixed assets

Fixed assets (excluding investments) are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Tangible fixed assets costing over £1,000 are capitalised and depreciated on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives as follows:

<i>Asset Category</i>	<i>Useful life</i>
Furniture and equipment	10 years
Computer equipment	3 years
Leasehold property	87 years (the life of the lease)

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f Fund accounting

- Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.
- Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Management Committee for particular purposes.
- Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

g Investments

Investments are included at market value at the balance sheet date. Changes in valuation from one year to the next are included in the Statement of Financial Activities as unrealised gains or losses on investments.

h Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, where substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership remains with the lessor, are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they fall due.

2 Incoming resources from generated funds

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	18 months 2014 £	12 months 2013 £
Voluntary income				
Donations	35,582	6,000	41,582	30,676
Gift Aid	17,317	-	17,317	16,662
Legacies	216,641	-	216,641	40,030
Membership subscriptions	105,899	-	105,899	66,616
	<u>375,439</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>381,439</u>	<u>153,984</u>
Activities for generating funds				
Non-primary purpose sales	12,016	-	12,016	-
	<u>12,016</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,016</u>	<u>-</u>
Investment income				
Interest and dividends	3,944	-	3,944	2,899
	<u>3,944</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,944</u>	<u>2,899</u>
Total incoming resources from generated funds	<u>£ 391,399</u>	<u>£ 6,000</u>	<u>£ 397,399</u>	<u>£ 156,883</u>

3 Incoming resources from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	18 months 2014 £	12 months 2013 £
Sale of material promoting veganism	239,130	-	239,130	166,087
The Vegan magazine	24,299	-	24,299	16,513
Trademark (product authentication)	440,201	-	440,201	190,507
	<u>703,630</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>703,630</u>	<u>373,107</u>
Total incoming resources from charitable activities	<u>£ 703,630</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ 703,630</u>	<u>£ 373,107</u>

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

4 Resources expended

	Staff costs £	Direct project costs £	Postage costs £	Allocation of support costs £	Total 2014 £	Total 2013 £
Cost of generating funds						
Membership	23,221	-	6,468	16,655	46,344	24,992
Other fundraising	18,774	14,362	-	1,841	34,977	11,411
Cost of non-primary purpose sales	-	9,976	-	-	9,976	-
	<u>41,995</u>	<u>24,338</u>	<u>6,468</u>	<u>18,496</u>	<u>91,297</u>	<u>36,403</u>
Charitable activities						
Communications and outreach programmes						
Public relations	-	32,228	-	-	32,228	9,133
Festivals and events	-	5,264	-	-	5,264	10,618
Communications and Outreach programme	147,359	29,599	6,468	109,313	292,739	149,607
The Vegan magazine	28,806	38,685	11,456	20,661	99,608	57,115
International outreach	-	1,300	-	-	1,300	500
Grants paid	-	4,524	-	-	4,524	-
	<u>176,165</u>	<u>111,600</u>	<u>17,924</u>	<u>129,974</u>	<u>435,663</u>	<u>226,973</u>
Sales of material promoting veganism	19,383	141,029	30,032	13,902	204,346	135,397
Trademark (product authentication)	129,357	30,220	3,234	96,362	259,173	106,257
	<u>324,905</u>	<u>282,849</u>	<u>51,190</u>	<u>240,238</u>	<u>899,182</u>	<u>468,627</u>
Governance costs	9,990	11,764	-	-	21,754	24,478
Total resources expended	<u>£ 376,890</u>	<u>£ 318,951</u>	<u>£ 57,658</u>	<u>£ 258,734</u>	<u>£ 1,012,233</u>	<u>£ 529,508</u>
Total resources expended 2013	<u>£ 213,931</u>	<u>£ 167,155</u>	<u>£ 38,424</u>	<u>£ 109,998</u>	<u>£ 529,508</u>	

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

5 Employee information

Analysis of employee costs:	18 months 2014 £	12 months 2013 £
Salary costs	407,469	215,895
Employer's National Insurance	29,524	16,772
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total employee costs	<u>£ 436,993</u>	<u>£ 232,667</u>

No employee earned over £60,000 in 2014 or 2013.

Employee costs were allocated as follows:	18 months 2014 £	12 months 2013 £
As allocated in note 4	376,890	213,931
Allocated to support costs	60,103	18,736
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>£ 436,993</u>	<u>£ 232,667</u>

The average number of employees during the year, calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents, was as follows:

Trademark	4.6	3.8
Communications and outreach	5.5	5.8
Sales	0.7	0.9
Fundraising	0.5	0.0
Administration and management	2.0	1.3
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	<u>13.3</u>	<u>11.8</u>

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

6 Support costs

Analysis of support costs:	18 months 2014	12 months 2013
Bank charges	7,640	4,234
Depreciation	21,279	7,902
Information Technology	60,109	13,955
Insurance	3,783	3,731
Lighting, heating, cleaning & security	14,004	8,777
Premises and equipment repairs	4,202	3,026
Printing and stationery	21,006	7,839
Professional Fees	26,216	6,391
Staff recruitment costs	2,135	1,530
Staff training	1,648	4,258
Sundry	1,728	662
Telephone	6,283	2,326
Travel and meetings	23,885	11,485
Bad debts expense	3,250	1,196
Accountancy	5,463	13,950
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total direct support costs	202,631	91,262
Employee costs for support activities (from note 5)	60,103	18,736
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total support costs	<u>£ 262,734</u>	<u>£ 109,998</u>

7 Governance costs

Analysis of governance costs:	18 months 2014	12 months 2013
AGM costs	2,226	3,296
Audit	4,525	4,000
Meetings	409	80
Travel and accommodation (council members)	4,034	1,586
Trustee guidance and training	570	180
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	11,764	9,142
Allocated salary costs	9,990	13,128
Allocated support costs	-	2,208
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>£ 21,754</u>	<u>£ 24,478</u>

8 Corporation tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

9 Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting) the following:	18 months 2014 £	12 months 2013 £
Auditor's remuneration	5,875	4,000
Depreciation	21,279	7,902
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	7,742	-
	<u>5,875</u>	<u>4,000</u>
Auditor's remuneration comprised:		
Audit	4,125	4,000
Accountancy	1,750	-
	<u>£ 5,875</u>	<u>£ 4,000</u>

10 Trustee remuneration and expenses, and related party transactions

No remuneration was paid to Trustees in 2014 or 2013.

Expenses were reimbursed to seven trustees as follows:	18 months 2014 £	12 months 2013 £
Trustee guidance and training	570	180
Travel	4,034	1,586
Telephone	51	-
Accommodation	1,356	380
	<u>£ 6,011</u>	<u>£ 2,146</u>

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity, including guarantees, during the year, apart from Ian Liddle as set out below (2013: nil).

Jenny Liddle was a trustee until 2nd February 2014 and is the partner of another trustee, Ian Liddle, who was a trustee throughout the period.

After her resignation from council on 2nd February 2014, Jenny Liddle was paid £6,450 for Public Relations and Media Services. As at 31/12/14, she was owed £2,350.

Ian Liddle had no involvement in the discussions and decision to appoint Jenny Liddle in her paid role.

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Office fittings & equipment £	Leasehold property £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 July 2013	86,429	190,000	276,429
Additions	23,874	-	23,874
Disposals	(7,742)	-	(7,742)
	<u>£ 102,561</u>	<u>£ 190,000</u>	<u>£ 292,561</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 July 2013	77,578	15,288	92,866
Charge for the year	16,254	3,276	19,530
Disposals	-	-	-
	<u>£ 93,832</u>	<u>£ 18,564</u>	<u>£ 112,396</u>
Net book value			
At 31 December 2014	<u>£ 8,729</u>	<u>£ 171,436</u>	<u>£ 180,165</u>
At 30 June 2013	<u>£ 8,851</u>	<u>£ 174,712</u>	<u>£ 183,563</u>

12 Investments

	Cost £	Value 2014 £	Value 2013 £
Henderson Global Care Growth Fund	10,000	22,925	18,534
Kames Ethical equity fund	5,000	15,770	13,048
Kames Ethical corporate bond fund	5,000	7,981	7,401
	<u>£ 20,000</u>	<u>£ 46,676</u>	<u>£ 38,983</u>

All the investments are listed.

13 Debtors

	2014 £	2013 £
Trade debtors	25,032	44,476
Other debtors	72,226	74,516
	<u>£ 97,258</u>	<u>£ 118,992</u>

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

14 Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year

	2014 £	2013 £
Trade creditors	60,259	6,435
Accruals	14,110	7,776
Other creditors	6,029	4,682
	£ 80,398	£ 18,893
	£ 80,398	£ 18,893

15 Restricted funds

	As at 1 July 2013 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Transfers £	As at 31 December 2014 £
The International Outreach Fund	10,554	-	(1,300)	-	9,254
The Serena Coles Fund	64,606	-	-	(64,606)	-
Vehicle Fund	-	6,000	-	-	6,000
	£ 75,160	£ 6,000	£ (1,300)	£ (64,606)	£ 15,254
	£ 75,160	£ 6,000	£ (1,300)	£ (64,606)	£ 15,254

The International Outreach Fund was established in 2006-7 with donations of £3,800. It can only be used to support the promotion of veganism in developing countries. In June 2013 Council expressed ongoing commitment to support international outreach, particularly in countries with low GDP levels. From 2013-14 this will be done through the grants system and by individual projects detailed in annual plans. Council agreed to end the mandatory annual topping up of the International Outreach Fund with £1,000.

On 20th August 2009, we received £63,988 to establish the new restricted fund, the Serena Coles Fund for Older Vegans. This represents half the accumulated amount from donations made over 20 years ago as part of an attempt to establish a nursing home for elderly vegans.

The Charity Commission ruled that as the original purpose had not been fulfilled, the donations and the accumulated interest should be split evenly between The Vegan Society and another charity, Vegetarians for Life (VfL). VfL are strongly linked with the Vegetarian Housing Association who held the donated funds for many years in pursuit of the original objectives. VfL will hold their half of the accumulated funds in a restricted fund to provide grants for older vegans.

The remit of the fund was very restrictive as noted at previous AGMs. Despite repeated attempts in the past three years to locate older vegans in condition of need, hardship and distress who might benefit from the Serena Coles Fund, we were unable to find projects that met the strict criteria.

In 2014, Council obtained legal advice regarding the feasibility of lifting the restriction of the fund. The Charity Commission was satisfied with the evidence supplied that the society had been unable to spend the fund due to its restricted purpose, and ruled that the restriction could be lifted, thereby releasing the funds for general use. The second charitable object of The Vegan Society, which is registered with the Charity Commission, is 'To relieve older vegans who are in conditions of need'. This will remain in place, and the intention and commitment of the society to help older vegans will also continue.

All restricted funds are held as cash assets.

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

16 Designated fund

	As at 1 July 2013 £	Incoming transfers £	Outgoing transfers £	As at 31 December 2014 £
Leasehold property and equipment	-	180,165	-	180,165
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

This fund have been designated by the trustees to show that the money is invested in the building and equipment, cannot be realised and is not available to further the general charitable activities of the charity.

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 December 2014 are represented by:	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Fixed assets	226,841	-	226,841
Net current assets	596,834	15,254	612,088
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total net assets	£ 823,675	£ 15,254	£ 838,929
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

18 Effect of legacies - contingent asset

During the period under review the society received the following legacies:

	18 months 2014 £	12 months 2013 £
The estate of the late Mrs Ruth Storer Scott	2,500	-
The estate of the late Mr Reginal Carr Gash	5,000	-
The estate of the late Mrs Freda McCormack	70,000	40,000
The estate of the late Dr Enid Marshall (the society previously received interim distributions in 2009 and 2010)	632	-
The estate of the late Mrs Suzanne Coleman	60,000	-
The estate of the late Mrs Muriel Christina Longhurst	1,321	-
The estate of the late Mr James Patrick Norton	3,170	-
The estate of the late Mrs Joan Biddick	20,796	-
The estate of the late Mr John Lenihan	24,987	-
Other	-	30
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	188,406	40,030
Received after the year end but included in 2014 because receipt was virtually certain as at 31/12/14	28,236	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	£ 216,642	£ 40,030
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

As at 31 December 2014 further legacies had been notified to the charity, but at that date it was not certain that they would be received. It is probable that these legacies will generate a further £60,000 income for the charity.

The Vegan Society
Notes to the accounts
for the period ended 31 December 2014 (continued)

19 Lease commitments

The charity had the following annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases:

	Equipment	
	2014	2013
	£	£
Leases expiring in:		
One year	1,670	-
Two to five years	1,260	2,930
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Annual Overview

Perspective of the Chair and CEO

From the Chair of Council, Paul Crouch

The past year has again been one that has seen The Vegan Society grow in all its facets, reflecting the growing interest in and uptake of veganism around the world. The staff and Council have worked hard to continue the process of modernisation as the need for a strong IT infrastructure becomes more and more important. This enables us to reach further and more effectively.

The Society is now seen as the authoritative voice on plant based living and seeks to communicate that veganism is more than just a diet at every opportunity. We are working with the Hospital Caterers Association to provide nutritious vegan recipes for caterers and we continue to work with caterers in the Prison Service. These two areas are a vital part of the work we do to ensure that vegans receive fair and equal treatment wherever they may be.

Our vision of a future where all animals are free to live without abuse and how to achieve it is stronger than ever at a time when that vision becomes increasingly important for all the inhabitants of our planet.

From the CEO, Jasmijn de Boo

Summing up 18 months of achievements is challenging, as there were many highlights in 2013 and 2014. The new visual identity and modern, user-friendly website were certainly highlights, as well as receiving typically five to ten times more media & PR coverage. Our membership grew by 11%; we engaged thousands of people with the Love Vegan campaign; nearly 7,000 people took the Vegan Pledge, and companies interested in The Vegan Society Trademark increased the number of registered products to well over 16,000 worldwide.

This growth in veganism is great news for existing vegans and people caring for or cooking for other vegans. Making it easier for people to become and stay vegan on a balanced diet, and, by extension, no longer inflicting suffering and death upon tens of thousands of non-human animals, as well as reducing our environmental footprint and improving health are still our core aims.

Thanks to your support we have been able to expand, and this will continue in 2015.

More details of our achievements are in the Annual Review, which is published separately.

2015 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The 2015 AGM of The Vegan Society will be held on Saturday 27 June from 12:30-16:00 at the Quaker Meeting House, Priory Rooms, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AF. The closest railway station is Birmingham Snow Hill, although Birmingham Moor Street and New Street are also nearby.

Directions: <http://www.theprioryrooms.co.uk/page/location/getting-here>

Entry

The meeting is open to full members and supporter members and anyone authorised to act as proxy.

Voting

Voting is restricted to full members over 16 years of age and duly appointed proxies. Supporter members are not entitled to vote (if in doubt, ring the Supporter Services and Events Coordinator on 0121 523 1730 to check).

Proxy voting forms are enclosed with the mail out from the Electoral Reform Service (ERS). The forms include an explanation about how to appoint a proxy in case members do not attend. The form must be signed and returned by the specified date. You will need your membership number to vote (printed below your address on the cover letter). Those attending the meeting and entitled to vote will be issued with voting slips on arrival at the registration table.

Refreshments & crèche

Coffee, tea, water and biscuits will be available. A crèche has not been organised this year. Please inform us by 15 June if you have any requirements.

Disabled Access and Toilet

Yes

Recording

Those wishing to undertake an audio/video recording of the meeting must obtain permission from the Chair by Monday 15 June.

Agenda

12:30 - 13:00 Registration and tea/coffee

13:00 - 13:10 Welcome by the Chair and CEO

13:10 - 13:15 Appointment of Ambassador: Sara Pascoe, comedian. Proposed by Paul Crouch

13:15 - 13:20 Appointment & Remuneration of Auditors

13:20 - 14:20 Special and Ordinary Resolutions

14:20 - 14:50 Consideration of the Annual Report of Council and Accounts*

14:50 - 15:10 Tea break

15:10 - 15:15 Declaration of Council Election Result

15:15 - 15:35 Vegan comedy by Chris Stokes

15:35 - 15:45 Closing remarks by the Chair

15:45 - 16:00 Informal discussion and end of AGM

Please bring this document to the AGM. If you are not attending but wish to vote, a proxy voting form and reply paid envelope are enclosed with the mail out from the Electoral Reform Society (ERS). The cover letter in the ERS mail out provides a security code for members to vote online. You will need your membership number to vote.

* Constructive questions to be raised on the Report and Accounts should be submitted to The Society's office no later than Friday 19th June. In the interest of time and in order to allow more members to ask a question, the number of questions will be limited to a maximum of four per member. Similar questions will be taken together and answered once.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the AGM.



Sara Pascoe, vegan Comedian

CANDIDATES' ELECTION STATEMENTS

THE VEGAN SOCIETY 2015 AGM COUNCIL ELECTIONS, 27 JUNE

The number of Council members shall not be less than five nor more than twelve. The current Council consists of five trustees. George Rodger will step down after 21 years of serving as a trustee, and would have had to seek re-election had he wished to continue, as his four-year period on Council has come to an end. Paul Crouch (not the Chair, but a second member with the same name) was co-opted in January, Paul Crouch will have to stand for election at the AGM.

*There are fourteen candidates and nine vacancies in the 2015 Council Elections. **Please read the candidate statements carefully before casting your vote.***

Candidates describe their background in up to 500 words, which may include what skills, qualifications and experience they have that will benefit the Society; what they hope to achieve as a trustee; what their reasons are for being vegan; what experience they have of managing people and working on committees; and if they were previously a trustee, what they achieved during this time and any other information that they consider relevant.

Candidate statements are presented in alphabetical order based on surname.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Tim Barford, Bristol

Proposed by: Karin Ridgers

Seconded by: Neil Robinson

My name is Tim Barford, I'm 52 this May, and a grandfather to be at the time of writing.

I've been veggie since 1981, aged 18, mainly to upset mum and dad, being a wannabe rebellious punk at the time. I went vegan in 1984 during the Live Aid era, the first ethical reason being for reasons of long term global food sustainability – the answer to the Live Aid issues lay in us all going vegan. The awareness of health, environment and animals came later. A current passion is Animal Rights ideology.



A background of free festivals and rave culture of the 80's saw a progression to helping start the UK's first hemp company in the early 90's, before starting Yaoh my current hemp business in 2002. In 2003 the Vegfest events were founded, and have continued to grow ever since.

Having been a long term supporter of the Vegan Society, I am now a life member and a trademark holder for 13 years.

I'm standing because I want to help the Society take forward its remarkable progress during the last 3 years especially to even further heights. I see the 8 main priorities for the Vegan Society over the next 3 years as these:

- Deliver a clear consistent "Go Vegan Live Vegan Stay Vegan" message at all times and ensure that the animals have a true voice amongst humans
- Support the regional grassroots groups and events with more tools, resources, and promotion and develop a clearer understanding and response to their views
- Develop an improved and better resourced PR department to deliver a clear consistent vegan message to the global media
- Support the growing global vegan movement with more tools and resources and ensure a consistent Go Vegan global message as the focus of the Society's work
- Deliver a well budgeted sustainable Society that remains financially stable whilst both generating and also liberating assets at all times to those that need it and are most effective with it
- Ensure the continuation of a stable and positive VS team, ensure their needs are respected and taken into account, and continue to develop the excellent vegan outreach work that the current VS team already has in place
- Develop a more enhanced and effective school education programme
- Ensure that the VS's precious resources are focused on delivering consistent vegan education

The skills I would bring to the table are:

- Loyalty – first donated to the VS in 1984
 - Commitment and Support – The VS is like my football team – a lifetime commitment through thick and thin.
 - 32 years' experience of the UK vegan communities
 - Financial and budgeting expertise - I've learnt the hard way
 - PR and marketing skills, also social media expertise
 - Team player
 - Excellent vegan business contacts, and some business acumen and experience
 - I love being vegan and working with vegan people and I would so love to be a trustee of the VS! I have a global vision, am incredibly positive, have the drive to deliver, and a track record of success
-

Mark Bateman, Liverpool

Proposed by: Patricia Tricker

Seconded by: Stephen Walsh

Hi, my name is Mark Bateman.

Having researched the subject thoroughly, I became Vegan in 1993, a year after becoming vegetarian, and feel that I made the right choice, both ethically and personally.

I have been a member of the Vegan Society for 18 years. I live in Liverpool and became a local contact for Merseyside in 2004 and I attended local contact meetings for many years.

I am also a regular attender at AGMs whether they be in Birmingham, London or elsewhere.

I worked as an electrician until a short unexpected illness 3 years ago made me decide on a career change and I am now an Arriva driver, working from the Speke depot.

I have been an active supporter of Greenpeace for 20 years and joined the boat team some 15 years ago, taking part in many actions and also fundraising when needed.

I also volunteer for Greenpeace at Glastonbury each year, as team leader with the maintenance crew.

I am a member of a local snooker club and also a local motorbike club.

My wife, Ann and I have recently celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary.

I should feel it an honour and privilege to be a trustee of our society.



Clint Michael (Kael) Cockcroft, Thames Ditton

Proposed by: Helen Wright

Seconded by: Robb Masters

I became vegetarian in 1994 and vegan in 1998 being a member of The Vegan Society until moving to South Africa. I initially became a vegetarian realising that the animals I was eating had comparable experience of life, pain and love for their family as I.

I am fully committed to the lifestyle as a benefit to individual and societal health both mentally and physically, to the suffering of both consumer and consumed, and the sustainability of our social structures and environment. My vision for veganism is to broaden our approach to include the diversity of reasons people adopt and maintain the lifestyle. Some research shows that health and suffering are important initiators, but sense of community and connection with identity are crucial maintainers. I envision this being done by looking at the broader healthy lifestyle through the filter of food and by promoting the social meaning of being part of an ethical, healthy, sustainable and compassionate fellowship.

As a Clinical Psychologist, I am now working as Head of Therapies for a Private Hospital managing the Psychology and Occupational Therapies Teams in a Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit and Brain Injury Unit. Prior to this I lead an inpatient Rehabilitation and Recovery psychology team, including establishing a trust wide therapy treatment programme for Personality Disorders. I sit on the hospital's governance committees and contribute to training and programme development for ward based staff. In rural South Africa I worked in the maximum security forensic setting and rural clinics with severely disturbed and impoverished communities; the most destructive priorities being societal decay and sexual violence.

Initially, I worked as a journalist for 15 years in print and online; including several years as a university lecturer in online media. This placed me on the University's ITC Steering Committee and departmental executive committee, presenting papers and running courses for other institutions including the Nordic-SADC Journalism Centre, and project managing in the New Media Lab, Highway Africa Conference and South African National Arts Festival Website.

I moved into community working through editing a grassroots newspaper and materials production for charities. I was the Training Manager and executive member of a charity for five years sitting on the Projects and Programmes Board Sub-committee with 6 months as interim Director. My management training includes; ILM Trainer in 2013 (Institute of Leadership & Management) and Management Certificate (2004). My areas of focus are change/growth facilitation and leadership, gender violence, debt activism, equality/diversity and relational identity development.

The follow were some of my additional projects and responsibilities:

- Development Officer for the Local Government Regional Executive Committee, SA
- Advisory Committee for the Local Government Micro-Agriculture Project, SA
- Executive Committee member of Eastern Cape NGO Coalition, SA
- United Nations Decade of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Programme
- HIV-AIDS Mainstreaming resulted in the book "Responding to HIV/AIDS: A Practitioner's Guide to Mainstreaming in Rural Development Projects"

I feel that I can contribute in areas of governance, media and social engagement.

Paul Adam Crouch, Worcester

Proposed by: Caroline Malkinson

Seconded by: Dean Bracher

I have been co-opted as a trustee for The Vegan Society since January 2015 and now stand for election via the 2015 AGM to continue that role.

In this time I have been enthused with the direction the current trustees and CEO want to take the Vegan Society in, and hope to be able to support and contribute to that vision. I've already tabled a number of ideas to council, and will continue to do so in the interests of members and with reference to the budget available.

I live in Worcester with one cat called Picture and enjoy travelling both within the UK and internationally. A lot of my free time is spent seeing friends around the country, although I can often be found watching live music or eating as much vegan food as I can find. Like most vegans, I love food.

My path to veganism started from the age of fifteen after being given a leaflet in the street about animal experimentation. From that point onwards I educated myself, and have gradually given up animal products to become vegan in my thirties.

I believe we need to increase our support of outreach work by local groups, focusing particularly on the young who often have a more open view of life. There are also bigger picture issues where we need to continue to expand our presence as the 'go to' organisation for input into debates where popular media coverage exists.

I am passionate about veganism primarily for reasons of animal welfare but also recognise the need for our organisation to engage with people on other levels to promote our diet such as on an environmental and health basis.

In my work for the NHS I oversee the testing and assurance of IT solutions used across England. Basically this means that I make sure they work as they should and are safe, secure and usable. My work sees regular involvement in a number of other governance related activities which I



believe cross over in the role of Trustee including making board level representations and recommendations with a focus on risk management.

I hold some useful formal skills in project management, internal audit and ISO9001 which I believe can be put to use for the Society. I also hold a degree in Psychology with English and Literary Studies and have just completed a useful Trustee Introduction course to provide additional knowledge to fulfil my role.

Veganism is turning a corner at the moment and is starting to gain some semblance of normalisation in society. I believe the current group of trustees and CEO along with other trustees with specialist skills can help expand that normalisation. I estimate we are about twenty five years behind vegetarianism, but that has become relatively mainstream. We need to mainstream veganism as soon as possible for the animals and ourselves.

Edward Daniel, London

Proposed by: Robb Masters

Seconded by: Ian Perry

I am a practising solicitor and qualified over 21 years ago. I have corporate/commercial law and litigation experience. I held the position of partner in two London law firms; worked in-house for the world's largest insurer; ran my own legal practice in the City; and worked for a non-profit and one of the oldest Universities in the world. I am a qualified trainer too. My skills and experience will benefit the Society.



I have managed people while acting as a partner and running my own practice. I have also built a networking and social media community bringing together professionals in London. We held regular events, with speakers and I interviewed professionals each week over a period of three years.

For me being a Trustee is about giving something back to the community. I would be able to use my legal and other core skills and talents to further the interests of the Society. It would be a growing experience for me too.

I became a vegan purely on spiritual grounds. One morning I woke up and my heart was no longer in eating meat. It was an overnight transition for me. I researched why I would want to make this change as logically it made no sense to me at the time. I subsequently attended vegan potluck events and realised that I could still eat wholesome good food and not touch meat.

Ironically, in coming to realise that all things are interconnected, I came to develop compassion towards animals and the way that they do not have a voice in the society we live in. Perhaps, I am moving from a place of living in my head to a place of living in my heart.

I have just completed writing a three-book series with vegan recipes and themes on spirituality and intend to publish my first book in March 2016. I have a weekly recipe blog; the number of followers that I have globally encourages me.

Practising law stimulates my logical and creative mind. Cooking arouses my creativity. Spirituality awakens my passion. Veganism has opened my heart.

Felix Hnat, Vienna

Proposed by: Marek Vorsilka

Seconded by: Jan Kupec

I have been an activist for 15 years. I became vegan for ethical reasons, which continues to be the strongest reason for me personally. Of course I am well aware of the health benefits, and of the relationship between the consumption of animal products and environmental problems. Over the years I have been involved in the whole spectrum of advocacy, from vegan advocacy (leafleting, media work, lobbying, etc.) to animal rights advocacy.

For almost a decade I have been the CEO and president of the Austrian Vegan Society. We started as a tiny organisation with 1 paid staff member and a handful of members, and now, a decade later, we have over 2,000 members, 8 paid staff, a Facebook following of 30,000 and 12,000 newsletter subscribers. Over a period of 7 years I was accused (and reaccused) in the famous animal rights trial in Austria, where I was twice acquitted of all charges.

In addition, for many years I have been on various boards of trustees, for example the board of the Association Against Factory Farming (VGT Austria) and the board of the European Vegetarian Union (EVU). On these boards I often serve active functions, for example I am at the moment the vice-president of the EVU.

My academic background is in economics and I have a Master's degree in Political Economy. I would very much like to be involved in the board of trustees of The Vegan Society UK. In summary, what I could add to the board is an international component, my expertise in media work, and my experience of growth of an organisation in terms of members as well as staff. I hope you will consider me as a trustee on the board of The Vegan Society.



Constantin Édouard Imbs, Paris

Proposed by: Vanessa Clarke

Seconded by: Salim Akbar

Born in France and educated in England, I am a natural internationalist. Vegan for the animals, the backwardness of French attitudes led me to re-launch a French vegan society (defunct since the 1990s). I also joined The Vegan Society, with its vital international remit, and have worked energetically to develop the sunflower trademark in France and beyond. I am currently based in Paris, but with advance planning travel is cheaper than from some parts of the UK.

French is spoken by more than 200 million people in 75 countries, so an early task was to translate and print The Vegan Society's nutrition and environment booklets (with financial help from the Society) for distribution in France, Belgium, Switzerland and French-speaking Africa.

Thanks to this excellent material, the English-speaking world has sensible, if cautious, official guidelines on vegan nutrition. The rest of the world deserves the same. If national guidelines are hostile, doctors and dietitians follow; mainstream people are fearful and individual vegans, especially children, are at risk from ignorance and misinformation, sometimes with disastrous (and widely publicised) results.

I have sought to steer a course between those who regard vegan eating as dangerous and those who see it as a panacea, allowing us to live on chips and doughnuts with no concerns about our



health or even about vitamin B12. Occupying an evidence-based centre ground has brought much success. In the French-speaking world, most official guidelines are negative. "Veganism: a harmful diet," proclaimed the French Health Ministry. Arguments with hard facts and references led to that statement being withdrawn and official guidance issued on the importance of vitamin B12. And further improvements are on the way since over 1200 vegans participated in a major state-funded study.

Much ill health has been prevented by stressing the need for vitamin B12 through talks, vegan parties and social networks (with free high-dose B12 for those with serious deficiency) as well as by promoting The Vegan Society's VEG1 multivitamin.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation was still recommending fish for vegetarians and seemed barely to have heard of vegans. As leader of an EU-funded project, "Eating Together", I compiled a list of the best government guidelines around the world. This brought an invitation to discussions which, with international support, should lead to proper WHO guidelines on plant-based nutrition.

Our colourful "Eating Together" poster showing foods acceptable to the widest possible range of cultures, including vegans and Jains, has attracted mainstream and international interest, promoting diversity and educating caterers. A recent highlight was a multicultural vegan meal at twelve Parisian schools supported by the local mayor.

An enthusiastic cook and lifelong foodie, I have participated in free food stalls, cookery demonstrations and "Eating Together" meals in various countries, including a snowy vegan soup run to street people in Denmark, an anti-milk stall for Switzerland's national dairy day and an energetic brioche-making session at the international vegan festival in Spain.

If elected, I aim to reinforce and extend the role of the Society and its trademark worldwide.

Ruth Jenkins, London

Proposed by: Danny Bates

Seconded by: Patrick Morello

I'm hoping to be able to share my finance, governance and strategic experience to help the Vegan Society achieve its aims.

I'm a chartered accountant by profession and I specialise in working with charities. I have a Master's in Voluntary Sector Management and a Diploma in Charity Finance from Cass Business School. I'm currently Director of Finance and Accountability for a children's charity.

I have been (and am) a Trustee and Director for a number of charities and not for profit campaigning groups. Currently I am a trustee for a local arts organisation, a disabled children's charity and a director for a small NGO campaigning around genetics. I am also an active Green Party member, and have previously stood as a candidate for them in local, national and European elections.

As a trustee of other organisations, I have:

- worked to manage strategic development with limited financial resources
- improved financial reporting systems to both reduce the amount of work required by staff and improve the reporting received by trustees
- included visual elements in the management accounts to better communicate key risks
- run training for trustees on understanding their accounts to help inform their decision making
- implemented full activity costing, enabling review of surplus generating and loss making events
- developed new controls systems
- timetabled activities relating to statutory requirements and best practice, so that these can be scheduled into yearly operations



I would like to help The Vegan Society by providing similar support.

I have been an ethical vegetarian since the age of ten, but I became vegan after going to university and reading Peter Singer's Animal Liberation in my first term. It was the only logical thing to do! Now I am embarking on raising my son as a vegan.

When I went vegan I was the only vegan I knew, but the Vegan Society was a wonderful resource for me, and I've felt hugely supported by it all this time (nearly half my life!).

I would love to help support The Vegan Society so it can continue to support others so well. Please consider offering me your vote if you think I could bring useful skills to the Vegan Society board of trustees at this time.

Christopher Saul, London

Proposed by: Kay Saul

Seconded by: Kathryn Saul

Background

I'm a passionate Vegan and company strategist based in South West London. After 26 years of vegetarianism, I took the next logical step and became vegan in December 2013 and it's one of the proudest decisions I've made. The Vegan Society (and my Mum) helped me realise that it was not hard to transition to a lifestyle that matched my belief in respect, compassion and love for all living creatures. I'd now like to contribute my experience and expertise to our Society and movement as it continues to grow.



I would contribute by ensuring the Society is true to a strategy which reflects the values of its members. One key enabler for that is ensuring strong commercial foundations are in place and that the Society gets the most possible value from the Vegan Trademark. I'm also passionate about ensuring that the Society creates the right environment to bring together staff, volunteers, members and vegan businesses in a way that empowers us to deliver our vision collectively.

Skills and experience

I believe I have a well-rounded set of skills which can strengthen the Council of Trustees. I was fortunate to study Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Essex which developed my ethical outlook on life, and my ability to challenge some of society's prevailing views. I also participated in student politics, becoming a Trustee of the Students' Union in my final year. In that role I supported the Union making tough choices to ensure the organisation did not break its bank covenants. This was particularly difficult because of the extremely diverse viewpoints represented on the Board.

I then pursued a Master's Degree in Management at London Business School. This gave me a fantastic grounding in the commercial world, including accounting, marketing and strategy. After graduating, I joined the Capital One graduate scheme in Nottingham to hone my financial and data analysis skills in a very well-governed environment. The skills I learnt at Capital One are directly applicable to being a valuable Trustee at the Vegan Society; developing the right processes and frameworks to ensure results are properly understood and that the organisation is getting the biggest bang for its buck.

In my role in strategy at Avios (British Airways' reward currency) I'm responsible for managing the corporate strategy cycle, including the identification of key strategic priorities from all areas of the business. I believe the Vegan Society has a clear strategic framework and I can add value by facilitating the discussion on how it is delivered and communicated most effectively.

The Vegan Society has made incredible progress over its first 70 years, there is still to do more, and it would be fantastic to play a part in contributing to the Society for the second 70 years.

David Hunter Scott, Paisley

Proposed by: Alex Douglas

Seconded by: Paul Crouch

David is a co-founder and Director of Beyonder Ltd which was established in 2013 as a profit for purpose business working within the education sector with older pupils, developing skills and enterprise and with younger pupils, supporting creative learning. With an industrial sewing training hub as part of the company's portfolio, the business is now progressing into garment manufacture as an ethical employer in the UK textile industry with the specific aim of providing employment for the most disadvantaged groups in society.



David is also the Treasurer of BeYonder's philanthropic division, BeYonder Involve, supporting children and young people, schools and the wider community by developing and managing projects which would otherwise be unfunded.

Glasgow born and educated, David was the Chief Executive of GTG Training, a wholly owned subsidiary of Arnold Clark Automobiles, where David had additional responsibilities as head of Group Training and Development and as a specialist adviser on youth employment, training and development to the Board. During his 15 years with Arnold Clark, David also headed the Direct Marketing division for 2 years and spent 3 years leading on Sales Development working directly for the Sales Director. He project managed the Management Development Programme and instigated the Sales Academy, both of which have subsequently become industry-leading exemplars of best practice.

David has been a member of the Goodison Group in Scotland since its formation in 2005 to bring together experienced people from the worlds of business, government and education to focus on particular themes to do with learning, skills and productivity.

David sits on Glasgow City Council's Firm Base Committee as Lt. Col. (Retd.) and is a Director of Glasgow Buildings Preservation Trust.

He is an Ex Deacon of the Incorporation of Tailors in Glasgow and is the 3rd generation of his family to hold this appointment, his Grandfather having also run a successful tailoring business in the City. In 2015 he becomes Preses of the Grand Antiquity Society of Glasgow.

David is an active Council Director of Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Glasgow Employers' Board. He served on the People and Skills Workstream for the Glasgow Economic Commission and on the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce/Glasgow Employers' Board Youth Employment Action Group.

David is a former Director of Sea Shepherd UK and a Sea Shepherd Cove Guardian.

David became vegan in 2010 and was so inspired by the support, guidance and advice received from The Vegan Society as he made the transition that he joined as a Life Member. Election to the Board of The Vegan Society would allow him to give back the support to the Society's Executive which they provided so willingly to him.

Sagar Kirit Shah, Edgware

Proposed by: Nishma Shah

Seconded by: Minal Shah



I am putting myself forward as a trustee as I care passionately about veganism, value the important activities undertaken by the Vegan Society and believe I would be able to make valuable contributions.

My main motivation for following a vegan lifestyle is to minimise suffering to other living beings. I was born into a Jain family and was raised as a lacto-ovo vegetarian. At university, I discovered how cows were killed during milk production, and became a dietary vegan just before I turned 21.

I have been actively promoting a vegan lifestyle since 2008. I founded and ran a (100% vegan) vegetarian society at university, and helped establish a number of initiatives raising awareness of the relevance of a vegan lifestyle within the Jain community (www.jainvegans.org). I have helped many people on the transition to a vegan lifestyle, and the Vegan Society has assisted with these activities by providing reliable information, written materials and financial grants.

My main motivation for becoming a trustee is to help safeguard the long-run sustainability of the Society, and to ensure it continues to support the needs of vegans. I am particularly interested in helping ensure that the Vegan Society maintains its reputation as a source of reliable, evidence-based information regarding plant-based health and nutrition and ensuring that the Society does not take excessive risks during episodes of growth or change.

I am confident that I would be able to make positive contributions as a trustee.

I am hard working and committed. I think deeply about issues that I care about (of which the direction of the Vegan Society is certainly one). I am articulate and confident, and am not afraid to voice my opinion or to challenge conventional wisdom. But I am also aware of the limits of my own judgement, and place value on listening to others, especially those coming from a different perspective. Importantly, I am not interested in debate for the sake of debate, and am practical when it comes to making difficult decisions.

Professionally, I am a public sector economist working on financial services regulation. I have also worked as a researcher for a think-tank focused on campaigning on sustainability and social justice. My professional work means that I understand policy development in the public sector and the governance processes associated with different types of decision-making committee. I am also familiar with data analysis techniques and environmental economics. I believe my professional background will be useful as a trustee.

Even though being a trustee is a big time commitment and will involve lots of hard work, I think will enjoy the experience. I am excited about the prospect of serving fellow vegans, and helping govern the world's first vegan society.

Jenifer Vinell, Tunbridge Wells

Proposed by: Patricia Tricker

Seconded by: Robb Masters



I became a dietary vegan in 1977 when a colleague introduced me to Plamil and told me about the dairy industry. I joined The Vegan Society soon after and was then invited to work at the VS stall at the Mind, Body & Spirit Festival where I met Serena Coles, Kathleen Jannaway and other vegans.

Gradually I gave up leather, wool, etc. and ten years later met my partner, who was vegetarian but quickly became vegan. Our children, now adult, were brought up vegan and all of us are life members of the Society.

I trained in art & design, at St Martins and Farnham, specializing in textile crafts. I have a National Diploma in Weave and am a member of the Embroiderers Guild. From 2001 to 2010 I ran workshops at Glastonbury and the Big Green Gathering using recycled vegan textiles. We would like to run a vegan stall with talks at festivals but have not had any luck so far.

I am computer literate and have OCR/RSA Level 3 qualifications in most applications - spreadsheets, word, powerpoint and so on. I also use Adobe's Creative Cloud.

Sixteen years ago I founded an inline-hockey club and have been running it ever since, with teams in several leagues and covering all age groups. The work involves arranging fixtures, booking halls, compiling and keeping membership records, doing the accounts, contacting managers, arranging regional teams etc. For five years I ran a league too, doing everything except refereeing. I prepare the food for the children's party every year and rarely does anyone notice that it's all vegan!

I became a Local Contact in 2009 and subsequently founded Tunbridge Wells Vegans, which now has 110 members. We have monthly shared meals and discuss a wide range of issues of interest to local vegans. We have a Facebook page, run stalls at local events and help out at a local farm-animal sanctuary. We ran a mini VegFest in November 2011 when Vegusto had just started, possibly one of the first they attended. I and my family often attend London Vegan Meetup events.

I originally became interested in the Vegan Organic Network at a BGG and since coming across them again at the Brighton VegFest a couple of years ago have been turning our garden into a paradise for slugs by replacing flowing plants with organic vegetables and herbs. I buy vegan organic flour from Rufford farm and I've recently bought a grain mill so now bake vegan organic bread.

I attend all the London AGMs and some of those held in Birmingham. For years I've also attended the vegan festivals held in London at Conway Hall, Kensington Town Hall and Olympia.

My paid work is part-time which means I am flexible and would be able to give full attention to the work of Council.

Stephen Walsh, London

Proposed by: Patricia Tricker

Seconded by: Paul Appleby

Vegan since 1993, I helped organise Vegan Camp for some years when my daughter was younger. I got into nutrition research on seeing the completely unnecessary damage caused, particularly to children, by misleading information about vegan nutrition and especially vitamin B12.

Every doctor, dietitian and health visitor, every hospital, school or prison caterer, every health and lifestyle journalist – above all, every vegan – should understand that a good vegan diet is as healthy as any other, potentially healthier. Properly informed, vegans could shine in comparative health studies, improving eating habits worldwide for the benefit of animals, people and the environment.

I abhor vivisection and nothing in my book Plant Based Nutrition and Health (all proceeds to the Society) is based on animal experiments. Also during my previous stint on Council (2001-9) I formulated the VEG1 nutrition supplement, which we are currently working to improve. As nutrition and health spokesperson, I brought the vegan message to mainstream government, medical and media circles, giving talks on vegan nutrition at home and abroad, including the 14th Frey Ellis Memorial Lecture at King's College London. Talking to local groups is as crucial as national and international dialogue and I am always happy to do this.

Having served at various times as Chair, Treasurer and Company Secretary, I have a thorough understanding of the workings of the Society and understand the importance of good governance in meeting our objectives. Honesty, integrity and accountability are key to maintaining and enhancing the Society's reputation and the highest ethical and democratic standards must prevail in everything we do.

I prepared a successful challenge, through the Advertising Standards Authority, against Nestle's claim that dairy products were essential for bone health. I also helped The Sunday Times magazine produce a cover story exposing inaccurate claims by the Dairy Council.

To maintain our own integrity, I upheld the principle of balanced and accurate information in all Society communications and introduced the policy of refusing misleading advertisements that could put readers' health at risk.

When proxy and postal voting became law, we adopted a policy of presenting arguments both for and against AGM proposals so that members unable to attend could make informed and effective choices.

It is easy for standards to slip under pressure and these issues would benefit from a fresh focus by Council.

Professionally, my work involves mathematical modelling, data analysis and systems engineering. These skills underpin my research into vegan issues. They have also been useful in dealing with accounting issues at the Society. A former lecturer at Imperial College London, I subsequently returned to industry but intend to move on again shortly to concentrate on issues closer to my heart, including The Vegan Society and another book.

Hobbies: eating (a lifelong favourite - our family had two sittings at mealtimes and I went to both); once adequately fed, delving into research papers at the British Library; if any time remains, reading, films, theatre, opera and meeting with friends.

Helen Wright, Tunbridge Wells

Proposed by: Raphael Clegg-Vinell

Seconded by: Alex Douglas

I've been vegan for nearly two and half years, initially, and still primarily, for the animals. I was a strict vegetarian (including no leather, silk, feathers etc) for around twenty years and was (mistakenly) secure in my belief that was enough. Once I began to become aware of the cruelty inherent in the dairy and egg industries it was a slow process for me to becoming fully vegan. The transition was slow not least because I (also mistakenly) envisaged that it was difficult to follow a vegan lifestyle. Just about every reason people give as to why they can't go vegan I've believed in the past and so I'm keen to spread the "it's easier than you think" message in addition to the "why vegan" message.



I believe that education, particularly that of children and young people, about the personal and global benefits of veganism for animals, people's physical, spiritual and mental health, poverty and hunger, environment and sustainability, is key to the advancement of veganism and believe that The Vegan Society is central to spreading this awareness.

I'm an active member of the London Vegan Meetup, a social group for vegans and the vegan-curious which has over 3,500 members, and I often organise and host London Vegan Meetup events, such as dinners, games afternoons and walks. I also regularly attend events run by another key vegan social group London Vegans. These social groups help to provide vegans and potential vegans with a sense of community, a source of knowledge-sharing and support mechanisms, which I feel are key to adopting and maintaining a vegan lifestyle.

Professionally, I'm a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and have worked in various Human Resources Management roles since 1999 in the private, public and charity sectors. I specialise in Employee Relations, supporting managers with staffing issues such as disciplinaries, grievances, performance management, capability, attendance and ill health.

I gained an upper second class Bachelor of Arts Honours degree in Social Science and Human Geography at the University of Sussex in 1997.

I have a pragmatic, common-sense and down-to-earth approach as well as an ability to see the big picture whilst not losing focus of the finer details of issues and hope this would enable me to become an effective and useful member of The Vegan Society council.

THE VEGAN SOCIETY 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING RESOLUTIONS

Introduction

The Vegan Society's aims have not changed since it was established in 1944, and incorporated as a charitable company in 1979. However, its role in society has changed. Whereas support for existing vegans was once one of the main objectives for the society, this role is now being fulfilled to a large degree by individual vegan advocates, and through the greater provision of vegan products and services by manufacturers, caterers and retailers worldwide. While support for members directly (over 4,400 as of May 2015) is important, The Vegan Society is not a Members' Association only.

We have a duty to provide a **public benefit**, as required by the Charity Commission, namely:

"Adopting a vegan lifestyle makes a major contribution to reducing animal suffering, achieving environmental sustainability, advancing health and saving lives. The Vegan Society's advice encourages and enables people to make this step in such a way as to benefit themselves, other people, animals and the environment. Recognising and supporting the needs of vegans can also advance the rights of humans and promote equality. Veganism contributes to the relief of poverty in the global south through enhanced global food security. The Society's educational material and advice are available to any member of the public, mainly without charge. Working with and valuing the contribution of volunteers further advances community development and engagement in society."

In order to effect change within the wider society, it is essential that The Vegan Society becomes a significant player at international policy and commercial level, thereby implementing our **mission to promote veganism**:

"The Vegan Society makes veganism an easily adopted and widely recognised approach to reducing animal and human suffering and environmental damage by means of meaningful, peaceful and factual dialogue with individuals, organisations and companies."

In addition to established benefits for the planet, including food security and food justice, people's health and other advantages, veganism is based on the premise that the exploitation of other animals, as sentient beings, for human consumption is unnecessary and morally indefensible in a world where alternative sources are readily available. In order to achieve our **vision of a world in which humans do not exploit other animals**, our objectives need to change.

If we are to systemically oppose the view that other animals are seen merely as 'property', and that animal experimentation is 'charitable' (as espoused not only by politicians, pharmaceutical and related industries, but also by the Charity Commission), we need to engage in campaigning activities that are currently beyond our charitable scope. While some political activity is permitted, there are severe restrictions placed on charities (see – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities-cc9/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities>). Organisations such as the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, Friends of the Earth and others have therefore set up a Trust, which carries out charitable educational and research activities. Each also has a separate trading company and subsidiary, which permit them rightly to conduct their political campaigns for change.

N.B. Motion 1 and 2 are not dependent on each other and should be read and voted on based on their own merits.

Special Resolutions

Motion 1

Following a feasibility study and risk assessment, Council will explore options to establish a trading subsidiary, through which increased trading and political campaigns may be carried out

Rationale

As an educational charity and a not-for-profit organisation, The Vegan Society has the benefit of tax rebates on Gift Aid donations, but there are also strict limits on its ability to make profits through trading and to carry out political campaigning. Many similar charities have a trading subsidiary, which can raise funds for the charity and is also much more free to lobby politically on behalf of a charity's charitable objectives.

To increase its impact on society, (including individuals, companies, manufacturers and caterers, health professionals, politicians, the media, academics and other relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries), The Vegan Society needs to become much more prominent. By demonstrating greater impact on changes in practices and policies, we will increase the number of supporters, members and donors, which in turn will allow us to reach further. To acknowledge current momentum in the growth of veganism, a bold approach is required to further normalise veganism within society. There is great potential for The Vegan Society to grow. However, serious investment and additional political campaigns are needed to improve the Society's influence.

Proposed by Council

Motion 2

In principle, to adopt the Charity Commission's model Memorandum and Articles of Association

Rationale

Acting in the long-term best interest of the organisation is one of the key duties of trustees' governance responsibilities. During 2014, the Council discussed whether The Vegan Society's Memorandum and Articles of Association, which were originally drafted in 1979 and have been amended several times over the last 26 years, still remain fit for purpose.

Supported by expert advice from two legal firms (Blake Morgan Solicitors and Bates Wells Braithwaite Solicitors), an independent solicitor, our Auditors, and charity fundraising and strategy consultants, the Council proposes to update the Articles of Association by adopting the model Articles of Association (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269508/gd1textc.pdf) as recommended by the Charity Commission in March 2012. The model Articles are based on best practice in charity governance and have been adopted by numerous charities. Printed copies of the model Articles may be obtained from The Vegan Society office.

If this special resolution is passed at the 2015 AGM, details of the new Articles will be discussed by the full new Council. Consultations with the wider membership will be held before placing the draft new text before the members at an EGM. Throughout the process charity governance and legal expert advice will be sought. An independent expert will also be invited to the consultation process with members in order to answer any queries. It is anticipated that an EGM to vote on the new Articles of Association will take place within 9 months following the AGM.

Proposed by Council

Motion 3

Change the text in Article 21:

“Ordinary Proposals should in the interests of economy and clarity, not exceed 200 words, including any supporting material”

to

“Ordinary Proposals should in the interests of economy and clarity, not exceed 300 words, including any supporting material”

Rationale

Since the introduction of postal voting, most proposals are effectively decided by those members voting by post. The number of members attending the AGM is often insufficient to alter the result even if members at the AGM vote unanimously. Members at the AGM hear more detailed comments from the proposers and this extra information can alter how they vote.

Allowing a longer text with each proposal will give members voting by post a fuller view of the reasons behind each proposal.

Proposer: Stephen Walsh (001322) Secunder: Patricia Tricker (000390)

Motion 4

4(a) Add to Article 21:

In so far as is practicable, every proposal put to a general meeting by members or by Council should be accompanied by a counterargument of up to 150 words and a reply by the proposer of up to 100 words. The counterargument should whenever possible be written by a well informed member genuinely opposed to the proposal. The proposer should be given at least a week to prepare their reply. These additional arguments should be circulated to all members with the proposals as part of the documents for the meeting.

Rationale

Since the introduction of postal voting, most proposals are effectively decided by members voting by post without hearing the views of other members at the AGM.

In the first few years after postal voting was introduced Council did arrange for counterarguments and replies to be included, but recently this practice has lapsed despite requests from members. Proposals such as those on palm oil and animal experiments therefore lacked the clear and balanced information necessary for an informed vote.

Democracy requires that all members should be provided with a clear and balanced picture of the pros and cons of each proposal.

Proposer: Stephen Walsh (001322) Secunder: Patricia Tricker (000390)

4(b) Add to Article 21:

In so far as is practicable, every proposal put to a general meeting by members or by Council should be accompanied by a counterargument of up to 150 words. The counterargument should whenever possible be written by a well informed member genuinely opposed to the proposal.

Rationale

If the proposer is allowed to reply to a counterargument, the opposer should be allowed to reply to that reply, and so on! It is up to the proposer to provide a sound, well-informed case and answer anticipated possible objections. A well-informed counterargument will leave it up to each individual member to decide to vote for or against the proposal. If a proposal is very sound, there may be no need for a counterargument.

Amendment to 4(a), proposed by Council

Ordinary Resolutions

Motion 5

To move World Vegan Day from 1st November to 1st June or 1st July

Rationale

World Vegan Day is an annual event celebrated around the world on 1st November. The Day was established in 1994 by Louise Wallis, then President and Chair of The Vegan Society UK to commemorate the society's 50th anniversary. Taking advantage of the society's 70th anniversary year we should move this event to a summer month so that any activities and events put on by vegans can benefit from the wider variety of seasonal food, the longer days, and the much improved weather.

A move away from cold, grey, austere late-autumnal skies to the first of June or July would also ensure Vegan Month enjoyed the best possible chance of reaching the widest possible audiences it can. If the former is chosen vegan month wraps neatly around World Environment Day on June 5th. If the latter then World Population Day on July 11th.

A decision over which of the two months is best should take into account any operational activities undertaken by The Vegan Society's head office at that time of year.

Proposer: David Gore (015528) Seconder: Martin Taylor (001659)

Counterargument from Council

Moving World Vegan Day (WVD) from November to June or July would not be desirable operationally nor strategically. As The Vegan Society was founded in November, probably 5th of November 1944, we should stay true to our founders' visionary approach by celebrating WVD in November. World Vegan Day and Month have been celebrated around the globe in various ways by many different organisations since its inception over 20 years ago. Its timing is such that it gains maximum publicity globally and it is not a seasonal event. Moreover, for vegan communities in the southern hemisphere the first of November is at the start of summer. They may not be keen to move it to their winter. If The Vegan Society members were to change the date, thousands of vegans' views would effectively be ignored. The Vegan Society and vegan advocates everywhere should campaign and participate in events throughout the year and use any opportunity to promote veganism.

Motion 6

To appoint Sara Pascoe as Ambassador of The Vegan Society

Rationale

Sara Pascoe is a vegan stand-up comedian, writer and actor, performing Live at the Apollo and appearing in the BBC's 2012 and W1A, along with guest appearances on panel shows such as Never Mind the Buzzcocks. Earlier this year Sara organised a comedy night fundraiser for The Vegan Society.

Proposer: Paul Crouch (048922)

Motion 7

To re-appoint Slade & Cooper as Auditors for the financial year ending 31 December 2015

Proposed by Council

Motion 8

That the Auditors' fee be fixed by the Council

Proposed by Council



Minutes of The Vegan Society Extraordinary General Meeting 2014

Held on 28 June 2014 at the Priory Rooms, 40 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AF, 2-4PM.

Present

Council: Ian Liddle (Chair), George Rodger, Menna Jones

Staff members: Peter Smith, Laura Croudace, Allan Oakes, Heather Graham, Spencer Harris, Jenny Liddle (minute-taker)

Members: Vanessa Clarke, Stephen Walsh, Patricia Tricker, Dean Bracher, Non-voting member Emily Liddle

Apologies

Nicola Martin (Treasurer), Jasmijn de Boo (CEO & Company Secretary), Paul Crouch, Alex Kapila and Ruth Semple

Introduction

The Chair of Council, Ian Liddle (IL), welcomed The Vegan Society members and opened the meeting at 14:00 pm. IL explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and vote on a Special Resolution. The rationale for the proposal is in Appendix 1.

Special Resolution (requiring 75% majority)

To waive, once only, the requirements in Article 9 of our Articles of Association stipulating the holding of an AGM every calendar year and no later than 15 months after the previous AGM; and to hold the Society's next AGM in 2015 in order to allow for a financial year-end change from 30th June to 31st December (extending the current financial year to 18 months, once only)

The result of the vote at the EGM was 99.5% in favour of the proposal:

For: 637 (582 postal proxy forms, 45 appointing the Chair as proxy, 2 others as proxy, 8 votes on the day)

Against: 2

Abstained: 1

Spoiled: 35

Total Votes (incl. postal proxy forms): 679

The motion passed.

AOB

Vanessa Clarke and Stephen Walsh enquired about 2 trustees stepping down from Council to take up paid work and whether The Vegan Society had informed the Charity Commission about this, as there could have been a potential conflict of interest.

IL replied: Details would need to be confirmed post-meeting.

The next AGM will be held in 2015.

Companies House, the Charity Commission, and The Vegan Society Auditors (Slade & Cooper) will be informed of the new financial year-end date.



Minutes of The Vegan Society AGM 30 November 2013

Held on 30 November 2013 at the Thinktank Science Museum, Curzon Street, Birmingham B4 7XG, 1-4PM.

Present

Council: Úna Gordon, Ian Liddle (Chair), Jenny Liddle, George Rodger (Treasurer), Kelly Somers, Rick Savage (outgoing).

Staff members: Jasmijn de Boo (CEO and Company Secretary), Kathleen Bright, Alex Douglas, Allan Oakes, Heather Graham, Spencer Harris, Paul Philbrow, Ruth Semple, Anna Thorley

Members: Philip Tipton, Stephen Walsh, Frank Thunder, Nicola Martin, Tracey Hague, Michael Hooper, Mark Bateman, Barbara Staples, Anthony Hill, Raymond Vickers, Ruthie McNally, Theresa Yates, Dean Bracher, Gillian Millard, Myles McDonald, Menna Jones, Kay Saul, Bobby Balfour, Adam Druett, William Green, Mario Di Maggio, Pascale Fioretti, Adam Duncan, Rokhsaneh Ghawam Sahidi

Introduction

The Chair of Council, Ian Liddle (IL), welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 13:00 pm.

Apologies

Paul Crouch, Matthew Cole, Kevin White and Alex Kapila.

We would also like to remember Graham Kemish, who died peacefully 2 weeks ago.

Introduction by Members of Staff

Several members of staff* of The Vegan Society introduced themselves and briefly highlighted what they were responsible within the organisation, and what they enjoyed about working for The Society. LiLi then demonstrated the look and feel of the new website which we were hoping to launch soon.

* Ruth Semple, Head of Communications, Public Policy and Research
Alex Douglas, Volunteer Development Coordinator
Spencer Harris, Sales & Membership Coordinator
Anna Thorley, Communications & Campaigns Officer
Kathleen (LiLi) Bright, Website & Digital Marketing Officer

Honorary Patrons

The Chair explained that the existing Honorary Patrons did not need to be reappointed. Following efforts to re-engage patrons more with our work, only Freya Dinshah, Wendy Turner-Webster Benjamin Zephaniah, Macka.B, Fiona Oakes and Kerry McCarthy wished to continue in their ambassadorial role. Other Patrons did not reply or did not feel they could continue in their role. There was one proposal for a new Honorary Patron, actress Roxy Shahidi, who held an engaging Q&A session with members of The Vegan Society.

Proposal (Motion 1): To appoint the TV and stage actress, Roxy Shahidi, as Honorary Patron.

Proposer: Jenny Liddle

Secunder: Ruth Semple

Votes on motion 1

For: 175 Against: 4 Abstain: 16

Motion carried.

Appointment of Auditors

Proposal (Motion 2): That Slade & Cooper be appointed as the Society's auditors.

Proposer: Ian Liddle (Chair)

Secunder: Stephen Walsh

Votes on motion 2

For: 179 Against: 3 Abstain: 9

Motion carried.

Proposal (Motion 3): That the auditors' remuneration fee be fixed by Council.

Proposer: George Rodger

Secunder: Stephen Walsh

Votes on motion 3

For: 180 Against: 1 Abstain: 11

Motion carried.

Special resolution (change to Articles of Association requiring 75% to be passed)

Proposal (Motion 3): To change the title of Honorary Patron to that of Ambassador.

Proposer: Rick Savage

Secunder: Tracey Hague

Votes on motion 4

For: 180 Against: 20 Abstain: 13

Motion carried

Question from Stephen Walsh: Have current Patrons be consulted on the proposed change of name?

Answer: No.

Consideration of the Annual Accounts and Report of Council 2012-2013

The first question was answered by George Rodger (Interim Treasurer) before voting on the new auditors took place to provide members with background information about the selection process.

Tracey Hague:

Is the reason for motion 2 (to change auditors) because Critchleys didn't notice the £7k IT misrecorded (pt 6.2.3 on p10) & the misallocation of the Serena Coles Fund, both picked up by the review of 2010-2012 accounts? Also who else submitted a tender bid (as auditors) & what were the differences between the bidders & the reasons for choosing Slade & Cooper?

It is good practice to set up a tendering process for auditors from time to time, for example every 4-5 years. The Society had used Critchleys for over 20 years. The Serena Coles Fund was not misallocated. The funds had been included in the way The Society describes our 'Reserves' in the Report of the Council of Management, however, as explained therein restricted funds cannot be used for general purposes, and so they ought to be treated separately. Critchleys had not commented either way on the description of the reserves level in the previous two years.

The nominal code tidy up in May/June 2012 resulted in a credit note to IT costs. Auditors in general do not drill down the details of every account code. That would be forensic account auditing,

which is extremely rare and is only done when serious allegations of fraud are suspected. Auditors sample accounts and generally ensure the overall picture balances.

The other two companies involved in the tender process were UHY Birmingham and Jackson & Jackson in London. The latter proposal was too expensive, and the company preferred to have accounts sent to their London office, whereas The Society preferred to have auditors on site. UHY has helped with monthly management accounts and with the 2010-2012 reconciliation tidy-up, and know our organisation reasonably well. However, it was felt that Slade & Cooper had more direct and relevant experience in the charity sector. The Council vote between keeping Critchleys and proposing Slade & Cooper was won by one vote in Slade & Cooper's favour.

Jasmijn de Boo added this appointment is for this financial year only (2013-2014). If The Society is satisfied with services, they will be recommended again. Otherwise, The Society will put out a new tender process.

Thirteen further written questions relevant to the financial year 2012-2013 and the 2013 AGM were received in advance. Finance questions were answered by George Rodger, except for the first question about Gift Aid, which was answered by Administration and Finance Officer, Allan Oakes.

Tracey Hague (TH):

1. Why are we submitting 4 years' backdated Gift Aid to HMRC (pt 6 on p21) ? Will this now be done annually?

The reason we were prudent with a provision for 2011-2012 was explained in last year's accounts. The CEO started in September 2011. Once the CEO realised that the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 Gift Aid claims had not yet been submitted to HMRC, the Gift Aid administration was checked and found to be erratic. A Gift Aid advisor produced recommendations for Council in July 2012. A previous attempt to produce an accurate 09/10 Gift Aid list failed in January 2013, and once the new Administration & Finance Officer had settled into the role, work began again from scratch in May 2013. It is very labour-intensive as checks need to be made in multiple places (electronic and paper-based), but we are now in a position where we can submit the four years of claims in the next few weeks. Going forward, annual claims will be made around 4-5 months after financial year-end.

2. Why is advertising income from the magazine significantly down from £19k to £12k (p16 & note 9 on p21)? Are the many new trademark holders not interesting [sic] in advertising with the Society?

The recession and rapidly evolving IT have caused a shift in companies spending their marketing resources. While traditional print is still important, companies often require more 'value for money'. In order to increase the income from trademarked product registration some offers were made to new TM companies wishing to advertise in The Vegan. While the number of members has increased, we unfortunately do not have the same circulation as other magazines that could be viewed as our competitors from an advertising perspective, such as Vegetarian Living. With the overall changes taking place at The Vegan Society we hope to increase the number of supporters.

3. What office equipment cost £3.5k (p17) ? Was this IT software &/or equipment? What further IT costs can we expect in 2013-14 accounts?

These are items that are capitalised over time and include: one iMac, and the first payment of the new CiviCRM database minus the overall depreciation on fixed assets such as computers.

Part 2 of the question has already been explained on p.10:

"The figure for IT will increase for 2013-2014 due to the development of a new database and website."

4. *Has the Serena Coles Fund been used at all in the last 2 years (p17) ? If not, what is the Society doing to change this & is there anything members can do to support this (e.g. hand out generic business cards for the Society)? As well as knowing members' ages, is pride a factor (unwillingness to be seen to need to apply for handouts) or is it merely lack of awareness of the fund's existence?*

Jasmijn de Boo:

There was a gap of over 7 months between a staff member leaving and new advocacy staff member responsible for the Serena Coles Fund and advocacy for older people. Toward the end of financial year 2012-2013 The Vegan Society set up a Serena Coles Fund grants mechanism for individual older vegans in conditions of need, hardship or distress. On informal advice from Age UK (Registered Charity 1128267), to avoid unlawful age-related discrimination, no explicit age threshold is imposed and the term 'elderly' is avoided. An attempt was made to contact everyone on The Vegan Society supporter database by telephone who are aged above various age thresholds. Grant application packs were distributed, but to date, no completed applications have been received. The terms of the fund are too restricted. As explained on p. 23, we are unable to establish how many older vegans are in need, hardship or distress. The reason for not coming forward is therefore unknown. If anyone knows of any older vegans who might qualify, please get in touch with us.

5. *Why have the awards been suspended (pt 10 on p21) ? Will this continue or is it a permanent cessation?*

Jasmijn de Boo:

There are many other existing award initiatives, such as VegfestUK, WMVF, and Vegan of the Year Awards. We believe rewarding exceptional volunteers is more relevant for The Vegan Society, whilst also working directly with trademark companies to encourage good practice.

6. *Have all copies of the Animal Free Shopper now been distributed (as discussed at last year's AGM)? If not, can they be given out by Local Contacts & Groups as part of a pack for new vegans? Or in goody bags at next year's VegFests?*

Jasmijn de Boo:

All copies have been distributed.

7. *Congratulations on reversing the long-standing trend by continuing to increase membership. Has any work been done to uncover why members do not renew (to learn lessons & improve)? I presume when someone resigns his/her membership s/he explains the reason/s for doing so, meaning no further investigation is required.*

Ian Liddle:

Thank you. Research into member retention and lapsed members has not yet been carried out due to not having an adequate database in place (which we are changing), and lack of resources (staff time). Usually the reason for discontinuing membership is not given, but there are many reasons.

Membership of any organisation is highly dynamic and naturally fluctuates. There are not many big membership-only organisations, other than the National Trust (where members receive a clear benefit) and the RSPB. Most successful organisations have supporters, not members, who like what the organisation does, such as inspiring and successful campaigns and projects. Providing information, which the Society used to do, may not have been seen as inspiring or something that requires donations, as people may believe it should be free (but of course it is not, as staff time, equipment and materials are the largest sources of expenditure in any educational charity).

The Vegan Society did not keep up with trends in society and began to show deficits, and stagnating membership. Providing information does not result in media coverage, leverage with

other organisations, or help influence policy makers and manufacturers. Requiring members to sign a form to become part of an 'exclusive' club may not appeal to all vegans. For example, Viva! has tens of thousands of supporters, Animal Aid has at least the same, and PETA has over 2 million supporters worldwide. Organisations that do well, and grow the number of supporters appeal to a wider audience by running effective and often emotive campaigns, and they give their cause a sense of relevance and urgency – something that The Vegan Society was starting to lose.

Providing vegan information was no longer unique to the organisation. Information about veganism is everywhere on the internet and beyond helping individuals globally, which is great, as we have partly achieved our mission. However, it means the Society needs to fulfil a different role now; one that focuses more on advocacy, lobbying, partnership, and outreach to non-vegan audiences. This requires different expertise and creative skills, better tools (i.e. better website) and a fundraising approach to make the organisation more sustainable and less reliant on legacies, which are highly unpredictable.

We need to be ambitious and inspire a new generation. We need a critical mass of new supporters, who like our approach, not just on Facebook but translated into regular donations, as our ongoing work is going from strength to strength and we can claim victories and share success stories. We need you, our members, to be the best ambassadors for veganism you can be. Thank you!

8. Given all the AGM papers are now online (not printed & posted out), why hasn't the cost of the AGM decreased significantly (£3.7k to £3.3k)?

The Accounts before you are the 2012-2013 figures. During this financial year all papers were printed and posted, in Nov 2012. The current financial year, 2013-2014, we will see a drop in AGM costs.

9. When will regional training of school speakers happen? I tried to attend a training session but it was at the Society's offices (a long way from Croydon!) and I was not impressed by the condescending reply when I asked which was the nearest major train station (not easily discernable on Streetmap despite zooming out a considerable way!); having delivered over 200 presentations in 4 years, I am well-used to sorting out my own logistics! Being told no travel expenses could be reimbursed although I am unemployed merely added insult to injury. Unsurprisingly I have not pursued the matter. Other vegan/animal rights organizations hold regional training sessions & provide a 1-page pdf about the venue (map, directions by train, car, etc.), something many companies now have on their website. If the Society has no such pdf, please consider creating one.

Jasmijn de Boo:

We are sorry to hear you feel you received an inappropriate reply a long time ago. Staff have changed. We are now offering training by Skype for those unable to travel to Birmingham, starting in January. Please contact Volunteer Development Coordinator, Alex Douglas.

10. It is great that nation & international contacts work is now done by paid staff. Who is the PR/media consultant? What experience does this person/company have of promoting minority organizations? How ethical are they/is she/he?

Jasmijn de Boo:

More and more organisations and companies now offer flexible working arrangements for a range of reasons. It has been a challenge to find professional vegans for certain roles, who are willing to be paid a low salary, with the work place being based in Birmingham. The Media & PR role was offered to someone in May, who later withdrew. As we really needed someone to increase our media and PR profile, long-standing vegan Samantha Calvert, former Head of Marketing at the Vegetarian Society, offered to help on a consultancy basis for 3 days a week. She has her own PR company and works for a range of other clients in the third sector.

Comment by TH: I am surprised that pre-ordered vegan lunch is not being laid on (paid for by members themselves of course), especially as many people travel a considerable distance to attend the AGM. I will be travelling up for the day but will have to bring all my food with me (lunch & dinner as I will not return home until 9pm having left at 9am).

Jasmijn de Boo:

In 2011 the catering company based in Wales wanted a minimum order of £250 worth of lunch options sold at the Cardiff AGM otherwise the time and effort would not be worth it. The Society paid upfront and members paid The Society on the day. We made a big loss as only 22 people attended the AGM in Cardiff and only 15 or so bought lunch. Last year members were able to buy lunch from the Animal Aid Christmas Fair. Our staff are very friendly and would have happily advised where to eat or buy food near the Thinktank Science museum if you had called our office. Google is also useful.

Bobby Balfour:

1. I read the nominations for Council and then went trawling back and forth through the magazine, the Annual Review and the Report and Accounts but couldn't find any voting paper. A friend later suggested this might be because there were fewer nominations than places. I feel it would have been helpful if that could have been mentioned at the start of the candidate profiles, although I now read that we will be voting at the AGM. Does this mean that anyone who doesn't attend will have no vote?

Ian Liddle:

You are right that we could have made the lack of competitive elections clearer in the AGM papers. This will be mentioned on the day, but we could have clarified on p. 26 that we had seven vacancies this year, as Council can be made up of up to 12 trustees. The two co-opted trustees were required to be nominated for election if they wished to continue. As we had five nominations, the total number of trustees will be 10, and therefore no voting is required, and that all five are automatically appointed as trustee.

2. I seem to remember answering a question about the Vegan Society's image needing a revamp but I didn't realise that meant a new logo. I have to say I'm not particularly taken with it and I wonder how much the whole thing cost - could the money have been better spent elsewhere? Will it not be confusing using the old logo in some places and the new logo in others? It might lead people to think we are two different societies.

Ian Liddle:

The Senior Management Team brought to Council's attention that there was a clear need for an update to our visual identity across the organisation. We took initial feedback into consideration, and as Ruth Semple has demonstrated a strong sense of understanding and developing brands from previous roles, Council gave the green light to proceed with the project. We are very positive about the result, and we would like to ask Ruth to provide more details and background.

Ruth Semple:

These are two valid questions and I am glad they have been brought up as this provides us with an opportunity to talk more about it. Unfortunately, our research demonstrated that our audiences—and I am talking about vegans who are not already members or supporters, vegetarians, and meat reducers—were already confused about The Vegan Society. Because the charity brand had become so diluted as other groups had been allowed to use the logo or had reproduced it, we haven't been standing out for a long time, and people don't know who we are. It is now time to reposition ourselves as THE original vegan society with the experience and professionalism that comes with that but it isn't shown in the current brand. A lack of strong and consistent branding has led to the Society receiving reduced credit for its really important work.

I will give you an example. We regularly prepare press releases, which are picked up by journalists who, in the past, have sometimes gone to The Vegetarian Society, who then take the opportunity to talk about work that we have been involved in. The Vegetarian Society looks after and protects its brand. The Vegan Society unfortunately has not done that. We believe a strong consistent and contemporary and professional identity will help encourage wide media interest and that the quality of the message is maintained. We have registered the new logo to prevent anyone from reproducing it without our consent.

The business brand has been highly successful. We all know this from the increased revenue each year. The charity brand has not. We have been stagnating at around 3000-3500 members for decades. A brand is not just a logo, it's everything that we present to the world – it is how we talk to the public at events, it is the language we use in our publications. And already with the new team since January we are already demonstrating this way of working at events. We are already showing this new warm welcoming, professional brand and it already having an impact. And this is without the public seeing our new website. For example, between January to July 2013, we received £23,500 in donations compared to the period between July and December 2012, when we only received £7,000 in donations. Membership and sales have also gone up. It is essential that we not only get new members but that we retain members, and a consistent, clear brand is key to that.

This project is an investment and it actually cost very little. Under £5000. The designer has put in nearly 1700 hours of extra time to this project on a voluntary basis. She saved us around £30,000. I delivered focus groups. I have specialist skills in focus group discussions coming from a museum background. I have done this for nearly 7 years. A focus group is around £2,000. I did four focus groups, saving the Society £8,000. We believe this small investment will allow us to appeal to fundraisers, new audiences and also to encourage others to fundraise and volunteer for us.

Many organisations have a separate business brand to their charity brand, for example the Coeliac Society. We are creating extensive brand guidelines to ensure that the brands work together really well and complement each other's work. The trademark has been amazingly successfully despite little communications around it. Over recent months a lot of planning and development has taken place between the Business Development team and the Communications team on how to increase the visibility of the trademark and we've spent a great deal of time working on how to promote it strongly on the new professional website, which you saw earlier. This is an example of how a professional charity brand works well with an established business brand. And hearing from Roxy earlier, I feel we can work closely together on Trademark promotion. We firmly believe that all of this will enable us to bring in more revenue.

A related question came from Ruthie McNally:

Lastly, I was very surprised to read about the new logo, particularly in view of the fact that I had been given no chance for a say on this. Will we be allowed to discuss/vote on this at the AGM or are major decisions that effect [sic] the Society made without reference to members? I look forward to hearing back from you.

Ruth Semple:

Extensive consultation was carried out before the project began in January. We consulted with a range of stakeholders including current and past trustees, a sample of about 40 members, a range of our supporters, volunteers and staff and asked them questions to bring about their true feelings about the Society's current image and what they would like it to be.

We reviewed their thoughts, opinions and feelings on this and we saw quite a few trends emerge, and all of this research and analysis was put into a brief for the designer.

During the development phase we carried out a lot of evaluation and focus groups that I mentioned, with our target audiences. These include members, vegans who are not members, vegetarians, meat-eaters, students. During this phase we also went into Birmingham city centre to speak to people on the street to see what they thought. A lot of work went into this. After

analysing all of these discussions, we were able to provide more information for the designer who incorporated this into the development of the brand. A common theme was that we needed to stand out from other vegan/vegetarian/welfare/environmental organisations. There was a lot more detail and maybe I could talk to you after if you have time, but it was an extremely thorough process. That's why focus groups exist, because it would be impossible to ask 3,500 members the same thing and do all that research. We would need a team of about 200 people. So that's what we have done.

Ian Liddle added that we now have a fresh new vibrant look, strong core values and that we are ready to move forward. We've moved forward in numerous ways, as Ruth has already alluded to. These are exciting times. We will have a lot more to celebrate next year, during our 70th Anniversary.

Questions on the day

A question from the floor concerned membership renewal and setting up a Direct Debit process. Spencer Harris replied: When a membership is due to expire we send a letter a month before, at the time of expiry and a month following renewal due date. People are given the option to set up a Direct Debit and specify when to take the first amount.

George Rodger added that we also have a life membership option, which makes it easy for everyone.

Tracey Hague: Last year I received my membership card a month after my membership was renewed and I could not use my card.

Spencer explained that last year November there was staff change-over and all the other members of staff were helping out. We currently have to wait for 5-10 days to receive confirmation from the bank that a Direct Debit payment has been received and we can then send out the membership card, but we aim to send out the card within 5 days.

Stephen Walsh: Last year at the AGM there was a lot of discussion around the citation of animal experimentation, and the minutes referred to developing detailed guidelines regardless of the outcome of the motion. Has any work been undertaken on this?

Jasmijn de Boo: Unfortunately we have not yet had the time. It has not been forgotten.

Council Election: Declaration of results

The Chair explained:

We have had Trustee movements in the financial year 2012-2013: Catriona Gold moved to Canada to further her studies in August 2012; Matthew Cole and Karen resigned from Council on 31st of October due to work commitments, and Philip Bickley stepped down at last year's AGM after serving as a trustee for four years. I would like to thank all of them for their hard work and dedication for The Society.

Earlier this year, in January, Nicola Martin stepped down as Treasurer following the resignation of the Finance Officer so that she could temporarily maintain the Society's bookkeeping. Two trustees were co-opted in April 2013: Rick Savage and Kelly Somers. Kelly is standing for election today.

This year no election was necessary, as there were fewer candidates than vacancies on Council.

Eight nominations were received. One wasn't eligible and two candidates withdrew before the AGM. This year the following five candidates have been elected to Council: Kelly Somers from Birmingham, Nicola Martin from Sheffield, Menna Jones from Cardiff, Alex Kapila from Stratford-upon-Avon and William Green from London.

Rick Savage is standing down, and I would like to thank him for his work during the past 7 months.

Dr Frey Ellis Memorial Lecture by Dr Mike Hooper

Following the break, the results of votes on the motions were announced. This was followed by Dr Mike Hooper, London GP, kindly giving an inspirational and moving speech. His words and message were in keeping with the late Dr Frey Ellis' spirit, and Mike spoke about the 'Silent revolution', where vegan advocacy is efficient, professional and considered. This was followed by sharing experiences from the floor in medical situations where vegan members thought their beliefs were either upheld or not considered. Feedback from this session will be made available at a later stage.

Closing remarks

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the AGM, and he thanked staff, volunteers, trademark holders, supporters, and everyone else who helped make 2012-2013 a successful year. Jasmijn de Boo thanked Council.

The meeting closed at 15:58.



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