

Dales Pony Society Annual General Meeting – November 2021 – Combined Reports

Chairperson's Report

What a year! All Council and Officers embraced Zoom Meetings. We have had monthly meetings, slightly more regular than in previous years, plus Face-to-Face meetings for interviews for Honorary Secretary and Pedigree Livestock Services (PLS).

The Zoom meetings have worked well in this difficult and challenging year. Having not had a show since Spring 2019, our Spring Show had to be cancelled due to Covid constraints, but we were fortunate in that we were able to incorporate it into our Festival at Richmond in June, even though spectators were not permitted.

Our Summer Show went well although entries were down from 2018 but spectators were allowed to attend. There was great camaraderie and we had positive feedback- which for Council was great. Thanks, in particular, to René Bradley, Ian Graham and Penny Eminson for their hard work towards these shows.

Our members and their ponies have showcased our Breed around the country in all disciplines, including a mentionable achievement by the Pennell family qualifying a record number of ponies for Horse of the Year Show with various owners. Well done all! We are immensely proud of what you all have achieved.

2021 has certainly been a time for change. As you know Jo Ashby has stepped down as our long-standing Secretary, though I am glad to say, considering her last official day was 31 August, she has spent a lot of time since supporting PLS as well as time with our Honorary Secretary to ensure a smooth transfer and great customer service for our members and all.

As you know, 31 August saw the last official day for Jill Graham – she too has continued to support the Society. Claire Crow now holds the position of Honorary Secretary and is building up her knowledge, primarily supported by Jill and Jo.

We have recently had a successful Judge's Assessment Day at Nipna Rare Breeds Farm, where Mr and Mrs Pennell, Anna and Laura made us more than welcome. We originally had eight applicants but due to circumstances only four came forward. Thanks to all who were there – a highlight of the year for me. Our next assessment will be in 2023, if enough interest, but earlier if there is a surge in candidates.

We have also welcomed two new Life Vice Presidents, Keith Metcalf and Robert Wall, in recognition of what they have done for the Society. Moving forward, we have already started to link with our Area Representatives and will be scheduling our first Zoom meeting very soon.

Following a presentation to Council, we hope to arrange a virtual presentation from Dr. Andy Dell on genetics and breeding over the Winter months. We are planning Stud Visits for 2022, dates to be confirmed, mainly in the surrounding area, but as far afield as Cornwall and Surrey – so watch this space.

Kate Waite will be taking on the role of Show Secretary, working alongside Council and a small sub-group. Thanks to René Bradley for her work as Show Secretary.

My personal thanks, for their support over the past twelve months go to:

Council Members; President Jeff Daley; Life Vice Presidents; Officers: Jo, Jill and Ian;

those behind the scenes: Marion Lowe for merchandise sales, Sue Webster Affiliations Secretary, Grace Snowden for the Dales Despatch and more recently as Native News Representative;

Anyone and everyone who has helped and supported our Breed over the past twelve months.

I will conclude by saying that we will be moving to a blend of meetings for Council, some face-to-face and others by Zoom.

General Secretary's Report

It is good to see members face to face again at this AGM, following last year's postal AGM due to the coronavirus pandemic, which is still lingering on although thanks to the vaccination programmes, at least there is more normality to life generally.

The Spring Show was scheduled to take place on the first Saturday in May, its normal date, however this was before restrictions were lifted, and it was eventually postponed and re-arranged to run as a separate show at Richmond Equestrian Centre alongside the Dales Pony Festival on June 26th. The Summer Show ran as normal at Streatlam on August 7th, and although pony numbers were well down at these events, members appreciated being out and about again and able to have a good catch up with friends and fellow members. Hopefully 2022 shows will see a return to pre pandemic numbers at the Breed Shows, and the Dales Pony Festival will take place again in June at a new venue, Camden Equestrian Centre near York. This is an excellent venue with good stabling, and many thanks to Freda and Ritchie Longstaff for arranging the booking for us. We hope to see a much increased entry in 2022 if this show is to remain a permanent feature on the Society calendar. Sadly it was deemed wiser to forego the Supper Dance this year, as with the onset of winter, Coronavirus cases were increasing rapidly, however we hope this event will be back, bigger and better than ever next year.

Council has continued to work throughout the pandemic, firstly by email and then by the introduction of Zoom for Council meetings which has been very successful, with meetings now being held monthly. It is likely that in the future Council meetings will be a mix of Zoom and some face to face, making it much more possible for members from further afield to become Council members by limiting physical travelling and saving time and money as well as contributing to the green agenda.

I have been dismayed this year by the amount of time the Council and Officers have had to spend dealing with complaints and grievances mostly caused by rude, thoughtless and provoking comments made on social media platforms, particularly Facebook. Can I please ask members to think very carefully about what they say on these platforms and forums. In common with most other Societies, the DPS has a Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy, which is published on the website and was published again in full again in the Autumn Despatch. We expect all members to abide by this, and also the Members Code of Conduct published in the Members Handbook. All members, their families, officials and volunteers must be treated with courtesy and respect at all times, including on social media, and the Society will not tolerate abuse or bullying of any kind.

There has been a tremendous amount of work going on behind the scenes this year as we prepared for the administrative changes brought about by Jo Ashby's retirement after over 30 years as Secretary. The changes have been well publicised and all members should now be aware of the new structure. We are delighted that Pedigree Livestock Services, who are represented here tonight by Alison and Lucie, are providing us with excellent service in dealing with registrations, passports, transfers, memberships and all other database related activities and feedback from members has so far been excellent. We are also delighted to welcome Claire Crow as the new Honorary Secretary for the Society, looking after all other Society matters.

I would like to mention the Ridden Pony of the Year competition. In years gone by this was a hotly contested and prestigious event, but in recent years numbers have dwindled. Despite a relaunch of the competition last year, with lovely new qualifying rosettes, substantial prize money and a new high profile venue for the final, out of the seven ponies eligible to compete disappointingly only one entered. It may well be that this competition has run its course and is no longer of interest to members, and this was debated by Council recently. It was agreed to give it one last shot, and

increase the number of qualifying shows also, but if it is not supported in 2022, then it will be the last one. This really is a case of use it or lose it.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer sincere thanks to our outgoing Secretary, Jo Ashby, for all she has done for the breed, the Society and its members over the past 30 years. I have been helping out with some of the work for the past couple of years, to create enough time for Jo to prepare for the handover and an interesting and challenging experience it has been. Members should not underestimate just how much of her life Jo has given to the Society over the years, most of which is largely unseen. Jo & I will be helping out for a while yet, until the new team is fully established, and will continue to help the breed develop and move forward in the future, especially with the work on preserving genetic diversity within the breed which has just started with the help of Andy Dell from the Cleveland Bay Society. This is already influencing Council's thinking, and the change to stallion licencing to allow the provisional licencing of stallions out of Section B mares to broaden the stallion lines available is a direct result of data showing a serious narrowing of current stallion lines.

This will be my last report as General Secretary and I would like to thank Chairs Anne Alderson and Janet James for their help and support throughout my time as General Secretary, my long-suffering husband and DPS Treasurer Ian, and I'd also like to thank our Despatch Editor in Chief Grace Snowdon who works tirelessly producing our twice yearly magazine, Rene Bradley our retiring Show Secretary, Sue Webster for looking after the show affiliations, Penny Eminson for her help on show days and arranging printing, Marion Lowe for her help with selling merchandise and everyone else who willingly puts in time and effort to help run the Society.

Secretary's Report

In the time honoured tradition, I will begin with the registration numbers from 2020, all of which are published in Volume 39 of the studbook, which is newly printed and for sale here tonight.

In 2020 we registered 42 section A colts and 42 section A fillies. 3 fillies were registered in Section B, together with 10 colts and geldings. That is a UK total of 97 foals newly entered into the studbook.

10 stallions were licensed in the year, all having been tested clear of the FIS gene.

Overseas registrations comprised 3 colts and 2 fillies in Europe and 3 colts, 4 fillies and 1 gelding in North America. We also registered for the first time 1 colt and 1 filly in Australia. This gives 15 overseas registrations, and an overall total of 112 new registrations in the year.

1 stallion was licensed in Europe and 2 in North America.

Part bred registrations were all in the UK and were 1 colt, 5 fillies or mares and 2 geldings.

2020 was a fairly quiet year for transfers, no doubt due to the Covid lockdown, and 8 stallions, 28 colts, 66 mares and 47 geldings changed hands.

Membership was lower than usual during 2020 and only increased in the later part of this year, again probably due to shows being cancelled thanks to Covid. Membership is currently just under 500. I think most people would agree we need more members.

FIS testing has continued steadily during the year. Do not forget we now pay grant for testing fillies as well, and it is always a good selling point if the pony has FIS certificate prior to advertising. The rate of carriers versus non carriers remains at about 13 % in the breed, which is good to see – the measures we have taken have prevented an increase in this faulty gene in the population.

On this subject, there are numerous faulty genes in equines, and proliferation of problems caused by them is the worrying result of in-breeding in any closed studbook. There are concerns over the decreasing stallion lines in Dales ponies, due both the loss of breeders able and knowledgeable enough to keep their own stallions, and the overuse of fashionable lines which win in the show ring.

These concerns have prompted Council to have the studbook assessed for levels of in-breeding, with the help of Andy Dell. Andy did a lot of work to help rescue the Cleveland Bay from really dire straits, so his expertise is well tested. The "Sparks" system of assessing any possible matings for levels of in-breeding using a "traffic light" type rating is simple and easy to use and it is hoped to have this information for breeders prior to the 2022 breeding season. This should help sensible choices to be made.

It was with the importance of maintaining genetic diversity in mind that the Council agreed to license correctly marked section A colts from section B mares, and both upgraded and downgraded mares qualify. These colts will be issued with a provisional license and their offspring carefully limited and monitored before a full license is issued.

It is true that the rarer lines are sometimes not the top ponies, but genetic diversity is utterly vital in preventing the further rise of deleterious genetic disorders in Dales ponies. The breeders in history did not produce a wonderful sound working pony for us to ruin with the dictates of fashion and lack of knowledge when we have the ability to prevent it.

The HBLB grant was increased recently and the Council has been trying quite hard to spend this extra money on preserving some of the rarer stallion lines and also allowing easier access to a variety of stallions for our far-flung small breeders who have one or two mares. This has proved harder than it should have been but will be the subject of continuing effort.

So 2021 has been a difficult year, not least because of the changes to the administrative team due to the retirement of myself and Jill Graham. That this has been achieved is mainly due to the hard work put in by Jill and we should all be profoundly grateful for her energy and professional expertise – it has not been a simple exercise.

I am very happy with the excellent start made by the new team at PLS, keeping our treasured stud book safe, and members will be getting used to addressing questions and requests to Alison and Lucie, both of whom are here tonight – please do say hello to them, they are now part of the team. Any transfers and registration forms tonight should go to them.

Claire Crow, who has taken over the Society administration, is already well known to members, and is making good headway in learning the complex range of tasks to be carried out.

So it has been a tricky year, with the extra difficulties caused by Covid restrictions but business has continued with the help of Zoom. Council members have not had an easy time and we can but hope for a better year ahead. I would urge all members to have a little more respect for each other. Like it or not, we are all bound together by a common purpose, and our much admired breed of pony deserves better.

It was 34 years ago that I first had to give a report to the AGM as a newly appointed secretary and I have a strong memory of the fear and trepidation. I felt facing that room full of experts and being borderline phobic about public speaking – (and everything was read out those days, including the full minutes) You have listened politely to my ramblings ever since!

This last report has given me much thought and I have not found it easy to write – so many years, so many changes, and so many members no longer with us – but in the end, and at risk of sounding like a Sunday sermon, it comes down to telling you how thankful I am. Thankful to have had the job, Varied, unrelenting and often challenging work with great peaks and troughs; for being able to work with the historic studbook with its fascinating history, it is completely unique and so much to be safeguarded.

Thankful for the Council – Completely dependable in their support at all times and kindly forgiving of my many mistakes; -- and also for the Officers and volunteer helpers– all excellent, professional and in control.

Thankful for you the members – You are delightfully enthusiastic and charming, and for the most part polite and patient – I will miss all the phone conversations about your ponies.

Lastly I am thankful for the ponies themselves – Utterly wonderful, complicated and absorbing – Our capable, defiant survivors. Serving them these many years has been, with a doubt, an absolute honour.

Treasurer's Report

Due to the continuing situation of many changes in social and political conditions, for the second year running it has been difficult to make a comparison with previous years' financial positions.

The Society made a profit for the year of £6,828, only a marginal decrease from last year of £149. Although the first eight months continued to see the reduction in activities as in last year, the last four months saw increases in many areas due to reduction of several restrictions which had been in place for eighteen months.

Subscriptions made a recovery to the level seen in the 2019 financial year. Although there were slight decreases in Registrations and Stallion Licences, the number of Transfers gained momentum giving rise to an increase of £1,800. There was a slight increase in requests for FIS testing after the large reduction experienced in the last financial year and this also gave rise to an increase in both testing fees.

Revenue from Affiliations was exceptionally low, but this was because other organisations that started to run shows later in the year already had DPS Special rosettes purchased in previous years.

Donations reverted to a level that reflected the lack of activity in the earlier part of the year.

However, there were two major occurrences that contributed in a major way to the profit this year. The first was the retiming of the distribution of the Horserace Betting Levy Board grant by the advance of 25% early in the year but then followed by the full grant of £9,000 later in the year. This advance was to support organisations suffering from the economic climate during the early part of the year. The second was the transfer of £3,623 from the Centenary Fund donations from the control of the sub-committee to the main body of the Society. Much donated was specifically to advance the awareness of the Society, the Dales Ponies themselves and the development of the Society.

The main increases in General Printing were due to more printed information needed for last year's AGM and restocking of passport covers and pre-printed standard pages. Show Expenses returned to normal levels for holding both the Spring and Summer Shows plus a slight increase for the inclusion of some of the Performance Show activities.

The assets on the Balance Sheet are satisfactory and the Society is financially sound.

In addition to the normal activities, the Treasurer has taken part in discussions, undertaken investigations and given advice on the sub-contracting of Registrations, Transfers and Membership activities to a third party.

Due to the costs of last year's audit and the adoption of a financial package for future proofing the Treasurer role, the Council approved, under Section 485(3) of the Companies Act 2006, the recommendation of J T Rennie & Co for the Reporting Accountant for this financial year.

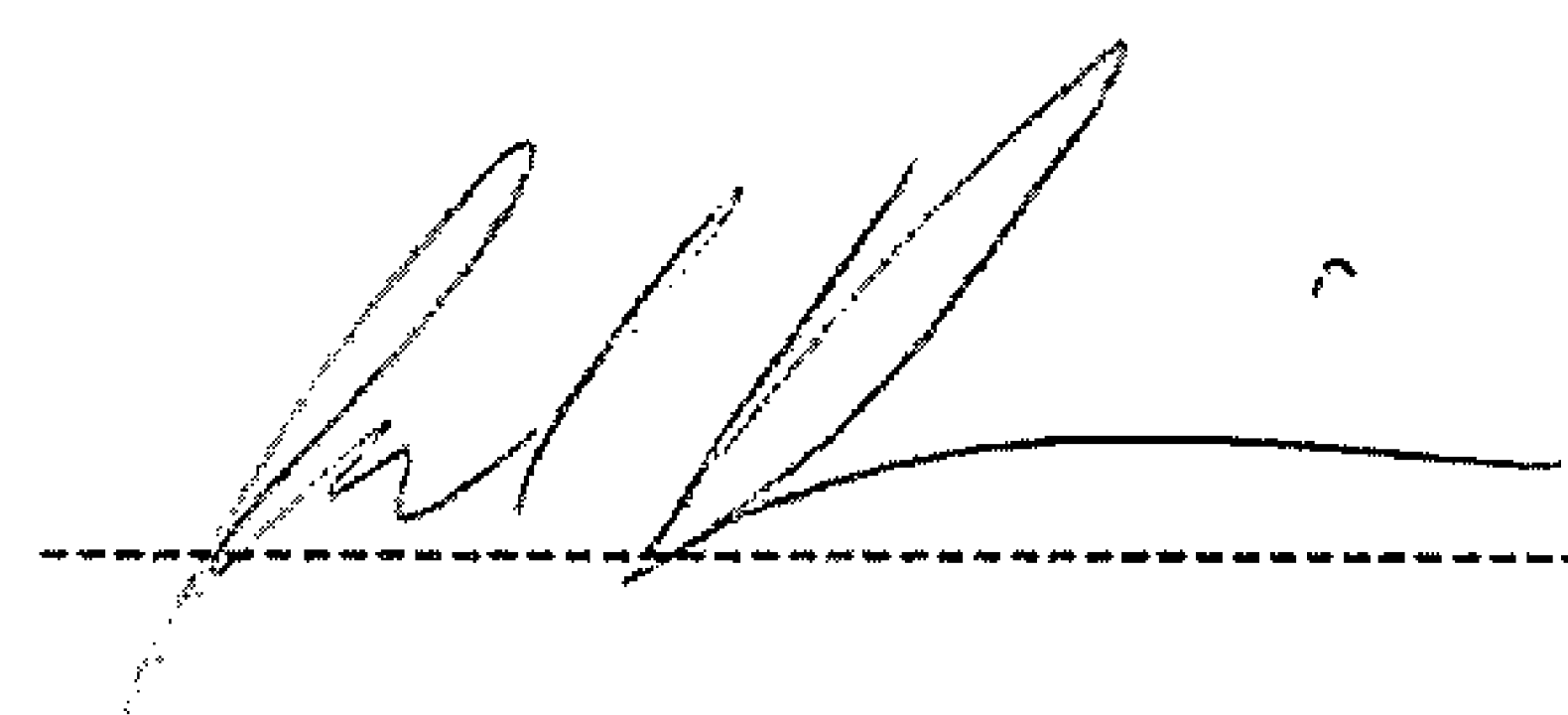
Source and Application of Funds			31st August 2021		
2020	Receipts	2021	2020	Payments	2021
30.00	Subscriptions 2019/2020	120.00	279.00	Stud Book Printing	178.00
11,741.72	Subscriptions 2020/2021	14,391.15	0.00	Catalogues Setting-up and Printing	78.00
0.00	Subscriptions 2021/2022	135.00	1,465.00	Newsletter Printing & Despatch	1,750.00
440.00	Show Affiliations	26.00	1,553.83	General Printing	2,597.00
3,382.62	Registrations	3,225.00	3,087.12	Postage and Telephone	3,702.58
1,339.48	Stallion Licences	1,075.00	579.30	Meeting Expenses	603.68
206.31	Prefix Registrations	376.02	10,000.00	Honoraria	10,000.00
3,660.32	Transfers	5,470.39	2,900.00	Colt & Stallion Premiums	2,120.00
1,200.03	Sales of Goods	451.50	2,000.12	Mare Premiums	3,840.00
615.00	Entry Fees	2,268.00	306.00	Affiliation Fees	345.00
0.00	Catalogue Sales and Gate Money	213.00	0.00	Accountant Fees	556.80
9,000.00	Betting Levy Board / Grants	11,250.00	147.50	Central Prefix Register Payments	195.00
1,068.50	Social Events	135.00	0.00	Prize Money	70.00
143.31	Income Virgin Money	36.69	61.98	Cups and Engraving	120.00
28.69	Income Business Premium Account	4.30	539.87	Rosettes and Numbers	1,213.09
3,843.64	Donations	372.00	2,719.57	Insurance (Events and Indemnity)	2,957.43
60.00	Sponsorships	320.00	611.00	Show Expenses	2,586.70
1,298.00	DNA / FIS Testing	1,845.00	363.80	Purchases of Sales Goods	176.45
120.00	Passports	120.00	67.50	Bank Charges	0.00
0.00	Centenary Fund Donations	3,622.67	1,524.81	DNA / FIS Testing	2,054.06
			251.20	Exhibitions and Events	0.00
			13.00	Companies House	26.00
			73.00	Refunds	301.40
			0.00	Office Equipment	228.54
			921.60	Stud Book Software	853.20
			450.00	Website Hosting / Domain Name	475.00
			1,195.60	FIS Testing Premiums	999.93
			89.99	Other Software	234.79
			0.00	Returned Cheques	70.00
			0.00	Stock Adjustment for Promotions	296.00
			31,200.79		38,628.65
			6,976.83	Profit for Year carried down	6,828.07
38,177.62		45,456.72	38,177.62		45,456.72

Balance Sheet at 31st August 2021

2020	Liabilities	2021	2020	Assets	2021
44,064.20	Surplus as at 31st August 2020	51,041.03	2,987.55	Stock (at cost)	2,607.34
0.00	Deferred Income	111.11	19,189.74	Virgin Money	19,226.43
6,976.83	Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year	6,828.07	4,866.01	Barclays Bank Current Account	8,015.29
			23,766.20	Barclays Bank BPA	23,881.61
			0.00	Barclays Bank Community	3,622.67
			0.00	PayPal	0.00
			231.53	Cash in Hand	626.87
<u>51,041.03</u>		<u>57,980.21</u>	<u>51,041.03</u>		<u>57,980.21</u>

Notes Cash at Bank in Current Account is balance at 31 August 2021 (£8,015.29) less unpresented cheques of none (£0.00)
The above accounts do not reflect the 31 Challenge Cups held by the Society (insured value £8,700.00)

In my opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs at the 31 August 2021 and have been properly prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act 1985 applicable to small companies.



Mr Paul Dickson
On Behalf of J T Rennie & Co
Reporting Accountant

7/10/2021

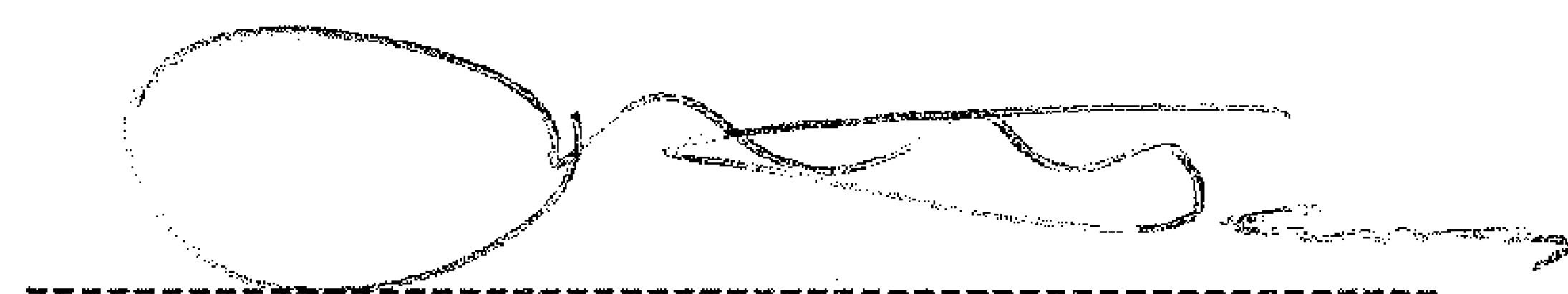
Date

For the year ending 31 August 2021 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.



Director

Mrs Janet James

13.11.21

Date