

# MINUTES OF THE 12th AGM of the Friends of Long Sutton Church (FOLSC)

Held in Long Sutton School, Thursday, 23rd February, 2017

**Trustees in attendance:** David Aitken (Chairman), Geoff Pringle (Secretary), Phil Godfrey (Treasurer), Caroline Astington, Jane Farenden

**Apologies:** Michael & Avril Brake, Kevin Robinson, Tim Creegan, Rob Hartley, Rosie Cox, Gordon & Thea Miles, Jess Broomfield

The meeting was attended by 22 members including trustees.

## 1. 2016 AGM

David confirmed that the draft minutes of the 2016 AGM had been displayed in a public place for the appropriate period. It was put to the floor if they should be approved; this was carried by a unanimous vote and the finalised minutes were duly signed by our Chairman and Secretary.

## 2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not covered later.

## 3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported it had been a good year for FOLSC with minimal demands from the PCC and it is anticipated a similar scenario for 2017. 2018 looks to be the year when more quinquennial repairs are to be carried out.

David indicated he had made several attempts to try for a meeting with the PCC so we can clear any doubts about what we can and cannot pay for. Hopefully that meeting can be forthcoming this year.

It was reported the FOLSC newsletter this year to be better than ever and thanks were given to all the contributors including the editor in chief Val Pringle.

Our 2016 events have been outstanding and this year we will not let you down.

David concluded by expressing thanks to all trustees and spouses for unstinting help.

We have had one trustee stand down, Jock Lyons. We have not been inundated with applications to join us apart from one lady, so hopefully the vacancy can be filled in item 5.

## 4. Treasurer's Report and Adoption of Accounts

Phil Godfrey our treasurer reported that during 2016 we have been well supported by members and their guests, resulting in three highly profitable events, two of which contributing more than a thousand pounds each to the maintenance fund. Subscription income is about the same as last year though we have lost some members and gained others.

During the year, we were not called upon to fund any work on the fabric of the church and this is the second year running that we have not had to pay out. As a result, we have seen the fighting fund break the £50,000 mark which is a very impressive result and ensures that we will be able to react positively to all but the biggest emergencies. We are aware of some substantial remedial work that needs to be undertaken before the next Quinquennial survey which we believe is next year.

In 2016, we received interest of £181.82 from our deposit account. We have had £800 income from subscriptions and £248 of donations from a variety of sources. Phil specifically mentioned a donation from a collection at the funeral of Mr David Herman which raised £173. Our events, including donations at the AGM, made an excellent profit of £2933.31. When combined with the income already mentioned, we finished with a total income of £4,163.13 and, with no expenditure, this was added to our opening balance to finish the year with total accumulated fund of £51,881.27. This is made up of:

Current Account	£8,994.10
Deposit Account	£42,887.17

We have no real need for petty cash so this has been incorporated that into our current account. As you will be aware, interest rates have fallen to record lows. Our deposit account is now receiving interest at 0.367% which, though rather pathetic, is somewhat better than many other banks.

Finally, the Trustees would like to thank Bernard McTernan who, once again, has kindly audited our accounts at no cost to FOLSC.

It was proposed by Roger Cox and seconded by Tony Huggard that the accounts should be adopted and signed off and this was unanimously approved by the members present.

## **5. Election of Officers and Trustees**

David advised, as mentioned in his report, that Jock Lyons had decided to stand down and therefore we had a vacancy. The remainder of the officers and trustees were prepared to stand again for another year if re-elected. It was advised that Christine Turner had put her name forward to join the trustees if elected; no other volunteers were forthcoming from those attending the meeting. It was therefore proposed by Roger Cox in line with previous years to re-elect trustees and officers en bloc. This was seconded by Andy Gough and the vote was agreed unanimously. Tony Huggard then proposed Christine Turner to be elected as a trustee and was seconded by Val Pringle. All were in favour and we are delighted to welcome Christine to join us.

## **6. PCC Report**

Tim was unable to attend and asked Heather Pomeroy to read his report.  
Tim wrote in January this year:-

"How time flies! It only seems a few weeks ago that I was writing the churchwardens report for FOLSC and yet a complete year has passed by.

Once again the PCC has not needed to call upon FOLSC for funds and any changes or improvements that have been undertaken have been financed by the PCC or personal giving. I would also like to thank everyone involved in their voluntary roles keeping our beautiful church in such good condition including cleaning the interior of the building, brightening the brasses, arranging the flowers and tidying the churchyard. There are so many people who do so much and so it was wonderful to have a Volunteers Thank You event last November for all those who play vital roles in keeping our church in A1 condition.

There have been many discussions about reordering the church and there are still plans to make the building fit for a twenty-first century community. Discussions are underway to make any changes as appealing to all users without creating a division in our ranks. We are fast approaching the end of the current quinquennial and so the PCC will be asking builders to tender for the outstanding minor repairs required before the next inspection in 2018. Once the estimates have been obtained the PCC will ask FOLSC for assistance in funding the necessary works.

Like last year, numbers attending regular services remain steady. Special services continue to attract good attendance and this past Christmas saw 250 adults and children attend the carol service.

Following the publication of the FOLSC annual newsletter the PCC would welcome trustees attending a meeting to find a smooth working arrangement going forward, firstly in regard to completing the outstanding works from the current quinquennial report and secondly in regard to the current thinking on the installation of a lavatory with the church building. An invitation will be issued to the trustees when the coming year's PCC meeting dates have been agreed."

## **7. Review of 2016 Events**

Geoff summarised the 2016 programme which it was generally agreed had been another good year. Full event reports have already been published in FOLSC News together with Phil's excellent pictures. The trustees had decided that 3 events were optimal, particularly in view of all the other fund raising activities going on in the village.

The year started with a Grand Mouse Race evening organised by Kevin Robinson and with the assistance of the skilled team from the Masquerade Carnival Club, a fantastic evening was had by all, although the attendance was a trifle disappointing. Despite this, £1132 was delivered to the bottom line which was a great result.

The Summer Party was held in the village hall. Geoff explained that whilst other local venues had provided an attractive alternative, they did create significant logistical challenges in both cleaning and setting up, not to mention the fact that this year they were being used for their

intended farming purposes. By comparison, the village hall is centrally located and as a charity themselves, it is nice for FOLSC to push much of our business their way. Our theme this year was 'Shorts and Shades' and the event was run by Jane Farenden whose idea it was. We were royally entertaining by local band Twisted Vinyl and thanks were expressed to Martin Underwood for again supplying and organising the barbeque. It was generally agreed this provided more variety than a pig roast and certainly helped deliver a good profit to the bottom line which in this case was a very creditable £1180.

The autumn event offered live theatre which was another first for FOLSC. Three talented young actors from the Pantaloon Theatre Company performed 'The strange case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde'. Our first choice had been Romeo & Juliet but this proved to be unavailable on the date required. Jekyll & Hyde proved to be not to everyone's taste, but overall the majority of our guests left with smiles on their faces and bringing live theatre to Long Sutton was generally deemed to be a great success.

In summary, our three events delivered a profit to the fighting funds of c.£3000, which was a very credible effort and Geoff expressed his thanks to all who had supported us as well as to the village shop who kindly acted as our ticket office.

### **8. Preview of 2017 Programme**

Geoff confirmed we would be sticking with the same format this year with three events in spring, summer and autumn. Our first outing scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> April is to be another FOLSC Quiz extravaganza with an April Fools' theme. It was explained this would be a cut above the standard pub quiz offering with Phil Godfrey providing audio/visual support on nearly every question. Team size is limited to 6 players per table and tickets will go on sale on 1<sup>st</sup> March at £10 to include a ploughman's supper. FOLSC quizzes always seem to be well received and we are hoping for an excellent turnout this time.

For our Summer Party to be held on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> July, we are returning to the village hall (for reasons detailed above) and have booked the services of a local duo 'Transition' who can apparently pump out 50's, 60's, & 70's music to suit all tastes. Martin Underwood has again kindly offered his BBQ services. The theme for this year's party has yet to be decided or the event manager appointed. Both to be discussed at the next trustees' meeting.

The autumn event has provisionally been reserved for Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> November and the outline plan is to run a Beaujolais Nouveau evening with French food, music and the 2017 vintage which is released on 16<sup>th</sup> November. In pre-planning, however, it has been established that the village shop does not have access to the wine and in buying elsewhere it is likely to cost at least £9 a bottle as opposed to £5 which we pay for a decent wine from the village shop. If we then add on the catering costs, even doing it in house and possibly a live musician, it would mean ticket prices of at least £15 per head which is significantly more than we normally charge. It was suggested from the floor we offered the "Not the Beaujolais Nouveau Evening" – a suggestion that we will take on board. Geoff also mentioned following an earlier suggestion, he had been in touch with Taunton Amateur Operatic Society but had so far not heard back from them. He had also been in touch with Howden Jones who had been recommended by Andy Gough but the trustees felt they were a little too "folky" for a general FOLSC audience. Jacky Godfrey suggested an Old Time Music Hall/singalong event and a further suggestion was for us to organise a Military Wives Choir. David advised he had contacted the local group but their booking forms and questionnaires were onerous in the extreme and it had been decided not to follow this through. In response to Jacky's suggestion, Geoff mentioned that if we could book Taunton Operatic, this could well provide the singalong opportunity. Geoff concluded by mentioning the success we had had previously when Richard Digance performed for us where we had a capacity crowd and despite a high fee charged, we still had a fantastic evening and made a good profit. This was generally considered to be a good opportunity with an appeal outside FOLSC membership and the village and it was agreed to follow this up.

### **9. AOB**

No questions were raised and the meeting closed at 20.00 hrs. with thanks to all members and guests who had attended.

Chairman .....

Secretary .....