

MINUTES OF THE 13th AGM of the Friends of Long Sutton Church (FOLSC)

Held in Long Sutton School, Monday, 19th February, 2018

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

Apologies: Kevin Robinson, Jess Broomfield, Roger & Rosie Cox, Yvonne Aitken

The meeting was attended by 28 members including trustees.

1. 2017 AGM

David confirmed that the draft minutes of the 2017 AGM had been displayed in a public place for the appropriate period. It was proposed by Andy Gough and seconded by Ron Roberts that they should be adopted and the motion was carried by a unanimous vote.

2. Chairman's Report

David reported that 2017 had been a successful year financially. We have struggled, however, to get the number of punters we had hoped for. With only around sixty for the summer party, it was very depressing and disappointing. With the amount of work that goes into these events, we wonder whether it is sometimes worth the effort. The size of the hall does make it more difficult to fill seats. There are certain areas where we get minimum support. How do we encourage these villagers to come out and enjoy themselves and support a very good cause? Is one problem the fact that there are no visible signs of our quite considerable funds being utilised, but do also take note of the proviso detailed on the final page of FOLSC News!

He apologised for being rather grumpy but if we want to keep our wonderful Church in good order we need support from all quarters. He thanked those that do support us regularly, without you we would struggle even more.

We can only spend money when we are requested to do so. We have had a request to finance the clearing of the SW wall round the cemetery of debris and spoil excavated and tipped after graves have been dug, which we have approved. This, however, has been hampered as an unmarked grave has been discovered in the vicinity and this needs to be resolved before work can commence. 2018 is the year for the Quinquennial report. There is still an amount of work to be completed from the last report. It would have been nice to complete before it appears again in the new report.

David thought the time has come to ring the changes and it is his intention to remain as chairman for just one more year (if elected!!) He would hope to stay on as a trustee. In regard to other trustees, Caroline Astington, who has now served for 8 years, would be happy to stand down if a replacement volunteer can be found. David concluded by thanking the Village Stores for acting as our box office. Spouses must never be forgotten and we would struggle without their unending support. Many thanks to them and also thanks to Val Pringle for being the editor in chief of FOLSC News and Phil Godfrey for compiling and printing this year's edition.

3. Treasurer's Report and Adoption of Accounts

Our events in 2017 were not quite as profitable as the previous year but we still succeeded in adding £3,470-50 to the FOLSC fund.

Once again, we were not called upon to fund any work on the fabric of the church although we have approved the PCC to go ahead with seeking quotes for some work remaining from the last Quinquennial survey. We anticipate that we will be making contributions to that work during the course of this year.

Phil then took us through the accounts for 2017. On the income detailed at the top we received £109 interest from our deposit account. We have had £800 income from subscriptions and £154-20 of donations from a variety of sources.

Our events, brought in an income just short of £2,628. When combined with the income already mentioned, we finished with a total income of £3,666-15.

We had 4 items of expenditure including AGM costs, a set of replacement beer glasses, and a banner. This resulted in a total expenditure of £220-65. Our net income was therefore £3,470-50. We started the year with

£51,881.27 in the two banks. Adding the net income for the year we therefore finished the year with total accumulated fund of £55,351-77. We transferred £6,000 from our Current Account to the Deposit account. Our funds are therefore made up of £6,330-59 in our current account and £48,996-18 on deposit. There was a late subscription for 2017 which was not banked until early January. There is no petty cash.

Whilst interest rates from the Bank of England have crept up a quarter of a point, income from interest remains very low. We have not recently explored better rates, but the difference is likely to be negligible. We will, however, continue to monitor the situation.

Phil then asked if there were any questions in regard to the accounts presented.

Andy Gough commented, whilst he fully understood and accepted the detail of the accounts presented, he felt the interest accrued on a comparatively large amount was minimal and queried if a part of the fund could be invested elsewhere within CCLA for a better return. Phil responded by advising he was monitoring the situation but that the suggestion of alternative accounts within CCLA was a good one and he would investigate. David commented he was loath to lock monies up just in case the PCC should call upon us at short notice for funds which might then not be available. Tim Creggan representing the PC, advised he felt a short term call on substantial funds was unlikely at the present time.

Finally, Phil asked for the meeting to thank Bernard McTernan who, once again, has kindly audited our accounts at no cost to FOLSC.

On the membership front we ended the year with 63 annual members and 29 life members making a total of 91 members and we have added four new members this year: -

Tim and Angela Ayres
Mike and Christine Turner

Conversely, we have lost 3 members due to them leaving the village: -

Gillian Bradley
Lauren Wright and Janet Nabbutt

4. Election of Officers and Trustees

David advised, as mentioned in his report, that Caroline Astington had decided to stand down after 8 years providing a replacement could be found. David confirmed that Rob Hartley had put his name forward. No other names were forthcoming, Jackie Godfrey therefore proposed Rob and this was seconded by Peter Brand and he was duly elected. David then thanked Caroline for her years of service and particularly with input on catering at numerous FOLSC fund raisers. These thanks were endorsed by all present with a round of applause. David then proposed, as the remaining trustees were all prepared to stand again if elected, that they be re-elected en bloc as in previous years. The meeting approved this suggestion and the motion was proposed by Tim Creggan and seconded by Tim Walford and the trustees were duly re-elected.

5. PCC Report

Tim reported that whilst many may have hoped that the PCC will have drained the FOLSC 'treasure chest', he was once again happy to say that we have not needed to call upon the fund during the past year. With prudence, the PCC has spent money where needed. This expenditure has been on smaller works such as electrics and minor repairs which has been afforded through service collections, personal giving and other financial supporters.

There are some mortar repairs that need to be done this year in conclusion of the last Quinquennial Report and builders have been approached to tender for these tasks. He expected the Diocesan architect to contact him soon to arrange a visit to Holy Trinity for the next Quinquennial Report this autumn. The PCC are fortunate to have a 'healthy' building and he really hopes that the Quinquennial Report will bear this out. However, being realistic, we cannot expect a six-hundred-year-old building used by thousands of worshippers and visitors each year to not require some extensive repair and maintenance. It is heartening to know that FOLSC Trustees and supporters have all expressed an interest in seeing that some of the accumulated fund is invested in the church building as soon as required. Tim took this opportunity to thank all for supporting FOLSC and Holy Trinity Church.

Geoff asked if there was any update on the clearance of the graveyard adjacent to the wall where an ingress of damp had been reported on the reverse side. Tim replied that Peter Tulk had been commissioned to carry

out the work, but this was now on hold as an unknown grave had been discovered in the vicinity. The Rev Jane Twitty spoke from the floor and confirmed that graves could not be exhumed. David commented that the work should not involve digging below ground level.

Tim concluded by mentioning a recent article in the newspapers concerning the installation of Wi Fi masts within church grounds.

Tim Walford raised a question that on the basis FOLSC is looking for more support from the village, it could be beneficial if FOLSC were seen to be funding specific PCC projects. He felt it would be good to complete the balance of works outstanding from the last Quinquennial report as soon as possible. Tim Creggan advised he had this in hand and was currently awaiting a second quotation from an appropriate builder.

6. Review of 2017 Events

Geoff reviewed the 2017 programme which started with the **April Fool's Quiz**. He confirmed these were always well attended and whilst significant work was involved for the trustees, they always proved excellent fund raisers as we do not have to hire an act. Geoff also commented with Phil's IT skills, the audio/visual aspects lifted our event to a new level and an excellent £1154 was delivered to the fighting fund.

The **Summer Party** held on 15th July was themed "What we were wearing when the ship went down". This was felt to be an excellent idea as guests could dress up or down as much or as little as suited them. The village hall was decorated with nautical artefacts and Martin Underwood delivered a fantastic BBQ. It was felt the band were not entirely appropriate but were much enjoyed when they played older numbers – if a little loud! Despite all this and a lot of planning, the event was not well attended with just over 60 guests as opposed to 100 which we always aim at. The profit was therefore down at £600.

In the Autumn, we had proposed holding a Beaujolais Nouveau event but finally decided this could be risky in terms of costs and possible monies to be raised. We were fortunate therefore to book **Richard Digance and support band – The Broadside Boys** (although one was off sick on the night). It was generally agreed Digance was even better than his last visit and as we booked direct rather than via his agent, we got a more competitive fee and delivered a £845 profit on the night.

7. Preview of 2018 Programme

For spring, we have "Elvis" performing for us on Saturday, 21st April in the village hall. In the second half Tim Bassett will transform into the Bassett Allsorts. It is very much hoped by the trustees that this will be something new for members and the village and will be well attended.

In view of the disappointment at last year's summer party, we have decided to ring the changes and instead we will be holding a late summer event on Saturday, 8th September where the Pantaloon Company will be performing their interpretation of 'As you Like It' for us. It was felt the village hall grounds would not provide either the ambience or the security and we are pleased to report with grateful thanks the village school have loaned their playing field to us for the evening. It is proposed visitors bring their own picnic, etc. and the event run similar to those organised by the National Trust. The village hall has been booked for facilities and also as a fall back in case of wet weather.

For our Autumn Event, we have reserved Saturday, 1st December. We have been in discussions with Taunton Amateur Operatic who we have been trying to get for some time but unfortunately nothing is available at that time. Geoff asked members present for any suggestions or ideas. He commented that as a fall-back position, we could run a Christmas themed quiz, perhaps with a small reception with drinks and canapes to reflect the season. Significant discussion followed with some good ideas from those present. Peter Brand made the very valid comment with the age profile of both villagers and FOLSC members, could the Trustees consider organizing an event or events more appropriate to the demographics. He referred to the RNLI who always seem to pack out the village hall for their interesting talks and presentations and whilst not wanting to replicate an RNLI event, could we offer something in the form of a talk, lecture or presentation that would have wide appeal to the age profile of many members.

Geoff responded that this was useful feedback and the trustees would discuss further. He also mentioned by coincidence he is currently working on a naval related presentation for the history group in Cornwall that could possibly have interest to a FOLSC audience.

8. AOB

Geoff reaffirmed the point mentioned in FOLSC news that recruitment to FOLSC is essential for our continuity and the trustees felt the best method was by word of mouth from existing members when meeting anyone new to our community. He also mentioned the Parish Welcome Pack did not always seem to be reaching new residents. Anona responded that it was being issued when she was being made aware of anyone new to the community but clearly some slip the net when she is unaware of them. In addition, a relevant map is currently missing. A debate followed with various useful suggestions from the floor, viz. a notice advertising the pack in the village shop window, a poster on the Parish notice boards, or a request to go out to those delivering the Newsletter/Roundabout to advise the PCC when they were aware of new residents on their patch. Ron suggested asking estate agents to keep the PCC advised but it was pointed out that this would not be allowed due to data protection regulations. Anona asked if the trustees could check the current leaflet is up to date (we have, and it is) and further quantities can be printed and supplied on request. Tim Walford mentioned an excellent printer working from Bridge Barns (Hannah) who might be able to print leaflets for us at a modest cost.

The Rev Jane Twitty thanked FOLSC for all their fund-raising efforts during the previous year.

The Meeting closed at 20.15hrs with the Chairman thanking all members who attended for turning out in such excellent numbers.

Chairman

Secretary