

Trustees' Annual Report

The Friends of St James the Great, Thorley *Registered Charity No: 288678*

Year ending 31 December 2021

Legal and Administrative Information

This report is for the financial year beginning on 1 January 2021 and ending on 31 December 2021.

The Principal Address of the charity is:
60 The Paddock
Bishop's Stortford
Herts
CM23 4JW

E-mail: friends.stjames@btinternet.com

Website: www.friends-stjames.org

The object of the charity is to help and support the Rector and Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. James the Great, Thorley (subject to any necessary faculties being obtained) to:

- maintain and embellish the fabric, furnishing and fittings of St. James the Great, Thorley
- maintain, protect and beautify the Churchyard of the Church.

The Governing Document of the charity is the Constitution as adopted on 21 February 1983 and amended on 18 March 1984 and 1 October 2021. This calls for the management of the charity to be in the hands of a Committee of Trustees consisting of two members appointed by the Parochial Church Council of St. James the Great and six members elected at the Annual Meeting of the Association. The Committee may co-opt additional members as necessary and invite the Incumbent of St James the Great to be an ex-officio member. The Officers of the charity are a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary who are appointed by the Committee. The Constitution calls for an Annual Meeting to take place in the month of March and the Accounts to be made up to 31st December every year.

In fulfilling the object of the charity, the Trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

At a meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2007 it was agreed that it would be prudent to maintain reserves at a level of £2,500.

The following table details the Trustees as of October 2022 and those who acted during the period covered by this report.

Name	Office (if any)	Dates Acted Since 1 January 2021	Mode of Appointment
Mr Desmond Conridge	Treasurer	1 January 2021-present	Elected
Mr Daniel Daniells-Smith		1 January 2021 – 25 March 2022 6 April 2022 - present	Elected until 25 March 2022 Co-opted from 6 April 2022 Parochial Church Council Appointee from 26 September 2022
Mr Bill Hardy		1 January 2021-present	Elected
Dr Philip Hargrave	Chairman & Secretary	1 January 2021 - present	Elected
Mr Clive Hayball		1 January 2021-present	Parochial Church Council Appointee
Mrs Lina Loadman		1 January 2021 – 25 March 2022 6 April 2022 - present	Elected until 25 March 2022 Co-opted from 6 April 2022
Mrs Margaret Morley	Vice Chairman	1 January 2021-present	Elected
Mr Graham Rundle		1 January 2021 - 25 March 2022 25 March 2022-present	Co-opted until 25 March 2022 Elected from 25 March 2022
Mrs Sue Russell		1 January 2021 - 25 March 2022 25 March 2022-present	Co-opted until 25 March 2022 Elected from 25 March 2022
The Revd Gareth Tracey		2 July 2021 - present	Ex-Officio
Mr Clive Weir		1 January 2021-22 May 2022	Parochial Church Council Appointee

Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 25th March 2022

Good evening and thank you for coming to the 2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Friends of St James the Great, Thorley. I've chaired many Friends' AGMs over the years, but never with a greater feeling of déjà vu than this year. That's probably because it's less than six months since I was last sitting in this very spot saying "welcome" to those attending our 2021 AGM. That was something I had hoped

to say in March of last year, the month laid down in the Friends' Constitution during which AGMs should be held, but I was unable to do so until October because of the public safety measures in force in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that prevented our AGM from taking place earlier in the year. Because of the delay in holding last year's AGM, this year's is taking place less than six months after last year's.

Such public safety measures had led to all the Friends' fund-raising activities being on hold from ten days after our March 2020 AGM until July 2021. Consequently, the only activities we were able to undertake during 2021 were a short season of Sunday Afternoon Teas from the Church Room from the first Sunday in August until the last Sunday in September plus an Autumn Craft Fair in the St Barnabas Centre in November. I'll leave it to Des to report on the financial aspects of these activities but, as I'm sure you'll appreciate, for the second year running the pandemic has had a considerable impact on our fund-raising.

Since our 2021 AGM, we have been saddened to learn of the death of a very long-standing member of the Friends, Joan Abbotson, who also served as a member of the Committee. In recalling Joan's sterling service to the Friends, I can do no better than quote verbatim from my report to the Friends' 2010 AGM at the time of her standing down from Committee membership.

"I cannot end my report this year without paying a very special tribute to one of our long-standing Committee members, who has decided not to seek re-election to or co-option onto the incoming Committee. Looking back through the Friends' records, I find that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held ... on 29th March 1990 record that, when Compton Whitworth, the then Chairman, called for nominations for what would otherwise have been three unfilled positions on the Committee ... Joan Abbotson was proposed by Vera Camp. This proposal was seconded by Diana Ashwell and passed unanimously by the meeting ... Joan has given sterling service to the Friends, particularly in an area that is dear to my heart, that of catering. Whenever food or refreshments have been called for, Joan has been ever present. Joan did take a short break from Committee membership, standing down at the 1998 Annual General Meeting at the time of the illness of her late and much missed husband, John, but was co-opted back onto the Committee in April 2003."

Joan went on to serve as one of the key members of the Committee until 2010.

We have also been saddened by the death of a long-time supporter of the Friends, Simon Dellow. Simon was initially organist, then organist and choir leader, and subsequently Director of Music at St James for a total of 25 years. He played at the many Celebrations of Flowers and Music that were hosted by the Friends during this time, continuing to do so even after stepping down from the latter role. He also gave a considerable amount of his time to playing music on the organ and piano for us to record, such as that used to accompany images of the Festival flower arrangements on the DVDs the Friends produced for many years. Simon's mastery of a wide range of organ styles became particularly apparent following the Friends' campaign to raise the funds required to replace the old Church organ that had serious shortcomings by a new 37 Stop Two Manual Allan electronic organ that was installed in 2010. Simon would move effortlessly between playing this instrument in the style of a classic church organ and that of a theatre organ. He will be sorely missed.

Last year was another challenging one for Churchyard Maintenance. That wasn't because of limitations on the number of volunteers that were allowed to undertake the work as had been the case during 2020. Rather, it was due to the somewhat excessive growth of the grass last year coupled with the very wet weather. In addition to undertaking the usual seasonal work, our small team of dedicated volunteers cleared the large area of tangled ivy and undergrowth that had remained following the removal of the dead beech tree to the north of the Church. We were very grateful to everyone in the team for their dedicated efforts. There was considerable wear and tear on all the machinery last year and we were also indebted to Mokut, our local repairers, for their valuable and prompt help with maintenance, particularly given the severe shortage of spare parts, another consequence of the pandemic.

Earlier this year the Churchyard Machines were serviced in readiness for the 2022 season that is now underway. If you enjoy fresh air and camaraderie and can spare an hour or two a month to come and help

us with Churchyard Maintenance, please contact Margaret and Peter Morley who will be delighted to hear from you.

As I reported at our 2021 AGM, the Friends' Committee agreed towards the end of 2020 to cover the cost of repairs to the fabric of the Church that had been outstanding since the 2014 Quinquennial Inspection, together with those additionally identified during that of 2019, as costed in quotations received by the Parochial Church Council in November 2020. This work was completed towards the end of 2021 when the Friends were pleased to make a grant of some £7,200 to cover the full cost less the element of VAT, the latter being reclaimable by the Parochial Church Council through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

This year got off to a good start with a most enjoyable Quiz Evening on 26th February. The previous one that had been held in March 2020 had turned out to be our only fund-raising event of that year. In deciding whether to proceed with the Quiz Evening that we initially planned for February of this year back in September of last year, the Committee carefully considered the pros and cons of holding such an event at a time when there was continuing pressure on the health service. Although there was some concern that bringing people together for several hours might lead to further COVID-19 infections, it was concluded that not proceeding with the event would itself have adverse consequences. It was felt that many people, although worried about the pandemic, were nevertheless very keen to return to some form of normality. The Committee therefore decided to proceed with the Quiz Evening with a limit of six placed on the number of individuals in each team and the maximum number of such teams restricted to ten. A big thank you is due to Pam Robertson for once again setting the questions, to Steve Robertson and Carina, Pam and Steve's daughter, for overseeing the marking, and to Mike Trippick for acting as our Quiz Master. As usual, a great time was had by all.

As you will have seen from the letter inviting you to this year's AGM, the Committee's plans for the remainder of this year include a sale of Nursery plants in May and an Autumn Craft Fair in November. We would also like to be able to offer Sunday Afternoon Teas from the Church Room during the months of May, June, July, August and September. However, this will only be possible if volunteers come forward who are prepared to organise rotas for segments of this season, together with those willing to sign-up for the weekly slots in these rotas. Please let me or any of the other Committee members know if you can help in either way.

During last year's AGM, we considered the question of the Friends' next funding priorities. It was noted that the Parochial Church Council was giving consideration to the acquisition of land to extend the Churchyard as it was becoming full, something that had been viewed worthy of a grant by the Friends at our 2016 AGM. The only other significant project of relevance to the Friends that the Committee was then aware was also receiving consideration by the Parochial Church Council was an idea that had been posited at our 2020 AGM to resolve the limitations resulting from the smallness of the kitchen in the Church Room. It had then been suggested that there might be value in turning the much larger backroom that is presently used for storage into a new kitchen, with a smaller storage area being created in its stead in the space currently occupied by the kitchen.

Since the 2021 AGM, another pressing priority has come to the fore. Back in 2018 the Friends' made a grant to the Parochial Church Council of just over £10,000 to cover the full cost of an upgrade to the Church's heating system based on the existing boiler but employing more efficient radiators fed from new pipe work. It has now become apparent that there are still issues with the system, the resolution of which will necessitate the replacement of the boiler at a likely cost of a further £10,000. This work has naturally risen to the top of the Friends' future funding priorities. I will leave it to Des to outline the amount currently at our disposal for the funding of new projects.

Once the necessary business of this AGM has been completed, the evening will conclude with a 'bring and share buffet' with drinks provided. As has become our recent practice, self-service options will be minimised, with items being served unless individually wrapped.

I will draw my report to a close by thanking Margaret Morley, our Vice Chairman and Des Conridge, our Treasurer, and indeed all the members of the Committee, for their help and support since our last AGM. On behalf of the Committee, I would also like to thank you all for the support you have given us.

Unless there are any questions at this stage, I will now pass over to Des for him to deliver his Treasurer's Report.

Thank you very much.

Treasurer's Report to the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 25th March 2022

The formal annual accounts for 2021 (Annex A) show how income was received and expenditure incurred in the year ended 31st December 2021, with comparative figures for 2020. In this report I will talk through a user friendly version of our finances for last year.

Income

We have five main sources of income each year:

- **Subscriptions & donations**
- **A quiz night**
- **A Spring plant sale**
- **Sunday afternoon teas**
- **An Autumn Craft Fair**

Subscriptions & donations for the year amounted to £1,054.22. This came from 30 people. This compares with £957 in 2020.

Both the **Quiz Night** and **Plant Sale** in 2021 were cancelled because of COVID 19, so our income from them was nil. In 2020 the quiz night raised £947 and in 2019 the Plant Sale £397 (having also been cancelled in 2020).

Income from **Sunday afternoon teas** amounted to £544.75. We were unable to provide teas during 2020 because of COVID 19 restrictions. Our income in 2019 however was £1,624. The main reason for the reduction in 2021 was because we only ran for two months (August & September) instead of the usual five months because of Covid restrictions. And I think, even when we did start, some of our usual customers remained anxious about getting out and about.

We were able to run the **Autumn Craft Fair** and raised £1,090.80 nett. In 2020 we had no Craft Fair (Covid again), but the figure for 2019 was £974.

Bank Interest (£11.09) and **Gift Aid** from HMRC (£201.62) brought our total income for the year to £2,902.48. This compares with £2,240 in 2020 and £6,499 in 2019. 2019 you will remember was the last year unaffected by COVID 19.

Expenditure

Turning to our expenditure:

You will see one very large figure of £7,164.93 for the cost of **Quinquennial repairs to the Church**. This sum is the total cost of the work by Lodge's, less VAT. This work was completed in September 2021, and consisted of repairs to

- Rendering in the North Nave
- Fine cracks in the North Nave, Chancel & Vestry
- Pointing in the South Porch
- Two steps in the Bell Tower
- Asphalt in the Tower gutter
- Shingle damage caused by woodpeckers and work on the lightning conductor on the spire

- Replacement of a missing tile to the south flank of the Chancel
- Gutter & drain maintenance
- General pointing and crack repairs

Our other expenditure consisted of:

- A small job re-painting radiator pipes (£30.24)
- Mower servicing, repairs and fuel (£555.99)
- Insurance (£253.34)
- Admin costs (£33.87)

Our total expenditure in 2021 therefore was £8,038.37.

In summary therefore:

In 2021 our income was £2,902.48 and our expenditure was £8,038.37, an excess of expenditure over income of £5,135.89.

We started 2021 with total assets of £25,600.80 and ended the year with £20,664.71. Of this we had £2,641.19 in our Barclays' current account and £18,023.52 with the Church of England Deposit Fund.

Looking ahead it seems likely that some of these reserves will be needed this year to replace the Church boiler.

Authorisation

This Annual Report is issued on behalf of the Trustees and was approved by them at a Committee meeting held on 26 September 2022.

Philip Hargrave
Chairman and Secretary

Margaret Morley
Vice Chairman

Desmond Conridge
Treasurer

October 2022

Annex A

**FRIENDS OF ST JAMES THE GREAT, THORLEY
BALANCE SHEET**

AS AT 31st DECEMBER

2021		2020
£		£
NET ASSETS		
2,641	Barclays Community Account Bank Balance	3,788
18,024	CBF Church of England Deposit Fund Bank Balance	22,012
20,665	TOTAL NET ASSETS	25,801
REPRESENTED BY:		
25,801	Surplus Brought Forward from Previous Year	24,749
-5,136	Year Surplus / (Deficit)	1,052
20,665	TOTAL RESERVES	25,801

FRIENDS OF ST JAMES THE GREAT, THORLEY

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER

2021		2020
£	INCOME	£
740	Subscriptions	835
314	Donations	122
	Fund Raising	
0	Quiz	947
0	Plant Sale	0
1,091	Craft Fair	0
545	Refreshments	0
1,636	Sub-total Fund Raising	947
11	Bank Interest	91
202	Tax Rebate (Gift Aid)	244
2,902	TOTAL INCOME	2,240
	Fund Raising Costs	
0	Quiz	209
0	Plant sale	0
0	Craft Fair	0
0	Sub-total Fund Raising Costs	209
	Other	
34	Annual General Meeting	21
0	Rector's Board	75
253	Insurance	239
586	Repairs and Maintenance	644
7,165	Paid to PCC (Lodge)	0
8,038	Sub-total Other	979
8,038	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,188
-5,136	TOTAL SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	1,052

Desmond Conridge Treasurer
March 2022