

Trustees' Annual Report

The Friends of St James the Great, Thorley

Registered Charity No: 288678

Year ending 31 December 2019

Legal and Administrative Information

This report is for the financial year beginning on 1 January 2019 and ending on 31 December 2019.

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. 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 2020 and those who acted during the period covered by this report.

Name	Office (if any)	Dates Acted Since 1 January 2019	Mode of Appointment
Miss Margot Cage		1 January 2019 - 8 March 2019	Co-opted until 8 March 2019
Mr Desmond Conridge	Treasurer from 15 April 2019	1 January 2019-present	Elected
Mr Daniel Daniells-Smith		8 March 2019 - present	Elected from 8 March 2019
Mr Bill Hardy		1 January 2019- 8 March 2019 15 April 2019 - present	Elected until 8 March 2019 Co-opted from 15 April 2019-13 March 2020 Elected from 13 March 2020
Dr Philip Hargrave	Chairman & Secretary	1 January 2019 - present	Elected
Mr Clive Hayball		1 January 2019-present	Parochial Church Council Appointee
Mrs Rosemary Jones	Treasurer until 8 March 2019	1 January 2019 – 8 March 2019	Elected until 8 March 2019
Mrs Lina Loadman		1 January 2019 - 8 March 2019 15 April 2019 - present	Elected until 8 March 2019 Co-opted from 15 April 2019-13 March 2020 Elected from 13 March 2020
Mrs Margaret Morley	Vice Chairman	1 January 2019-present	Elected
Mrs Lesley Parker		1 January 2019- 8 March 2019	Co-opted until 8 March 2019
Mr Graham Rundle		1 January 2019- 13 March 2020 1 April 2020-present	Co-opted until 8 March 2019 Elected from 8 March 2019-13 March 2020 Co-opted from 1 April 2020
Mrs Sue Russell		1 January 2019- 13 March 2020 1 April 2020-present	Co-opted until 8 March 2019 Elected from 8 March 2019-13 March 2020 Co-opted from 1 April 2020
Mr Clive Weir		1 January 2019 - present	Parochial Church Council Appointee

Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 13 March 2020

Good evening and thank you all for coming to the 2020 Annual General Meeting of the Friends of St James the Great, Thorley.

The Friends' main fundraising events during the past 12 months were a sale of plants in May, an Autumn Craft Fair in November, and a sale of Sunday Afternoon Teas from the Church Room during the summer months. Last Saturday we also held another very successful and most enjoyable Quiz Evening. A particularly big thank you is due to Pam and Steve Robertson for once again setting the questions for the Quiz and overseeing the marking, and to Daniel Daniells-Smith for his sterling performance as Quiz Master. As usual, a great time was had by all.

The Friends' Grass Cutting Team continued to maintain the Churchyard throughout last year's growing season from March to December. The team undertaking this important task is small and we were grateful to those who came to help. The Churchyard Machines have all recently been serviced in readiness for the 2020 season. 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 2018 Annual General Meeting, it had by then become clear that significant sums of money were required to undertake work in areas of the St James' estate that fall outside the remit of the Friends to support. The Committee therefore agreed that the Friends should step aside from organising a Festival of Flowers and Music and associated Craft Fair over the 2018 August Bank Holiday weekend to enable the Parochial Church Council to use the extended weekend for fundraising in support of other parts of St James. The Parochial Church Council decided to hold a Festival of a similar format to that organised by the Friends during the preceding years. Following the success of the 2018 event, and the continuing requirement for funds for areas of St James' outside the remit of the Friends, the Committee agreed at its meeting in October 2018 that it should once again step aside from organising a Festival in 2019 should the Parochial Church Council wished to do so. The Parochial Church Council took up this offer and organised another very successful Festival over the 2019 August Bank Holiday Weekend.

When the time came to discuss the way forward in respect of the 2020 August Bank Holiday weekend, the Committee noted that the Festival had grown substantially in terms of its organisational complexity over the more than thirty years since the first that was organised by the Friends in 1987. It was also noted that the fact that the Parochial Church Council had taken on the responsibility for the preceding two Festivals had resulted in these benefiting from a significantly wider community being involved in the organisation of these. It was therefore concluded that it would be preferable if this were to continue. I accordingly wrote to Pippa Roy-Chowdhury in her capacity as Churchwarden, noting that, although individual members of the Friends would no doubt be happy to continue to be involved as members of the Church family, the Committee had concluded that it would be preferable if the Parochial Church Council were to take overall responsibility for the organisation of future Festivals, noting that the whole of the St James estate, and not just the Church building and Churchyard, would then also be able to benefit from the funds raised by them. Pippa responded agreeing to this way forward. She expressed her thanks for the Friends' hard work and dedication in the organisation of the Festival over so many years and for establishing it as such a great occasion, noting that it would be a hard act to follow.

During both 2017 and 2018 the Friends made substantial grants to the Parochial Church Council to cover the full costs of the re-decoration of the Church and an upgrade to its heating system. Together these amounted to over £25,000. I will leave it to our Treasurer to report on our expenditure during 2019, but you will see that it is at a much lower level than in the preceding two years. This has meant that, despite the loss of income from the Festivals of Flowers and Music, the Friends now has a significant sum available for future projects. The Committee had been giving consideration to funding the remaining work that had been identified as being required on the Church during the Quinquennial Inspection undertaken in 2014, but, as the next inspection was due in 2019, we held back from agreeing to do so in

case this were to identify other more urgent work. The 2019 Quinquennial Inspection did identify a new crack in the south wall of the Church and this is undergoing further inspection. However, it also concluded that the work outstanding from the 2014 Inspection should cost far less than had previously been estimated. It has therefore now been agreed that the Friends will fund the approximately £8,000 required for this work, holding back a decision on the use of the remainder of the funds at its disposal until a conclusion has been reached in respect of the crack in the south wall.

We have also been in discussion with the Parochial Church Council on the future of the Churchyard. One of our members noted at our 2016 Annual General Meeting that burial space in the Churchyard appeared to be running out and wondered whether the Friends should offer to assist the Parochial Church Council in raising funds to acquire land to extend it. It was observed at the time that, although such additional land, if acquired, would clearly fall within the remit of the Friends to help to maintain, it would be necessary to check whether The Friends' current Constitution would permit it assisting the Parochial Church Council in such a purchase. The Parochial Church Council has recently been giving the matter some consideration but concluded at its meeting in December 2019 that a final decision on the way forward should await the appointment of a new Rector. In the meantime the Parochial Church Council has undertaken some basic research that has indicated that, although the local authority might officially take over the Churchyard if it were to become full and closed to further burials, much of the decision making in its future respect would still remain with the Church.

The upshot is that the Friends next significant project has yet to be agreed. So, if you do have any other suggestions in this respect, please raise them during our "Any other Business" agenda item. One small but important item that the Friends has just funded is the construction of a new board to display the names of future Rectors, as the board used hitherto has no room for further additions. The new board reflects the design of the now full board, which has been re-sited higher on the wall than before, with the new one beneath it, awaiting the engraving of the as yet unknown name of our next Rector.

As you will have seen from the letter inviting you to this Annual General Meeting, the Committee's plans for the remainder of this year are once again to hold a sale of Nursery plants in May and to host an Autumn Craft Fair in November. The Committee would also like to be able to offer 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.

[Post Meeting Note: As of the date of this Annual Report, none of the activities that were planned at the time of the Annual General Meeting for the remainder of 2020 have taken place because of the coronavirus pandemic.]

I will now 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 during the past year. On behalf of the Committee I would also like to thank you for the support you have given us.

Unless there are any questions in respect of my report, I will now pass you over to Des to deliver the Treasurer's Report, his first since taking on that role after the 2019 Annual General Meeting.

Thank you very much.

Treasurer's Report for the Year Ending 31 December 2019 to the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 13 March 2020

1.The Accounts (Annex A) show how income was received and expenditure incurred in the year ended 31st December 2019, with comparative figures for 2018.

2. Firstly I would like to thank Rosemary Jones for handing over the books to me in such a very good state. She has made it easy for me to take over from her because of the detailed work she has done over the previous years.

3. In the past I have sat where you are now listening to the Treasurer's Report, with a copy of the accounts in my hand but at times have been a little confused about all the figures - maybe it's just me. Having prepared the statement this year I feel I have a slightly better grasp than before. I thought I'd like to talk you through the figures and give you the opportunity to ask any questions.

4. Starting with INCOME

On the right-hand side of the statement you will see details of our income for 2019 with a comparison for 2018.

Subscriptions increased to £1,107 - this from 39 people/couples.

Donations increased to £506 - this was made up of money donated in memory of Margot Cage plus a "one-off" donation from a member of the congregation.

Income from **fund-raising** increased to £4,492 from four sources:

- **Quiz Night** - £727
- **Plant Sale** - £1,129
- **Craft Fair** - £1,012
- **Sunday afternoon teas** - £1,624

Lastly on the income side we received

- **Bank Interest** of £115 and
- **Tax Refund for Gift Aided** donations of £279.

You may notice a steep fall in the Gift Aid tax refund. This is because the Friends of St James no longer has responsibility for the August Flower & Music Festival. Consequently, donations for the festival are now channelled through the Parochial Church Council and not the Friends.

Therefore, our total income for 2019 was £6,499, a 13% increase on 2018.

5. Turning to EXPENDITURE

You will see that we have not had very much expenditure in 2019, certainly not compared with 2017 (church decoration) and 2018 (heating).

We made a £200 donation to the Parochial Church Council to settle the final invoice for the **church heating**.

We spent £187 on the **Quiz Night** - this was for the food & prizes.

We spent £732 on the **Plant Sale** - this was all for the plants from Matthew's.

We spent £38 on the **Craft Fair** - this was all for food.

We spent £32 on the **AGM** - this was for photocopying.

We negotiated a reduction in our **insurance premium** to £205.

Our biggest expense was £775 for **Repairs & Maintenance**. The bulk of this was for a new mower and servicing of our existing ones plus restoration of the altar frontal.

The total expenditure in 2019 was £2,169.

6. Our income of £6,499 and expenditure of £2,169 resulted in a surplus of income over expenditure of £4,330.

7. Turning to the left-hand side of the page you will see we started 2019 with assets of £20,419. Adding the surplus of £4,330 left us, at the end of 2019, with £24,749. This was made up of £5,078 in our Barclays current account and £19,671 in our Church of England deposit account.

8. Thank you for listening.

Authorisation

This Annual Report is issued on behalf of the Trustees and was approved by them through an exchange of emails during September 2020.

Philip Hargrave
Chairman and Secretary

Margaret Morley
Vice Chairman

Desmond Conridge
Treasurer

October 2019

Annex A

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

AS AT 31st DECEMBER

2019		2018
	£	
NET ASSETS		
5,078	Barclays Community Account Bank Balance	8,263
19,671	CBF Church of England Deposit Fund Bank Balance	12,156
24,749	TOTAL NET ASSETS	20,419
REPRESENTED BY:		
20,419	Surplus Brought Forward from Previous Year	29,359
4,330	Year Surplus / (Deficit)	(8,940)
24,749	TOTAL RESERVES	20,419

FRIENDS OF ST JAMES THE GREAT, THORLEY

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER

2019		2018
	£	£
	INCOME	
1,107	Subscriptions	965
506	Donations	370
	Fund Raising	
727	Quiz	687
1,129	Plant Sale	935
1,012	Craft Fair	859
1,624	Refreshments	1,139
0	Sundries	63
4,492	Sub-total Fund Raising	3,683
115	Bank Interest	60
279	Tax Rebate (Gift Aid)	642
6,499	TOTAL INCOME	5,720
	EXPENDITURE	
200	Church Heating	12,660
0	Church room floor	1,248
0	Churchyard work	1,257
	Fund Raising Costs	
187	Quiz	177
732	Plant sale	662
38	Craft Fair	36
957	Sub-total Fund Raising Costs	875
	Other	
32	AGM	13
0	Lottery Registration	20
205	Insurance	300
775	Repairs and Maintenance	741
0	Sundries	51
1,012	Sub-total Other	1,125
2,169	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	14,660
4,330	TOTAL SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(8,940)

Desmond Conridge Treasurer
March 2020