

Friends of St Peters AGM

10.30 Wednesday 10th May 2023

Present:

Committee: Chair: David Holmes (DH), Peter Barker (PBarker), Suzie Dodsworth (SD), Ashley Hutton (AH), Anne Worsfold (AW)

Members: Anne Bailey, Mary Bell, Mike Dodsworth, Jenny Hailstone, Marion Holmes, Diana Knight, Teri and Gary Larson, Rosemary Minshall, Heather Stramik, Kevin and Judy Sumner.

- 1. Welcome:** DH welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that it was under a year since the last meeting and that much had been achieved.

- 2. Apologies for Absence:** Apologies were received from John Belli, John Dietz, Joan and Trevor Mason, Graham Fice, Josie Hainsworth, Gary Cooper, Katie and Nico Franks, Julie Lambert, David and Rosemary Boutie, Tim Hailstone, Sue Tweed, Mary Newman, Peter Bailey, Mike Warner and Mike Bell.

- 3. Minutes of the last AGM (8th June 2022)**

Matters arising:

The flagpole plaque in memory of the Duke of Edinburgh needs a full faculty and therefore has not yet been done. It can be placed on the flagpole itself but that was not considered a suitable place. It was suggested that it could be added to, or next to, the plaque listing contributors to the tower funding and so share that faculty. This will be considered and the issue will be taken forward.

The minutes were agreed. Proposed by Mike Dodsworth, and seconded by Gary Larson.

4. Chairs Report:

The Chair's report is appended.

David Holmes told the meeting that one of the aims of FoSP is to increase the general use of the church in the community. The current use includes 'Little Stars', the Christmas Tree Festival, the primary school and an occasional pantomime. We are now introducing Soirées at St Peter's. The first Soirée will be a talk by ecologist David Curry, Others being planned are with local musicians, book readings, poetry recitals and art exhibitions. An after-event discount with the Green Dragon has been agreed. The Soirées aim to strike a balance between fundraising and increasing church use and the 'branding' of 'Soirees at St Peter's' is intended to strengthen the message. It was suggested that the age at which children could attend free of charge should be increased to encourage teenagers to the church.

FoSP is currently working on two projects. First, to upgrade the toilet and kitchen area – this is in the advanced planning stage. Anne Worsfold and Mike Dodsworth attended a fundraising information day in Exeter. Grants for the work are available but we will need to demonstrate community involvement. We have plans to consult the community.

The second project, 'Stoke Fleming Living Churchyard', is to enhance the churchyard and increase its biodiversity. The project is being run by a separate team, ably lead by Jenny Hailstone, with excellent publicity by Anne Bailey. Jenny reported that there are two aims: to protect and enhance what is already in the churchyard, and to make it a relaxing place for people to visit. She said that the team of around 12 enthusiastic volunteers had complementary skills. Together they have cleared 2 metres of brambles (uncovering hidden graves and a cross), planted 2,000 bulbs, sown some mini-meadows and mown paths. Signs will be erected explaining the aims of the work. The school are making bug houses. Future work will include new benches and a story-telling area. Work to widen and re-surface some paths is planned. It was noted that there is a potential for flooding at the entrance to the path by the east gate and that any change must ensure that this is not exacerbated. The next stage of the project will be to survey the current wildflowers, the lichen, wildlife and visiting bats. Once the surveys have been completed a way will be found to make this information available to the public, probably involving information charts. It was noted that the re-wilding of churchyards can provide islands which create corridors for wildlife across the country. Jenny and her team were warmly thanked for their work.

5. Treasurer's report:

At last year's AGM we were able to announce the completion of the FoSP funded Duke of Edinburgh flagpole. We have no completed project to announce today, and, during the financial year very little money was paid out, so FoSP ends the year with a very healthy bank balance of over £19,000. Our purpose, however, is not to build up funds but to use them to achieve our charity's aims, so I am pleased to report that we are actively involved in two projects - The Stoke Fleming Living Churchard and the provision of new kitchen and toilet facilities in St Peter's. The former is entirely a FOSP project (and we have begun to spend some of our funds on it) while, on the latter, we are working very closely with the Parochial Church Council. FoSP funds are with Lloyds. Now that interest rates have risen to a worthwhile level, we have £10,000 in a six month term deposit earning interest at an annual rate of 2.9% It was suggested that the new houses at Little Cotton might produce more members.

The treasurer's report was accepted. Proposed by Anne Bailey, and seconded by Judy Sumner.

6. Committee nominations / election: All committee members are obliged to stand down and offer themselves for re-election.

New committee member, Ashley Hutton, told the meeting that he runs a digital marketing company, is active in sea-life conservation and has longstanding family ties with the area. He was warmly welcomed.

All agreed to re-stand and were re-elected in a block vote.
Proposed by Diana Knight and seconded by Judy Sumner.

7. Projects: covered in Chair's report.

8. Fundraising: covered in Chair's report.

9. AOB: Mike Dodsworth suggested that a weekend meeting might enable more members to attend.

Anne Bailey offered her MailChimp mailing list for FoSP's use.

DH thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 11.38.



Friends of St. Peter's CHAIR'S REPORT

May 2023

I am pleased to report that this has been a very active and, I believe, productive year for the Friends.

Last year we presented a plan for the Churchyard and now I am delighted to report that it is really starting to take shape. Indeed, it has taken on a life of its own with a core working group of 5 people in addition to the FOSP Committee. This group, ably co-ordinated by Jenny Haley, has enabled the 'Stoke Fleming Living Churchyard Project' with its own website and Facebook presence (thanks largely to Anne Bailey's eye for publicity). Most of you will have already seen the fantastic display of daffodils and the work that has been done to clear large swathes of brambles – enhancing the vista and uncovering 'lost' graves!

A handful of unkempt, curbed graves have had the weeds removed and planted with wild flowers to produce 'mini flower meadows'. Pathways are being mowed to provide access between graves and more benches are planned around the churchyard.

We are also planning to restore the pathway that leads from the east gate to the war memorial – widening and resurfacing it to enable wheelchair access. We just need to raise the funds to enable this.

Our other project involves the improvements to the toilets and kitchen – modernising and extending the servery area. The PCC are seeking approval for the plans and the Friends are looking at ways to raise the necessary funds through grants. We believe that these improvements will make the church a more attractive venue – already being used by the school and by the 'Little Stars' mother and child group.

We plan to try to increase the use of the church as a community venue and to this end are planning a series of interesting talks and musical recitals under the heading of "Soirees at St Peter's". The Green Dragon have kindly agreed to offer attendees a discount for meals after the events. Our first talk is by David Curry on the importance of churchyards for wildlife and biodiversity to be held on 16th May.

We have also updated our own Website and linked to JustGiving for donations which not only makes it easier for people to donate but also has zero fees.

Finally, I would personally like to thank the stalwarts of our committee, Tim, Suzie, Peter and Anne, for their work and enthusiasm. However we are all aware that we are thin on the ground (and not getting any younger). Our Constitution allows for up

to 8 Trustees yet we are currently working with only 5 so could well do with some new, young blood to ensure that the work of FoSP continues.

David Holmes

Treasurers Report Friends of St Peter's Financial Year 2022-23

Year ending 31 st March 2023		2020-21
Receipts	£	£
Subscriptions	4105.00	3,594.51
Donations	800.00	1,288.50
Gift Aid	1,072.19	870.60
Other		
Easy fundraising	68.97	109.58
Paypal		362.31
Card sales	50.00	
Total receipts in this financial year	6,096.16	6,225.50
Expenditure		
Duke of Edinburgh flagpole		3,451.80
Photo competition expenses		61.48
Web hosting		198.00
SF Living Churchyard	800.58	
Sundry	100.00	72.00
Total expenditure in this financial year	900.58	3,783.28
Total surplus in this financial year	5,195.58	2,442.22
Bank Balances b/f from last financial year		
Lloyds	13,460.62	
Paypal	362.31	
Total	13,822.93	
Balances as of 31st March 2023		
Lloyds	19,018.51	
Paypal		
Total	£ 19,018.51	2,442.22

Notes Last year's Paypal balance transferred to Lloyds account
£117.97 of petty cash held in addition to Lloyds and Paypal bank account balance.