

## Friends of St. Nicholas General Meeting

18<sup>th</sup> October 2018

St. Nicholas' Church, Stretton

Present: JP Leefe (JPL, Chair), E Foster (EF, Treasurer), P Ransome-Jones (PRJ, Secretary), Tony and Janet Bianchi (TB, JB), Richard Foster (RF), Tony and Judy Tullett (TT, JT), Helen Hall (HH), Greg and Gill Harker, Penny Isaacs (PI), Vivian Wainwright (VW, Surveyor and advisor on ecclesiastical building projects)

Apologies: Lady Angela Sutton, Andrew Hayns, Julian and Jill Lessey, Rona Menzies, Johnny Hall

### TREASURER'S REPORT

A statement of FOSN accounts was supplied; they are the healthiest they have ever been, particularly due to the success of the Stretton Summer Fete.

No subscriptions have been collected this year.

The accounts are now held with Reliance Bank.

Questions: **1. GH:** although it had been agreed at last November's Meeting that FOSN would pay for the mowing of the Churchyard, there were no entries to show such payments.

**EF:** No invoices have been received from Richard Crowden, who has mowed the Churchyard 3 times this year.

Action: **EF** to approach Richard Crowden for Invoices.

**2. RF:** commented that Reliance had imposed charges on payments into FOSN account.

**JPL:** had understood that there would be no charges on the account.

Action: **JPL** to call Reliance to see if charges can be waived.

### MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Minutes were agreed.

**JPL:** HMRC agreed on 12.02. 2018 that FOSN is now a Charitable Company.

This status requires that there should be an AGM, with at least 4 members present.

It is possible to change the Trustees at the AGM.

The AGM will be held early in 2019, probably February, date TBA.

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## MOWING AND MAINTENANCE

### **Mowing**

*see above.*

### **Maintenance**

#### *Church Roof*

Moss needs to be removed and several holes need to be dealt with.

**PI** has obtained quotes for urgent roof repairs.

After consideration Welland Roofing have been approached to do the work; they are expected wk/comm 5<sup>th</sup> November to erect scaffolding and begin work, hopefully in time to avoid the worst vicissitudes of the winter weather. Welland Roofing will advise FOSN if any other problems are found that require urgent treatment.

Question: Is a 'faculty' required for emergency repairs?

**VW** thought not, but thought it would be politic to confirm with Church authorities.

Action: **VW** to approach Diocese regarding necessity, or not, of need for a faculty in this case.

#### *Information: Quinquennial Review*

Every five years the Church undergoes a Review which states the condition of the building, providing valuable information for those interested in seeing the Church building properly cared for.

**VW** has looked into the cost of such a survey, finding two companies of surveyors that do the job, one costing £750, the other £1,000.

**JPL** indicated that the cost of such a survey is borne by the PCC and further confirmed that funds are in place for the Review.

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership sub. is currently £10 per family per annum.

**RF** proposed a new sub. of £12 per person, per annum, to be paid by standing order per month/year, or 3 yearly, plus gift aid.

**GH** seconded, carried unanimously.

First subscriptions to be taken in January 2019.

## CHURCH RE-ORDERING

**JPL:** introduced VW as someone who has considerable experience in the re-ordering of churches and asked him to clarify essential elements of such a project.

**VW:** when re-ordering, communities are generally consider 4 things which enable a Church building to serve a community in ways other than religious:

1. toilets
2. kitchen facilities
3. heating systems (usually air-, underfloor- or overhead systems)
4. removal of pews.

The community needs to think:

- how is the church building currently being used? i.e. is it being used on Sundays? Are funerals and weddings being conducted? Are Kristingle services on offer?
- Could the building be used as a cinema (e.g. Oakham Museum)
- Might the building be used for Art exhibitions, concerts, etc.?

Once potential uses have been decided on, what should be done about the pews? Replacement of all or some of these with chairs (at a reasonable cost), which can be stacked or hung on brackets, would allow a space to be more flexible.

Perhaps all or some of the 'yellow' pews in the body of the church could be removed, leaving the older, historically important pews in situ.

The process of deciding on a plan for the re-ordering would be assisted by completing a form, “Statement of Significance” (see Church of England website), in which items of historical importance would be included.

Then a “Statement of Needs” should be completed (C of E website), indicating what the community would require from the re-ordered Church building.

Both of the above forms, while helpful in to guiding a re-ordering project, would be necessary anyway if grants and funding are applied for.

Question: **TB:** What about removing just half of the pews? Would it not be a good idea to do things incrementally? e.g. parking, lighting, access. It would be a shame to take action and then for nothing to happen.

**VW:** Agreed. There has to be a definite PLAN.

Question: **PI:** Will central heating damage the fabric of the church? If the church's walls are dried out completely it will weaken the structure due to the ancient materials used.

**VW:** Agreed. Heating should only be used when the building is being, or about to be, used. Leaving it on all the time would be harmful. It is a grave mistake to use modern materials on an ancient building.

Ref. Heating: a church in Kings Lynn has installed an overhead Heat/Light system which has proved to be extremely effective, heating the people rather than the fabric of the building.

Question: **Greg H:** Do you have a ball park figure for all these improvements?

**VW:** -Toilet and kitchen: poss. £30k. This would vary depending on whether a lot of digging to the drains had to be done (not to mention faculty required for digging through churchyard); consider a compostable toilet, or Saniflo toilet.

-Heating/Lighting: poss. £30k.

-Wheelchair access: poss. £100. **RF** stated this already in place.

Question: **TB:** What about repair of the organ?

**JPL:** The PCC has an organ repair fund of £842 to put towards this important restoration. Considerably more funds will need to be raised by the PCC.

Question: **JPL:** Would VW help with the "Statement of Need"?

**VW:** Yes, would be prepared to work with interested folk.

**HH** stated that when she was Churchwarden a Statement of Need had been completed, so should be in the PCC records.

Action: **JPL** to check through PCC records to find the earlier Statement of Needs.

**JPL** thanked **VW** on behalf of FOSN for his very helpful insight into the Re-ordering process.

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CLEANING OF THE CHURCH: to take place 10<sup>th</sup> November 18.

CAROLS AROUND THE VILLAGE: to take place 20<sup>th</sup> December 18.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**-Jill Lessey** sent an email recommending that although the Fete was a huge success, perhaps smaller events could be held throughout the year to not only raise funds for FOSN, but also to encourage village cohesion and enjoyment.

It was agreed that the sort of events that used to take place in Feast Week would go some way towards achieving the benefits Jill Lessey is looking for. They could be spread out over the year.

**JPL** thanked Members for their attendance and their contributions to the Meeting, Meeting closed at 7.55 pm.