

Annual Report Friends AGM 2024

I have great pleasure in presenting my annual report. It has been a busy year and the Friends have considerably raised their profile to contribute to life at St Thomas Church.

Last year, just before our AGM, we welcomed the Reverend Lee Thompson as our new vicar. Early in his tenure he witnessed our major fundraising event, the Christmas Tree Festival.

The 2023 festival was undoubtedly the best yet.

We had the same number of sponsored trees as in previous years but the restaurant was busier, the sales tables were busier and the Artisan Market in the hall was packed with shoppers. All this contributed to a massive foot-fall, particularly on Saturday morning. I have a vision of our new vicar acting as a traffic warden to try to control the crowds.

The purpose of this event is not solely to raise funds, it is to offer our Community the opportunity to be part of an event in this beautiful building, to be part of something enjoyable, something inclusive in their church.

We reach the businesses, the shopkeepers, the charities, and the schools. We also reach many groups of local musicians and choirs, from ukulele players to flautists to hand bell ringers.

At the wash-up meeting after the festival and subsequently we considered ways to improve the visitor experience. Several aspects were less than ideal, including crowd control, food preparation and the general safety of our visitors. This led us to the conclusion that we needed more space and so for the next festival the PCC have agreed that

we may use the whole footprint of St Thomas Church and Hall.

In June we held a Summer Reception for members and guests. Originally planned as a “thank you’ for the support of our members, we were delighted, also to present the newly published St Thomas Churchyard Memorials Book, the result of many years work by the late Nigel Mussett and his team of volunteers.

I am grateful to Rosie Ward and to Simon Bennett for pushing this publication over the line. Thank you Simon for coming to the reception and talking about this special document. It is the most detailed up to date record of the churchyard and will be a useful reference for the visitors who come to enquire about family graves.

As a result of this reception and of other initiatives during the year I am delighted to report that our membership has increased and now stands at 70 members.

Another recent initiative that The Friends were delighted to a part of was the Piano Project. To give a little background, the instrument that had long resided in St Thomas Church was no longer fit for purpose and needed replacement. Two professional musicians who regularly perform here and who take a keen interest in developing our musical life, were tasked with finding a replacement. This they achieved in late May with the caveat that the instrument they had identified must be paid for by the end of September. A small committee chaired by local retired businessman David Wansbrough, initiated a targeted fund raising drive. The Friends contributed available funds and the new piano arrived a couple of weeks ago. Gifted to St Thomas Church PCC, this beautiful Steinway Grand piano will hopefully serve the needs of all who contribute to the musical life here in St Thomas Church for many years to come.

As we reach the end of another year I am indebted to the Friends Executive Committee. I will introduce you to these wonderful friends of mine who work tirelessly through the year and keep me in order!

Alison Baker, the treasurer, assisted by Derek Sheffer, Yvonne Mackenzie the Minutes Secretary, Lynne Bennett the Membership Secretary and Joan Horton-Fawkes the Operations Manager.

Rosie Scott on the general committee.

These talented people bring with them a wealth of skills and ideas that continually astound me. They are generous with their time, (some are generous with their husbands time), all truly embody what this 'Friends of' scheme is all about.

I also would like to thank three former committee members who served for many years and have now retired. Joanna Oswin, Anthea Macalister and Peter Stone have each given many years service to The Friends and have seen the organisation go from strength to strength. They truly deserve their retirement, I cannot thank you all enough.

I referred earlier to our significantly raised profile. There is always a risk when your head is above the parapet that you might be shot!

I thought I would end this Annual Report by reading some of the first page of our constitution, simply to make it absolutely clear why we are here and to remind you of just how much we can still achieve.

Our objects and powers

- a) The friends is established to promote and support the restoration, preservation, repair, maintenance, improvement and beautification of the church of St Thomas in the Parish of Lymington (hereinafter called the church) and of the monuments, fittings, fixtures, stained-glass, furniture, ornaments and chattels in the church and churchyard belonging to the church.

- b) In furtherance of the said objects but not otherwise the friends may
- c) arrange and provide for or join in arranging and providing for the holding of concerts, exhibitions, meetings, lectures and classes.
- d) Collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting the objects. Cause to be printed or otherwise circulated gratuitously or otherwise, such papers, books, periodicals, pamphlets or other documentation or films, websites or recorded tapes as shall further the objects.
- e) Raise funds by lawful means and through any lawful activity and invite and receive contributions from any organisation, person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription and otherwise provided that the Friends shall not undertake permanent trading.
- f) Make grants of money and gifts of the property to the Parochial Church Council of the Parish Lymington exclusively for the purpose of the said objects and generally assist those responsible for the care and maintenance of the church.

I share this with you to emphasize what is on the top of our notepaper. We are The Friends of St Thomas Church and thanks to the support we receive from you, we really can make things happen.

Thank you.

I commend my Annual Report for adoption.

Daphne Johnston. Chairman

From: Daphne Johnston daphne.johnston@icloud.com
Subject: Paper
Date: 12 December 2024 at 15:53
To: Daphne Johnston daphne.chantry@gmail.com

D

THE FRIENDS OF ST THOMAS CHURCH LYMINGTON

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<u>RECEIPTS</u>		
Membership Subscriptions	1,250	885
Donations	7,775	3,949
Gift Aid	949	-
Christmas Tree Festival	13,508	13,421
Musical Events	1,192	600
Sale of Christmas Cards	525	266
Artisan Market	-	435
	<u>25,199</u>	<u>19,556</u>
<u>PAYMENTS</u>		
Insurance	308	205
Donation to St Thomas Church	10,000	20,000
Christmas Tree Festival	5,052	4,667
Musical Events	87	693
Christmas Cards	382	316
Advertising	1,381	1,127
Sundry Payments	75	107
Bank Charges	112	122
	<u>17,397</u>	<u>27,237</u>
<u>(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</u>	<u>7,802</u>	<u>(7,681)</u>
Cash at bank at 1st April 2023	26,928	25,155
<u>CASH AT BANK AT 31ST MARCH 2024</u>	<u>£34,730</u>	<u>£26,928</u>
<u>STATEMENT OF ASSETS AT 31ST MARCH 2024</u>		
Cash at Bank	<u>£34,730</u>	<u>£26,928</u>

Approved on behalf of the Trustees on 6th November 2024

..... Dean Baker

.....



Sent from mv iPhone

From: Daphne Johnston daphne.johnston@icloud.com
Subject: Document
Date: 12 December 2024 at 15:57
To: Daphne Johnston daphne.chantry@gmail.com

D



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
The Friends of St Thomas Church Lymington

On accounts for the year ended

31st March 2024

1166743

Set out on pages

3

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st March 2024.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

J. Nivison

Date:

6th Nov 2024


Name:

John Nivison

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Address:

27 Beresford Road Lymington SO41 9JT



Sent from mv iPhone