

Friends of St Margaret's Church Annual Report 2013/14

This is the first Chairman's report looking back over the first year of the Friends

Let's start with income raised. Unfortunately we had an issue with the banks accepting some of the Direct Debit Forms and at long last I have managed to get to the bottom of this and new forms will be available shortly

Having said that we have managed to raise a credible £975 from subscriptions either by cheque, Standing Order or Direct Debit. Our monthly Subscriptions now equate to £130, which should rise on receipt of the new forms. I must thank all of you who have completed the forms or sent through cheques. I must thank May Smitherman who has been extremely patient with me in trying to get her subscription sorted – nearly there May

In terms of Fund raising events we had the following:

1 Jazz Festival

Superb entertainment by Chris Buckwell and Chris Irvine on an evening where rain threatened but I should have trusted Stephen when he said it would all be right on the night. Many thanks to both Chris's for such a wonderful evening

2 Christmas Tree Festival

This was the second year this event has been put on and is well on its way to becoming a regular community event. Many thanks to the various groups and individuals who put a tree in for the festival as well as Dramarama, Karmann Dancers and the Church Choir for the entertainment.

3 Santa's Visit

Again Santa came to High Halstow and this year the proceeds went to the Friends. Many thanks to Santa and his army of helpers who make this a magical night for all

4 Christmas Cards

Many thanks to Ray Collins in pursuing the making and selling of Christmas Cards for the charity. Sending these cards to people who no longer live in the Village is a great way of reminding them of what they are missing

Expenditure was kept to a minimum with leaflets and insurance. If you remember we had a grant from the Ward Members to help kick start the charity the previous year to pay for this. Again this was very much appreciated

We have helped the Church in our first year which to be honest I wasn't sure we would have sufficient funds to do so, but they asked for help with the pointing

and with the Church also putting some money towards this, we were able to provide over a £1000 towards pointing

As a result we have a surplus for the year of £1141.43 taking our funds to £3057.93, not bad for a quiet year

For the future we are looking at other fund raising ideas and will shortly be announcing details of a Cake Festival so please watch the space in the High Halstow Times

Other issues for us to resolve include bringing the web site up to date and will make this a priority during the coming months

I must also thank the Committee over the past year. Thank you Fred and Hazel Beringer for the use of their house for the meetings including the refreshments, it really is appreciated. Thanks must go to Mike Meredith for his continued support during the past year. Thanks to the Church representatives, Stephen Gwilt, Bob Prichard and June Collins for the liaising between ourselves and the Church. The Parish Council representatives have changed during the year following Josh Gordon's resignation and we welcome George Crozer in his place. Many thanks to both of them and Lesley Munday for their continued support

Once again thank you to you all for your support and if I can sum up a steady start, which has set the foundation for the group to grow

Gary Thomas

Friends of St Margaret's Church Chairman