



The Friends of Dedham Church Charity

Annual Report 2015

Registered Charity Number:

Charity No: 1103634

Registered Address:

Badgers, Coopers Lane, Dedham, Colchester CO7 6AX

Charity Trustees who served in 2015

Peter Wilson (Chairman)
Beth Mitchell (Secretary)
David Druitt (Treasurer)
Maria Johnston (Membership Secretary)
Jane Adams
Karen Gooch
David Jewell
Jill Strangward
Peter Rowles
Anne Fletcher
Jean Flewin (Minutes Secretary)

PCC Representative

Suzanne Woods

Independent Financial Examiner

Philip Strangward

Objective of the Charity:

To maintain, repair, restore, preserve, improve, beautify and reconstruct for the benefit of the public the fabric of the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Dedham its monuments, fixtures, fittings, furniture, stained glass, ornaments and other chattels and its churchyard. In addition the Society may support any charitable purpose in the parish of Dedham that promotes the whole mission of the said Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Membership

The Friends currently had as at the 31 December 2015 152 members, nine of whom are life members. This is a decrease of 7 from last year with one member having died, 12 members not having renewed and 6 new members added.

2015 saw the 10th anniversary of The Friends of Dedham Church. Over this period the Friends have donated approximately £100,000 to improvements to the Church fabric and support of the Duchy Barn, to assist our local Church School and to help in the village with projects such as the cleaning of the war memorial. We felt that this occasion needed to be marked with a proper birthday celebration and we invited the London Gospel Choir to make a return visit to Dedham, and thanks to the cost being underwritten by two of our members we were able to keep the ticket price to a reasonable level. Our initial concerns at the slow sale of tickets was unfounded as on the night the church was packed and we were treated to a wonderful evening of music, praise and fun which was enjoyed by all.

Main Donations 2015

Our main commitment during the year was to support the PCC in repairing the clerestory windows, carrying out renovation and decoration of the nave and providing a hospitality area and new toilet facilities within the church, the latter to comply with health and safety and safeguarding requirements. The initial estimates for the work showed that we would have a shortfall in the financing and so the Friends undertook an appeal to raise additional funds. I am pleased to report that this appeal has to date raised almost £12000 and my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed so generously, and have made it possible for us to progress these works.

Unfortunately, very late in the negotiations the PCC decided that they would not agree to the toilets being open at any time other than for church services or agreed events. The Friends are supported very generously by many people who are not church goers but want to support the upkeep of the fabric of the building, and we felt strongly that the facility should be open to visitors to the church from whom we ask for donations to its upkeep and should be made to feel welcome. We addressed the objections of the PCC, (principally related to cost) by agreeing to financially support the upkeep but this too was rejected. Regrettably we had to inform the PCC that we would not contribute to the toilet facility and they would need to find their own funding for a project which they accepted is needed.

As most of you will have seen the building works have commenced and the project is scheduled to last for 16 weeks, and during this time the hospitality unit will be built and installed. At the time of writing the works are running to the planned timetable and to cost.

Future Plans

We have told the PCC that we are able and willing to consider providing support for any works which fall within the remit of our constitution and having regards to the views of our members, and we are waiting on them to tell us what they consider are the most pressing needs emerging from the last Quinquennial inspection. We are also looking at any projects which the school may require if the costs fall within what is allowed by our constitution.

Fund Raising Activities

During the year the Friends held a number of fund raising events to promote the Charity and raise new funds.

Our annual golf day was again held at Hintlesham Hall and was a very successful event with a number of new golfers attending for the first time, as well as the regular supporters of this event, and raised £1406 for our funds.

On 13 August the Friends Summer Prims and canapés Party was held in the vicarage garden and was as usual very well attended. The ladies of the Committee produced a wonderful selection of canapés while the men folk ensured a steady "top up" of the glasses. A very good occasion for meeting together and celebrating the success of the Friends.

The Summer Ball was again held at the Talbooth and is now an established event in the local calendar. The event was again a "sell out" with just over 170 people attending. The organising committee led by Anne as usual did a superb job and I am constantly surprised at the ingenuity shown in devising the entertainment. The format for the evening was slightly changed in that a silent auction replaced the normal auction, and although this raised slightly less than in previous events the evening was a great success and raised £9255.50

The Friends annual outing last year was to Churchill's Cabinet Rooms and the Imperial War museum and this "Non profit" event managed to contribute £257.50 to our funds.

November saw a new event enter our calendar with the first Sea Dogs sea shanty Supper at the Assembly Rooms. A fish and chip supper was provided and Anthony Watson organised the music and coordinated the "singing" as well as providing his own brand of entertainment.

Financial Review

The financial performance for the year is provided separately in the accounts but in summary the Friends of Dedham Church made a net profit of £28573.46 on an income of £42285.06 and expenditure of £13711.60. At the year end our total funds stood at £98728.89. Our contribution towards the current building works is estimated at approximately £48000.

Trustees

This year there is one trustee, Anne Fletcher, who retires by rotation and she has indicated her willingness to continue and I ask that this be approved.

Jill Strangward and David Druitt were co-opted as trustees during the year and I ask that we now formally approve their appointment.

Future Fund Raising Events

Our first event of the year is the golf day at Hintlesham Hall on the 3rd May. We are looking for an even stronger turn out this year so if you play golf come on your own or form your own team and have an enjoyable day in lovely surroundings.

The 2016 Dedham Summer Ball will be held on 17th June again at Le Talbooth, and we have strong demand for tickets and are assured of a good evening. We will be grateful to anyone who can offer an item for the silent auction or who is able to provide a prize for the raffle.

The member's summer Pimm's Party will take place this year on August 4th at Princel House. Our thanks to Jane Adams for allowing us to use this beautiful venue.

The members outing this year will be a visit to Buckingham Palace on the 17th August.

We are still considering our options for an additional event in the autumn. All ideas are welcome

Thanks

My thanks to those who have served on the committee during the year for all their efforts and a particular word of thanks to our minute secretary Jean for her sterling work.

Finally our thanks to you our members for your continued support and may I encourage you to encourage your friends and family to also join us.