

St Lawrence Friends Heritage Trust

Chairman's Report 2023 - 24

Dear Member

This report takes us to the end of March 2024 and covers the financial year 2023-2024.

As the financial year of 2023- 2024 drew to a close, the Heritage Trust was in the position of being able to report asset levels at the bank, the paypal account and some unclaimed reclaimable tax of just over £22,000 at the end of March 2024. I am also able to report that the Heritage Trust funded projects totalling £18,675 in 2023 – 24, comprising:-

- £10,335 for electrical work;
- £1,770 for the church porch and doors;
- £4,085 for the church hall (roof, door and windows); and
- £2,485 for the works to the boiler.

In addition, the Trust has agreed to fund a significant effort to repair the mechanism in the clock in St Lawrence Church in 2024 - 25. As I'm sure you are all aware, reparations to historical clocks and their internal mechanisms are not undertaken by many suppliers and the Fabric Committee of the PCC have worked tirelessly to find an appropriate supplier at the right cost to deliver the works. The Heritage Trust is happy to fund these improvements as it falls comfortably into our remit. The costs for this will fall into the Accounts for 2024 -25 and will be reported next year.

This is a very commendable achievement. The fact we remain able to do this is due to previous years' fundraising efforts that has allowed us to build up substantial reserves. We continue to be very grateful to everyone in our community for their generosity.

Fundraising is never easy and requires considerable effort, time and goodwill in order to generate decent returns. I am incredibly grateful to all members of the Executive Committee and the wider Chobham community for supporting the Heritage Trust this year and in all previous years. I am also grateful to those who give regularly and those who donate through other means, particularly from Michael Hedgecoe for his longstanding support.

We managed a few fundraising events this year – providing our customary Quiz Night in January 2023, supporting Chobham Carnival with our traditional bakery stall in May 2023, supporting Nicky and Paul Biddle at the Westways Farm NGS Garden Opening in May 2023 and a movie night in the Village Hall showing Top Gun Maverick in November 2023.

A copy of the Income and Expenditure Account is attached for your information and awareness. Income for the year was marginally down from the previous year at £9,989 (from £10,138 in 22/23). The event income contributed nearly £3,255 of this, and therefore most of the income continues to come from regular giving, gift aid and other very generous community donations, this year totalling around £6,064.

Our expenditure consisted of mainly event costs (£1,179) and project costs (£18,675) as well as some normal operating cost items for insurances, bank costs and website costs. As a result we had an excess of expenditure over income of around £10,619 in the year. As noted earlier, we continue to carry over a healthy balance of just over £20,868 for future projects.

The Heritage Trust has now raised a figure approaching £300,000 over the last 30 years or so, all of which has been dedicated to keeping St Lawrence and St Saviour Churches in good repair. The 'repair and maintenance' of old and historic buildings never ceases, so we know that new demands will emerge in the fullness of time. But, for the moment, we can all take satisfaction that our two churches are in good order.

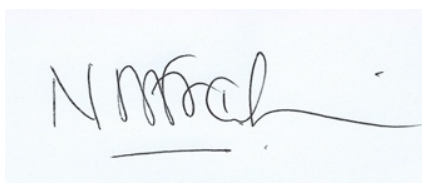
The AGM will be held in the St Lawrence Church Hall at 8pm on Monday, 25th November 2024, marking the twenty ninth year of the Trust's existence. Our plans for future events are currently under discussion and we hope to pull together some innovative and contemporary ideas to continue to support the community we serve over the coming years.

All of our Executive Committee members have agreed to continue for a further year, for which I am most grateful. In addition, we must not let the opportunity pass to thank John Findlay for his support as our Independent Examiner over the last 18 months or so.

The Trust's achievements have been substantial, but they have only been made possible through your support. Our achievements are therefore your achievements and from which you can take great pride. My grateful thanks go to all of you for responding time and time again to our request for funds. I hope that in the process of supporting the Heritage Trust you have gained satisfaction and enjoyment from our varied activities and that you will continue to be 'friends' for a long time to come.

In writing this report, it would be utterly remiss of me not to mention the enormous contribution of Christopher Delacombe to the St Lawrence Friends Heritage Trust. Christopher passed away earlier this year and as one of the founders of the Heritage Trust, it is no overstatement to say that his efforts over the years are a significant reason behind the Trust's ongoing capability and success to support our community, both in the direct roles he undertook but also the indirect impact of his influence at our events and beyond. Many of the current Executive Committee members, including me, were convinced by Christopher of the need to join the leadership team to make a difference in the communities in Chobham and Valley End. We are hugely grateful to Christopher and we will all miss his infectious enthusiasm for all things Heritage Trust. Our thoughts and prayers are with Lucy, his children Caroline, Sophie and Katie, and his grandchildren Rosie and Isabelle.

With every good wish to you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light blue background. The signature appears to be 'N. Mitchell' with a long, sweeping underline.

Neil Franklin

Chairman

November 2024