



The Friends of
Holland House

Friends of Holland House,
c/o Holland House,
Main Street,
Crothorne, Pershore,
Worcestershire
WR10 3NB



Dear Friends,

The AGM of the Friends was held at 2.30pm on Sunday 15th October in the Chapel. Here is a summary of the proceedings.

There were 17 people present, including 4 Committee members, two Trustees, and the Warden. There were 28 apologies.

As Chair I welcomed everyone and led the meeting in prayer, including silence to remember the state of the world at present, and 4 members who had died in the last year. (Vicky-Dennis, Nancy Murray-Peters, Peter Harris, and Elizabeth Stirling-Lee)

Our **secretary**, Wendy, reported that, during the year, we welcomed 2 new Committee members, Claire Billington and Sue Perry, although Sue had since resigned as she had become a Trustee. We have lost a number of members due to death, moving, or financial reasons. The current membership is 140. A Friend's Social was held on 18th July at Holland House - we had hoped to be in the garden but the weather didn't allow. However, a good time was had by 28 attendees who enjoyed meeting Helen, our new Warden.

As **Chair** I reported that I was glad that the Trustees had involved the Friends in the interview process for our new Warden. I noted that at the Social there seemed to be a new enthusiasm since Helens' arrival, noting that Helen has instituted regular morning prayer and Eucharists, and is leading several retreats. She will also lead a Friends Weekend for us next year. As usual Friends organised 6 Quiet Garden days this year, and 4 further Quiet Mondays, requested by the House. I expressed gratitude to those who give their time for nothing to lead the days and lead Communion. I reported that I had led a Quiet Day based on the Retreat Association icon, which the House had hosted over the summer. I thanked all Committee members for their support, especially Tarn Heeks, who became our Treasurer, and to our nominated Trustees who keep us up to date as far as they are able.

Since the last AGM we have been able to transfer £20,000 to the House to pay for new mattresses and to refurbish bathrooms. We will soon be spending £4,000 towards the purchase of new chairs for the Conference room, which will be lighter and more stackable. I thanked Friends for their subscriptions which make these gifts possible and for prayers and support. But I asked - please recruit new members!

Sue Perry read the **Trustees report**, prepared by Chair Paul West, who was on holiday. He said it had been a challenging 12 months for the Trustees, with 3 Trustees standing down, and 3 changes of Chair. The Friends appointed 2 new Trustees, but there remains a Diocesan vacancy. The Trustees had no clerk since 2021, but have had an excellent one for 6 months now. Paul praised the hugely loyal, dedicated and closely knit team of staff, who had worked extremely hard to keep the House running in the inter-regnum. Our post-Covid recovery continued during 2022 and we managed to end the year with a small surplus. However, a Quinquennial Survey carried out earlier this year highlighted a

number of essential repairs and areas for refurbishment in both the old House and the 'new' block, which the Trustees need to address in the months and years ahead.

The Trustees are grateful to the Friends for their financial support for specific items and for the Bursary scheme, which Helen is in the process of revising.

The Warden, Helen, began her report with a poem that highlighted her view of Holland House as a place of peace, beauty, comfort, and hospitality. Her key focus is on being a Retreat house, and offering our own programme as well as facilitating the work of others. She has set up a programme of retreats, and is advertising in the Church Times and other publications to build up the profile of the House nationally. She said that highlights of her time so far have been working with colleagues and supporters, meeting old friends and making new ones. Another key theme for Helen is diversity of groups and individuals - comments from the floor included using the Bursary Fund to attract new retreatants, those on low incomes, under-privileged and possibly students.

Two new Committee members were elected, and existing Committee confirmed in their posts. We re-nominated Revd Alma Organ as a Friend's Trustee for a further 3 year term.

Friends Committee: Chair: Revd. Brenda Morton, Vice Chair: Kathleen Bentley, Secretary: Wendy Berry, Treasurer: Tarn Heeks, Other members: Emily Miller, Julie Fay, Revd Claire Billington, Revd Nicola Moon, Mrs Kay Mason. 1 vacancy.

Friends' Trustees: Revd Alma Organ, Mrs Sue Perry, Archdeacon Hayward Osborne.

Diocesan Trustees: Derek Valentine, Paul West. 1 Vacancy

We hope to plan a Friends weekend in 2024, to run alongside another booking for a small group. Helen has agreed to run the weekend. The date will be 26th to 28th July 2024. It has been agreed that the garden only will be open for the Crophorne Walkabout on Monday 6th May and Friends will be asked to help on that day to welcome visitors, give out leaflets and promote the House.

The meeting concluded with a prayer at 3.45 pm and tea and cake were enjoyed in the dining room.

Date of next AGM: Sunday 13th October 2024 at 2.30 pm

As we are coming to the end of 2023 – can you take a moment please to check that you have paid your Friend's subscription for this year?

With all good wishes,



Brenda Morton (Chair of Friends of Holland House)