

our members) has been nominated as the link person between the PCC and the Friends;

Actions to raise the profile of the Friends in Highnam and the Benefice such as:

- an annual guided tour of the church led/organised by the Friends, promoted through the newsletter and locally, open to all. The **date of Saturday, 21st April 2018** has been pencilled-in. I will confirm this as soon as possible.
- establish a link with the newly formed Highnam History Group.

Any further ideas will of course be welcome: please let me know, and we look forward of course to your support and help.

OTHER NEWS

- Sadly we have to report the passing of David Smith of Maidenhall, Highnam, on 22nd November. David was one of our longest-serving members. Our thoughts and prayers go to his wife Wyn and family.
- We are delighted to welcome new members Trevor Durbin and John Williams, both of Coleford, and Neil and Mary Mclearie of Highnam.
- Eighteen members attended our 31st AGM on 10th June. A full report is being uploaded to our section of the Highnam Church website. We were privileged to have an expert presentation by Mr Richard Cann on the Great East Window of Gloucester Cathedral.
- **Forthcoming Three Choirs event in Highnam:** Magical Evening – a Magic Act and Supper - on **13th January** at 7.30 pm. All welcome. Tickets priced £24 available from <http://www.3choirs.org/event/a-magical-evening> or on 01452 768928

FRIENDS OUTING 2018 – PLEASE NOTE

We are looking into a visit to historic **Brockworth Court** , Gloucester, with its connections to the John Guise family, possibly July or September.

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FRIENDS OF HIGHNAM CHURCH

Newsletter 65

December 2017



Dear Friends

So, we are rapidly approaching the end of 2017. In this Christmas edition of our Newsletter you will see a few innovations such as a note from our Vicar and a plan of activities to refresh and progress the work of The Friends. I hope you will find it interesting reading.

However, first and foremost it is my great pleasure on behalf of our committee to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and also to send each of you enormous thanks on behalf of our organisation, and the church in Highnam as a whole, for continuing to support all we do. Given our modest ambition – described in full below – to expand and diversify our activities, we also hope that you will enjoy and possibly extend your participation in our work. Even better if you are able to encourage anyone else to join by contacting me or our Treasurer (details below).

With very best wishes from us all.

Graham Rosam
Hon Secretary

A Note from our Vicar

It is a pleasure to write this short report for the Newsletter to give an update on the wider work of Highnam Church. I write this as we start the Christmas season of services: ‘a busy time of year for you’ as people say to me! It is busy, I will agree, as we welcome many to our church, but a delight as it speaks of the good relationships that we strive to foster between the church and the wider community. In particular we have been working closely with

the school over the past year, thankful to our team who lead assembly (known now as Collective Worship) every week; the Messy Church that we run twice a term, to which over 30 children and their families come; our church represented as school governors; and the services and events that the school hold in Highnam Church. We were very pleased to welcome the whole school for their Harvest service and this month for their two Christmas services. All this leads to this generation of children being relaxed and 'at home' in the environment of the church, and their families understanding it as the church of the community.

A highlight of the Autumn has been our Alpha course – with 25 people gathering for an 8 week evening course with a meal and video, exploring the central issues of the Christian faith. We look forward to running another course in the Spring.

In the New Year it is important that we engage with the new Lassington housing development, welcoming those who move in, and introducing them to their parish church.

With good wishes, and thanks to you all for your support.

Revd Helen Sammon

FRIENDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23rd NOVEMBER 2017

After mulling over thoughts and ideas in recent months the committee explained its ideas for developing the activities of The Friends to our Parochial Church Council, who endorsed and supported our thinking. We then met again to put the plan into action as follows, reflecting our reaffirmed mission:

To engage everyone in appreciation and support of Highnam Church – a living cultural heritage building of outstanding artistic and architectural merit.

The core of the plan is a revised membership package reaching out to the

8000+ who visit/attend the church each year for services and open days. This number includes three distinctive groups:

- **those living locally** who may not engage with regular worship but realise the value of the building and its importance to the community

- **those from further afield** who visit as part of organised visits or casually on open days
- and of course **regular worshippers**.

We want to reach out to each of these groups and engage them as widely as possible as Friends of Highnam Church. As The Friends we aim to develop their appreciation of the building and provide a means for them to support the church. We aim to do this by developing our communications, promoting events, encouraging Friends to get involved in supporting events, and by regular information sharing and dialogue with the PCC.

The main elements of the new proposal will be as follows.

An improved membership package: with benefits to include:

Developing our Newsletter

- including a regular slot for a contribution from our Vicar (and Friends Trustee)
- providing more 'historical' features and cultural heritage information towards better engagement with the local community in particular;

Continuing the periodic update emails covering events of interest to Friends.

Early notice of events in the church to Friends e.g. Carducci Festival, Three Choirs Fringe, and other musical and cultural events in the church;

Priority booking (or discounts) for events (by agreement with organisers).

Dedicated Friends page on the Church website with Friends news, details of Membership and an invitation to join;

Potential Friends sponsorship of occasional events: examples could include:- the **Gloucester Choral Society Parry Festival (4-7 May 2018)** – which might involve stewarding and/or other support; and/or a **Three Choirs Fringe** event at Highnam (Gloucester 2019) requiring cash which Friends might secure from donations – and see the forthcoming event below;

New Friends membership leaflet with short narrative on the church, details of Membership, with and an invitation and full details of how to join;

Church Stewards briefing to raise our profile and encourage active promotion of the Friends to visitors;

Actions to improve partnership with the PCC such as more regular reports to the PCC, and periodic attendance at PCC meetings, so the PCC and Friends are in dialogue, better informed of respective plans and can develop mutually beneficial activities. We were pleased that Christine Steadman (also one of