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CONTRIBUTION – RESTORATION – CONSERVATION

26 May 2023

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to be writing to you as Chairman of The Friends of St Anne's Church, Kew about our achievements and performance over this past year and our plans going forward. This will be the last time I address you as Chairman as I step down at this AGM as you have read in my letter to you in March 2023.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I would like to thank you so much for your support and generous contributions during the past year. We close this year with a good balance in our account.

Unfortunately, the fundraising project I mentioned last year in my letter, the restoration of the pathway in the churchyard, was delayed. It is now in planning again and we very much hope it can be executed in the coming months. That project was the last project on the Master Plan for the Restoration programme created over twenty years ago that The Friends have completed over that time. We are now waiting to hear from The President of The Friends, Revd Canon Dr Giles Fraser, and the PCC the programme for the next Master Plan.

We commenced our Fundraising Event programme in September 2022 through to May 2023 offering both live and streamed if not restricted by copyright. You can read further details on our events for 2022 to 2023 in the Annual Report.

For your information, I have produced a Booklet '**The Friends of St Anne's Church Kew – Fundraising Events – Spring 2016 to Spring 2023**' outlining all of the fifty-three (53) Events that I have organised over the past seven years outlining the category. You can pick up a copy at the AGM.

I would like to say a big thank you to all those who have served on The Friends Executive Committee over the past year. Our President - Revd Canon Dr Giles Fraser, Cate Lyon - Churchwarden, John Mortley - Churchwarden, Simon Mollett - Treasurer, Ben Jones - Secretary, Wendy Booth - Membership Secretary and Linda Pethick. A special thank you to Cate Lyon, who as the Senior churchwarden has just stepped down after her long tenure of four years leading St Anne's through a stressful and busy time of a pandemic and interregnum but I may say always giving The Friends Executive Committee her full support and advice. I would also like to offer Paul Booth a special mention and thanks for, although he stepped back a few years ago from the Executive Committee, his help, support with all the IT has been outstanding even coping with my determination to get us online and into the 21st Century!

As I mentioned in my letter to you all in March, it has been an unquestionable pleasure to spearhead The Friends over the past seven years. It was almost on its knees with no real presence, or fundraising programme in place. To address this in 2017 we commissioned a graphic designer to create a profile,

logo and strapline which has been highly successful as evident in our flyers and banner. We progressed into creating a website with the help and support of Paul Booth as nothing was in existence and then to ticketing online. The pandemic was clearly a big hindrance as all our events came to a halt and prior to that at the end of an event we offered our audiences refreshments of finger sandwiches, fruit, and a glass of wine or soft drink which made it all very sociable. However, by September 2020 we were up and running offering streamed lectures via Zoom. We were initially helped and supported by Richard Lebus, Chairman of the Arts Society Richmond. This was a new experience for all our new speakers too and Richard was there to help and guide them. This continued until May 2021 and by September 2021 we were then able to offer both live with a controlled audience number along with streamed via Zoom assisted by Paul Booth. It has been quite a journey and I am so grateful to all of those that have helped behind the scenes as well as the two work experience IT students we commissioned in early 2022 to assist with the online learning as well as paying them too.

I now wish the next Chairman and Events Secretary – yet to be selected and appointed – all best wishes as The Friends continue to contribute, restore and conserve the fabric of this most iconic and beautiful church on Kew Green.

On behalf of The Friends of St Anne's Executive Committee, may we thank you all so much for your continued support as a valued member of The Friends into 2023 / 2024.

I do hope to welcome you all at the AGM on Saturday 17 June 2023 at 10.30 am in St Anne's Parish Hall when it will be our pleasure to offer you a glass of wine or soft drink and my opportunity to thank you all personally for your support to me over these past seven years.

Yours Sincerely

Lorraine Neale
Chairman & Events Secretary, The Friends of St Anne's Church, Kew

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