

# NEWSLETTER

## of the Friends of Beverley Minster

SPRING 2018



### THE CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

**Roger Lewis**

This spring I want to bring you up to date with our thinking about how we conduct our Friends' business. Not perhaps the most exciting or accessible topic but very important: not only do we have to discharge our responsibilities as a charitable organisation but we have properly to account to you, our members.

#### Membership of the Friends' Council

The Friends' 'Constitution' sets out our purpose as an organisation (I have often quoted from this in contributions to newsletters and annual reports). The carrying out of this purpose is overseen by the Council - set up (in the words of the Constitution) to look after 'all matters concerning the organisation, business and finance of the association'.

Within the Council there are four categories of 'member':

- Six members elected at the AGM; these retire in rotation
- 'Ex-officio' members (the vicar and the officers, the latter to be elected at the AGM)
- 'Nominees'; two nominated by the PCC and one by the Old Fund – in all cases these are to be 'subscribing members of the Association' (i.e. they must be Friends, though they need not necessarily be members of the organisation that nominates them)
- Co-opted members.

In addition are people invited, usually on a one-off basis, to 'attend' or 'observe' or contribute as an expert to a particular item on the agenda (this could include, for example, the Minster Surveyor or someone writing a proposal to an external body for a grant).

Looking at our Constitution document we can immediately see some gaps. Nothing is said about the duration of membership for those elected at the AGM (in practice it is three years); nor about co-opted members; nor about other people who may take part in meetings on an occasional basis.

#### Conflict of interest

We have also been thinking about 'conflicts of interest'. Our Constitution is silent about this, maybe because those who drafted it assumed no explicit statement was needed - treating this as a matter of

sensible and honest conduct. Conflict of interest is however very much a concern of our time and we need to be clear about it. Good practice suggests that people with an 'interest' in the outcome of a discussion should declare that from the start. The interest may be financial (for example they or a member of their family or a friend might benefit financially from a decision the Friends' Council makes); commercial (they may know someone with whom a contract might be placed); or personal (they may be in a relationship with someone who may benefit from a particular decision). Conflict of interest may also be an issue when a member of a committee also sits on another group which stands to lose or gain from the taking of a particular decision. Declaring an interest need not prevent a person from taking part in a discussion but it may affect whether or not they should vote on a proposal arising from the discussion.

#### Other governance matters

There are other things we need to 'tidy up' including voting arrangements at the AGM, voting during Council meetings, taking decisions between meetings (including powers delegated to the Chair), our financial year, and our position on financial reserves.

We also have to consider the most effective way of making and recording these changes: what needs to be committed to paper and where.

At our February meeting we are giving time for a systematic consideration of all these issues. We will then carry out any further work as necessary before bringing to you, the members, proposals at the AGM in October.

#### Michael Nicholson

It is with sadness that we record the death of Michael Nicholson, long a member of the Friends, who died suddenly and unexpectedly in January. Michael was truly a friend of the Minster in every sense – a regular at most of the services; always ready to help with whatever needed doing, for example serving breakfast after early morning Holy Communion and helping at events for children and young people. He 'carried the torch' in the Olympic ceremony and wrote a series of articles for the parish magazine on saints. A distinctive 'character' - warm, sociable and well-informed (especially on Church matters) - Michael is much-missed and will continue to be so for a long time.



## FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

The membership as of the beginning of February is 496 – we will make it over the 500 mark again if enough people linger when I'm around... The great sadness of this diminution of numbers are two tragic losses to the Friends. Neil Pickford, died on the day of our AGM and Mike Nicholson, who died as he would have wished, during a service in the

Liz Grove

Minster. Great for him, a sadness for us. Both Neil and Mike have been such an integral part of the Minster life that their loss will be felt in the silence they leave behind. But new members continue to appear and are of course most welcome. May many more Spring up and join our Friend-ship.

## BREAKING NEWS



The coin shown here is a silver penny with the image of King Athelstan of Wessex who reigned from 924-39.

He heard from pilgrims, so the story goes, of the miraculous works of John of Beverley and was persuaded to visit the relics of John (who died in 721 and was buried in the monastery he had founded on the site of the present Minster). Athelstan was on his way to fight the Scots at the battle of Brunanburgh and took with him a banner from the church. After his victory, to honour John, he granted the church the right of sanctuary and Charter of Freedom in 937.



The oldest object in the Minster is the sanctuary chair which dates from the Saxon period. It is currently to the left of the high altar and is therefore in the oldest, 13th century, part of the present building where medieval pilgrims would have prayed at the shrine of St John. This

part of the building is in urgent need of restoration - particularly the wood and lead of the lesser transept roof.

Maintaining the fabric of the Minster to function as a place of worship and a destination for thousands of visitors is a task beyond the means of the two sources of funding we have - the Old Fund and the Friends. Even supplemented by the the giving of visitors we are only able to fund routine maintenance. Given the surveyor's report that there are major structural issues to resolve which will cost millions of pounds, we began the lengthy process of seeking funding from external sources - the Heritage Lottery Fund being the key source.

A small steering group was formed under the guidance of a project manager, generously funded by the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, to apply for Heritage Grant funding for a project '*Beverley Minster, place of sanctuary*'.

There are two aspects to the bid - the structural repair of the fabric of the building and a range of plans to share our heritage with visitors - the 'interpretation'. After all, it is the people who buy lottery tickets that make this funding possible and they will have the opportunity to learn more about sanctuary through exhibitions, tours, events and educational projects for schools. We hope that our project will also resonate with the current plight of refugees and asylum seekers who flee persecution.

A press release is expected to confirm the following:

*"Beverley Minster has received initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the Beverley Minster, Place of Sanctuary project.*

*Made possible by National Lottery players, the project aims to repair and conserve the badly leaking roof of the lesser transept under which the famous Saxon Sanctuary chair is situated.*

*In 937 King Athelstan granted Beverley the Right of Sanctuary – one of only two towns in the north of England with this status. People fleeing persecution or accused of wrongdoing travelled from all over the country to find protection for up to 30 days and a fair hearing. The priceless Beverley Sanctuary Book, kept in the British Library, has records from 1478 - 1540 containing a list of the names of fugitives and their misdemeanors."*

The initial funding is to enable us to spend a year in consultation with all involved so that, if successful, the full amount applied for will be granted for the 'delivery' phase between April 2019 and April 2021.

The total grant applied for is £440,000 with match funding from the Friends and the Old Fund to cover the actual cost of £775,000.

You will have seen in the Friends' Annual Report accounts that the Friends Council have been holding back a larger than normal sum of money knowing that Friends would want to make a major contribution to this project of sharing the heritage of the Minster with visitors. This will involve the creation of a sanctuary exhibition with the latest touch screen technology, a website, the commissioning of an artwork, the appointment of a Learning Events Officer for two years and a new publication.

The Minster's project is just the start of what we hope will be an ongoing relationship with the HLF working towards a joint bid working in partnership with St Mary's Church and the Local Authority - the much heralded *Two Churches, One Town Story* project.

Mervyn King  
Member of the steering group



# SOCIAL PROGRAMME 2018

## SATURDAY 5 MAY STUDY DAY

10.00 - 16.30

### 'A THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY: BEVERLEY MINSTER AND THE ENGLISH MEDIEVAL CATHEDRALS AS TIME MACHINES'

*This day school uses the English cathedrals as 'time machines' to the medieval period, tracing their story from the revolutionary birth of English Christianity in about 600AD, through the great rebuilding that followed the Conquest of 1066, to the decades around a century later when gothic was invented in an atmosphere of febrile change and political tension. It then follows the story through the cults and traumas of the fourteenth century, backdrop to England's most extraordinary architectural miracles, and into the dynastic struggles of the late medieval era; struggles which eventually tore apart the very world that created the cathedrals. Throughout, beautiful photography of the buildings themselves, as well as of contemporary manuscripts and paintings, helps to use these buildings to bring to life the remarkable events they witnessed, and helping explain how these events shaped their architecture. Special attention will be given to the role of Beverley Minster in this story.*

Speaker: **Jon Cannon** (lecturer, author, researcher and BBC TV presenter)

Venue: Peter Harrison Room, Minster Yard North, HU17 0DP.

Cost per person: £38 (£34 for Friends)

Includes, Morning Coffee, Buffet Lunch and Afternoon Tea and pastries.

## MID-SUMMER EVENING EVENTS

### TUESDAY JUNE 5

19.15

#### VISIT TO BEVERLEY FRIARY

Speaker/Guide: **Chris Dawson**

Venue: The Friary, Friars Lane, Eastgate, Beverley, HU17 0DF

Cost per person: £6 (£5 for Friends)

Meet at the Friary (Parking available in Beverley Minster Car Park)

### MONDAY JUNE 25

19.15

#### 'ROUND AND ABOUT BEVERLEY MINSTER'

Guide: **Pamela Hopkins**

*A walk round the exterior of the Minster looking at the five roads which lead into this area and discussing what buildings there would have been here in the medieval period.*

Cost per person: £6 (£5 for Friends)

Meet outside the Highgate entrance of the Minster

(Parking available in Beverley Minster Car Park)

### MONDAY JULY 2

19.15

Guided Tour of Eastgate – to Beverley Beck

*A walk looking at the history of this former industrial area of Beverley, almost on the doorstep of Beverley Minster.*

Guide: **Richard Mann**

Cost per person: £6 (£5 for Friends)

Meet outside the Highgate door of Beverley Minster

(Parking available in Beverley Minster Car Park)

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### FRIDAY 10 AUGUST COACH TOUR

8.15 (for 8.30 start) - 19.15

#### VISIT TO RIEVAULX ABBEY AND MOUNT GRACE PRIORY

*Looking at these respective Cistercian and Carthusian sites which are so much a part of our Yorkshire heritage.*

Guides: **Stuart Harrison and Dr Glyn Coppack**

Cost per person: £54.75 (Adult); £53.20 (Concessions)

English Heritage Members: £39.50

National Trust Members: £47 (Adult); £46.50 (Concessions)

Includes Entrance Fees, Morning Coffee, Buffet Lunch and Afternoon Tea.

Meet on Eastgate near the junction with Minster Yard North

NB: EH and NT members' cards essential on the day

The AGM weekend is **12-14 October** 2018, starting with Dinner at Cerrutti 2 on Friday 12, and with the AGM on Sunday 14 October.

Full details will be published, with the booking form, in the Annual Report later this year.

#### BOOKING ENQUIRIES TO:

The Programme Secretary, Friends of Beverley Minster,  
85, Ancaster Avenue, Hull, HU5 4QR

E-mail: [friendsbooking@beverleyminster.org.uk](mailto:friendsbooking@beverleyminster.org.uk)

Telephone 01482 442221

Please use the enclosed form to apply for places.

NB 'Friends' should be interpreted as current 'Friends of Beverley Minster' and also current Friends of St Mary's who are able to buy tickets at the reduced Friends' prices listed.



The Friends of Beverley Minster unite in common fellowship all those throughout the world who wish to be associated with this outstanding medieval building. They are a link between those in Beverley and far beyond, whose love of the Minster inspires them to share in preserving it, in all its beauty, for future generations.

Registered Charity No. 501302

Beverley Minster Parish Centre, 38 Highgate, Beverley HU17 0DN

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## PROGRAMME SECRETARY'S REPORT Pamela Martin



The 2017 Events programme was a successful one and this was reflected in the increase in numbers attending the mid-summer coach tour outing to Byland Abbey and Newburgh Priory. A total of forty members, church members and friends gathered early one bright and sunny August morning and awaited the coach in Eastgate. A stop was made in Malton for coffee at the 'Old Lodge' where a warm welcome awaited. We then drove up to Byland Abbey where Stuart Harrison, our guide and expert in Church architecture and archaeology, awaited our arrival. The site of the Abbey was much larger than the view from the road, which was deceptive. Stuart not only provided a fascinating insight of life in the Abbey and its regional influence, but also described the architecture and remains and what the buildings would have looked like. A visit to the small museum on site proved to be interesting and completed the tour, mostly in sunshine and managing to dodge the only short, sharp rain shower of the day! An excellent buffet lunch followed at the Byland Abbey Tearooms. The coach then took us some three or more miles to Newburgh Priory where we were welcomed by Stephen Wombwell (son of the seventh Baronet) and then given a most interesting tour of the Priory by their volunteer guide of long-standing, Mrs Woods. Afternoon tea and scones were taken in the Tea Room served by the family and staff. Thereafter, members had time to explore the grounds, gardens, lake, waterfalls, etc. before we made our way home again.

The October weekend (6th – 8th October) commenced with the Annual Dinner on the Friday evening at *Cerutti 2* in Beverley, where we were provided with the usual excellent choice of menu. John Phillips, our Honorary Secretary and after-dinner speaker, gave an interesting account of his life and career and not least about his love of the Minster and researches, culminating in his recent book being published on the subject of re-dating the Minster.

The Study day on the Saturday, entitled '*Beverley Two Churches and a Town*', was delivered by Professor Barbara English, M. B. E. The morning comprised a lecture and a practical session when delegates examined wills and deeds and compared the presence of both Beverley Minster and St Mary's Parish Church, Beverley in these documents. After an appetising buffet lunch, the group was divided into two before moving across to the Minster for two talks, one on the Percy Tomb and Chapel (by John Phillips) and the other on the Warton family monuments. Afternoon tea followed and a final resume of the day was held. Thirty three people participated on this occasion.

The AGM on the Sunday was very well attended by approximately forty members in total. The St John of Beverley Annual Lecture, '*New thoughts on an old Chronology: Meaux Abbey, East Riding of Yorkshire, in a new light*' was delivered by Dr Glyn Coppack & Stuart Harrison and attracted such a large audience (Friends and Non-Friends) that the room was overflowing. Afternoon tea, followed and finally, the calm of Evensong ended a very pleasant weekend.

The Epiphany Organ Recital, '*Messiaen: La Nativite du Seigneur*' played by Robert Poyser, Director of Music at Beverley Minster, attracted about forty people and following the concert, refreshments were sponsored by the Friends.

And finally, if members have any ideas for future events, lecture topics, visits and activities, please do get in touch with me at

**Email: [friendsbooking@beverleyminster.org.uk](mailto:friendsbooking@beverleyminster.org.uk)**

**Telephone: 01482 442221**

and I will try and incorporate these in forthcoming programmes.