



The Friends of All Saints Church, Hemblington

**“A Market for our Times” – an illustrated talk about the history of Norwich Market
with Frances and Michael Holmes
held in church on Saturday afternoon, 6th June 2026**

The Friends of All Saints Church were very pleased to welcome 55 people to hear the history of that central meeting point in the fine city of Norwich - its market place. Illustrated by early drawings, paintings, later photographs and interviews with current stall holders, earlier architects and others involved with the market over many years, the presentation was a lively and well-researched history of how the market has changed over the centuries, and what is being proposed for its future.

The Friends group is very grateful to Frances and Michael Holmes for offering this well illustrated talk to mark the beginning of Great Big Green Week at Hemblington and as a precursor to their Annual General Meeting. The group would also like to thank all the people who attended the presentation, and generously donated to the Church Repair Fund.



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
of The Friends of All Saints Church, Hemblington
held on Saturday, 6th June, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. in the church**

Present: Chair Gwendoline Slater, Treasurer Peter Harvey, Secretary Susan Rowe, PCC representative Catherine Howe and 3 members of the Friends group.

- 1) Welcome to the meeting:** Chair Gwendoline Slater welcomed attendees to the meeting, outlining the aims of the group, and thanking them for staying on after the very interesting talk about Norwich Market.
- 2) Apologies for absence** had been received from committee member Steve Briggs, Revd Andrew Tapsell and 5 Friends.
- 3) Minutes of the AGM held on 7th June, 2025** had been circulated to the meeting, and were agreed as a correct record of that meeting.
- 4) Matters arising therefrom not on the agenda:** there were no matters arising.
- 5) Chair's Report for the year 2025:** Gwendoline Slater outlined another successful and eventful year for the group, organising or supporting events in church and in the local area. Her report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 6) Treasurer's Report:** Peter Harvey's report had been circulated to the meeting. He outlined the main areas of income and expenditure, feeling that the Friends had had another successful year and the fund is in a healthy state. The report is attached as Appendix 2. Acceptance of this report was proposed by Catherine Howe, seconded by Revd Sue Shillam and agreed by all present.
- 7) Nomination/Election of officers and committee 2026:** the chair confirmed that the current committee was willing to stand for a further year, though if anyone else was interested in joining the committee, they would be most welcome.

Chair	Gwendoline Slater
Treasurer	Peter Harvey
Secretary	Susan Rowe
PCC representative	Catherine Howe
Committee member	Steve Briggs

Agreement to the above committee was proposed by Revd Sue Shillam, seconded by Jennifer Harvey and agreed by all present.

- 8) Proposed programme for The Friends - 2026:** Susan Rowe outlined forthcoming events planned by the Friends committee. The report is attached as Appendix 3.

9) Any other business:

- a) Formal thanks to the group from Revds Andrew and Sue: Revd Andrew had sent his apologies for absence at the meeting and had asked Revd Sue on behalf of them both to sincerely thank the Friends committee *et al* whose aims supported the work of the church and showed such good collaboration with the church team.

10) Date of next meeting: Spring/summer 2027 - date to be confirmed

Appendix 1

Chair's Report for the year 2025

There were 21 life Friends, 28 annual friends and 1 new corporate sponsor has been recruited.

Overview of activities organised or supported by The Friends in 2025

26th January 2025: Big Churchyard birdwatch

24th February: refreshments and short church architecture/wall painting talk given to the U3A walking group.

15th March: "Grand Music Quiz" organised by David Bryant at Heathlands Community Centre.

23rd April and 4th June: Norfolk Wildlife Trust organised churchyard conservation training for their volunteers. Members of the Friends group offered refreshments, and briefly outlined the roles, responsibilities, challenges and benefits of involvement in churchyard conservation at Hemblington.

Saturday, 7th June: 'Wildlife in a Country Churchyard' illustrated presentation by David Bryant, followed by the Friends AGM.

8th – 15th June: Churches Count on Nature and Great Big Green Week with exhibition in church.

16th August: commemoration of 80th anniversary of Victory over Japan Day. The Friends were fortunate to engage well-known Norfolk historian Neil Storey to give a formal presentation: "The war in the Far East", and events leading up to its conclusion. This was followed by Friends Committee member Steve Briggs' presentation of "H.M.S. Persimmon in the Indian Ocean 1943-1946 - the story of a Troop Landing Ship and her crew in the context of the war against Japan."

19th August: planned visit by members of The How Hill Trust: refreshments and church architecture/wall painting talk.

12th – 21st September: Heritage Open Days / Norfolk Churches Trust bike ride

20th/21st September: Art exhibition in church courtesy of the Gt Yarmouth Guild of Artists and Craftsmen.

For all these events, members of the Friends group and church team cleaned the church, baked and/or served refreshments and cleared up afterwards. All attracted donations for the Friends fund.

Members of the Friends team also helped with some church organised events, e.g.

- the Village Garage Sale in April, with a stall at The Bird in Hand, kindly offered by Mr and Mrs Norton
- the 80th anniversary afternoon tea marking Victory in Europe Day (May) at Heathlands.
- Hemblington School churchyard visit on 1st July, when BADCOG chairman had organised a moth trap for the children to see the next day.

Churchyard conservation: the Friends group continued to support local conservation groups BADCOG and the Bure Valley Conservation Group with cutting and raking both churchyards. We also supported some working parties to help prune hedges, remove brambles, etc. and helped prepare the ground and plant more trees on the eastern boundary. The group also supported the church's successful application to become an accredited Eco church at silver level.

Monthly wildlife surveys were undertaken in 2025. The data are sent at year end to Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Norfolk Biodiversity Information System and the Caring for God's Acre group. A set is at the back of the church as part of the Churchyard Conservation information.

The Friends group were nominated for two awards during the year:

- in the Spaces for Nature and Wellbeing category of the Norfolk Community Biodiversity Partnership's award scheme 2025
 - the National Churches Trust "Church & Community Volunteer" Award
- though unfortunately both applications were unsuccessful.
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Appendix 2 Annual Financial Report for the Friends of All Saints Church, Hemblington for the year ending 31st December 2025

The Friends had another successful year in 2025 and managed to raise a further £2,069.05 after deducting two donations of £55 to the Bure Valley Conservation Group for their help with cutting the grass in the churchyard.

We had a number of successful fundraising events this year including David Bryant's music quiz, our annual RSPB Birdwatch, VJ Day talks and an Art in the Church event. The Applegates organised another Jigsaw puzzle sale on eBay which raised £64.60.

In March we were awarded a £200 grant by the Norfolk Community Foundation which was to be used to support our Victory in Japan events. It was a condition of the grant that we held the money in a separate restricted fund so it is reported outside the main Friends accounts. The grant was used to pay the presenter fees for our VJ Memorial Talk.

At the end of the year, we had £4,694.35 in our account. Our funds are held as a protected fund in a Lloyds bank account belonging to the Hemblington Church Parochial Church Council.

Friends Account

Summary of Income:

Membership Subscriptions	£370.00
Donations	£568.10
Events	£1,144.76
Recovered Gift Aid	£96.19
Total	<u>£2,179.05</u>

Summary of Outgoings:

Donation to BVCG	£110.00
Total	<u>£110.00</u>
Balance in Fund at 1.1.2025	£2,625.30
Plus Receipts for 2025	£2,179.05
Less Payments for 2025	£110.00
Excess Receipts over Payments	£2,069.05
Balance in Fund at 31.12.2025	<u>£4,694.35</u>

Peter Harvey, Treasurer

6th January 2026

Appendix 3

Proposed programme for the Friends 2026

The Friends year seems to have been pretty quiet up to now, though background work has been ongoing preparing newsletters and applying for a couple of awards relating to the conservation work undertaken in the churchyard by BADCOG, Bure Valley, and various Friends. The usual RSPB Big Garden birdwatch was not repeated in the churchyard this year, as attendance has reduced over previous years, and it really can be very cold and unproductive. However it was agreed to encourage people to join in a survey at another time – Great Big Green Week.

Our main event is today, so thank you for attending the presentation by Frances and Michael Holmes about Norwich market place. Thank you even more for staying on for this AGM!

Today also sees the start of Great Big Green Week, with this small exhibition about work in the churchyard, last year's wildlife survey report, and other general information. Tomorrow Revd Sue will be holding morning "eco service" – 9.30 am – all very welcome.

On Wednesday 10th June, Norfolk Wildlife Trust officer Lucy Seely has kindly offered to give a wildflower walk around the churchyard – 10:30 – 11:30. This will be followed by light refreshments, then we will do the June wildlife survey for an hour. Do come along with binoculars if you have them, and help us to note all the birds, bees, butterflies, damselflies etc that can be seen from the churchyard. We also hope to see Revd Martin Greenland at this survey, an expert on bugs of all types, which will inform and expand our annual survey.

Linked to our concerns about the environment and climate change, in collaboration with Revds Andrew and Sue and Hemblington eco-church team, we will be showing the People's National Emergency Briefing film at Heathlands on Thursday evening, 2nd July. This is a national initiative to try to inform people about the threats we are actually facing and what steps can be taken to mitigate some of the damage. We encourage you all to attend with an open mind.

Not a Friends event, but the church team is working closely with the Heathlands team to offer an Auction of Promises – Heathlands on Saturday evening, 4th July. If you can think of something item or service that could be offered, please have a word with Catherine Howe, who is coordinating with Claire Norton and Jill about this. Half of the profit is to be donated to the church repair fund, so very worthwhile supporting. Details will be in the Heathlands Newsletter.

Saturday afternoon, 1st August will see the return of Imogen Corrigan, the well respected historian and excellent speaker. Her subject is The Bayeux Tapestry – which I know will be well researched by her and presented with rigor and humour! Tickets will be £10 per person, to include refreshments – and you know that means cake! Please tell people about this event as we need to cover certain expenses as well as make it worthwhile for the speaker and for our funds.

Another major event in church which we are sure will attract many visitors is another exhibition of paintings by John S Applegate, over the Heritage Open Days of Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th September. Coast and Country is the title. Offers of help with baking / serving refreshments, stewarding, washing up etc will be much appreciated.

This is as far as we have got for 2026, but do have a word with anyone on the committee if you can think of other events the group can organize, to increase funds that are specifically for the repair and upkeep of the church and churchyard.

Thank you for your attendance today and please encourage other to join us – just £10 a year to help keep this beautiful little church in good nick!

Susan Rowe, Secretary

June 2026