

June 2023

Dear Members

Firstly thank you for being a member of Friends of Kirkley Hall. I'm pleased to report that we are doing very well as far as membership is concerned and regularly welcome in new people.

In the last year we have tried to vary the programme so that everyone can find something that they feel they would enjoy. We continue to have speakers and these have been warmly received, although numbers attending could possibly be better.

We had the Christmas meal that had a few bumps before we eventually got things going, but I think everyone enjoyed themselves and the caterer who helped us out last minute was excellent. We tried a beetle drive, (how competitive everyone was), and recently we held an afternoon tea with nearly half the membership attending. We offered members the opportunity to see what was going on at Kirkley Hall with a tour of the site that was hosted by the Principal and we planted a tree for the Jubilee on behalf of Friends of Kirkley Hall. We are already planning the Christmas wreath making event and the Christmas meal. We will continue to vary the programme as much as possible and hope that you will support us as much as you can.

We have a good relationship with the management of College and the new Principal, Gary Potts has been to one of our committee meetings when we discussed our way forward. We have been fortunate, after this meeting, to receive some excellent requests for funding from various courses and are happy to report that most fitted the criteria set out in our constitution so we're successful.

We are always looking for ways to raise money but after a long discussion at our last committee meeting we decided this was not the time to increase the subscription charge. What we have done is investigate how much the benefits offered to members are used. We have found that no one has taken up the offers from the Ashington site, the zoo offer can be obtained equally well on-line and entry to the gardens at Kirkley is very restricted. So we will stop offering these to members and this will enable us to apply for Gift Aid that should give us 25% more on subscriptions without any extra charge to members, we will also not need to issue membership cards and so save on postage. We do hope that you will all appreciate and agree with the reason for these changes.

The propagation group, all members of Friends of Kirkley Hall, continue to lend support to the college in a variety of ways. The future is looking very good for Friends of Kirkley Hall but we do need you to continue to support our events.

Enid Saint

Acting Chair

Friends of Kirkley Hall