

Friends of Bolingbroke Castle (FOBC) – Review 2021-2022

Purpose and News

The Friends of Bolingbroke Castle's objectives are:

To support, to further the work of and to provide financial assistance to the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire ("Heritage Lincolnshire") in connection with the protection, development and management of Bolingbroke Castle

That in carrying out its activities, the Friends of Bolingbroke Castle, shall so far as is possible, endeavour to provide benefits to the village and the village community as a whole

In particular it will try and ensure that the views and feelings of the residents, the long established and recent, are taken into account when considering new initiatives

Over the course of the last year our membership has remained steady and our finances have remained healthy, despite only being able to hold a small number of fund raising events.

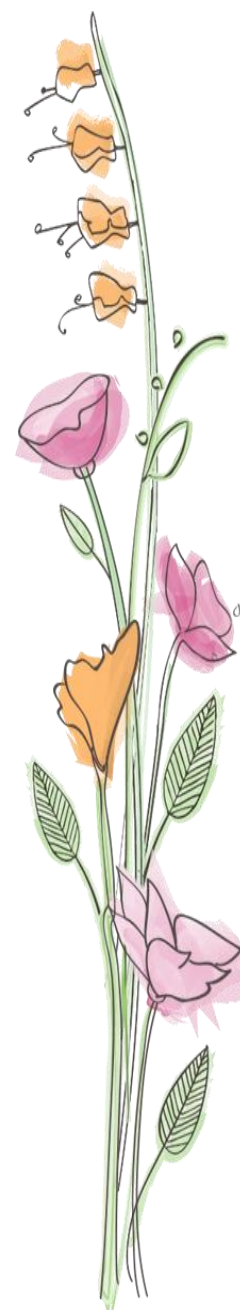
The FOBC continues to support the work done by Heritage Lincolnshire regarding maintenance of the castle and its grounds. We have helped with some minor site maintenance, monitored the performance of the maintenance contractors and aided in the tender process for new contractors. We have also found and commissioned local contractors to maintain and repair hedges, fencing and gates.

In March, a small group of volunteers helped clear the butcher's shed of ivy with a view to longer term improvements to it and the area around it. We are currently investigating the provision of services to it, so that it can become a useful asset to the FOBC, volunteers and visitors to the site. One of these is a noticeboard on the shed itself, to inform visitors to the castle of future events and news.

FOBC are now working closely with the Friends of St Peter & St Pauls church, to look at ways we can collaborate to provide a more holistic view of the points of historical interest in the village, as the histories of the two sites are very much intertwined. This approach helps provide a more community-based approach to securing grants for repairs and improvements – that will benefit both sites, in terms of bidding success and value.

We are engaged with Lincoln University on the Great Cowcher Project, which plans to be a major historical exhibition in 2023 - looking, in particular, at the Duchy of Lancaster's estate. Old Bolingbroke plays a significant part in the story to be told so this presents another exciting opportunity.

Later this year we will be working with Lincolnshire County Council and a local film company, in the production of a "Heritage Behind the Scenes" film at Bolingbroke Castle. This, "quirky, interesting and inspiring" film, will then become an asset that will feature on the visitlincolnshire.com site as a promotional tool for the county.



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Events

Last August we held a medieval re-enactment on the castle grounds and the field owned by Andrew Chambers. The numbers were down on what we would have liked but the event made a small profit and received great feedback from those who attended. We are planning a larger event this August (20th & 21st), with numbers planned to be significantly higher and a broader range of displays and trade stands. Tickets are still available now at “early bird” (20% off) prices on the Heritage Lincolnshire site. We hope that this year’s event will raise enough money to be able to start some improvements to the butchers shed, support the wider historical interpretation to be embarked on through the work with the church, and act as seed funding for future events – all of which we hope will benefit the whole village and its visitors.

If you are interested in helping out at the event by providing a few hours or more of stewarding, then you will be rewarded with complimentary tickets. Please register your interest with me after the meeting.

On the Saturday of the re-enactment weekend (20th August) we are having a concert in the church. The concert will be an educational and fun journey through the development of instruments and music, ranging from the Medieval period through to later periods in our history. There might also be a surprise local act as a support. Tickets for this concert will be going on sale soon. **Note.** Last year the tickets sold out and we had to turn people away.

In January of this year, we had a small and successful Burns Night and we are repeating the event next year. This is restricted to quite small numbers to allow for room to dance, so tickets are prioritised to FOBC members. Tickets aren’t available yet - but if you register for the FOBC email, either as a member or just out of curiosity, you will be one of the first to know when they are. If demand for this event continues to increase, we are considering making this an annual and larger event.

Our Annual General Meeting is on 9th June, at 7:00pm here at the village hall. Apart from the small amount of official business, there will be a quiz, some light refreshments and a talk on “How to Look After Your Historic Home”. Members and non-members are welcome.

This summer we will be holding a FOBC BBQ on 6th August at The Laurels, which is mainly aimed at being a social event but hopefully will raise funds to put towards projects relating to the castle too.

All of our forthcoming events will be in the next village newsletter. If you are interested in joining the FOBC then please let me know and I will give you a membership form. Or give me your email address and I will add you to the newsletter mailing list.



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