



**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 21 JUNE 2023**  
**CHAIR'S REPORT**

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Gwyn Thomas in February this year. Until he stepped down in November 2022, Gwyn served on the Friends' committee for a number of years after his retirement, in 2007, from the then Suffolk Record Office. We all benefitted greatly from his extensive archival knowledge, as well as his wisdom and judgement. He was also a stickler for grammar and punctuation, crafting the most concise and precise minutes I have ever read. Gwyn's dry sense of humour and his modest, quiet manner will be missed by all of us who knew him.

Since our last AGM, we have had some success in acquiring documents for the Suffolk Archives' collections. Among these are some 24 ledgers from Tolly Cobbold and the Star Brewery, detailing accounts for the breweries themselves, as well as records of day-to-day management of their many pubs and inns. We also bought an Abstract of Title for lands in Wortham and Redgrave, as well as a beautifully bound volume containing a land survey for Westhall dating from 1812. The FOSA committee also agreed with Suffolk Archives that our £2,000 cataloguing grant should be used to catalogue all FOSA deposits to date, so that these items can be accessed by researchers.

FOSA has continued to maintain an open and constructive dialogue with Suffolk Archives on the challenges they are facing on delivering a service for its users. I represented the Friends at a Focus Group meeting in February, at which we had a chance to discuss our concerns about the current level of service with Suffolk County Councillor Bobby Bennett.

We have suffered from a dwindling membership in the past few years, for a variety of reasons. We are therefore grateful to those dedicated members who continue to contribute a minimum of £12 each year to allow us to support the work of the Suffolk Archives service. Even a small charity like ours needs a committee to keep it running, and to help promote the work we do to a wider audience. I am grateful to the current committee for their hard work and enthusiasm. We do, however, need more people to join the committee if we are to continue to operate effectively.

**Sarah E Doig**