

TRUST NEWS

Saving The Past For The Future



BIKE 'N HIKE 2022

The 2022 Bike 'n Hike was overshadowed by the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II only two days before. Many people were concerned about whether the event would go ahead and whether they should take part.

Official advice said 'celebratory' events should not take place but that 'quiet, reflective' events could. We decided that individuals or small groups visiting churches fell into the second category but it was difficult to 'get the word out' to everybody in the 24 hours prior to the event. In the end, many people still enjoyed the day. Photos and stories of how people take part are always welcome and we ask that they can be used for publicity of both the Bike 'n Hike and the Trust.



St Mary the Virgin, Kensworth



All Saints Leighton Buzzard's Bike 'n Hike team at Dunstable Priory

Last September was also the height of people's concerns about energy bills in the coming winter and this was reflected in the levels of sponsorship. Very understandably, people gave money but perhaps a little less than they might have done. The final amount raised was still an impressive **£91,040**, for which we are very grateful. Thank you to all those who took part, and their sponsors.

There is always someone who bucks the trend, so thank you to Nico and Maureen from All Saints, Southill who took to four wheels, covered 140 miles and visited 64 churches thus raising **£3,623**.

We also have two other gold certificate winners to congratulate – for raising **over £2,000**: St. Mary, Northchurch at **£2,411** and All Saints, Willian at **£2,162**.

Madeline Russell

BISHOP OF ST. ALBANS OPEN GARDEN

Easter Monday (10 April) from 2-4pm

Abbey Mill Lane, St Albans AL3 4HD

Entry £4 per adult with proceeds to BHHCT

(Please note, there is no parking in the grounds or the lane)

The Trust is very grateful to Bishop Alan who is keen for people to enjoy the garden in all its Spring glory.

The Bishop already raised £2,000 for the Trust when his garden was open to view the snowdrops earlier this year.

DIARY DATES

17 June
Church Tour

15 July
Annual Meeting

9 September
Bike 'n Hike

23 September
Church Tour

See our website for details.

RAISING OUR PROFILE

During autumn and winter, some of our Trustees have been visiting Deanery Synods to talk about the Trust and what it can do to help our churches to repair and restore buildings which are an important part of the religious and cultural heritage of our two counties.

We have been quite surprised at how committed members of the church know so little about this body which has been awarding grants for such work over the past 30 years. It shows how important it is to keep in touch and not just assume that everybody knows what we do. This is our first step since the Covid-pandemic to raise the Trust's profile and increase support from the wider public.

Deanery Synods may be small gatherings, but they are made up of members of every Church of England parish in their area. We hope Synod members will report to their parishes to generate more support for our activities and encourage people to participate in events like the Bike 'n Hike, which raises the bulk of the money we distribute to churches in grants towards the work they undertake. But they need help – the help of all Friends of the Trust, and everyone who receives and reads this newsletter.

This Easter issue of "Trust News" is an encouragement to every reader to tell their friends and anyone who shares their interest in our churches, and invite them to join us in whatever way they can, individually and collectively, to build up the body of supporters who make our grant-awarding possible. This newsletter will inform you of things we are doing to raise money for the churches we appreciate and want to preserve.

If we can recruit more Friends, their subscriptions will increase our annual income, and make more grants possible. The more people who join our tours and other activities also helps, and local fund-raising events for the Trust would be very welcome. Of course, we are always glad to see more and more people taking part in the Bike 'n Hike, using whatever form of propulsion they find most convenient and enjoyable.

Most important of all is spreading the word. Tell your friends and neighbours about the importance of the Trust and the work it is doing – don't be shy. Word of mouth and personal invitation are the best ways of spreading the message and gaining support.

The total sum the Trust has awarded in grants for church repairs since its creation in 1991 is approaching £4m! The need for such work is ever with us, and, unfortunately, the cost is ever-rising: it is estimated that costs of such work has increased by 35% over the past decade. I make no apology for talking about that embarrassing subject, money, because, after all, it is why the Trust was formed. We exist to raise money to give away "to save the past for the future" in our wonderful church buildings. Please help us to do just that.

Malcolm E. Grant, Chairman



*Chairman, Revd. Canon
Malcolm Grant*

A WORK IN PROGRESS: ALL SAINTS WILLIAN

After nearly 20 years of consultation, planning and fundraising our church re-ordering project, with the provision of toilet and kitchen facilities is now underway.

Reality of the changes to come began in 2021 when the organ was removed from the base of the church tower, clearing a space where the toilet and the kitchen could be installed. The removal of the pews exposed a number of problems with the building fabric, including the underlying floor, the lower walls areas, along with the mystery of deep pits used for the old heating system. This is what the Trust's grant will help to fund. The nave and tower floor areas have had to be screeded and the lower portion of the walls replastered before redecorating can take place.

Externally we had to install water and sewerage services and regrade the pathway to provide level disabled access.

The Revd. Amanda Ferris, Associate Vicar at All Saints said, "We are extremely grateful to the Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust for their financial support, through a grant award, allowing us to undertake this project.

"It is our aim that the church building will not only help us serve the congregation but also allow us to be a church in the community for the community. We hope to care and reach out in so many ways to those living around and further afield. The work will provide not just a holy space but a flexible space which can be used prayerfully and creatively."

Royston Jones



*Work is now apace at All
Saints and they hope to
reopen in Summer 2023*

IN PRAISE OF CHURCH TOURS (NOT JUST FOR ARCHITECTURE BUFFS!)

“CONVIVIAL, HUGEY INTERESTING, AND WELL ORGANISED. THE GREAT VARIETY OF THE HISTORIC CHURCHES WE VISITED MADE THIS BHHCT TOUR AN EXCELLENT DAY OUT.”

Dr Stephen Jury joined our North Herts church tour last September.

“Around 30 of us met at Ware railway station and got to know each other while working out how to use the car park machine, but we were soon at the pretty village of Great Amwell where the church of St John the Baptist nestles deep in a leafy lane,” says Stephen. From the churchyard you can see the New River Canal – developed in 1613 to take fresh water to London.

Next was St James’s, Stanstead Abbots (owned by the Churches Conservation Trust). The splendid three decker pulpit is so lofty that the preacher can see right into the tall box pews which remain and there is a beautiful blue modern stained glass window by Thomas Denny.

On then to St Dunstan’s, Hunsdon which boasts a huge timber porch – possibly the oldest in the county and a splendid carved Jacobean screen. By now it was time to relax over a pub lunch at the Bull in Much Hadham where there was excellent food.

A stroll across the churchyard led to St Andrew’s Much Hadham- largely built from 1225-1550. Sculptor Sir Henry Moore was a local resident as was Edmund Tudor, whose son became Henry VII. “I was most impressed by seeing two Henry Moore sculptures at the church entrance, and the very fine needlework in the hassocks and the Millennium panel which features the life of the village,” said Stephen.

The day ended with a visit to St Mary’s, Ware - a large church in typical Herts style - flint, with battlements. Stephen explains: “ St Mary’s, unusually, runs as an ecumenical parish for the Roman Catholic congregation and C of E. We had a very good presentation about the history and extensive restoration works and enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea. I look forward to the next BHHCT Church Tour.”



St John's Great Amwell



A roof boss in St Mary's, Ware

SIR SAMUEL WHITBREAD KCVO

We were sad to learn of the death of Sir Samuel Whitbread who has been such a staunch supporter of the Trust and was Joint President whilst Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire. Sir Sam was responsible for the effective collaboration between the Trust and his family trust, Wixamtree. He wrote to then Chairman, Meric Jenkins, proposing that BHHCT should do the church work for Wixamtree. This was agreed and our Grants Secretary and their Administrator developed a 'modus operandi' for making recommendations to Wixamtree, who then paid the grants.

This worked well and after a few years, Wixamtree decided to give our Trust an annual award to distribute on their behalf. This has proved very successful, with the Chairman and Grants Secretary joining a Wixamtree trustee meeting each year to review progress.

Sir Sam's forethought and his easy and constructive manner led to a strong relationship which has continued since his son, Charles, took over the chairmanship of Wixamtree.

Sir Sam will be greatly missed. As Chaucer said, "He was a verrey parfit gentil knight"

Archie Russell



Sir Samuel Whitbread KCVO

BOOK NOW

CHURCH TOURS 2023



“THESE TOURS ARE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE THE HERITAGE OF SOME OF OUR MOST SPECIAL CHURCHES.”

We have two Church Tours for 2023 with experienced and knowledgeable guides. The first, on **17 June**, is led by Archie Russell. It starts at Bedford station and will visit churches in rural north Bedfordshire, including Thurleigh, Swineshead and Shelton (pictured), finishing with afternoon tea at Sharnbrook.

The second tour on **23 September**, will be led by Richard Genochio. It starts at Royston station and will visit a selection of churches in South Cambridgeshire.

Tours meet at 10am at the railway station named. We then travel by coach to the churches with a pub lunch en-route. Lunch (not included in the cost) is payable at the venue on the day and the coach will bring you back to the railway station.

The price includes afternoon tea and coach transport, and this year we have introduced a special rate for Friends in recognition of their support. **Friends of the Trust: £30. Other guests £40**

Please include your email address to receive booking confirmation. Alternatively, enclose an A5 SAE. Send your completed booking form with a cheque, payable to Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust, to:

David Allard
8 Chilcourt, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 9DD
E: david.slade.allard@gmail.com
T: 01763 242677

CHURCH TOURS 2023

BOOKING FORM

I WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE FOLLOWING CHURCH TOURS:

Tour	
Friends £30: others £40	
Saturday 17 June (Please book by 18 May at the latest)	
No of tickets	Total £
Saturday 23 September (Please book by 1 September at the latest)	
No of tickets	Total £
GRAND TOTAL	

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____

EMAIL _____

TELEPHONE _____

Post your form and payment to David Allard - see details overleaf.

Places are limited so book as soon as you can to avoid disappointment.

Further details of the September tour will be available on the Trust website later in Spring.

ANNUAL MEETING

Friends of the Trust are invited to attend the Annual Meeting at **St John the Baptist, Cockayne Hatley on 15 July at 2.30pm**, to hear from Trustees about the past year's work. This will be followed by afternoon tea at nearby All Saints' Sutton with Evening Prayer at 5.30pm.

This year's location gives an opportunity to see works the Trust has funded. We recently awarded £10,000 to St. John, Cockayne Hatley for urgent repairs to the tower window and roof parapet, and £2,000 to All Saints, Sutton in 2020/21 for electrical repairs.

Our Bike 'n Hike is still one of the biggest fundraisers, compared with other counties which run a similar one-day event (aka Ride and Stride).

Thank you to all who make this possible.

Bike 'n Hike 2023

Save the date for **Saturday 9 September** and watch our website for more information coming soon.

www.bedshertshct.org.uk/bike-n-hike/

TO FIND OUT MORE
ABOUT THE TRUST,
OR TO JOIN US, USE
THE QR CODE



Wanted

Bike 'n Hike Area Organisers

Can you give a few hours a year to help raise money for our churches?

Area Organisers check that churches and chapels are OK to take part and ensure they have the information needed to join in and fundraise.

Areas have 20 - 30 churches so you get to know the contact in each.

The AOs team meets twice a year, for planning and for results/debrief.

The role is not too time-consuming and is very rewarding.

Email

bikenhike@bedshertshct.org.uk

or visit

www.bedshertshct.org.uk

to find out more.

Digital Newsletter

Help us cut the cost of print and postage by opting to receive the Trust newsletter by email.

To receive your copy please contact

trust.news@bedshertshct.org.uk

Trustees

Chairman: Rev'd Canon Malcolm Grant *Secretary:* William Marsterson *Treasurer:* Trevor Groome

Trustees: Mrs Theresa Britt; Sir Timothy Clifford; Richard Genochio; Dr Christopher Green; Mrs Judith Howard DL; The Ven Paul Hughes; Jim May; Mrs Madeline Russell; Archie Russell; Rev'd Thomas Sander.

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Editor: Katrina Grant trust.news@bedshertshct.org.uk