

# Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust

# Autumn Newsletter

2017

## Report by the Chair of Trustees



It's been a busy spring and summer for your Trust and its supporters. The season kicked off with an excellent and well-attended conference as we "Lifted up our Eyes" to the roofs and higher parts of our churches and received excellent presentations on subjects as diverse as our magnificent angel roofs (more of those anon) and the very practical business of heritage structural engineering, which helps us realise

for instance that a skew-whiff wall that's been that way for 500 years need not frighten us too much! I enjoyed involving delegates myself in a re-enactment of how our forebears from those times measured heights, and was glad that the maths did add up at the end – not my strong point! We recruited several new members on the day and also a new volunteer Ride and Stride administrator, Sue Holgate. Thank you! Next year's conference will be on Saturday 7th April, again at Wolfson College and under the title "What an Achievement" will look at heraldry in churches. Full details and booking form will be available in the New Year.

We followed the conference by launching an appeal at a "Patrons' Lunch" for real-life angels to protect all our church roofs which are under threat from lead thieves. Approved roof-alarms are essential both to validate insurance and deter thieves, and with over 50 church roofs in the county which have lead but no alarm, we set a course to find the funds to pay half the cost (of about £5000) of an alarm for any church that needs one. Generous support from EIG kick-started our campaign; we put in £25000 from our own Bishop Walker bequest; and with a recent grant of £10000 from the Police and Crime Commissioner we are now in a place to help half of those at-risk churches. The scheme can only run until the year end so if you know angels that can help us help the remaining churches, please contact our Appeal Secretary, Denis Payne on [chctappealsec@gmail.com](mailto:chctappealsec@gmail.com).

Meanwhile committees were meeting to give out our other grants and loans as usual (up to around £250,000 is available this year for both combined), which is of course our "core business". But the longer summer days also allowed time for us to be out

and about on our summer tours, and of course to take part in the annual Ride, Drive and Stride fundraiser. I used the same weekend to visit the ten Cambridgeshire churches that won this year's Engage awards for building work that helped them connect with their community (and so of course secure the future of their building better as well). These were the winning churches:

**Elton:** window repairs

**Pidley:** new lighting scheme

**Little Paxton:** churchyard path re-opened

**Somersham:** roof repairs

**Cheveley:** opening up space round the font

**Buckden:** illuminated stars on the spire

**Mepal:** church bell restored to working order

**Great Wilbraham:** a suite of facilities at the west end

**Fenstanton:** church hall renovation

**Steeple Morden:** new heating for gathering space at west end



• All Saints, Pidley



• St Peter & St Paul, Steeple Morden

The bare list of works hides a lot of imaginative engagement with the community and it was a privilege to endorse such good work. All being well the Engage awards will be offered again in 2018 so plan your application now! And thank you to everyone involved in the Trust in whatever way.

+ David

Chair of Trustees

The Trust is an independent charity whose primary task is to give financial help in the form of grants and interest-free loans towards the cost of repair and improvement of churches and chapels of all denominations throughout Cambridgeshire. Its funds accrue mainly from the annual Ride, Drive and Stride and from membership subscriptions. Members receive twice-yearly newsletters and other information about the Trust's activities including an annual conference in the Spring and Sunday afternoon church tours in the summer. Minimum annual subscription £20 for up to two individuals at the same address, £50 for corporate membership for churches.

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Email: [secretary@camhct.uk](mailto:secretary@camhct.uk)

Membership Secretary: Jenny Lowles, Phone 01353 861674, Email [members@camhct.uk](mailto:members@camhct.uk)

For our formal Annual Report and Financial Statements visit [www.camhct.uk](http://www.camhct.uk) or ask the Secretary for a printed copy.

## Secretary's Report

The past few months have seen the usual level of activity by the Trust in promoting knowledge and understanding of church buildings and their contents. As described in more detail by our Chair of Trustees on page 1, we had a very successful Annual Conference on 8th April. The sessions included a return visit by Robert Walker, the Trust's founding Hon Secretary, who spoke about the angel roof at St Wendreda's, March. See below, "Dates for your Diary", for details of the 2018 Conference.

The Revd Dr Lynne Broughton very ably led the May, June and August church tours. The guest expert who had been due to lead the July tour unfortunately had to withdraw, and my wife and I did our best to research the churches involved and provide commentaries. As it turned out, the churchwarden at the final church, St Peter's, Barton, was the author of an excellent church guide book, and took over the task there with distinction, illuminated by her evident personal attachment and commitment to the building. Lynne has kindly agreed to lead all four tours next summer. For the second year running there was no joint tour with the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History. In 2016 a planned visit to Salisbury was abandoned for lack of sufficient bookings, and between our two organisations we had not reached any firm conclusions in time to arrange anything for August 2017. However, we are very hopeful to organise a visit for 2018 which will attract enough support to be fully viable.

As we often remind members, these events are ancillary to our core purpose of offering help to churches towards the cost of repairs and improvements. This year that aspect of our work has been dominated by the resurgence of lead theft and our efforts to help churches take preventive measures against this. As you will gather on page 1 and from the Grants Secretary's report, a good number of churches have been awarded our special grants for this purpose. Only limited funds remain, but if you know of a church which still has unprotected lead, please urge them to contact us.

Virtually every report and newsletter we have published in recent years has mentioned our pressing need to recruit a new organiser for our main source of funds, the annual sponsored Ride, Drive and Stride. This Spring we decided to aim for the less ambitious target of appointing an administrator to put the practical arrangements together just for this year's

event. Still nobody came forward, but at our Annual Conference a Trust member, Sue Holgate, volunteered to give the Trust any administrative help that might be useful. This offer was taken up with alacrity and she has done a superb job in putting in order our contact information which is all-important in reminding churches about the Ride and encouraging them to welcome visitors on the day and if possible get people to take part. At the time of writing we do not know the financial outcome of this year's event.

In conclusion I must thank Bishop David and Canon David Pritchard for their leadership and support, and all my fellow office-holders for the hard work they do to maintain the Trust's activity.

**David Stazicker**  
Hon Secretary



• St Mary's, Comberton, following lead theft

## Dates for your Diary

**Subscriptions are due on 1st January 2018.** Please send cheques made out to Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust to the Membership Secretary, c/o the Hon Secretary's address (see foot of Page 1). Only those on email will be sent a reminder – see below.

**Annual Conference** at Wolfson College, Cambridge **Saturday 7th April 2018** - "What an Achievement! – Getting to grips with heraldry in churches". Organised by Dr Claire Daunton and Chloe Cockerill.

**Church tours Sundays 13th May, 10th June, 8th July and 12th August** - itineraries to be announced later.

## Membership Secretary's Report



• St Mary's, Great Eversden, following structural repairs and moving of font (see page 4)

The Trust's total membership as at 30 June 2017 stood at 297 consisting of 190 individual members (of which there were 35 joint members at the same address) and 107 corporate or church members. This is a welcome, if modest, increase compared with 2015-2016. 11 individuals and 11 churches have joined the Trust since 1 July 2016. Seven individual members and one church resigned during the year. We were notified of one death and 5 members who were in arrears have been removed.

We recently had an enquiry asking if the Trust offered gift membership. In this instance a congregation wanted to show their appreciation to a retiring Churchwarden for their efforts over the years. Gift membership could also mark a birthday, an anniversary or as a present for someone who enjoys visiting churches. We are working on a suitable form for this purpose which will be downloadable from our website.

Finally, we have a new bank account which enables us to manage our finances online. We ask members to update their standing orders. Our account with CAF Bank sort code 40-52-40 is in the name of Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust with the account number 00031047. If you are able to change your standing order online, please use these new details. Otherwise a new Standing Order form is attached. We appreciate this is an extra chore but the change will make our work much easier, more economical and the Trust will benefit from better management of our funds. If you don't at present pay by standing order, please consider doing so.

**Jenny Lowles**  
Membership Secretary

# Financial Update

## How the finances work

From a financial point of view, the Trust meets its charitable objectives by making interest-free loans (concessionary loans) to churches and by giving churches grants of money so as to enable the churches to maintain, preserve, repair and improve their buildings and, occasionally, their monuments.

The concessionary loans to churches come from a floating pool of money. The loans are made from this pool and repayments put back into it. We appear to be cash rich with more than £350,000 in hand but this cash is invested and provides the funds from which rolling amounts of loans are made, Concessionary loans are interest free and usually repayable over a four year period.

The Trustees determine what is a sensible amount to make available for lending in accordance with our reserves policy. We have an excellent credit history in that we have not known churches to fail to repay loans, and repayments are almost always made within a month of them being due.

Grants to churches are absolute gifts of money for our charitable purposes. The amount available for grants is predetermined in accordance with our reserves policy.

The amount made available for grants is the net income actually received in the previous year. In other words, the income received in one year is distributed by grants the following year.

## Where the money comes from

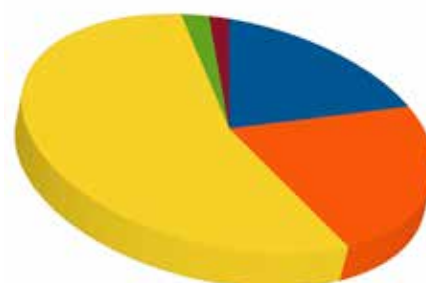
Our unrestricted income comes mainly from subscriptions, donations and the annual Ride Drive and Stride event.

Subscriptions and donations are from individuals and churches. Gift aid, an important element, is included in this category.

We also receive bank interest from deposits and we charge admittance to the annual conference.

This last financial year saw the launching of a Roof Alarm Appeal Fund. We received £50,000 from AllChurches Trust Limited to enable us to make grants to churches for roof alarms. Any unspent portion is returnable in 2018.

Otherwise, our regular income is similar to that of the previous year.



- Subs & Donations £15,816
- Ride Drive Stride £20,807
- Roof Alarm Appeal £50,000
- Conference £2,042
- Bank Interest £1,488

## Where the money goes



- Grants to churches £33,000
- Fundraising £13,490
- Management & Admin £2,786

The main item of our charitable expenditure is the making of grants to churches. In our last financial year, we were able to make grants to 17 churches totalling £33,000. Whilst the year before that was unusually high, this represents a fall of 15%.

The fundraising expenditure supports the income. It includes conference costs but the large part is giving churches a share of the Ride Drive and Stride income. Rather than as a deduction from income, we have started to show this as expenditure.

The Trust incurs minimal amounts of management and administration expenses.

## Looking ahead

We now have accounts for online giving with JustGiving.com, Stewardship.org.uk and with CAFonline.org (Charities Aid Foundation).

We also have a new bank account with CAF which will allow us to use internet banking facilities. We should be able to pay churches and bills by bank transfer. Churches will also be able to make loan repayments online too. We hope this will make transferring money quicker and easier for us all.

*The latest Annual Report and audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2016 are available on our website [camhct.uk](http://camhct.uk). The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 will be published on our website and Charity Commission's in due course.*

## The stone which the builders rejected . . .

Sponsored events abound these days and potential donors can be forgiven for suffering generosity fatigue. One has to introduce some element of novelty to attract support. Seeking to raise funds for repairs, Elizabeth Stazicker, Churchwarden of St Mary's, Mepal hit on an unusual idea.

But first we must go back to the 1840s, when St Mary's was in a sorry state. The new rector, Francis Daubeny, decided that action was needed, and help was forthcoming from the Cathedral Chapter, patrons of the living. They arranged for their Clerk of Works to oversee the repairs.

Fast forward to 2010 when the Trust visited Mepal in the course of the August church tour. Peering at the outside of the west wall, extensively rebuilt as part of the 1840s repairs, John Maddison and Richard Halsey spotted some unusual pieces of stone which had been used as infill. They were elaborate mouldings inserted end-on, clearly originating from a medieval building of higher status than Mepal could ever have boasted. Evidently the Clerk of Works had not just contributed his time but had allowed the builders to help themselves to pieces of masonry discarded from earlier repairs to the Cathedral or the monastic buildings.

So Elizabeth decided to re-enact the events of the 1840s by asking the Chapter to donate a piece of stone, and seeking sponsorship to trundle it in a wheelbarrow the 8 miles from the Cathedral to St Mary's. This succeeded beyond expectations. In addition to donations made by more conventional methods, as the stone was wheeled through the streets of Ely several people, including a man digging a hole in the road, asked what was going on and when informed tossed coins or even notes into the barrow. Altogether more than £1,400 was raised, not counting Gift Aid. The PCC are doubly grateful to the Trust, for awarding a loan and grant towards the cost of the repairs and additionally for providing the information that inspired the fundraising gambit.

The message to cash-strapped PCCs must be to research your church's history, find an interesting anecdote, and devise an eye-catching or off-beat commemoration involving a bit of fairly strenuous activity which will encourage sponsors to reward the originality as well as the effort.



• RIGHT: The stone arriving at St Mary's

## Grants Secretary's Report

Under our new scheme, roof alarm grants of £2,500 have been awarded to Bluntisham, Buckworth, Ellington, Fowlmere, Hemingford Abbots, Huntingdon, Melbourn, Tydd and Yaxley.

In addition, grants and loans totalling £18,000 and £68,200 respectively have been offered for repairs and access improvements to Eynesbury, Arrington, Little Paxton, Ely St Mary, Kirtling Our Lady and St Philip Neri and Ramsey St Thomas a Becket. Also a grant of £3,000 and loan of £20,000 to Cheveley for a new WC/servery to improve the life of the church.

We are delighted that on our recommendation Little Paxton was also awarded a grant of £5,000 Partnership Funding from The National Churches Trust for their urgent fabric repairs.

**Andy Clarke**  
Grants Secretary

• RIGHT: St Nicholas, Arrington



## Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust

Registered as a charity in England and Wales No 287486

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Alan Churchard (Hon Treasurer)  
Nicholas Grantham  
The Revd Canon David Pritchard (Chair of Executive Committee)  
David Stazicker (Hon Secretary)  
The Revd Simon Talbott  
Alison Taylor

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The Revd Dr Lynne Broughton  
Alan Churchard (Hon Treasurer)  
Andrew Clarke (Grants Secretary)  
William Craven  
Jenny Lowles (Membership Secretary)  
Graham Pledger  
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