

Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust

Spring Newsletter

2018

A Message from the Chair of Trustees



Welcome to another year of the Trust, with our annual Spring Conference leading the way. We are enormously grateful to Chloë Cockerill and Claire Daunton who have brought together a fine team of speakers around the topic of Heraldry in our churches – under the tongue-in-the-cheek title of “What an Achievement”.

As usual this will lead on to a programme of church visits, and of course Ride, Drive and Stride. Thank you to all those who took part in it last year or helped behind the scenes. Could you join in this year on September 8th? I will be out and about myself presenting a third tranche of Engage Awards. (Do contact me if you have completed a recent building project that is helping your church engage with its community and would like to put in for one.)

Meanwhile we have been busy making our usual grants and loans, and are especially pleased to have made 25 special grants to help install roof alarms and keep our heritage safe. My thanks to our generous donors, and to Denis Payne, Graham Pledger, Andy Clarke and David Pritchard who have all helped make this a success.

We have also been able to help with the funding of a new Places of Worship Support Officer for the area who will follow in Scilla Latham’s footsteps and help our local churches understand the challenges their buildings face and access the grants they need to respond to them.

Our Cambridgeshire churches come in every size and style, and it will come as no surprise to those of you who know me that those which date back to the middle ages are my special delight, with their layers of history that it is so fascinating to peel back. We remember at this time how skilled one of our founders, the late Pamela, Lady

Wedgwood, was at doing this, and I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute on behalf of the Trust to her life and work.

I grew up worshipping in Victorian red-brick surroundings, but to tell the truth they have never had quite the same appeal for me as their older cousins. It was good for me, then, to find a copy of William Whyte’s book ‘Unlocking the Church’ under the Christmas tree. Whyte gives us not so much an architectural history as an explanation of why the buildings mattered so much to those who built them. The changes Newman, for instance, made at Littlemore were very modest by later standards, but having a place of worship in which the beliefs were built in the bricks, as it were, was one of his great joys.

Their intention was missional too. These new churches should be open, places where parishioners and visitors could meet with God at any time, re-sacralising space and time. They were even seen, Whyte suggests, as especially missional towards men, in a context where the previously ubiquitous box pews had become feminised, with cushions sent down by the lady of the manor.

I was left with a greater appreciation of what the Victorians were doing, and perhaps more importantly, with a renewed sense of just how much the embodiment of our faith matters. Church buildings are – as we instinctively realise when we ponder it – much more than roofs to keep the rain off a congregation: they stand for the faith that congregation holds and offer it to those around them, built echoes of the incarnation. So I am pleased and proud to have been able to play a little part in not just keeping the roof on our Cambridgeshire churches, but keeping the rumour of faith alive through them as well.

+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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Membership Secretary: Jenny Lowles, Phone 01353 861574, Email members@camhct.uk

For our formal Annual Report and Financial Statements visit www.camhct.uk or ask the Secretary for a printed copy.

Hon Secretary's Report

I will not repeat what my fellow-officers have said about various aspects of the Trust's activity. To use the usual cliché, we are in good heart but there is no room for complacency. Our fundamental purpose is to help churches with repairs and improvements, and in order to make grants for that purpose we need income. Membership is buoyant but, as we report elsewhere on this page, our main source of revenue, the Ride Drive and Stride, suffered a further decline last year. Some other county Trusts manage not only to raise several times the amount we do from this event, but in other ways to achieve a higher profile in their local communities. Meanwhile financial help to churches from central sources is likely to become more tightly constrained, and the "Taylor" review of sustainability of churches, commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, concludes that more of the burden of support should be borne locally.

How do we meet this challenge? In 2023 the Trust will have been in existence for 40 years. Our Trustees and Executive Committee members will be meeting together in April to formulate ideas about where we want the Trust to be when we reach that landmark, and how we propose to get there.

Vital though it is to have a strategy for the future, one cannot neglect day-to-day administration and the changing regulatory requirements that affect it. Some of you may have heard of the General Data Protection Regulation. It will come into force on 25th May this year and will impose on all organisations, commercial and non-profit, new duties to do with the personal information we hold about our subscribing members and other people with whom we have contact. Among other things we have to make sure that we have your express consent to hold information about you, such as postal and email addresses, and to use it in the ways we do. The fact that you don't object isn't enough; we have to ask you to say positively that you consent. That is why you have received, or will shortly receive, what may appear to be a tiresome bureaucratic request to answer a series of questions. Please reply, because if you don't we shall be legally obliged to delete you from our contact list.

On page 4 of this Newsletter you will find the usual report from our Grants Secretary, Andy Clarke. Andy has been serving the Trust in that capacity since 2011, doing this not only most efficiently from the Trust's point of view but also, as we learn from church officers who have applied for loans or grants, helpfully and sympathetically to them. That could have something to do with the fact that he has at the same time been filling several roles in his own parish in Horningsea and therefore knows what it's like to be responsible for a church and its physical maintenance.

In the summer Andy will be stepping down, and we now urgently need a replacement to fill this essential role. If you feel you might be able to take this on, or you know of someone else who might, please let me know at secretary@camhct.co.uk.

David Stazicker
Hon Secretary

Membership Secretary's Report

At the time of writing this report it isn't possible to give precise figures, because we need to check how many members have renewed their subscriptions by standing order or by cheque, and send any necessary reminders. From the information currently available there doesn't appear to be a significant change from the situation I reported in our Autumn 2017 Newsletter, namely 297 members of whom 190 were individuals or two persons at the same address and 107 were corporate church members. Recent years have seen a gradual and modest increase in membership, especially by churches. We shall be looking at ways to achieve a more major expansion.

Again I would like to encourage the few members who still pay by cheque to switch to Banker's Order, the form for which can be downloaded from our website. Those of you who already pay by Banker's Order, if you have not already changed this to our new account with CAF Bank, please email members@camhct.co.uk for the necessary form, or ask the Hon Secretary (contact details on page 1) to post you a copy. I have reminded members that payment was due on 1 January for 2018 so if you have yet to renew your membership, please let me have payment as soon as possible.

Jenny Lowles

Membership Secretary

Ride, Drive and Stride

This is Cambridgeshire's contribution to the national Ride and Stride day in which local historic church trusts across the country take part. It is the Trust's main sources of funds to enable us to make grants to churches for repairs and improvements. Continuing the practice of recent years, in this county we welcome participants using all forms of transport and not just those who cycle or walk. The proceeds are divided between the Trust and the church or churches nominated by each participant.

Sue Holgate did sterling work in getting our church contact list up to date and in order for the September 2017 Ride, so we are confident that just about everyone who wanted the information and the papers had access to them in good time. It was therefore very disappointing that the gross income from the event was only £16,278, a decrease of £4,766 compared with 2016. Although a few churches took part having not done so in 2016, no fewer than 22 who had taken part in 2016 did not do so in 2017. This, rather than the amount raised per church, accounted for the drop in income.

We would very much like to hear from you about the reasons for this. Is there anything we can do to make the event more attractive or easier for you to organise? Is it simply that this type of event is becoming less appealing and is getting squeezed out by other sponsored fundraising initiatives? Are you finding it more and more difficult not only to get people to take part actively but to staff the church during the day? The decline seems to be common to a large number of local historic churches trusts, but there are two or three exceptions where they still raise six-figure sums each year.

Grants Secretary's Report

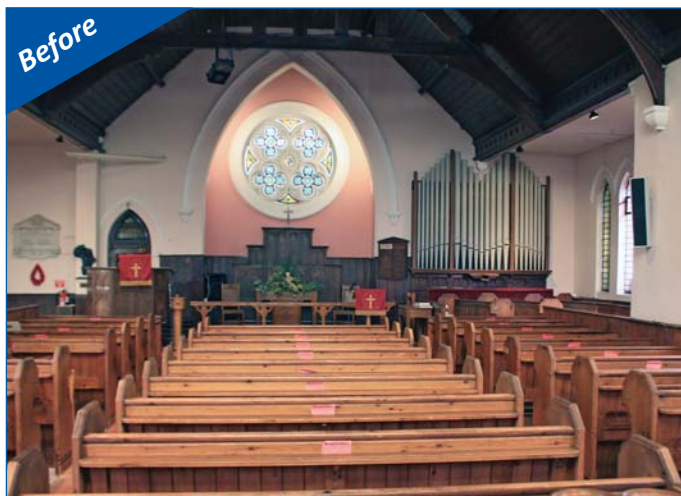
Our alarm grant initiative, which closed at the end of December, proved highly successful. Grants of £2,500 were awarded to 24 churches and another was awarded £1,000. We are very grateful to Allchurches Trust Ltd for supporting this scheme which was so well received and has – we are told - made some people sleep easier in their beds.

A grant of £3,000 and £20,000 loan were offered to both Steeple Morden and Tilbrook for high-level repairs including - in one case - replacing stolen lead. A loan of £20,000 was offered to Somersham to ensure a project for new heating could proceed. This demonstrates the value of a loan facility to give project certainty while other grant applications are pending.

Andy Clarke
Grants Secretary

Here are some examples of work recently completed with the help of loans or grants from the Trust.

Histon Methodist Church



St Mary Eynesbury – North Porch



St John the Baptist Peterborough – North Aisle roof



Annual Conference

“What an Achievement “

Getting to grips with heraldry in churches
Saturday 7th April 2018
Wolfson College, Cambridge



The conference is again taking place early in April and it is possible that it will already be over by the time you read this. In his message on Page 1 Bishop David has already thanked Dr Claire Daunton and Chloë Cockerill for assembling this excellent programme of speakers. In addition to the presentations there will be the now-customary brief session describing the work of the Trust and enabling members to ask questions and express their views.

After careful consideration we decided to make another modest increase in the fees for attendance, in order to ensure that the event remains financially viable, but we are confident that it remains excellent value for money at £22 for members and £27 for non-members.

Church Tours

As usual there will be tours of churches in or adjacent to the county, on the second Sunday afternoon in each month across the summer. All the tours will be led by the Revd Dr Lynne Broughton, to whom we are very grateful for again undertaking this and giving us the benefit of her expert knowledge. One of the visits has yet to be confirmed but the latest information is as follows:

13th May	Hail Weston	St Nicholas
	Southoe	St Leonard
	Buckden	St Mary

10th June	West Wratting	St Andrew
	Weston Colville	St Mary
	Woodditton	St Mary
8th July	Old Weston	St Swithin
	Barham	St Giles
	tbc	
12th August	Madingley	St Mary
	Girton	St Andrew
	Impington	St Andrew

If possible an insert will be circulated with this Newsletter, giving the full itineraries including July.

As before, each tour starts at 2.30 pm at the first church named. On arrival at the final church, our hosts are kind enough to provide us with tea, and toilets are available. Those who wish to can stay after the tour of the final church, for a short service of Evening Prayer, or join the congregation for their evening service if there is one. There is no charge for participation in these tours, which are open to all, but those attending are asked to donate generously to the churches visited, and especially for the teas. Directions will be posted on our website and printed in leaflets nearer the time of the tours.

In earlier years, jointly with the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History, we arranged a coach trip each August to a major church or churches, led by Lynne Broughton. For the past two years, for various reasons, this has lapsed, but this year we are reviving the project and we are planning to visit Rochester on Saturday 18th August. Full details and a booking form will be circulated later.

Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust

Registered as a charity in England and Wales No 287486

Trustees

The Rt Revd Dr David Thomson (Chair)
The Revd Canon Christopher Barber
Alan Churchard
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The Revd Canon David Pritchard
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