

## Church Open Day with a Theme *continued*



St Peter's, Horningsea – Heritage Open Day

This year's themes include Heritage & Nature and the 50th Anniversary of conservation areas.

Andy Clarke

## Annual Conference



**"I Will Lift Up  
Mine Eyes . . ."**

**Church roofs and ceilings,  
their structure and decoration**

**Saturday 8th April 2017**

**Wolfson College, Cambridge**

This photograph is of one of the angel carvings in the roof of St Andrew's Church, Isleham, from "The Angel Roofs of East Anglia" and is reproduced by kind permission of the author and photographer, Michael Rimmer, who is one of the conference speakers..

Since the conference is taking place very slightly earlier than last year and this Newsletter is appearing slightly later, it is likely that the conference will already have taken place by the time you read this. At the time of writing, bookings are already looking healthy, for what we trust will be an interesting and stimulating programme giving an insight into the structural, aesthetic and iconographic aspects of church roofs and ceilings. For our 2016 Conference we were immensely grateful to Cambridge University's History of Art Department for assembling the programme, but understandably they have not been able to repeat this and we have had to undertake the task ourselves. 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 a 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 less than £20 for members and less than £25 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, namely **Sundays 14th May, 11th June, 9th July and 13th August**

At the time of going to press the itineraries have yet to be settled. If possible an insert will be circulated with this Newsletter, but otherwise details will be circulated to members by email where available and otherwise by post. Jana Gajdosova, whose commentaries on the churches we visited last August were greatly appreciated, has agreed to lead this year's July tour. The remainder will be led by the Revd Dr Lynne Broughton who will be well-known to many members from her excellent commentaries jointly with our other tour leaders in previous years.

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.

Jointly with the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History we are planning the usual coach trip to a major church or churches, to be led by Lynne Broughton on a Saturday in August. Details have yet to be settled and will be publicised as soon as they are available.

## Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust

Registered as a charity in England and Wales No 287486

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Nick Pallister



2017

## A Message from the Chair of Trustees



**Engaging with local communities is a win-win for our historic churches. It's obviously at the heart of their ministry and mission (and a key theme of the Ely Diocesan strategy for instance). And the best way to ensure the healthy survival of a historic building is to keep it in healthy use, with a good band of people who share the commitment to keep it that**

**way. A well-used church will be reaching out as well as drawing in, and will have an open door for many sort of uses from Evensong to exercise classes.**

CHCT is of course at heart a conservation charity, but when vibrant current use is the key to conservation, old antipathies between "mission" and "maintenance" or "buildings" and "people" are melting away fast. And as a Trust we want to continue to celebrate and reward innovative building adaptation to meet the needs of the people of today – across all our churches, with a special encouragement to the smaller, more remote ones too.

So the CHCT Engage Awards will be made again in 2017 and are open to Cambridgeshire Churches of all denominations. A small prize of £100 is being offered to ten churches who have recently completed building work of this kind, which I will once again deliver in person on Ride, Drive and Stride Day in the autumn. You'll find the details you need to apply on my blog at <https://bpdt.wordpress.com/2017/03/21/engage-awards-2017/>, or contact Jo Godfrey in my office on 01353 662137.

See you on September 9th!

+David

Chair of Trustees

## Hon. Secretary's Report

**The past two years have seen a great deal of change in the Trust's affairs, but we have been extraordinarily fortunate in those who have stepped in to fill the gaps left by the departure of long-standing office-holders.**

Bishop David has applied his great enthusiasm, imagination and erudition to the task of overall leadership, and Canon David Pritchard has now assumed oversight of our day-to-day business in similar fashion. "The Three Davids" smacks of the music hall or the circus; we hope that in administering the Trust we will succeed in maintaining the highest standards of performance, but with a dignity appropriate to the Trust's role.

Just as importantly, Alan Churchar has "hit the ground running" in taking over our finances from Ron Dexter and has already steered us skilfully through some changes necessitated by new formal requirements and other altered circumstances.

I am constantly grateful to all of them, to the other officers who carry out their duties with dedication, and to the other Trustees and Executive Committee members for their support, all of which is indispensable in successfully pursuing the Trust's objectives.

However, there is no room for complacency. As reported elsewhere in this Newsletter, the Ride, Drive and Stride, our main source of income, succeeded in reversing last year the long decline in revenue. There is no guarantee that this will be repeated this year, let alone that we shall begin a serious climb back to the £30,000 returns that we were achieving a few years ago, still less that we shall move towards the six-figure sums realised by some other county trusts.

The Ride can only be really effectively organised and revived by someone dedicated specifically to that task, not just as something picked up by existing office-holders when their other duties allow, which is how we have been coping for the past few years.

We have tried repeatedly, latterly offering an honorarium, to recruit a new organiser, or now as an interim measure an

*Continued overleaf*

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](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.



## Hon Secretary's Report *continued*

administrator just for this year's event, still without success. Please think hard about this if you have the necessary skills or know someone who has.

Membership has been increasing gradually but again a step change is really needed, and we are pondering how to move from the present figure of just under 300 to 500 or more. Meanwhile, encourage your friends to join and not only enjoy the benefits of membership but know that they are contributing to our valuable work.

Heightening our profile is not just about the number of subscribing members, and we are reaching out towards people who may be able to help strengthen our influence in places where it matters.

As mentioned in Andy Clarke's report later in this Newsletter, the theft of lead from church roofs has again become a major preoccupation. Prevention is always preferable, and we would like to be able to offer grants towards the cost of roof alarms for all the churches in the county which remain at risk. We are hopeful of securing a substantial block of funds towards this from a national charitable source, but we will need to supplement this by our own fundraising – watch out for an appeal – and by deploying some of our capital towards what is effectively an investment against the risk of future loss.

Our conferences and tours are supportive of our main purpose of helping with the cost of repairs and improvements, since they are important in spreading better understanding and appreciation of church buildings and their contents, and thus in garnering and maintaining support for our work.

Following the departure of Richard Halsey and John Maddison we were lucky last year that Cambridge University's History of Art Department took on a large part of the burden of organising these events. Understandably they have not been able to do this again, and in particular the devising of a conference programme and recruitment of speakers has fallen to me. I am confident that the results will maintain our usual high standard, but it has been a time-consuming process and I must crave your indulgence for the delay in announcing details of some of our activities.

**David Stazicker**

Hon Secretary

## Membership Secretary's Report

The Trust's membership has again seen a slight increase since my report in the Spring 2016 Newsletter. The total figure now stands at 298 members representing 190 individuals (of which 36 are joint members at the same address) and 108 church or corporate members.

Since 1 July 2016 we have welcomed 3 individual members and 9 churches. There has been 1 resignation, 1 bereavement and I have removed 3 members who were either in arrears or were not paying the correct subscription.

## Ride, Drive and Stride

You will hardly need reminding that this sponsored event each September is the Trust's main source of revenue to enable us to continue offering grants to churches. It is Cambridgeshire's contribution to the national Ride and Stride day in which local historic church trusts across the country take part. 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.

From the 2016 event on 10th September we received a total of £20,807. This was a slight increase on the 2015 figure, reversing the downward trend of the last ten years or so. £9,759 was remitted to churches, leaving £11,048 which after deduction of £523 expenses leaves £10,525 for the Trust to devote to grants. In addition we expect to recover approximately £8,238 in Gift Aid. 88 churches took part, compared with 52 in 2015. This increase, and the proportionately more modest increase in income, may have been due in part to our introduction of on-line sponsorship through JustGiving, which accounted for £1,048 including the amount recoverable in Gift Aid. We only concluded the arrangements with JustGiving at a late stage and the opportunity to use this facility was only publicised by an addendum slip added to the paperwork circulated to churches. We shall in future give it due prominence and we hope that this will help to encourage more sponsorship. Hearty thanks to everyone who contributed, including those who staffed the churches that were kept open and in many cases provided very welcome refreshments to their visitors, as well as the participants and their sponsors.

As usual we are awarding modest prizes to those who raised the highest amounts. The £50 prize for the most successful individual participant goes to Tim Stone of Whittlesford who raised £1,050 and the church prize of £125 goes to St Andrew's Oakington who raised £1,690. At the time of writing we are having difficulty identifying the junior prizewinner and his or her identity will be announced later. Bishop David will present the prizes in due course.

This year's Ride, Drive and Stride will be on Saturday 9th September. We hope that as many as possible of you will collect sponsorship and take part, and encourage your local church to do so and to open up for visitors. With respect to JustGiving, it's important to stress that it will work best if each church sets up a fundraising page for itself. The Trust will then know where the proceeds are to be shared. If individuals set up their own individual fundraising pages we probably won't know where to allocate the funds.

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. I have reminded members that payment was due on 1 January for 2017 so if you have yet to renew your membership, please let me have payment as soon as possible.

**Jenny Lowles**

Membership Secretary

## Grants Secretary's Report

It's always good to hear news about projects completed with our help. Since our Autumn newsletter came out St Mary's Bainton have told us about the repairs to their spire for which we awarded a loan of £20,000 and a grant of £3,000. It was especially interesting to learn of the efforts over many years by one of their now deceased parishioners in support of the Ride, Drive and Stride, which they recognise as being the Trust's main source of income to spend on grants.



Mary's Bainton Spire Repairs

St Mary the Virgin Great Abington have also expressed their appreciation of our financial support - likewise a £20,000 loan and £3,000 grant - towards the cost of a new WC and servery.



St Mary the Virgin, Great Abington – exterior view



St Mary the Virgin Great Abington – Interior

The focus of recent meetings has been on fabric repairs. Many applicants have had roof problems,

either general repairs, or following lead thefts, or needed help towards alarms. Grants were awarded to Peterborough (St John the Baptist), Little Shelford, Abbots Ripton, Bourn and Buckworth, and a loan made to Oakington.



St Mary the Virgin, Great Abington – servery

We are delighted to have again been awarded Partnership Funding of £10,000 from The National Churches Trust for 2017. On our recommendation Somersham was recently awarded a grant of £5,000 towards urgent roof repairs.

**Andy Clarke**

Grants Secretary

## Church Open Day with a Theme

Horningsea church will be opening this September for Heritage Open Day. While looking for a way to keep the church open for Ride and Striders (same Saturday) a few years ago, I was inspired by a talk by HOD lead Sarah Holloway to open our Grade 1 Listed building.

We have never looked back. Benefits include free organiser training and a free entry on their national website, as well as advice on managing publicity. We have had our picture published in the Cambridge News and been interviewed twice by BBC Radio Cambridgeshire.

HOD suggest themes each year but you are free to choose your own. Our speakers are usually drawn from within the village, and talk about local history.

We have tackled Magna Carta, Horningsea in 1766, Roman potters and the Viking invasion. Ask people to take part - many are very modest about what they know. One of the best-received talks was by an incomer who had done some research on his own rather ancient house and its previous occupants. We always offer refreshments, but last year found that lunchtime bread and cheese drew in the crowds ready for the afternoon slots.

Doing this has been lots of fun and seen people in the church who don't normally come. And sponsored cyclists are delighted by the buzz. So have a go! Visit [www.heritageopendays.org.uk/](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/)

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