

# TRUST NEWS

*Saving The Past For The Future*



## WE'VE DONE IT AGAIN! £102,699

The Bike 'n Hike 2021 has once again made a six-figure sum, maintaining our place in the top five historic church trusts in the country for fundraising in this annual event. This brilliant achievement is down to the hard work of bikers, hikers, generous sponsors, and of course Trustee Madeline Russell and her team of Area and Church Organisers and helpers.

Raising such a sum would be wonderful if it was just once – but it's becoming a habit that we don't want to break. (See *page 2 for Madeline's report*). If you fancy a great day out while fundraising to save our historic churches, put **Saturday 10 September** in your diary and sign up for Bike 'n Hike.

See our website for details, where you can also set up your Justgiving fundraising page: [www.beds Hertshct.org.uk](http://www.beds Hertshct.org.uk)



*The charming thatched Congregational Chapel at Roxton visited by Bike 'n Hike participants. The Trust awarded the chapel a grant some years ago.*

## GOVERNMENT HELP FOR CHURCH REPAIRS TO CONTINUE

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport has announced that the Government's Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme will be extended for three years to **31 March 2025**.

Grants cover the cost of VAT on repairs to listed buildings in use as places of worship.

Applications may be made in respect of repairs to the fabric of the building and associated professional fees, pews, as well as repairs to turret clocks, bells, and pipe organs.

This can make a very significant reduction in overall costs and is good news for any listed church engaged in or about to embark on repairs or restoration.

## STUDY DAY AND CHURCH TOURS ARE BACK!

More great reasons to join the Trust are our Study Day and Church Tours by coach with knowledgeable guides and lunch. We are delighted to offer these events again.

The Study Day talks include: an Eaton Bray detective story; graveyard cautionary tales; Bletsoe's derelict chapel reclaimed. Church tours make a great day out. In June we'll see some Northamptonshire gems including a rare Norman round church. The E. Herts tour includes a range of styles from early Norman to Victorian with some unusual periods.

See our special flier or website for details and booking information. These events are very popular, so book your places soon to avoid disappointment.

## GREAT NEWS FOR NORTHILL

The National Churches Trust has announced the award of £99,000 from the Heritage Stimulus Fund (part of the Government's Culture Recovery Fund) to St. Mary's, Northill for repairs to the roof.

### Our Campaign

You can now read about our Endowment Campaign on the website where you can make a donation via **JustGiving**.

## DIARY DATES

14 May  
**Study Day - Bedford**

11 June  
**Church Tour - Northamptonshire**

9 July  
**AGM at St George's, Norton**

10 September  
**Bike 'n Hike**

17 September  
**Church Tour - East Hertfordshire**

See our website for details.

# BIKE 'N HIKE 2021

2021 proved to be a difficult year in more ways than one. Not only were we still faced with Covid but, with the loss of Ken Shrimpton our longstanding Documents Manager, producing documents and accessing the Bike 'n Hike website proved problematic.

With the help of my son-in-law, we retrieved masters of the documents from a private part of the website and I set about updating them for 2021. When the Area Organisers met, we decided the detail of how to run the event with restrictions still in place and then the documents needed final updating. I was delighted that Kelvin White offered to take on the role of Documents Manager. I then got in touch with Murray's, who have long printed all the documents for us, and they were very supportive, helping with the final issues we were struggling with. The rest, as they say, is history. Documents were distributed, Church Organisers took over and participants came forward. Whilst not quite reaching the dizzy heights of 2020, the total raised has reached £102,699 so many, many thanks to everyone involved in any way.

Feedback this year indicates that people miss the Register of Visitors – churches like to see who has visited and participants like to see who else is taking part. Expect it to be re-instated for 2022!

Two great positives for 2021 were the new Trust website and profile on social media. The website, managed by



*Bike 'n Hike is great fun for even the youngest bears*

Katrina Grant, is on a more modern platform and allows greater flexibility. Kelly Liebenberg and Katrina run our new Facebook page and Kelly has ensured Bike 'n Hike is now on YouTube.

It would seem that this year, 2022, the country may be back to something like normality and I hope this September will see the return of the event as it should be – churches able to welcome visitors and offer refreshment and participants being able to see inside churches and chapels, which is all part of the fun. Keep an eye on the website for full details.

*Madeline Russell*

## PLEASE PUT SATURDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER IN THE DIARY!

## OLD WARDEN WANDERERS GO FOR GOLD

Our Grants Secretary describes an excellent day out for the Bike 'n Hike.

Mike and I had cycled together before but in 2021 Mike invited his son, Guy, and daughter, Fleur, with their partners, to join us as the Old Warden Wanderers, cycling for St. Leonard's Church, Old Warden.

The six of us set out from Biggleswade, across the Common – avoiding cattle – to Sandy and St. Swithun's, across meadows and the river to Beeston Methodist Church and then back to Sandy to the Baptist and Methodist churches there. Already four churches under our belts!

From Sandy we joined the disused railway from Bedford to Cambridge, now part of a national cycleway so no traffic and lovely and flat. Coming off at Blunham, we headed for Tempsford and Roxton, using the path alongside the A1 to cross the River Ouse. Another five churches and chapels.

En route to Great Barford, disaster struck. I had a puncture in the rear wheel but managed to push the bike to Barford, where we had a riverside lunch. 'Search and Rescue' – ie Mike's wife, Dawn, arrived with a replacement bike and took mine home. Not so easy on a 'strange' bike, but onward to

Willington, re-joining the railway. Off at the Danish Camp to visit the Methodist Chapel and St. Lawrence and back to the railway via the Dovecote.

Time for the run home, to Sandy along the railway line and across the Common to Biggleswade, then round the four churches and chapels and back to our house for a very welcome tray of tea and homemade cakes.

In all, a great day out – 16 churches visited, covering 32 miles and between us all, enough raised to gain a gold certificate!

*Archie Russell*



*Cycling along the old railway track at Willington*





*Chairman, Revd. Canon  
Malcolm Grant*

Looking back through the details of grant awards we made recently, I was struck by the range of work to the churches of our two counties which we are supporting.

Occasionally we are asked for help with very large projects, such as the restoration of a church after a catastrophic fire, or of a roof after thieves have stripped off the lead. Both examples have been before us in the past year, and Trustees are very conscious of how small a sum we are able to offer. To try to ensure that we give some help to almost all who apply, we normally do not offer more than £10,000 to any one project.

In cases of fire and theft, of course, a large proportion of the cost will be met from the insurance claim. Insurances must be reviewed regularly to maintain full cover: else the insurers will meet only a proportion of the cost of restoration. Do make sure your church keeps up to date with the total sum insured. When it comes to lead thefts, if a roof alarm approved by the insurers is not fitted and operational, only a small proportion of the cost of replacement and repairs will be met. The Trust is still administering grants funded by Allchurches Trust for the provision of roof alarms, but this will finish at the end of June.

## CHAIRMAN'S MUSINGS

But proper care of our churches requires many smaller projects to keep a church in good repair. Stonework repairs occur frequently in the applications we receive, whether it is falling masonry, or erosion of window surrounds or other stonework, or rectifying ill-advised repairs which in the long-term have actually caused further damage. Repairs to stained glass also can prove surprisingly costly.

We have recently offered help towards access improvements, repairs to collapsing floors (stone and wooden), and the replacement of aged or dangerous heaters. One of the major obstacles to making more use of church buildings is inadequate and inefficient heating. This work may be urgent because of safety or legal obligations. One recent case was the urgent re-wiring of a church, and we occasionally give a loan to enable urgent work to be done when the money required is not immediately to hand.

Normally grants awarded are paid out only when work to the value of the grant has been completed and professionally certified, but we do have an emergency procedure for making a grant within days of receiving a request. This can mean, for example, that collapsing masonry can be shored up immediately where necessary! We have also given a loan to enable rapid investigation of a serious building fault to determine the best solution. The Trustees all know only too well how hard it is for churches to raise that sort of money in a hurry!

Then we get the "one-off" applications, like help for repairs to an historic clock in the church tower, or the need to install "modern" surface-water drainage (gutters and down-pipes) because the medieval gargoyles, designed to throw roof water clear of the building, have saturated the surrounding ground, creating major dangers to the fabric of the church.

I am impressed by the range of work we help to fund, and I hope this gives our supporters a sense of what Trustees do with the money which they all help to raise, and which we seek to use wisely and fairly. We would love to be able to offer more help – that's the reason behind our Jubilee Endowment Campaign – and a large part of the money that we award is raised by those who take part in the annual Bike 'n Hike. Thank you to everyone who plays a part in our valuable work.

*Malcolm Grant*

## MEET KELVIN WHITE

It is a pleasure to announce that the new Documents Manager for the Bike 'n Hike is Kelvin White from Milton Bryan, near Woburn, Bedfordshire. As well as being a Churchwarden and PCC Secretary at S. Peter's, Kelvin is a Lay Leader of Worship, on top of his day job as Senior Assistant Facilities Manager at Cranfield University.

Over many years, Kelvin and his wife, Stacey, have taken part in the Bike 'n Hike and ensured that their church welcomed visitors. He is also Ampthill's Area Organiser, ensuring that churches in the area have all they need to take part in the Bike 'n Hike. We are very grateful for Kelvin's energy and support of the Trust.

*Madeline Russell*



*Kelvin White*

# FAREWELL TO DAVID MOWBRAY

Following the retirement of the previous treasurer in 2017, I approached David Mowbray, a retired civil servant from the Ministry of Defence, to take on the role. David and I had previously been involved with a preservation trust, and as a church treasurer he was an ideal candidate. Our then Chairman, Richard Genochio, and I were delighted when David agreed to come on board.

Early last year, David became extremely ill and could no longer continue in the role. His health has since improved

but he and his wife, Barbara, have moved to a new home near Berwick-upon-Tweed, in a part of the world where they have family.

On behalf of the Trust, I record our sincere thanks to David. He and I enjoyed an excellent working relationship – made easier by living in the same town – and Trustees enjoyed working with him.

*Archie Russell, Grants Secretary*

## CHANGE IN OUR CHARITABLE STATUS

Under our original Trust Deed, the Trust could not hold investments other than bank accounts. As contributions to the Jubilee Endowment Campaign accumulate, Trustees know that we need to diversify our financial holdings, but these could not be in the name of the Trust, but only in the name(s) of individual Trustees, which was clearly unsatisfactory!

It was agreed, therefore, (as I announced at last year's AGM) that the Trust should apply to be re-registered as a "Charitable Incorporated Organisation, whose only voting members are its charity trustees". This would preserve the existing objects of the Trust and its methods of operating, but make it a legal entity able to hold investments in its own name. The Trust will remain the same, but there will be administrative changes to which we shall all have to adapt.

We shall be re-registered with the Charity Commission, with a new Constitution and a new Charity Number as the existing one will be discontinued. Our existing bank account will be closed, and a new one opened.

When this is done, all gifts to the Trust must go to the new Charity Number, and be paid into the new account. All standing orders and other payments will have to be made with the new details - particulars will be circulated as soon as they all are known.

This will affect all subscriptions, donations and gifts to the Trust, as well as provisions in Wills where the Trust is named as a beneficiary. Details will be given on the website, and existing members and donors will be contacted; we would urge you, when you receive that notification, to lose no time in taking the necessary action to maintain your link with the Trust. Gift Aid declarations may also have to be renewed.

Another consequence will be some name-changes, because of the legal wording. The word "member" is restricted to people with power to act on behalf of the organization - in our case, the Trustees. Our existing 'members' who pay annual personal or family subscriptions will in future be called "Friends" of the Trust. Churches which are currently 'corporate members' will in future be "Corporate Supporters" of the Trust.

You can see that this change will involve a lot of extra work for our Trustees in the coming months, and we would ask you all to do all you can to reduce that burden by acting speedily to up-date your own relevant paperwork. We all want the work of the Trust to go ahead as smoothly and efficiently as possible, and I take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and co-operation.

*Malcolm Grant*

## New Treasurer needed

If you or someone you know could take on this role please contact us:

**[general.enquiry@bedshertshct.org.uk](mailto:general.enquiry@bedshertshct.org.uk)**

We thank Madeline Russell for holding the fort meantime, preparing our accounts and ensuring Trust finances run smoothly.

### Trustees

*Chairman:* Revd. Canon Malcom Grant    *Secretary:* William Marsterson

*Grants Secretary:* Archie Russell    *Bike 'n Hike:* Madeline Russell

*Other Trustees:* Theresa Britt; Sir Timothy Clifford; Richard Genochio; Dr Christopher Green; Judith Howard, DL; The Ven. Paul Hughes; Jim May; Revd. Thomas Sander; Robert Sharp.

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