

TRUST NEWS

Saving The Past For The Future



BIKE 'N HIKE 2024

We were fortunate to have perfect weather for the Bike 'n Hike this September. Sponsorship continues to come in and the results will be shared early in 2025. We've heard of some great experiences in this year's event but none more special than that of Nicholas Tufton who reports on his 33rd Bike 'n Hike.

REFLECTIONS ON THE BIKE'N HIKE SINCE 1991

In 1991 I attended a meeting where the idea of a sponsored bike ride around our churches was first mooted by Patrick Lepper and I have taken part ever since. (I'm rather hoping that I am not unique in that regard so please let me know if you have done the same, so we can form a club!)

It is now an annual ritual contacting friends and family at the beginning of September to see if they can face sponsoring me yet again and they continue to be enormously patient as well as generous when they hear from me. All the money raised goes to the Trust but half the sum raised comes back to our parish church being St Mary Magdalene in Barkway, nr Royston

These days, it is easiest if the sponsorship is set up on JustGiving as that gives instant results and saves me from the painful business of knocking on doors after the event to ask for the cash. It always amazes me how generous people are, and it is important to tell them how things went, how many miles travelled and how many churches visited so that they might think of sponsoring me again next year.

This year's journey was 31 miles long and I was accompanied by my son, who probably came to ensure I returned home in one piece, without falling off. We visited or passed by churches in the Buntingford Deanery being: Barkway (2 and where I live); Reed; Therfield (2); Kelshall; Sandon; Buckland; Anstey (2); Hormead (2); Furneux Pelham; Stocking Pelham and finally Brent Pelham. That sounds like an announcement of stops on a train Tannoy system but that was our planned route, using minor roads with less danger from traffic.

In times gone by, I was taken by car with accomplices to St Albans and we rode back to Barkway, stopping for lunch at the Lytton Arms in Knebworth. Another time we started in Ely and rode back to Barkway-big mistake as there was a strong wind blowing from the south which made pedalling harder.

Two years ago, I cheated by buying an electric bike as I'm not as young as I used to be and in 2022, I covered 36 miles before the battery ran out and I had to walk up a hill to get home. This year, I cheated because we did the ride a few days early as we knew we would be in Uzbekistan on 14 September. Perhaps I should have ridden on a camel ticking off mosques on the way in Samarkand.

I have enjoyed all the rides over 33 years (I walked one year) and the weather in September has usually been kind. There is something special about speeding along country lanes, passing acres of stubble fields and visiting our wonderful selection of churches on the way. The drinks and biscuits are an added bonus! And of course, there are also numerous fine churches in our towns, which can seriously stretch friendships if you are being sponsored per church rather than a one-off donation.

Here's hoping the Bike'n Hike will continue for years to come!

Nicholas Tufton, Area Organiser in the Buntingford Deanery



Nicholas and his son Henry on the Bike 'n Hike (photo by Nicholas Tufton)

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN – CHANGES AT THE TRUST

I am delighted to be writing my first letter to Friends as Chairman of BHHCT although I have been involved with the Trust for many years now, primarily through the Bike 'n Hike, and some of you will be familiar with my name.

It continues to be a time of change for the Trust. We have completed the transition to Charitable Incorporated Organisation as our legal status and the former Trust will be closed down as soon as we lodge the final accounts, which are in preparation.

Other changes are in our people. The Revd. Canon Malcolm Grant, who successfully steered us through the CIO transition, has now stood down as Chairman and retired as a Trustee. Our Membership Secretary for many years, Jim May, has similarly retired from both the role and as a Trustee. Archie Russell has retired as Grants Secretary but remains a Trustee.

BHHCT owes a huge debt of gratitude to Malcolm, Jim and Archie for their hard work, good humour and wise counsel.

Joining the Trustee team are Andrew Lambourne as Grants Secretary and Mark Newbery as Membership Secretary. They are both bringing new ideas to their roles. The Revd. Canon Lynda Klimas has also become a Trustee and takes over from William Marsterson as Honorary Secretary. William will stay as a Trustee.

So, a new look to the board of Trustees but the work of the Trust goes on. All organisations evolve over time but it is good to reflect on past achievements and there are two figures of which to be particularly proud. Over the last 25 years, the Trust awarded over £4.2 million in grants. Over that same period, the income from the Bike 'n Hike was £2.4 million. There is a real need for what we do and we must continue the good work.

You will have seen that we are offering some different events for Friends alongside our popular church tours. If anyone would like to suggest a future event, please do contact me on chairman@bedshertshct.org.uk I'd be glad to hear from you. Also, if you feel you have the time to do a bit more for the Trust, do get in touch to discuss the possibilities.

I am both excited and daunted to be leading the Trust through this period of change but look forward to the challenges which no doubt lie ahead!

Finally, Sir Timothy Clifford, who joined us to help with the Trust's Endowment Campaign, has retired.

Madeline Russell



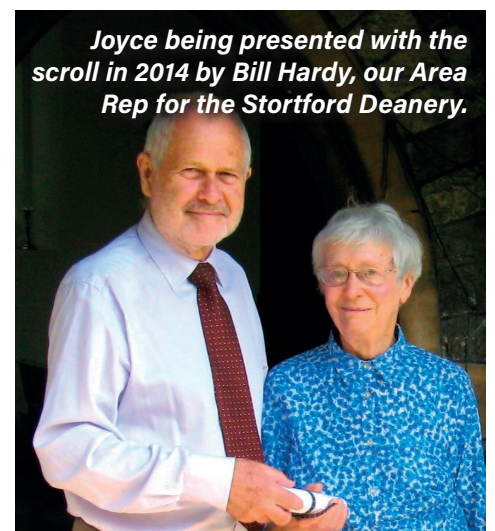
JOYCE HAMMERSLEY RIP

In October, the Trust lost a longstanding supporter and fundraiser for the Bike 'n Hike. Joyce Hammersley, who has died aged 97, was Headteacher of the Herts & Essex school in Bishop's Stortford from 1965 to 1989, where she is still very fondly remembered. She supported the Trust from the beginning, becoming an indefatigable fundraiser but also successfully applying for many thousands of pounds of grants for Holy Trinity Church.

Joyce took part in the Bike 'n Hike every year from its inception in 1991 until very recent years, walking around churches and chapels in the Stortford, Stansted and Cambridge areas and encouraging others to take part. For many years, Holy Trinity was in the top three fundraisers in the Diocese. Through her energy and encouragement over thirty years, £60,000 was raised for Holy Trinity and, latterly, All Saints, Hockerill. Joyce said she moved to All Saints as she could no longer manage Hockerill Hill.

In 2014, when over £40,000 had been raised, the Trust presented Joyce with a scroll 'in recognition and appreciation of a happy and fruitful relationship' with the Trust. It was a joy to receive her letters – long, chatty and handwritten.

Joyce Hammersley became a legend in the Bike 'n Hike community. She will be sorely missed.

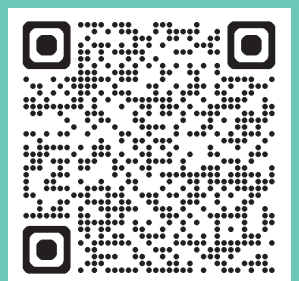


JOIN US: WE NEED FRIENDS



We rely on the subscriptions of Friends to help fund our work and you can join as an individual or household. We arrange regular events for Friends, and they receive Trust News twice yearly.

To join, see our website www.bedshertshct.org.uk or scan the QR code for our Join Us leaflet. You can also get in touch at: membership@bedshertshct.org.uk



MORE EVENTS FOR FRIENDS IN 2025

We have been planning more events for Friends and others to enjoy in 2025 and while not all details are yet in place, we wanted to alert you now so that you can mark your diaries.

CHURCH TOUR 7TH JUNE 2025

Rev. Canon Malcolm Grant, our former Chairman, will lead a church tour in the west of our region on 7th June 2025, to start from Leighton Buzzard station and take in churches including Wing, (one of the most important Saxon churches in England), Ivinghoe (14th C crossing tower and fine Jacobean pulpit), Edlesborough (medieval painted timber roodscreen, pulpit and rare canopy) and St Mary's Church Eaton Bray (where Malcolm was previously Vicar).

John Betjeman said, "The church has nave arcades of absolute and quite unexpected magnificence", and 13th C door ironwork by Thomas of Leighton.

As usual, we will enjoy lunch at a nearby pub and afternoon tea.

Booking details will appear on our website and in the spring 2025 issue of Trust News.



CONCERT: 4TH OCTOBER 2025

On the evening of October 4 at 7pm the Trust plans to host a concert by the well-known Galliard Trio at St. Mary's Church Ware. It should be a lovely evening with refreshments after the concert.

Tickets will be available both in advance and on the door. We look forward to welcoming you.

Theresa Britt



RECYCLED ROMANS ON OUR SEPTEMBER CHURCH TOUR

The September Tour devised by Richard Genochio commenced with St Mary's Godmanchester - a fine Gothic/ Early English church where the Vicar gave an excellent guided tour. Most interesting were the Roman bricks, tiles and even columns which can be clearly seen in the walls and were re-used in the building's construction in the 13th century.

At St Andrew's, Orwell where the tower dates from c1250 we came face to face with a memorial to former Rector Jeremiah Radcliffe, one of the scholars who translated the Authorised Version of the Bible.

After a convivial pub lunch at Orwell, we visited St Helena and St Mary's Church, Bourn which has a hammer beam roof with angels and a surviving rood screen.

The tour ended at St John the Baptist, Royson, recently restored after a devastating fire in 2018. Dating from 1250 it formed part of an Augustinian Priory. The Trust gave a grant towards the new lighting scheme, and it was a joy to see how bright and fresh the interior looked. After this came a delicious afternoon tea. We enjoyed a most interesting day on this Tour and look forward to the next Friends' event.

Katrina Grant



Memorial to Jeremiah Radcliffe, also one-time Vicar of Eaton Bray, Beds. (Photo: by Malcolm E. Grant)

BOOK NOW

CHURCH TOURS 2025



St Leonards Church Flamstead exterior
Photo by Andrew Lambourne

VISIT TO FLAMSTEAD CHURCH SATURDAY 15TH MARCH 2025

St. Leonard's, Flamstead, is a 900-year-old Grade I listed church, with medieval graffiti and medieval wall paintings which Pevsner calls the most important in the county apart from St. Albans. In 2017, a structural survey indicated that the church would have to be closed on safety grounds unless money could be raised within 3-4 years for major restoration work on the failing roof timbers. Weatherproofing was also urgently required otherwise the wonderful wall paintings would have been at further risk from damp in the walls.

We will meet at the church at 10am for coffee, followed by a tour and talks about the church and about how more than £1 million was raised for the massive restoration. We then have lunch at The Bell in Studham (own transport) and the opportunity afterwards to visit the early 13th century Grade 1 listed church of St. Mary Studham, with a Kempe window from 1903.

Numbers are limited to a **maximum of 24**.

The cost is **£10 for Friends** and **£12 for other guests**, not including lunch. Lunch to be ordered in advance from a menu which will be sent with your booking confirmation.

If you would like to join us, please complete the booking form and send it as soon as possible (14th February at the latest) either with your cheque or confirmation that you have paid by bank transfer. Your booking will be confirmed by email.

BOOKING FORM

I WOULD LIKE TO BOOK THE FOLLOWING TICKETS FOR THE VISIT:

Tour Flamstead		
Saturday 15th March 2025 (Book by 4th February 2025 at the latest)		
No. Friends at £10	No. Guests at £12	Total £

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____

EMAIL _____

TELEPHONE _____

Please enclose a cheque to be made payable to The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust.

Or tick this box to confirm that you have transferred the amount above to:

Account Name: The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust, Sort Code: 20-05-73, Account Number: 43234452

Please add the reference **'Flamstead'** so that your payment can be identified by our treasurer.

Post this form to: Madeline Russell, 31 Ivel Gardens, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 0AN



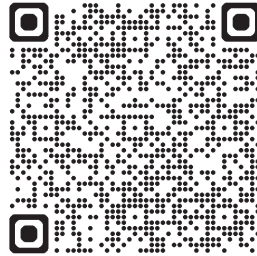
Photo by Two Tails Creative

MORE BIKE 'N HIKE ADVENTURES

REVD BILL BRITT'S PILGRIMAGE

Revd Bill Britt devised a seven mile pilgrimage route taking in Roman and medieval sites and the churches of St. Ippolyts, and Great and Little Wymondley.

Bill also produced an 8-page self-guided pilgrimage booklet with a history, Bible verse, short reflection and directions plus map: scan the QR code to download it from our website.



Stained glass from a series representing Pilgrim's Progress at the Bunyan Meeting Church Bedford

LEIGHTON BUZZARD'S TEAM

All Saints Leighton Buzzard's team followed part of the John Bunyan Way in and around Bedford - wowed by some beautiful stained glass and delighted to find almost all 15 churches they visited were open.

Our thanks to all those who were on duty at churches to welcome Bike 'n Hike visitors.

REVD STUART OWEN'S WALK

Revd Stuart Owen Rector of St Peter's Berkhamsted and Rural Dean, walked 28 miles to take in all the churches in the Berkhamsted Deanery for Bike 'n Hike.

NOT ONLY THE C OF E

While the majority of church buildings are Church of England, the Trust is very pleased to support different denominations in Beds and Herts.

We have recently made awards to: St Charalambos Greek Orthodox Church, Luton; Hertford Quaker Meeting House; Ashwell United Reformed Church; Renhold Baptist Church; the Methodist Church, Trowley Hill.



Contact us

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