NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

England & Wales · Charity number 1021632

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Trust
Registered	1993-05-25
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Bouverie Court Peterborough Diocese Unit 1 Bouverie Court The Lakes Northampton NN4 7YD
Phone	01604887049
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Website	www.nhct.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE PRESERVATION REPAIR MAINTENANCE IMPROVEMENT UPKEEP BEAUTIFICATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF CHURCHES IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AND OF MONUMENTS FITTINGS FIXTURES STAINED GLASS FURNITURE ORNAMENTS AND CHATTELS IN SUCH CHURCHES AND OF THE CHURCHYARD BELONGING TO ANY SUCH CHURCHES AND THE TRUSTEES MAY AT ANY TIME AND FROM TIME TO TIME PAY OR TRANSFER ANY PART OR PARTS OF THE INCOME OR CAPITAL OF THE TRUST FUND TO THE HISTORIC CHURCHES PRESERVATION TRUST FOR ANY SIMILAR CHARITABLE PURPOSE OR PURPOSES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM OTHER THAN IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Activities: Repair and maintenance of churches in Northamptonshire

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Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations
- **What:** Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
- Northamptonshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£59,238	£67,300	-	-
2023-12-31	£60,115	£80,635	-	-
2022-12-31	£57,510	£64,564	-	-
2021-12-31	£122,928	£81,286	-	-
2020-12-31	£104,565	£69,859	-	-

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
GARETH LUGAR-MAWSON	Chair	2018-04-17
Alice Magnay		2024-11-12
Andrew Roy Presland		2020-11-20
BRUCE ANTHONY BAILEY FSA		
Dr Martin Gaskell		2016-04-19
EDWIN BYLAND		2011-08-04
Eleanor Townsend		2022-04-19
Hilary Aslett		2016-11-08
JOHN CHARLES BARKER		
James Percy Miller D.L.		2016-04-19
Michael John Moore		2021-04-21
Mrs Liz Doherty		2016-04-19
Rev Robert Farmer		2020-11-20
Rosalind Mary Willatts		2020-11-20
THE VENERABLE RICHARD JEREMY ORMSTON Archdeacon		2014-04-29
VAL HARTLEY		2011-07-20
Virginia Anne Henley		2019-05-13

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1021632

Accounts

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

In September 2024, the National Lottery Heritage Fund launched a new three-year initiative to support the UK's places of worship. This will involve a number of different initiatives that seek to tackle sector-wide issues and funding gaps and to secure the future of these important buildings, backed by lottery funding. As Sir Chris Bryant, Heritage Minister, said: 'Thanks to funding provided by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, these important buildings will continue to thrive and serve the communities that cherish them for generations to come'.

But in January, Sir Chris also announced only a one-year extension to the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, which offers grants to offset the VAT on building repairs, as well as a cap on the amount an individual building can claim, and on the total funds available (see p.8 for more information). In a difficult financial climate for both congregations and government, this is a worrying development.

It is clear how important these historic buildings are to their communities. A truly impressive number of people and church congregations contacted their MPs about the LPW Grant Scheme, resulting in MPs highlighting many examples of churches in their own constituencies in their speeches. On a county level, the NHCT raised more than £35,000 through Ride and Stride this year, and reading the reports from the churches that have received NHCT grants is encouraging and inspiring. Tourism in churches, to which Andrew Presland draws our attention (see p.28), is a meaningful way forward to build on this affection, and to generate wider awareness.

Within this uncertain landscape, our Trust really makes a difference, and we should be proud of that. When the beautifully melancholic bells of our village churches ring out on a warm summer's evening, something will always feel right.

Eleanor Townsend and Alice Magnay (Editors)

Supporting the Trust

Become a Friend – Leave a legacy – Give practical help

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

President: James Saunders Watson, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire
Vice-Presidents: The Rt Revd. Debbie Sellin, The Bishop of Peterborough
The Rt Revd. John Holbrook, The Bishop of Brixworth

Trustees: James Saunders Watson, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire; The Rt Revd. Debbie Sellin, The Bishop of Peterborough

Hilary Aslett
John Barker
Liz Doherty
Dr Martin Gaskell
Virginia Henley
Gareth Lugar-Mawson
James Miller
The Ven. Richard Ormston
Canon Andrew Presland
Rosalind Willatts
Bruce Bailey
Edwin Byland
Revd. Robert Farmer
Val Hartley
The Rt Revd. John Holbrook
Alice Magnay
Michael Moore
Susan Parkinson
Eleanor Townsend

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire and the Bishop of Peterborough are trustees of the charity by virtue of their offices, and they appoint the remaining trustees. The number cannot exceed sixty, but cannot be less than four, and every trustee has one vote. These trustees administer the management of the charity.

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust was constituted by a Trust Deed dated 10th March 1955
Registered Charity Number: 1021632

Registered Address:
The Diocesan Offices, Bouverie Court,
6 The Lakes, Bedford Road, Northampton NN4 7YD

Trust Officers

Chairman:	Gareth Lugar-Mawson
Vice-Chairman:	John Barker
Treasurer: Eddie Byland (to April 2024),	Michael Moore (from April 2024)
Grants Secretary:	Michael Moore
Secretary and Friends Secretary:	Nuala Salter
County Ride and Stride Organisers:	Val Hartley and Liz Doherty

www.nhct.org.uk

Front cover: St Mary's, Wellingborough Previous page: St John the Baptist, Chelveston

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - 2024

Striders at St Martin's, Welton for Ride and Stride: (l-r) Pat Kent, Lynsey Dykes, Christine Reid, Jan Shepperson

I am very pleased to report that, once again, 2024 was a successful year for the Trust.

In 2024, the Trust:

- Paid £67,300 in grants
- Raised £35,535 (to date) in the Ride & Stride
- Put in a claim for £5,587 in Gift Aid
- Received £6,540.60 in donations and subscriptions

I express my thanks, and those of all the trustees, to:

- Our President, James Saunders Watson, HM Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, and our Vice-Presidents Bishop Debbie Sellin, and Bishop John Holbrook for their strong continuing friendship, support and encouragement.

- Michael Moore, our Grants Secretary, and to John Barker and Rosalind Willatts for visiting the applicant churches and chapels and reporting on their circumstances.

- Michael Moore, again, for stepping up to the plate and taking on the onerous job of being the Trust's Treasurer.

- Val Hartley and Liz Doherty, the Ride and Stride County Organisers, for their enthusiasm and the many hours they spent in planning and coordinating the event, and to all the Riders and Striders, Area Organisers, Church and Chapel Organisers and Church and Chapel sitters. Ride and Stride is the main funding source for our grants, and in making grants the trustees give priority to those churches and chapels which have a history of participation in the Ride and Stride, particularly those that have raised sponsorship money.

- Nuala Salter at the Diocesan Office, who has the unenviable task of being the Trust's Secretary and Friends' Secretary and who is doing a wonderful job in both roles.

- The Capron family for hosting the 2024 Celebration Evening in the beautiful surroundings of Southwick Hall on a wonderful English summer evening in July (see the article later in this Report).

- Bruce Bailey for organising the 2024 Church Study Day in August in which we visited the churches at Grendon, Whiston, Castle Ashby and Easton Maudit (see the article later in this Report).

- Eleanor Townsend and Alice Magnay for preparing this Report.

- All who made donations to the Trust and all the Trust's Friends for their continuing support.

I welcome on board our new trustee, Alice Magnay, who has very kindly agreed to help Eleanor Townsend with the preparation and editing of this Report.

I pay a heartfelt tribute to Eddie Byland, our former Treasurer, for the excellent way in which he looked after the Trust's accounts during the many years he held that role, and the very efficient way he dealt with the numerous individual Ride & Stride payments involved, making the Gift Aid refund claims to HMRC, and coping with the (sometimes strange) requirements of our bank. We made a presentation to Eddie at the Celebration Evening to show the Trust's gratitude for all his hard work.

It is with very great sadness that I report the deaths in 2024 of three stalwart supporters of the Trust: our Vice President, David Laing, our former Secretary, Ruth Fitch and Eric Peplow who made many inspections of our grant recipient churches on our behalf in the past years. Obituaries of David and Ruth appear later in this Report. All three will be greatly missed and our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Eddie and Lydia Byland, with Chairman Gareth Lugar-Mawson, at the Celebration Evening, July 2024

What is the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust for?

"It used to be the job of the churches to save people; now it is the job of the people to save churches…"

Those prescient words were delivered half a century ago by the late architect and academic, Professor Sir James Dunbar-Nasmith, at a public meeting in June 1974 in Edinburgh organised by the Cockburn Association (Scotland's oldest conservation charity), where local amenity groups, representatives of all of the major denominations, local planning officers and anyone with an interest in places of worship, were called together to try to find a solution to the problem of redundant churches in Edinburgh. This is still very much the case today.

The common view of the Church of England is that it is immensely wealthy. This is not entirely incorrect: it has an £8.2 billion investment portfolio, which generates an annual return of 9.4%. The Church spends around half of this and reinvests the rest to guarantee its fiscal solvency. But the largest single expenditure is on clergy pensions, and while some money goes towards cathedral maintenance, the rest is spent on general administration and wages. In effect, the Church spends next to nothing on maintaining its parish buildings.

Church maintenance, except in extreme circumstances, comes in the form of hard-won grants, some from the National Churches Trust and the Heritage Fund (until recently, the Heritage Lottery Fund), and from county Trusts such as ours, which are matched by fundraising. It is the local people who are forced to care and pay for the upkeep of their historic church.

This includes the burden of lead theft, which is driven particularly by the rising price on the international market for raw metal, particularly for use in batteries, and is often carried out by organised gangs. On that score, I bring you glad tidings. Some years ago the Trust gave St John's, Quinton a grant to install an alarm and CCTV cameras on the roof. In the early hours of a morning in July 2024, the monitoring station rang the churchwarden to say that they could see someone on the roof stealing the lead. The monitoring station automatically contacted the police and an hour later the churchwarden was advised that a man had been arrested. The efficiency of the system and the prompt action of the police resulted in limited damage to the church's roof. The man was later charged with attempted theft, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to a four months' prison sentence, ordered to undertake unpaid work and to pay £250 as compensation for his crime. The compensation ordered covered the cost of the insurance excess against a repair cost of about £1,100.

Later in this Report there is an article about changes to the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. This scheme was set up in 2001, as a response to changes to VAT. The idea was that any listed building used as a place of worship by those of any faith could be refunded the VAT it paid on repairs and alterations costing more than £1,000. This is the only direct support offered by the State to places of worship. In return, the scheme delivers what are, by any measure, extraordinary and diverse benefits. In cultural terms, listed buildings of all kinds are by definition physical embodiments of our history, deserving of our care, and their restoration maintains important professional and specialist skills. Moreover, places of worship are anchors of community life.

The National Churches Trust's recent report 'The House of Good' (https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/house-good-research) estimated that churches nationally, as measured by Treasury Green Book methods, are worth a staggering £255 billion annually in social value. In terms of direct expenditure, they also return £16 for every pound spent on them. They are centres of life at a local level and important contributors to our tourist economy. In 2023, for example, 9.3 million people visited England's cathedrals.

You might imagine, therefore, that a cash-strapped government would regard the £29 million spent, or rather returned, through the LPW grant scheme as exceptional value for money. It appears not so; at the end of the Westminster Hall debate on the renewal of the scheme, Sir Chris Bryant, the Minister for Creative Industries, Arts and Tourism, himself a former priest, pleading financial pressures announced a renewal of the scheme for only one year with a reduced £23 million budget and an arbitrary cap of £25,000 on the amount that any one place of worship could recoup in that time. This is a real cut in an unrealistic time frame with no promise of further renewal. It's also a tax on people's generosity towards a clear public benefit and threatens to exacerbate the estimated £1.2 billion backlog of repairs to parish churches alone, condemning any ambitious repair project to a massive tax bill.

In this difficult climate, please consider making a donation to the Trust, or leaving us a legacy in your will, or becoming a Friend of the Trust – the application form is at the end of this Report.

Gareth Lugar-Mawson, NHCT Chairman
Tel: 01327 830219; Mobile: 07452930801

St Matthew's Northampton

The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme was set up in 2001, to refund the VAT on repairs to listed places of worship of any faith. Since its inception, 13,000 places of worship have taken advantage of the scheme, which has a maximum annual budget of £42 million and makes about 500 monthly payments each averaging about £4,000. Last year, a total of £29 million was paid out, the return from a total sum of about £145 million raised and spent on repairs.

The Government has announced that The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS) will be extended into the next financial year until the end of March 2026, providing £23 million so that thousands of listed historical places of worship of all denominations and faiths throughout the UK can carry out restoration work such as works to the foundations, masonry and monuments integral to the buildings. The £23 million allocated compares unfavourably with a previous average allocation of £42 million per year.

There will be a cap of £25,000 that an organisation can claim during the year, and this can still be spread across multiple claims. Previously there was no cap. NHCT understands that the cap was designed to have no impact on the great majority (an estimated 94%) of applications. This is because most places of worship apply for a VAT refund of less than £25,000 in any one year, which is not surprising, as most repair and alteration projects cost less than £125,000 in a year.

Although NHCT is pleased that the Government has continued the scheme, albeit for only a year, the new cap of £25,000 per place of worship in 2025/26 is disappointing as it will cause substantial difficulties to larger schemes already in progress, or in later stages of planning and commitment, where more money will need to be raised or projects cut back.

Looking ahead; the future of the Scheme beyond March 2026 will depend on the Government's Spending Review, for which submissions to the Treasury are currently requested. NHCT understands that this covers the three-year period ending March 2029 (and five years for capital spending). NHCT along with National Churches Trust, the Heritage Religious Buildings Alliance, and many other organisations will be making the case for the Scheme's continuance with the necessary increased budget.

If you previously wrote to your MP and Lisa Nandy, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (enquiries@dcms.gov.uk), about the LPWGS, you may want to write again, expressing appreciation for the extension only to March 2026, together with your hope that, despite pressure on government finances, it will be extended again for a further three years. It is also not too late to write for the first time. If you are negatively affected by the cap, and/or the short period of extension of the Scheme, explain why politely. Evidence on the impact of the cap will help make the case for the future shape of the Scheme.

Gareth Lugar-Mawson, NHCT Chairman

GRANT COMMITTEE REPORT 2024

All Saints, Croughton

This year I thought that we would have had more churches applying for grants with the aftermath of the pandemic, but alas not so. Although I had several phone calls, not so many ended by completing the application form; maybe the costs are higher than expected or timelines don't match.

We do publicise our application closing date for each cycle, to give me time to arrange a round of trips around the county or several rounds, if need be, which can take a little time to arrange. Details are at https://www.nhct.org.uk/Main/GrantCriteria. However, several churches have contacted me after the closing date, and while I try to adjust the trips to fit them in, this can be embarrassing, so if you are thinking of sending in an application and are likely to be late, please let me know in advance.

This year we have allocated grants to the value of £74,800 to 18 churches from several dominations. That is the amount that is allocated, but during the year the trustees have also paid out grants to those who have completed their project.

We all know the cost of maintaining old buildings and restoring them to their glory for future generations to come, particularly as the collection plates seem lighter and populations are getting older, so it's vital that we encourage the younger members to discover the ancient buildings in our own county.

I would like to thank Rosalind Willatts for assisting on the trips and John Barker for his expertise, as well as Gareth Lugar-Mawson for chairing the meetings.

You can see from the schedules below the grants and pledges made during the year:

Town / Church	Works	Grant Given
Aynho St Michael's	Replace the old oil-fired heating system with a new infra-red lighting/heating system	£5,000
Badby St Mary's	Repairs to bell infrastructure	£2,000
Barnwell All Saints'	Churchyard walls repairs	£2,000
Church Brampton St Botolph's	Replace inadequate sound system	£500
Cotterstock St. Andrew's	Chancel floor repairs and broken pipe	£3,000
Cranford St John the Baptist	Replacement boiler	£2,000
Croughton All Saints'	Repairs to south porch	£5,000
Deanshanger Methodist Church	Roof repairs	£2,500
Glapthorn St Leonard's	Repairs to roof flashing	£5,000
Great Addington All Saints'	Urgent repairs to roof as cost of new one is prohibitive	£1,800
Lois Weedon St Mary's & St Peter's	Repairs to large crack in east window	£1,500
Passenham St Guthlac's	Installation of servery and WC, together with disabled pathway	£10,000
Piddington St John the Baptist	West door tower repairs	£5,000
Pitsford All Saints'	Roof repairs to flat roofs	£2,500
Rothersthorpe St Peter's & Paul's	Rewiring	£4,500
Towcester St Lawrence	Stonework repairs	£7,500
West Haddon All Saints'	Quinquennial repairs	£10,000
Weston-by-Welland St Mary the Virgin	Roof repairs	£5,000
		£74,800

In summary the Trust contributed as follows: -

Heating system	2	Churchyard walls	1
Building work	4	Roof repairs	5
Electrical	1	Servery/WC	1
Sound system	1	Tower repairs	1
Bell infrastructure	1	Window repairs	1

Until 2018 the trustees were able to recommend churches to the National Churches Trust (NCT) under the partnership agreement between the Trust and the NCT, however this scheme has unfortunately changed, and we are no longer able to do this. Nevertheless the Trust continues to welcome applications and tries hard to publicise the availability of funds to make grants.

M J Moore, NHCT Grants Secretary

NHCT Makes a Difference

ST ANDREW'S, COTTERSTOCK

We needed to replace a downpipe on the north side of the church due to a leak, which was causing damp inside the church wall that the choir platform backed onto. An added expense was asbestos removal. The choir platform floor had rotted badly, so had to be cordoned off. Both of these issues were listed as a Priority 1 in the Quinquennial report dated November 2023.

The work entailed:

- Removal of the asbestos downpipe and replacement with black cast iron, and cleaning out the gully below.
- Removal of pews and defective flooring and replacement with 22mm tongue and groove pine.
- Removal of rotten joists and replacement with oak (supplied by a villager).
- Insertion of brickwork supports/damp-proof course membrane.
- Refitting of pews and treating the floor with Osmo oil.

Many hands make light work at St Andrew's, Cotterstock

We are immensely grateful to Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust for the grant of £5,000. St Andrew's is a notable landmark on the River Nene, and we as a PCC together with the villagers are committed to maintaining its upkeep.

Monica Crosby, Organist

ALL SAINTS, CROUGHTON

Our church is Norman, and is especially renowned for its superb medieval wall paintings, appearing in Simon Jenkins's book, England's Thousand Best Churches. It is much loved by the local, regional and national communities. It has always been a spiritual, atmospheric, original and beautiful place, but is incredibly expensive to maintain given its age, and the technologies employed during construction and further maintenance through the centuries.

Threats to its future include the ageing, dwindling congregation (and consequently fewer resources with which to maintain the building into the future sustainably), as well as diminishing numbers of volunteers to undertake the range of roles required to manage the building and church resources. In 2019 our roof lead was stolen and we struggled to raise the necessary funds to replace it.

The repaired porch at All Saints', Croughton

The last Quinquennial Inspection, in April 2021, identified urgent major repairs required to the south porch.

Aspects of concern were detailed as follows:

"The west wall appears to be leaning out and more so at wall plate level. A structural assessment is recommended and should include the south wall and roof…
The copings to the head of the porch have eroded and open joints. There are further fine cracks around the doorway, which require pointing and the hood mould has spalling stonework and delaminating. A section to the gable and west of the opening has open and loose joints and stonework has vegetation growth.
To the base of the walling, there are further open joints. A programme of vegetation removal, raking out and repointing and conservation repairs is recommended for the porch."

The structural assessment was undertaken by a specialised civil and structural engineering consultant confirming the need for urgent and comprehensive attention as the structural integrity of the porch was under threat.

We began serious fund-raising in January 2024 towards a £40,000 target. We are most grateful to all our grant-giving agencies including the first to donate – Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust. By July we had raised nearly £25,000 in grants as follows:

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust:	£5,000
National Churches Trust:	£4,000
Wolfson Foundation:	£4,000
Headley Trust:	£5,000
Francis Coales Charitable Foundation:	£5,000
Benefact Trust:	£1,750

As a result of having all permissions in place and a selected tendered contractor, we were able to begin the work in September 2024 and it was completed by the end of the year - more or less on time and on budget (a little over). The gate to the porch has been restored by a local artisan metal worker.

A re-dedication service was conducted by the Bishop in May 2025. A record of the progress of restoration can be found on the church Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61564360697046

Dr Trevor Davies, PCC Treasurer

DEANSHANGER METHODIST CHURCH

The village of Deanshanger has had a strong Methodist presence since the early 1800s, with members meeting together in their own homes. The first Deanshanger primitive Methodist chapel was built of stone in 1849 and extended in 1860. With the growing congregation this was replaced in 1892 by the present brick building which included a schoolroom.

Deanshanger Methodist Church

Sadly, after 133 years, the roof began to leak quite badly so a full examination had to be undertaken. The initial estimate for the work was £11,500. With limited resources we commenced a fundraising exercise which included an application for a grant from the Trust.

The repairs commenced and it was found, not unusually, that additional work was required. This included the replacement of 180 slates. Our builder spent considerable time sourcing replacement slates from various reclamation yards to fit in with the unusual size of the original ones. This added to the costs as did the additional work required.

In the meantime, our fundraising efforts continued and we were humbled by the generous donations from the congregation, the local community and beyond, who showed such affection for the chapel and all that it represents. Obviously with the increased work the costs also mounted, culminating in a final bill of £14,000.

The chapel has always been open on the Trust's Ride and Stride days to welcome fund-raising cyclists and walkers so we were especially grateful when we were awarded a £2,500 grant from the Trust. It is heart-warming to say that we have managed to complete the repairs with all costs met. We can now worship in the dry, knowing that our roof will protect us for many years to come.

Anitra Bull, Steward

Tower doorway at St John the Baptist,
Piddington, during repair works

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, PIDDINGTON

In the early 1980s, an architect's Quinquennial Inspection itemised a large number of issues that required attention. The PCC of the time set about raising funds to initially repair the tower and north aisle roof, both being quite major projects for a small village church. At the time the architect's advice was that a major refurbishment of the tower doorway should be delayed until more urgent works had been completed.

Since 1984, stonework repairs have been made to the tower, spire and nave, both aisle roofs and the porch have been re-covered, the church has been rewired with new heaters and lighting, the organ has been dismantled and restored, and an internal re-ordering has provided a servery and toilet facilities. A considerable amount of money has been raised locally to fund all this work and various bodies have helped over the years to meet the costs, including several contributions from the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust. The church is most grateful for all the financial assistance that they have received in this time.

Restoration work on the West (Tower) doorway has been mentioned in every Quinquennial Inspection since 1980 but has been put back while other work deemed more important has been undertaken. In 2023, on the advice of our architect, Adrian Ringrose from Stimpson
Walton Bond, the PCC resolved to investigate the possibility of carrying out restoration work to the tower doorway.

The carved ironstone used to form the lower half of the doorway had become heavily eroded with many of the features undistinguishable, so our first task was to try and find what records were available. The congregation was asked if they had wedding photographs or any other pictures or drawings of the doorway which might help. What turned up was the discovery of an illustration from a 1936 book in the County Archives at Wootton Hall. Our Architect used this to help prepare drawings and a specification to describe the restoration work required.

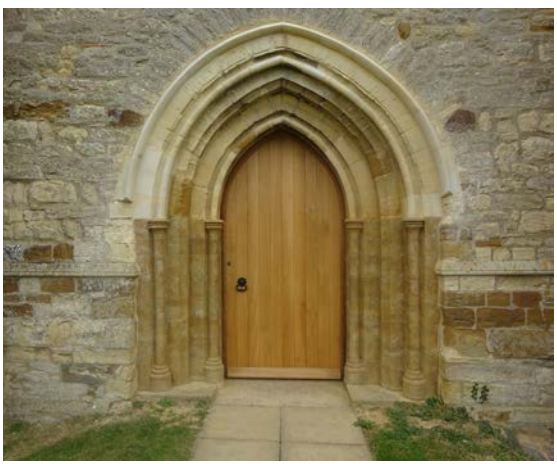
Consultation with the Peterborough Diocesan Advisory Committee followed and faculty permission for the restoration of the doorway was received at the end of February 2024. In tandem with the consultation, the PCC sought tenders for the work and approached NHCT for a grant to enable the work to proceed. After visiting the church, NHCT agreed to award the very generous sum of £5000 towards the cost of the restoration.

Steve Todd was appointed as contractor for the stonework and sub-let the carpentry work to Tom Seamark. It was hoped to commence work in April 2024, but a delay in the supply of the sandstone for the lower half of the doorway meant that work did not commence until mid-June.

Steve began replacing stones in the hood moulding initially which was complicated by the arch not being truly circular – a "flat spot" can be clearly seen in the upper right quadrant. Once the springing points of the arch had been established it became possible to locate the position of the new sandstone mouldings and commence removal of the weathered ironstone and building the new sandstone jambs. As the ironstone was removed markings were found on the rear of the stones which suggested that they may have been part of another doorway which was dismantled and brought to Piddington.

Work on the doorway was completed in early September and the architect has issued a Completion Certificate.

Stephen Watson, Churchwarden



The restored doorway at Piddington

ST JAMES THE GREAT, SYRESHAM

Work on the Syresham church spire began in January 2025. Its roof is made of wooden shingles, rather than slates, and our quinquennial report had suggested we get these checked - it turned out that they all needed replacing. Old shingles have been removed, a membrane attached and battens added.

Oak shakes for the new tower spire at Syresham

The old shingles were made of cedar. Anyone who saw them being removed will have seen they were sodden, splitting and in much need of replacement. This includes the lower shingles that were replaced in 2003. We were advised to move to oak shakes, a different type of shingle, hence the need for planning permission. These are thicker and should keep the spire safe for many years to come.

Our bat visitors had some impact on the work. We commissioned a Bat Report, this advised that work should be done in the winter months. The other consequence of our visiting bats is that an old school felt 'bat-friendly' membrane has been used as bats can get caught on modern membranes.

So, the old shingles were removed and supporting timbers inspected. Fortunately these all appear to be sound. However everything under the shingles was very damp due to the lack of airflow behind them. To counter this situation once the membrane had been installed, the builders added battens and counter battens before adding the shakes. This will allow airflow to allow things to dry out if water should get in.

The final cost is expected to be £66,012.65, and we are so grateful to all who have contributed to funding this essential work. As an acknowledgement, we have signed one of the shakes with the name of the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust, to be rediscovered when future generations have to face their own repairs.

Alice Palmer, Syresham PCC

Syresham spire during repair work

IN MEMORIAM

DAVID LAING CBE DL

Our Vice-President David Laing CBE DL died peacefully at home on 3rd March 2024.

David, with his wife Mary

David was born in Devon in 1945, the second son of Sir Kirby and Lady Laing and the grandson of Sir John Laing, the founder of the John Laing Construction Company. As a result, he grew up in an environment steeped in the building construction industry and throughout his life maintained a firm interest and a broad base of experience in construction. After graduating from Cambridge University, David trained as an architect with Sir Basil Spence Bonnington & Collins in London before setting up his own private practice in Hertfordshire. He was a director of GHM Rock Townsend Architects until 1999, and chairman of Country and Metropolitan Homes until 2005, taking it on to OFEX and then to a main stock exchange listing, as it grew to be one of the country's larger housing developers, specialising in brown field sites, high quality and affordable housing. He was a director of Eskmuir Properties Ltd, the Laing family's property company and served as Master of the Worshipful Company of Paviors in 2006.

As an architect, he designed both modern and period buildings, but specialised in listed buildings and conservation work. He restored the Grade I listed Mackerye End in Hertfordshire and oversaw the two-year full restoration of Grade II listed Fermyn Woods Hall near Brigstock, together with the restoration of the listed gardens at those historic houses.

Since moving to Northamptonshire just over twenty years ago David, together with his wife, Mary, threw themselves into the life of the county and were committed to making it known as the Heart of England. He brought an energy and dynamism to everything he was involved in, serving as High Sheriff of Northamptonshire in 2010–2011; Lord-Lieutenant of the County from 2014–2020 and was the first Pro-Chancellor of the University of Northampton from 2015–2024. He was awarded a CBE in the 2024 New Year's Honours list for services to charity and philanthropy.

David was actively involved with numerous local (first in Hertfordshire, then in Northamptonshire) and national charities, supporting them through his own foundation, the David Laing Foundation, and the Laing Family Trusts. He had a keen interest in literature, music, opera (his son, James Laing, is a well-known counter-tenor), the wider arts and sport, and his charitable giving reflected this, along with a passion for historic buildings and encouraging the preservation of heritage crafts and skills … and his strong Christian faith.

David is survived by his wife, Mary, his five children and eleven grandchildren. He will be especially missed by them, by his friends, and by the many others to whom he made a real difference through his kindness, support and numerous charitable activities.

At Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust, we were very fortunate to have David as one of our Vice-Presidents and a trustee. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, children and wider family.

Northamptonshire Historic Churches
Trust Income and Expenditure
Year ending December 2024

	£	£	£	£
INCOME .				
Ride and Stride :		**2024**		**2023**
Year ended December 31st 2023	280.00		44162	
Year ended December 31st 2024	35535.26			
		35815.26		44162
Income Tax Recovered see note 1	278.90			7117
Friends' Subscriptions	1410.00			3165
friends - Subscriptions individuals	1705.60			
other	9695.81			
transfers from building soc a/c	2500.00			
misc	155.00			
Donations	3,425.00			1595
Investment Income : Charinco	2439.55		1952	
: Bank & Building Society Interest	1813.77		918	
		23423.63		2870
Note 1. gift aid claim awaited expected value £5587				
		59238.89		58909
EXPENDITURE .				
Grants Paid (Note 1 A) (Grants pledged but unpaid				
at the year end are shown in Note 1 B)	67300		58595	
Less Part Grant Returned	0		2778	
	67300		55817	
Ride & Stride - Refunds to participating churches	18305.62		22441	
Administrative expenses printing .	875.54		2115	
Administrative expenses postage	319.60			
Administrative expenses - other/stationary	487.53			
Subscription	774.94			

Northamptonshire Historic Churches
Trust Income and Expenditure
Year ending December 2024

Upgrading Website	80.00		262	
other	9695.81	97839.04		80635
(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR .		-38600.15		-21726
ACCUMULATED FUND				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2024		326999		334033
(Deficit) for the year		-38600.15		-20520
Increase/(decrease) in Market Value of Investments		6836		13486
Balance carried forward December 31st 2024		295235		326999
REPRESENTED BY :				
Investments **(NOTE 4)**		206410		198940
Bank : Current account	3012		2061	
: Deposit account	3247		42546	
Building Society account	82565		83452	
		88824		128059
		295234		326999

Prepared by M J Moore 30/04/2025

NOTES TO THE INCOME & EXPENDITURE A

DECEMBER 31st 2024

1. GRANTS : ACCUMULATED FUND.

A) PAID : YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2024 .

	£
St. Andrew, Kettering	6000
St. Mary, Blakesley	10000
Ss. Peter & Paul, Kings Sutton	3000
All Saints, Wilbarston	5000
All Saints, Flore	5000
St Michael Aynho	5000
Broughton Baptist	3000
St Mary the Virgin, Western by Welland	5000
St Mary/ Paul, Lois Weedon	1500
All Saints, Croughton	5000
St Botolphs, Church Brampton	500
St Johns, Piddlington	5000
St John, Cranford	2000
St Andrews, Barnwell	2000
All saints, Great Addington	1800
Deanshanger,Methodist	2500
St. Andrews, Cotterstock	5000
	67300

B) PLEDGED AND NOT YET PAID AS AT DECEMBER 31st 2024.

Year of Pledge		£
April.2021	All Saints, Adstone(water supply	1000
April.2021	St. Martin, Welton	3000
April.2022	Raunds Methodist	2500
Nov.2022	St. Michael & All Angels,Creaton	5000
Nov.2022	St. Katherine, Irchester	3000
Nov.2022	All Hallows, Wellingborough	3000
Nov.2022	Ss. Peter & Paul, Harrington	10000
April.2023	St. Mary, East Haddon	2500
Nov.2023	St . Mary, Titchmarsh	2000
Nov.2023	St. Peter, Brackley	5000
Nov.2023	St . Leodagarius, Ashby St.Ledger	4000
Nov.2023	St. Peter, Weston Favell	2000
Nov.2023	St. James the Great, Syresham	6000
Apr.2024	St Leonards, Glapthorn	5000
Nov.2024	St Mary's Badby	2000
Nov.2024	St Peters/Pauls, Rothersthorpe	4500
Nov.2024	All Saints ,Pitsford	2500
Nov.2024	All Saints, Haddon	10000
Nov.2024	St Lawrence,Towcester	7500
Nov.2024	St Gunthlac's, Passenham	10000
		90500

Note : Pledged grants lapse if unclaimed after three years of being made available.

3.INVESTMENTS	Cost at 31/12/22 & 31/12/23 £	Market Value @ 31/12/23 £	Market Value @ 31/12/24 £	Change in Mkt.value y/e 31/12/24 £
BLK Charities UK Equity Fund Accumulation				
5896.125 Units	14970	152188	160293.25	8105.25
BLK Charities UK Bond Fund Income :				
32527.563 Units	60000	47386	46116.93	-1269.07
	74970	199574	206410.18	6836.18

4. GENERAL NOTE RE: DONATIONS .

Under Solicitors` Accounts rules, client funds held by a solicitor which cannot be allocated or returned, may be distributed as charitable donations . The Trust received such a donation from Hewitsons (Solicitors) in the sum of £ 3,545 in year ended December 31st 2024, and has given an indemnity to the effect that , if this sum is requested, it will be repaid . The Trust is obliged to maintain its resources at a sum in excess of the above amount .

Prepared by M J Moore 30/04/2025

RUTH FITCH

The trustees were very saddened to hear of the death on 5th July 2024, at the early age of 54, of Ruth Fitch, our former Secretary and trustee.

Ruth was born on 28th September 1969, the elder daughter of Alan and Evelyn Fitch. On leaving school, Ruth decided to pursue Agriculture at Moulton College. The course helped her eventually to be employed by Hewitsons, Solicitors of Northampton, working for John White, our former Chairman, dealing with agriculture and farming generally.

A committed Christian, in her spare time, Ruth was a 'perpetual student'. Among her many accomplishments was a gift for languages, which she studied part-time. Two of these were Latin and Classical Greek, which helped when, through the Central Methodist Church in Kettering, Ruth became a Worship Leader and then went on to become a Local Preacher.

While at school, Ruth learnt to play the recorder and violin. She then decided to buy a viola and joined the music group at her church. Approximately ten years ago, Ruth decided to learn to play the piano and bought a keyboard; found a teacher in Northampton near where she worked and proceeded to pass Grades 1 to 6. She received the Grade 6 certificate just before her teacher retired.

Whilst in her teens, and after a great deal of effort, Ruth obtained the Bronze, Silver and eventually, the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards. She was also a member of her church's Girls' Brigade.

Ruth was also a keen athlete. She began cycling at a very early age, and in her 40th birthday year decided to cycle from Land's End to John O'Groats over a period of 3 weeks. In order to cope with the journey by bike she attended a cycle maintenance course. Ruth took part in several cycle outings with her family and colleagues and also took part in several runs ranging from 5 miles to, in 2015, the full 26.2 mile Brighton Marathon, all of which resulted in her gaining many medals.

Ruth rarely watched television. Instead, by using headphones, she would listen to books being read, language lessons, bible study groups etc. and could happily walk to and from work or leisure while doing so. She also enjoyed jigsaws (her mother and father found 83 of them, ranging from 500 to 2,000 pieces) and would do these while listening to her programmes.

Ruth was a very lovely and loving daughter, and sister to Jo. Judging by the vast number of cards and emails her mother and father, and Jo, received after her passing Ruth left many happy memories with a great many people. This was clear from the very large number of people who attended her funeral service on 22nd July 2024 at the Central Methodist Church in Kettering, which was filled to capacity.

Ruth was the Trust's very capable Secretary and trustee for many years until her illness compelled her to give up the post. We all miss her very much.

She is now out of pain and with the Lord.

Ride and Stride

A great day out visiting England's churches – discover extraordinary treasures in Northamptonshire's religious buildings

The next RIDE and STRIDE will be held on Saturday, 13th September, 2025

Hat sponsorship: a novel way of fundraising at St George's, Evenley

Ride and Stride was 'born' in Suffolk in 1982 as a sponsored cycle ride or walk and is held annually, in virtually every county in England. It is the main fund-raising event for the county churches Trusts and is held on the second Saturday in September. It is now a sponsored event for cyclists, joggers, walkers and horse riders but any mode of transport can be used as long as sponsors are happy; a couple of people have used vintage cars! It is also possible to sponsor the people welcoming visitors to the church or gain sponsorship in other imaginative ways as the congregations get older. This was wonderfully shown by St George's Church in Evenley, as Jane Gibbs tells us:

'As most of us aren't bike riders, or we can't walk too far, we look for alternative ways to get sponsorship. This year our phrase was: "Wear your hat to church with Pride and get yourself sponsored for Ride and Stride!"'

Julia, third from the right in the photo above, got the most sponsorship with her pink and white bobble hat!

In Northamptonshire, 50% of the money raised and any Gift Aid is retained by the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust and a cheque for 50% of the money raised is sent to the church chosen by each of the participants. The money raised, along with other funds, is used to give grants for preserving, restoring and improving churches, chapels and meeting houses in Northamptonshire who take part, whether they are historic or not.

Some keen long-distance cyclists challenge themselves to visit as many churches as they can, some cycle groups set themselves a planned route, and others prefer a more leisurely approach, visiting fewer churches and taking more time at each.

Challenges around Northamptonshire vary – the hill in Rockingham meant the church had no visitors braving it again this year, and the HS2 works near Edgcote has closed roads leading to two-mile detours. Other village churches are far flung, and we tried to encourage the cyclists to include churches that hadn't had visitors in past years. We applaud Richard Lewis from All Saints', Kettering:
'In response to your request to visit churches at Easton-on-the-Hill, Collyweston, Duddington, Wakerley and Harringworth, who had no visitors last year, I decided to go across to those as my sponsorship effort for this year. My wife and our friend got to all five buildings!'

Churches are usually open from 10am to 6pm and a list of participating churches is produced and made available on our website at www.nhct.org.uk, as are links to churches in neighbouring counties, as well as sponsor forms, posters and other paperwork. An open church or chapel attracts visitors and with refreshments it really makes a difference; many Local Organisers take pride in drawing attention to their special features, or put on events. All this information is available on the Open Churches file which can be downloaded from July 2025 on the NHCT website: https://www.nhct.org.uk.

St Andrew's, Cotterstock: (l-r) Rosie Sands, Holly Rowlett, Kate and Jon Grussing, Bertie Rowlett, Karena Sands, Susie Rowlett and Kathryn Kroese

RIDE AND STRIDE 2024

Another successful year for Ride and Stride in Northamptonshire

Thank you to all Local Organisers and especially those who had their churches open with a warm welcome and persuaded Riders and Striders to take part

The weather was perfect this year after the heat of 2023 - no wind to impede cyclists and no rain! In Northamptonshire we have a great loyal following in most of the

churches now, with kind enthusiasts opening the church, putting out the register and welcoming visitors. The next stage of encouraging riders and striders to raise sponsorship for their church often comes when it is realised that half the sponsorship money comes back to their church, and they are regarded favourably when applying for a grant from the NHCT.

Income from sponsorship is down this year, £35,585 to date (lower than each of the last six years). However, three parish churches, at Stoke Doyle, Walgrave and Weston Favell, raised over £1,000 each, and Welton raised nearly £1,000. We are extremely grateful to all the church communities which have raised money and, of course, a special thank you to the above four.

As ever, we would like to thank all those volunteers who work so hard to make Ride and Stride in Northamptonshire the success that it is.

Local Organisers who work so hard to publicise the day in their parish newsletters and social media around the church, encouraging Riders and Striders to take part. 328 churches took part in 2024 and of those, 183 were manned for at least part of the time, 121 open with a register available, and 24 with just a register outside.

Mick Ball and Maisie take a break at St Martin's, Welton

We are grateful to all our **Area Organisers** who show great tenacity in contacting churches. We extend particular thanks to the Area Organisers who are leaving us – Dorothy Fitzgerald who has worked with many of the Northampton churches, Barbara Kelso who has looked after half of the Towcester Deanery churches, Cheryl and Maurice Jaynoy who were in touch with a third of Brixworth Deanery's churches, and Sally McGurk who has also stepped down as Area Organiser for half the Brackley Deanery. Thank you to them all.

However, this means that we need to recruit quite a few more people as Area Organisers as we are also trying to reduce the number of churches each one looks after, both to make it easier for them and also to make it easier for us to replace them when they retire. If you can make any suggestions, even approach people, we would be extremely grateful. Please let us know via liz.nhct@hotmail.com.

Thank you to everyone else who helped to make the day such a success: All the Riders and Striders and the hundreds of sponsors supporting them, anyone who helped publicise the event and encouraged people to take part, those who prepared the churches and welcomed visitors on the day, and of course our new Treasurer Michael Moore, who coordinates the sponsorship money and writes the return cheques to the churches.

Liz Doherty and Val Hartley, County Organisers

'THE REVVING REV'

Over 8 hours I visited and prayed for 39 churches across Kettering and Higham deaneries, I drove 103 miles, and still managed to clock up over 14,000 steps walking up and down church paths! Sponsorship raised over £770!

The Revd Nicki Hobbs outside St Andrew's, Broughton

Revd Nicki Hobbs
Rector, St Andrew, Broughton with Cransley and Mawsley
Rural Dean of Kettering and Higham
'Hop and Hope'

This year's Ride and Stride was more Hop and Hope, thanks to my recent knee operation!

First stop was the magnificent Holy Sepulchre, one of only four remaining medieval round churches still in use in England. This was my first visit, despite living in Northampton all my life.

It was built around 1100 by Simon de Senlis, Earl of Northampton, who wanted to make Northampton a Norman stronghold after returning from the Crusades. He also built the now-demolished Northampton Castle.

Among the majestic stone pillars and intricate wood carvings is a very thorough display on the history of Northampton and its huge importance in medieval England. It includes the story of Thomas Becket's escape from Northampton castle in 1164 after his arrest by King Henry II. Becket is said to have run to the Holy Sepulchre for a last prayer before fleeing on horseback disguised as a monk.

Today, he could have popped into the nearby Thomas à Becket pub for a few Hail Marys before jumping on the next train out.

Next, Denise and I visited All Saints' to admire the wonderful dome. It's incredible that Charles II donated wood from Royal forests to rebuild the church after the Great Fire of Northampton in 1675, considering the townsfolk had fought with the Roundheads against his dad.

Then to St Peter's in Marefair, thought to be the third church built on the site of a former Saxon palace. Although now closed, St Peter's dates back to 1150 and is protected by the Churches Conservation Trust. We were given a guided tour by Trust historian Jenny who showed us the magnificent Norman zigzag chevron arches and wonderful stonework which was later plastered over by Puritan zealots. Cromwell and his killjoys really have a lot to answer for. Beheading the King and banning Christmas are bad enough without defacing our beautiful churches.

Final stop was the White Elephant for a cool pint and chance to rest that painful knee!

Romanesque column capital at St Peter's, Northampton

Nick, St Matthew's, Northampton

Sunrise for Sheila Edwards's early start

'PHEW! NOT SUCH A HOT DAY'

As always, Ride and Stride is such a wonderful day out, getting outside in the fresh air and meeting like-minded people from various churches with so many stories to tell.

Always lovely to meet the church sitters, who give so freely of their time, to give a warm and friendly welcome and provide refreshments and give out any information of any special features of their particular church.

This year was not as hot as last year, Thank God.

I walked to eleven churches and although over the years of walking I've visited most of them, somehow there always seems to be something new to see.

The Guildhall runs tours and although I have always promised myself to go to one of them, it has never materialised. So this year after leaving St. Giles Church, I realised the tours were on, so I booked in. It was 90 minutes well worth the time, lots of history. There's a Mayors' Corridor, so called because of its history of all of Northampton's Mayors' portraits on a small individual plaque. I was able to visit the Session House and jails, which were a bit grim; any misdemeanour, and a person might land themselves a spell in jail.

Sheila Edwards, Christ Church, Northampton

RIDE AND STRIDE ON FOUR LEGS

My nephews and nieces decided that we should support Ride and Stride not only by mounting both bikes and a horse, but taking a completely cross-country route! For this reason the adults decreed that we would just make our way from St James's, Newbottle, to Holy Trinity, Hinton-in-the-Hedges and back. It was a big adventure, and quite hard work for the smaller legs, but we sailed down the hill into Hinton, where the children were very grateful for the delicious cookies that had been left out for Riders and Striders. The youngest opted out of the return trip, but the rest of us made it back to Newbottle in one piece, and even Elsa the horse had enjoyed the day.

Eleanor Townsend, Toby and Mikey Townsend, Violet and Molly Behan at Holy Trinity, Hinton-in-the-Hedges

Eleanor Townsend, NHCT trustee

ST ANDREW'S COTTERSTOCK

Cotterstock as ever came up trumps with its fabulous local produce stall and its now famous bicycle biscuits, this year made by Ingrid Hunter Coddington's brother. Delicious as always. The produce stall was a feast for the eyes, set in the heart of the beautiful churchyard. With thanks to Michele Mor, Lucy Horne, Elaine Brooker and others for manning it.

Produce stall at St Andrew's, Cotterstock: Elaine Brooker, Lucy Horne and Michele Mor with other friends

Attracting Visitors and Tourists to our County's 'Plethora of Churches'

Among other things, the Discover Northamptonshire Visitor Guide 2024[1] encourages people to 'explore the UK's largest collection of historic houses, as well as a plethora of churches, museums, stately homes and National Trust properties, to delve into our rich local heritage'.

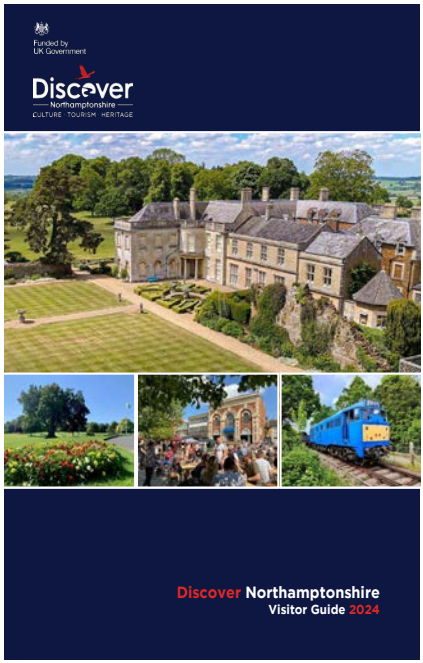
Whether the purpose is to delve into heritage; to help people visit an important community building or find out more about the Christian faith, there are several steps that can be taken to make a church building attractive and welcoming.

Here are a few of them:

A) Unlock it

Although some visitors will be pleased to see only the outside of a church building and to try to decipher the inscriptions on any gravestones, many will be disappointed at not being able to go inside.

Keeping a church building unlocked is therefore an obvious solution to this, but not always straightforward to arrange in practice. Although the best approach is likely to have a friendly and knowledgeable person present, such people aren't always available. However, some people – not necessarily church members – might welcome the opportunity to sit in their local church building, perhaps reading a good book or catching up with tasks on a laptop (wifi permitting) when visitors aren't present. It may be that people who have previously been persuaded to sit in church during Ride and Stride event would be willing to do so more often, on a rota with others. Alternatively, many churches are left unlocked with no one present, but with particular valuables locked away. Another possibility, albeit less immediately helpful to visitors, is to keep the church locked, but to give clear information – at the entrance to the church building and online if possible – on how a key can be obtained.



Discover Northamptonshire Visitor Guide

Five reasons for unlocking church buildings were set out in an article, written from a Church of England perspective, in the Church Times in August 2024.[2] In summary, these are:

- A church building is consecrated as a physical representation of God's presence with his people. When the church building is open, it invites people to come in. When that building is closed, it implies that God is absent.
- An open church is an opportunity for mission and evangelism. While there is no substitute for telling people about Jesus, an open building can be part of that process.
- The building can have a pastoral function. An open church provides a space for the grieving, lonely, lost, or distressed. The act of lighting a candle, or leaving a prayer request, or simply sitting in silence, can be a deeply healing one.
- It is also good for the image of the Church. There may be people who, however wide open the doors are, remain highly unlikely ever to cross its threshold. But their attitude to the Church may be softened by seeing the "Church open" sign.
- Finally, keeping churches open is deeply Anglican. The open church is a church that is available to all parishioners: they do not have to profess a faith, or prove their identity, or pay an admission fee.

The article added that, although unlocking a church might be seen as risky, Ecclesiastical Insurance encourages churches to be kept open "because of the positive effect that it can have on security", adding 'an open church that is visited is more secure than a locked church that is not'.

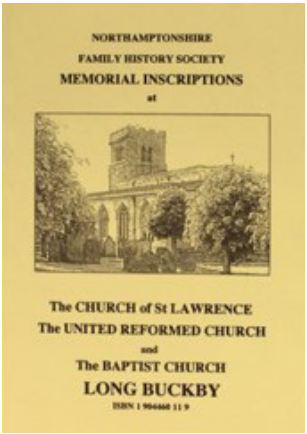
VISIT NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BRITAIN'S BEST SURPRISE

B) Use the 'Churches' section of the Northamptonshire Surprise website: where '100 best churches' are listed at https://northamptonshiresurprise.com/churches/ and access to four church trails (e.g. churches with notable stained glass) and 15 particular themes (e.g. Americans in Churches) is at https:// northamptonshiresurprise.com/crm-categories/things-to-do/churches/

C) Take part in the Annual Ride and Stride Event – preferably with the church open and manned: many churches already do this, of course. As well as enabling those taking part to be registered and to look around the building, other people can be encouraged to make use of the fact that it is open, and to visit. More details are elsewhere in this report and at https://nhct.org.uk/Main/RideAndStride.

D) Seek grant funding to improve the fabric of the church building and the facilities available. There isn't space here to go into detail, but the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust provides grants for a wide range of purposes (see https://nhct.org.uk/Main/GrantCriteria) and various other funders provide grants, sometimes including 'secular' funders such as parish councils, if the work would improve community facilities, promote wellbeing or result in environmental benefits.

E) Provide information on memorial inscriptions - and mention this in publicity material. In particular, a church may wish to have a copy of the Northamptonshire Family History Society's published and indexed transcript for its church and churchyard available for reference (if available) – as well as copies for sale to visitors.



Memorial Inscriptions transcript for Long Buckby

For over thirty-five years, volunteers from the NFHS have been transcribing churchyard gravestone inscriptions, indexing them, producing graveyard plans, and publishing the results in inexpensive booklets. They have so far covered about 225 Church of England parishes in the county, together with many Nonconformist graveyards and older parish cemeteries.

These booklets can provide a very helpful reference source for queries from people tracing family or local history, whether local people, visitors, or people enquiring from afar.

Some practical points:

- A list of the published parishes can be seen on the Society website at: www.northants-fhs.org/publications together with individual prices. It also gives details of how to purchase them.
- Some parishes find it helpful to have a supply in stock to sell to visitors – and might wish to arrange for an extra supply to be delivered to them to sell at a special church or community event.
- Copies can be provided on a sale or return basis if preferred.
- New volunteers to help record are always welcome. If you would like further information on purchasing a supply of books for your parish or would like to volunteer to help with this work, please contact the society at info@northants-fhs.org

F) Consider joining the Northamptonshire Heritage Forum: several individual churches (and Friends of Churches groups) are already members of the Forum, which, among other things, provides training and marketing advice for churches focusing on tourism/visitor opportunities: see https://www.northamptonshireheritageforum.co.uk/become-a-member.

G) Appoint a Visitors Officer: not necessarily a member of the Parochial Church Council (or equivalent in non-Anglican churches), but a volunteer with a remit to ensure that the church is open and welcoming to visitors, with relevant information etc. This was a recommendation of the Rural Church Buildings commission appointed by the Bishop of Norwich which reported back in 1991. It wasn't formally adopted, but may be worth trying.

Finally, as a contribution to this article, Cllr Daniel Lister, West Northamptonshire Council Cabinet Member for Local Economy, Culture, and Leisure, has said:

"Northamptonshire is home to a wealth of stunning churches and places of worship including some of the finest Saxon and Norman parish churches in the country, as well as one of only four remaining round churches - each with its own unique heritage, architecture, and cultural significance. These historic sites are not only places of faith and community but also valuable attractions that can draw visitors from near and far, boosting our local economy and helping to tell the rich story of our area.

"Through our newly established Northamptonshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP), we are working to promote all that our county has to offer, ensuring that visitors can discover and appreciate the incredible historic and cultural gems in our communities. We encourage church leaders and volunteers to reach out and explore how they can be part of this exciting opportunity to celebrate and showcase their sites."

Andrew Presland, NHCT trustee
andrew.presland.harborough58@gmail.com

1. https://discover-northamptonshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Discover-March-Update-Low-Res.pdf

2. Church Times Why churches should keep their doors open by Daniel Sanham, 2nd August 2024

All Saints' Northampton - The Great Fire

All Saints', Northampton

Stand in front and take a look at All Saints' in Northampton. All looks perfectly normal: in fact, just what you would expect in an ancient market town – a large church standing in its centre. But then take another look and what you see is not a substantial medieval edifice, a cruciform church rippling with crenelations. Instead beneath the high tower there is a classical building topped by a statue, not of a saint but of a monarch. If you penetrate inside, no high vaulted gothic structure confronts you but rather a sublime baroque interior centred on a dome. Isn't this all rather strange in a town surrounded by three medieval churches. Why? What happened?

All Hallows', as the church on this site was originally called, was a substantial medieval building continuously being enlarged. It was one of the principal victims of the Great Fire of Northampton which destroyed the center of the town 350 years ago on 20th September 1675. All that remained of this huge building was the tower but like a phoenix from the ashes of the old building a new church in every sense, All Saints', emerged.

The new church was exactly that, brand new. It was a way of putting the Fire and the old town behind and audaciously adopting the latest of architectural styles. Churches in the form of a classical temple first emerged in Renaissance Italy and percolated north emerging in England in the third quarter of the 17th century, first in Wren's London (again after a disastrous fire) and then Northampton. It is no accident that the architect here was Henry Bell (1647-1711), friend of both Christopher Wren and Robert Hooke, and conversant with their work in London. In January 1677 only 18 months after the Fire he was engaged by the Northampton Commissioners with Edward Edwards, a local surveyor "as manager for the rebuilding of All Saints' church". Their ecclesiastical patron was the distinguished theologian the Rev. John Conant, formerly both professor of Divinity and Vice Chancellor of Oxford University.

The building was a centerpiece of the reconstruction of the town, matched architecturally with the Session House (law courts) and the smart new stone houses. It made Northampton the acme of taste. The traveller Celia Fiennes noted in 1697 that it was "a large town, well built, the streets as large as London," and a few years later Daniel Defoe would write of "the best built and handsomest town in all this part of England … the beauty is owing to its disaster".

The interior of All Saints' certainly lives up to the expectations of its exterior. It is a light airy building with rich plasterwork by Edward Goudge, another of Wren's team; a magnificent gilded pulpit and mayoral throne; galleries all around and Thomas Swarbrick's splendid organ installed in 1706. Large paintings of Moses and Aaron flanked the altar together with commandment boards. The final touch was the erection of the statue of the monarch Charles II who had been instrumental in raising the funds, both Royal and Parliamentary, for the rebuilding of the town. It is appropriate that the sculptor John Hunt was both a native of the town and a pupil of another member of Wren's team, Grinling Gibbon.

The new church and indeed the rebuilding of the town was not just well done but an outstanding example of civic determination, ingenuity and vision, exactly the things that are to be celebrated in this year's commemoration of the Fire and the celebration of what came after: a brilliant phoenix.

James Miller, NHCT trustee

Celebration Evening

18th July 2024

On a warm and peaceful July eventide, the 2024 NHCT Celebration Evening was held in the gracious grounds of Southwick Hall, near Oundle, by kind permission of the Capron family. Three interconnected families have owned this fascinating house since the Middle Ages - the Knyvets, the Lynnes and the Caprons.

The tiny village of Southwick is tucked away in a valley beneath Rockingham Forest. The church, St Mary the Virgin, is particularly worth visiting in the Spring, when the bulbs are at their zenith. The great treasure here is Roubiliac's tomb for George Lynne. Thanks in part to the NHCT, this newly conserved monument is looking glorious.

The evening was a wonderful chance for trustees to meet the representatives from churches and chapels which have benefited from the Trust over the past year, and to thank them for all their steadfast work. It was also an opportunity to thank and encourage the impressive Ride and Stride fundraisers. The late-afternoon sun shone, the wine flowed, and the cucumber sandwiches and pretty cupcakes swiftly disappeared. A very enjoyable and memorable time was had by all!

Alice Magnay, NHCT trustee

2024 Church Tour

Led by Bruce Bailey
Saturday 31st August 2024
Grendon, Whiston, Castle Ashby, Easton Maudit

St Mary's, Grendon

Bruce Bailey led another fascinating study day for about thirty Friends of the NHCT on Saturday 31st August 2024. To the extent that it had a theme, it was connections with the Compton family, of Castle Ashby House and Compton Wynyates, Warwickshire.

It started in Grendon, a fine Medieval building with some double arcading and scallop capitals and some Compton heraldry including three catchments. The South Aisle houses an unusual Italian curtain from Castle Ashby House, probably from a sixteenth-century funeral service. The fifteenth-century Perpendicular tower includes bands of different types of ironstone.

NHCT Chairman, Gareth Lugar-Mawson at St Mary the Virgin, Whiston

We then visited Whiston, either by walking up a footpath up a hill or by going cross-country at the top of the hill, a beautiful Perpendicular church building that can be dated to 1534 through a document written by Anthony Catesby, a member of the branch of the family that lived in the village. It is said to be the last church to be built before the Reformation. It has many original fittings and monuments and is set in a commanding position overlooking much of the Nene Valley. The tower here is banded limestone – possibly from Weldon – and ironstone – from Duston – with carved angels at the top and demons at the bottom representing Heaven and Hell. There is a hatchment for Frederick, Lord Boston, who was descended from the Catesby family through the Pagets, and his two wives.

After a lunch break, we visited Castle Ashby church, a fine Medieval building with elaborate Compton memorials, the effigy of a twelfth-century knight and an associated brass, plus seventeenth-century woodwork and excellent Victorian stained glass. Unusually, we were able to walk out through the North Porch to see the side of the building that faces Castle Ashby House. The churchyard includes a stone slab in memory of Thomas Warren, a blacksmith of Weston Favell, who also arranged water supplies for country houses including Drayton and Hampton Court. His forge at Castle Ashby was used to produce ironwork at Finedon and Haselbech and for Vanbrugh for Kimbolton and Blenheim.

St Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby

The final visit of the day was to Easton Maudit, another splendid Medieval church, built about 1350 on top of a Saxon building, with the tower following about 1450, with some outstanding monuments to the Yelverton family. Local farmer, Councillor and Churchwarden Tim Allebone met us there, telling us about the building – including his boyhood visits to see the coffins in the crypt – and telling of a connection with the Compton family here too as the major landowner. Former residents of the village include Christopher Yelverton, speaker for Elizabeth I; Rev Thomas Percy, a literary Vicar who belonged to the Garrick Club and, much more recently, actor Derek Nimmo – also a Garrick Club member – who is buried in the churchyard with his wife.

St Peter and St Paul, Easton Maudit

The day ended with tea and cake in the cosy surroundings of Easton Maudit Village Hall.

Andrew Presland, NHCT trustee

Friends of Northamptonshire Historic Churches

From: Name(s) ……
Address: ……
……
……
Postcode: ……
E-mail (PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS):
……
I/We would like to join the Friends of Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust.
I/We

a. Have completed the Banker's Order below. (preferred option for NHCT)
b. Enclose a cheque for £…… (payable to Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust)

Gift Aid Declaration

If you are a UK taxpayer and able to donate under the Gift Aid Scheme, it will cost you nothing and will increase the value of your donation to the Trust by 25%. Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to offset any gift aid payment against your personal Income Tax.
I am a UK taxpayer and I will pay in the year an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax to be reclaimed by the Trust.

Signed …… Date: ……..202
The minimum donations requested are: £10 for individuals; £20 for Churches/PCCs
Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust is registered with the Charity Commission No. 1021632

Banker's Order

To (Bank/Building Society):……..
Bank Branch address: ……..
Postcode: ……
Sort code: ……
Name:……..

Signed:……
Date: ……202

Please pay to: Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust
C/o NatWest Bank plc Sort code: 56-00-60 A/c No: 05608961
On the …… day of (month) …….. 202 …
The sum of £…….. (words) ……
And the same sum annually until further notice.

Please send the application form to:
Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust, Friends' Secretary
E-mail: nuala.salter@peterborough-diocese.org.uk
c/o Bouverie Court, 6 The Lakes, Bedford Rd, NORTHAMPTON, NN4 7YD

Dates for your diary:

CELEBRATION EVENING (by invitation):
Wednesday 23rd July 2025
at Eastcote House, near Towcester
by kind permission of Mr and Mrs David Rowden

CHURCH STUDY DAY (for Friends of NHCT):
Saturday 30th August 2025
A visit to the churches of Dodford, Norton, Ashby St Ledgers,
Winwick and Stanford-on-Avon, led by Bruce Bailey

RIDE AND STRIDE:
13th September 2025

St Andrew's, Cotterstock

With thanks to all those who contributed to this Report
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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1021632

Accounts

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

THE theme of the report this year seems to be the effort required to maintain the important historic buildings we support, in a difficult climate where building costs have soared, congregations are static or dwindling and the struggle can seem overwhelming. But there is so much to encourage us all in the report as well.

The wonderful work aided by NHCT grants, on floors, towers, windows, reredoses and gutters (never to be overlooked!), is inspiring and shows us what can be achieved by motivated parishes, with our support. On this year's Study Day, we also admired the magnificent Roubiliac monument at Southwick, recently conserved thanks in part to a grant from the Trust.

The diocese explains some of the support the Diocesan Office can offer churches as they start out on the journey of a building or repairs project, and the Chairman reflects on support available outside the county and diocese, particularly from the National Churches Trust.

And we also celebrate the much-loved Ride and Stride event, which regularly raises spectacular sums to support these places of worship – and which demonstrates the important point that it is not only worshippers who love and appreciate our churches. As long as this is the case, there is reason to be optimistic about the future.

Eleanor Townsend (editor)

Supporting the Trust

Become a Friend - Leave a Legacy - Give practical help

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

Patron: Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

President: James Saunders Watson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire

Vice-Presidents: The Rt Revd. John Holbrook, The Bishop of Brixworth
†David Laing Esq
The Rt Revd. Donald Allister, The Bishop of Peterborough (to January 2023)

Trustees: James Saunders Watson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire; The Rt Revd. Donald Allister, The Bishop of Peterborough (to January 2023)

Mrs Hilary Aslett
John Barker Esq
Mrs Liz Doherty
Dr Martin Gaskell
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The Ven. Richard Ormston
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Bruce Bailey Esq
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Revd. Robert Farmer
Mrs Val Hartley
The Rt Revd. John Holbrook
Gareth Lugar-Mawson Esq
Michael Moore Esq
Mrs Susan Parkinson
Ms Eleanor Townsend

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire and The Lord Bishop of Peterborough are trustees of the charity by virtue of their offices, and they appoint the remaining trustees. The number cannot exceed sixty, but cannot be less than four, and every trustee has one vote. These trustees administer the management of the charity.

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust was constituted by a Trust Deed dated 10th March 1955.

Registered Charity Number: 1021632

Registered Address: The Diocesan Offices, Bouverie Court, 6 The Lakes, Bedford Road, Northampton NN4 7YD

Trust Officers

Chairman: Gareth Lugar-Mawson
Vice-Chairman: John Barker
Treasurer: Eddie Byland
Grants Secretary: Michael Moore
Secretary and Friends Secretary: Nuala Salter
County Ride and Stride Organisers: Val Hartley and Liz Doherty

www.nhct.org.uk

Front cover: St Lawrence's, Radstone *Previous page: St Mary's, Grafton Regis*

Chairman's Report - 2023

I am pleased to report that, once again, 2023 was a successful year for the Trust.

St Martin's, Welton, whose parishioners raised over £1000 for Ride and Stride

In 2023, the Trust:

· Paid £58,595 in grants

· Raised £44,162 (gross) in the Ride and Stride

· Received £4,760 in donations and subscriptions

The details are in the Accounts in this Report.

I express my thanks, and those of all the Trustees, to:

· Our President, James Saunders Watson, HM Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, and our Vice-Presidents David Laing (now, sadly, no longer with us), Bishop Donald Allister, and Bishop John Holbrook for their strong continuing friendship, support and encouragement. An obituary of David will appear in the Trust's 2024 Annual Report and in anticipation of that I pay tribute to David's strong support of the Trust over many years. He will be missed very much.

· Michael Moore, our Grants Secretary, and to John Barker and Rosalind Willatts for visiting the applicant churches and chapels and reporting on their circumstances.

· Val Hartley and Liz Doherty, the Ride and Stride County Organisers, for their enthusiasm and the many hours they spent in planning and coordinating the event, and to all the Riders and Striders, Area Organisers, Church and Chapel Organisers and Church and Chapel sitters. The Ride and Stride is the main funding source for our grants, and in making grants the Trustees give priority to those churches and chapels which have a history of participation in the Ride and Stride, particularly those that have raised sponsorship money.

· Eddie Byland, our Treasurer, for dealing with the numerous individual Ride and Stride payments involved, making the Gift Aid refund claims to HMRC and the excellent way in which he looks after the Trust's accounts.

· Nuala Salter at the Diocesan Office, who in the autumn of 2023 took on the onerous task of the Trust's Secretary and Friends' Secretary and who is doing a wonderful job in her new role.

· HCR Hewitsons for undertaking the Trust's secretarial work before Nuala's appointment and arranging for the smooth handover of the Trust's records to her.

· James and Lizzie Saunders Watson for hosting the Celebration Evening in the beautiful surrounds of Rockingham Castle on what must have been the rainiest July day in 2023.

· Bruce Bailey for organising the 2023 Church Study Day in October in which we visited the Georgian churches of Cottesbrook, Lamport, Southwick, Stoke Doyle and Stanion (see the report below).

· Eleanor Townsend for preparing this Report.

· All who made donations to the Trust and all the Trust's Friends for their continuing support.

Why are we here? What is Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust about?

THE United Kingdom has some of the most historic and beautiful churches, chapels and meeting houses to be found anywhere in the world, but many are at risk of closing for good if urgent action is not taken.

In England, there are now more than 900 listed places of worship on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, 53 more were added in 2023. In Wales, 25% of historic churches and chapels closed in the last decade and the Church of Scotland is planning to close as many as 30 to 40% of its churches.

Yet people still want churches. According to an opinion poll for the National Churches Trust, published in 2023 (https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/news/massive-public-support-church-buildings), 68% of adults agreed that churches, chapels and meeting houses remained an important part of the country's heritage and history. Perhaps unsurprisingly, older people were more likely to agree than younger adults.

More than half of those polled (54%) had visited a church in the past year. More than a quarter had visited for a religious service, including Sunday worship, weddings or funerals; one in five for a non-religious community activity or service such as a food bank, playgroup, lunch club, concert or meeting, and one in six went to a church, chapel or meeting house as a visitor or tourist.

There are around 16,000 churches in the care of the Church of England. Around 12,500 of them are listed, and around 8,000 are largely medieval structures. It's easy to be complacent about them as there is a common conception that the Church of England is an immensely wealthy institution.

This is not entirely incorrect: it has an £8.2 billion investment portfolio, which generates an annual return of 9.4%. The Church spends around half of this and reinvests the rest to guarantee its financial solvency. Its largest single expenditure is on clergy pensions, and while some money goes towards cathedral maintenance, the rest is spent on general administration and wages.

In effect, the Church of England spends next to nothing on maintaining its parish churches, despite the fact that the overall backlog of repairs is estimated as being at least £1bn, and that the annual cost of maintenance repairs is estimated at £150m.

Church maintenance and repair, except in extreme circumstances, comes in the form of donations and hard-won grants, often matched by fundraising. It is the local people who are forced to care and pay for the upkeep of their historic church. This includes the burden of lead theft, which is driven particularly by the rising price on the international market for raw metal, particularly for use in batteries, and is carried out by well organised gangs.

While this may appear a poor state of affairs, the fact is that it has always been this way. The Church's duty is to provide a priest for pastoral care and not a building for worship. Munificence towards church fabric was, and still is, a donation. Even if you took on the burden of building a new aisle or a personal chapel, or a tomb and monument, it became the property of the Church, and not yours. This is one positive aspect of an established church: it means that our historic parish churches are held as public property for the common good, rather than for individual advantage.

Since the end of the Second World War, there has been significant concern over the survival of historic churches. Even without the decline of faith, the change of settlement patterns since the Industrial Revolution has left rural England with a huge surplus of great church buildings. Fortunately, their quasi-public status has meant that they have not faced destruction to anything like the scale of that faced by the English country house. Church demolitions in the 1950s and '60s were slowed down by the founding of the Redundant Churches Fund (now the Churches Conservation Trust) in 1969, but transferring responsibility to the CCT is an option only for a relatively small number of redundant churches. Neither is disestablishing the Church of England and vesting all its historic property in the state (as is the case in France), or English Heritage, foreseeable or politically desirable.

Now that many former rural parishes are united into a single benefice, the custodianship, and the burden of the proper care, of as many as half a dozen buildings, becomes exceptionally onerous. Few of the clergy and members of Parochial Church Councils have expertise in either building management or fundraising.

The problem is being addressed: the National Churches Trust has launched 'Every Church Counts', a manifesto of six actions. These include public funding of £50m for urgent repairs; expanding the use of church buildings for community services such as food banks, nurseries, youth clubs and warm spaces; and cultural activities including concerts, exhibitions and craft fairs, and proposes a network of professionals to support places of worship belonging to all faiths. The Trust also recommends a drive to boost tourism, appealing to UK residents and visitors from abroad, and says that churches should be open beyond services, and seven days a week where possible, to allow them to better connect with local people and attract visitors.

Our Trust supports this initiative. Northamptonshire has some of England's finest examples of church and ecclesiastical architecture and memorials, covering well over 1,000 years of church building. We are fortunate to continue to enjoy them, but they must be looked after. This very great responsibility lies, as it always has, with local people, the parishioners and worshippers, as well as those who may have no strong faith or none, but love and respect the Christian tradition in England. We at Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust are here to support with our grants those who care for these fine buildings. We do this in order that those who come after us can continue to enjoy and worship in them and play their part in ensuring that the generations after them may also do so, for many centuries to come.

Please consider making a donation to the Trust, or leaving us a legacy in your will, or becoming a Friend of the Trust - the application form is in this Report.

Gareth Lugar-Mawson
Chairman
Tel: 01327 830219; Mobile: 07452 930801
Email: lugarmawson@msn.com

Grant Committee Report 2023

ANOTHER busy year has just ended, with 27 churches applying for grants. Several withdrew their application and some were rejected; this allowed us to distribute £66,595 to 21 churches from several denominations. That is the amount that is allocated, but during the year the Trustees have paid out funds to those who have completed their project.

As you will recall the Trustees in 2021 decided to limit the time of a grant to three years. As a result, the Trust wrote to several churches advising them of this and asking them to re-apply when their project is ready to run and when they have revised costs and can complete within a three-year period. Therefore, in the future, potential applicants should ensure that they can carry out the work within the three year period.

Although we have updated our website, sadly we have not been able to provide an online application form on the system so application documentation should be submitted via post or scanned and sent by email (see our website for more information). This should include a copy of the last set of accounts, to enable us to have a better view of the church and process the application.

Those churches who have applied over the year should be aware that we like to come and visit those who have applied and review the project. To do this takes a fair bit of route planning, fitting in as many churches as possible within the area,

which can be 150 to 200 miles in a day, so a friendly face is always welcome and the occasional facilities for a comfort break. It would therefore help if you can get your applications in early, even if that is just a phone call to say what your plans are, to avoid a mad dash before the review meeting.

As we have stated in the past, when considering the applications the Grant Committee takes into consideration all the criteria laid down by the Trustees, in addition to the history of past applications and in particular, a church's previous contribution to Ride and Stride, which is our main source of income. We encourage all churches to participate in this national event which benefits all churches. At the time of writing this, the annual day brought in £45,000, half of which was returned to the partipating churches, plus some Gift Aid monies and interest, whereas we committed £66,595 in grants.

Unveiling of the new door to the accessible entrance to All Saints', Wilbarston

We all know the cost of maintaining our buildings and preserving their glory for years to come, particularly as collection plates seem lighter and congregations are getting older, so it's vital that we encourage the younger members to discover this enjoyable event, while we find alternative ways of committing time without physically travelling, should you not be able to travel to see some of the beauty that these ancient monuments hold.

I would like to thank Rosalind Willatts for assisting on the trips and John Barker for his expertise, as well as Gareth Lugar-Mawson for chairing the meetings where the grant applications are reviewed.

You can see from the schedules below the grants and pledges made during the year but in summary the Trust contributed as follows:

Alarm	1	Monuments	2
Building work	8	Roof repairs	1
Electrical	1	Servery/toilet	1
Internal decoration	3	Tower repairs	1
Lighting	2	Window repairs	1

Town/Church	Works	Grant Given
Ashby St Ledgers – Blessed Virgin Mary and St Leodegarius	Urgent plaster work and restoration of wall paintings	£4,000
Brackley – St Peter's	Repairs to tower and guttering	£5,000
Broughton – Baptist Church	Replacement wooden windows at front and UPV on side elevation	£3,000
Chipping Warden – St Peter & St Paul	Installation of alarm	£500
Cotterstock – St Andrew's	Urgent rewiring requirement, discovered during refurbishment of organ. Replacement of pew support structure, that was rotting under the floor.	£4,000
Earls Barton – All Saints'	Redecoration and repair to internal rendered wall	£3,000
East Haddon – St Mary the Virgin	Repairs to porch guttering and downpipe, and nave handrail	£2,500
Easton Neston – St Mary's	Replacement of lighting system	£1,500
Ecton – St Mary Magdelene	Installation of bird guard and weather proofing to louvre windows	£595
Flore – All Saints'	Repairs to structural cracks, and to stonework and lime plaster	£5,000
Geddington – St Mary Magdalene	Additional grant to that previously offered, due to increased cost with window and funding from NHLF	£2,000
Glapthorn – St Leonard's	Repairs to roof, guttering, flashing and downpipes	£2,000
Harrington – St Peter and St Paul	Major refurbishment of bell tower; creation of servery/toilet and provision of disabled access	£10,000
Kettering – All Saints'	Replacement of existing lights with more energy-efficient LED lights; roof repairs and redecoration of windows	£1,500
Northampton – St Alban the Martyr	Repointing of parapet and walls, plaster repair following leak	£1,000
Quinton – St John the Baptist	Quinquennial repairs	£2,000
Staverton – St Mary's	Conversion of stone storage into storage/toilet	£4,000
Syresham – St James the Greater	Spire shingle replacement	£6,000
Titchmarch – St Mary's	Restoration of monuments	£2,000
Wellingborough United Reform Church	Provision of disability ramp, glass door installation and redecoration of church	£5,000
Weston Favell – St Peter's	Repairs to walls and repointing plus repairs to roof and rainwater goods	£2,000
		£66,595

Until 2018 the Trustees were able to also recommend churches to the National Churches Trust (NCT) under the partnership agreement between the Trust and NCT, but this scheme has unfortunately changed, and we are no longer able to do this. The Trust continues to welcome applications and tries hard to publicise the availably of funds to make grants.

M J Moore
Grant Secretary

NHCT Makes a Difference

ALL SAINTS', WILBARSTON

All Saints' church, Wilbarston, originates from the thirteenth century. The church is a significant part of village life which includes the C of E village school. As well as the regular services, and additional school services, a number of activities take place within the church building.

The church is built on a hillside, where the main access to the church on its south side involves two steps into the porch and a further five steps down into the main body of the church. The recently completed project, which benefitted from the generous grant from the NHCT, created a new level access into the church by opening up the door on the north side, adding a new entrance incorporating an accessible lavatory and an improved pathway around the west and north side of the church.

An additional modification included the removal of some of the Victorian pews from the rear section on the north side of the church, by the new north entrance. This has opened up a welcome space adaptable to many new and additional activities, such as a café-style seating area for refreshments after a service, or children's activities and other social events. A supply of chairs is now available to create more seating as and when required.

Thanks to these improvements, visitors relying on wheelchairs or pushchairs to access the church can do so easily, and the WC provides the necessary comfort for young and old alike when attending services and other events. It has also provided a fifth classroom for the village school now that the necessary facilities are available.

The new entrance has also opened up a beautiful and peaceful part of the churchyard. Future plans include further improvement of this area to allow for quiet contemplation and prayer, and create green space for outdoor worship.

This project has been some thirteen years in the making. After some years of planning and fundraising, in 2018 we had to replace the roofs above the north and south aisles with terne steel because the copper roofs had been stolen – a considerable expense which used up the monies intended for the level access project.

Losing two years of fundraising due to the pandemic shortly afterwards also hindered our progress. Over the years the project total rose as materials and labour costs increased, to just over £136,000. However, we achieved our project completion within budget, and our new access was formally opened in November 2023.

We are delighted now to have finally completed this major capital project, securing, we believe, a wonderful new addition to the church and its life serving our vibrant village community and beyond.

Exterior of All Saints', Wilbarston, during work on the new access

Julia Trustram Eve

ST PETER AND ST PAUL, KING'S SUTTON

More than fifty years of wear and tear saw the interior of this grade I listed church become grey and gloomy which, coupled with the water streaks created by the heavy rain which followed the theft of lead from the roof, meant the church was looking in great need of internal redecoration.

A quote from David Herridge decorators (specialists in listed buildings) provided an idea of the cost and saw a small committee formed to raise the money (£60,000 plus architects fees and extras).

Kings Sutton (St Peter & Paul)

A photographic treasure hunt of fifty images of the church and village, with a £400 prize (donated by a local businessman) was launched in the summer of 2022. Printed A5 booklets sold for £10 (perhaps a little high on reflection) saw people exploring the church and seeking images throughout the village. Alongside this, drawings were made of the church elevations, divided into one metre squares, each

available for £10. Names could be inscribed in a memorial book if people wished to dedicate their purchase to family and friends. Individuals were approached for contributions and grants applied for, with contributions from the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust, the Parish Council and Banbury Charities. Luckily, the church is in the eligible area for application to the Valencia Communities Fund and Landfill Trust. This involved a fairly complicated application demonstrating community use and open access to the building, but one that provided a substantial sum to complete the fundraising to £70,000.

Our architect, Henry Sanders of Hestia Architects, collaborated with us to achieve faculty permission and then to draw up tender documents for three quotes. These varied enormously with David Herridge receiving the contract and starting work on January 2nd after nearly two years of fundraising.

The work took ten weeks, the Thomas Becket chapel, chancel, nave and tower being scaffolded first and painted while services continued in the Lady Chapel. With the Becket chapel completed services moved there, along with the hired portable organ. Finally, the south and west porches were painted.

The decorators did a magnificent job, washing down, replastering and applying a sealing coat and two coats of Graphenstone, as well as cleaning the ceilings, the stonework and repairing and cleaning windows. A remarkable discovery was the reveal of fifteenth-century writing, probably the Ten Commandments, high up on the Lady Chapel wall, some of which was left exposed, along with the dates and names of early churchwardens, the earliest being 1632.

Interior of Kings Sutton church following redecoration

The church is now clean, airy, bright and wonderful looking – thank you to everyone who contributed. It is open 9-5 daily.

John Childs

ST. ANDREW'S, KETTERING

The planning for this project started eleven years ago. The background was that the existing parquet floor was breaking up because the damp-proof course underneath it was failing. In 2004 we had a quote for repairing the damp proof course and re-laying the parquet. It was £26,000, which was beyond our means. So we put out warning notices about the dangerous floor. In 2013 the boiler broke down and was

too old to repair. It was then that we conceived the idea of removing the floor, installing under-floor heating and at the same time making the church fully accessible to those with mobility issues. This would involve replacing the existing demountable dais on which the nave altar stands, and which acts as a stage for events run by our community facility, 'Kettering Arts Centre at St. Andrew's Church', with a permanent structure with an access ramp. We hoped that this would also make the chancel fully accessible, but were unable to obtain a faculty for that part of the plan.

Having obtained the faculty, fund-raising started in 2017 and the funds grew slowly. Then came the covid pandemic, with the national lockdown starting five days after our vicar moved to a new post in Edinburgh. So very little happened until our current vicar was inducted in 2021.

At this point we felt we had to tackle this seriously, and that meant engaging a company of professional fund-raisers. We were fortunate in one being recommended by word-of-mouth and they have been exceptionally effective. Inevitably, with the delays caused by the pandemic and high inflation, the cost has risen steeply since the original quotes were received, but by November 2023 we were sure we could cover the costs and the go-ahead was given to the builders and the under-floor heating firm. Work started on January 8th 2024 and is scheduled to be complete by the end of May.

Work so far has consisted of removing the parquet blocks (which were sold on for re-use) and digging out the floor to the new level required for the heating.

St Andrew's, Kettering, with old floor taken up

St Andrew's, Kettering, with the new floor substrate in place

We discovered Victorian tunnels which no-one knew existed, which must once have carried heating pipes from the boiler house. This first stage, as can be imagined, was very messy.

The contractors then moved on to laying conduits for electrics and audio cabling, and currently the heating firm are laying the material on which the heating pipework will be laid. So far, everything is going to plan.

We are so grateful to all those who have supported us through this, especially those like the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust which have awarded us grants towards the work. Without this external support, with the generosity of our congregation, the work would not have happened. I look forward to reporting on the finished work, and its dedication by Bishop Debbie, in due course.
John Weaver

ST MARY MAGDALENE, GEDDINGTON

Reredos

Geddington's reredos dates from the fourteenth century and was probably brought there from elsewhere, as were the two heads beneath – perhaps from Geddington's former royal palace or from nearby Pipewell Abbey after its suppression. Sitting immediately below the great east window, it is 4.72m wide and 1.28m high. It is said that the niches once contained statues of Christ and twelve Apostles.

George Gilbert Scott restored the reredos in 1856-57, but in 1888, a young Ninian Comper carried out his very first church restoration project – re-decorating the stonework and creating the exquisitely painted zinc panels, featuring Christ crucified with a kneeling Mary Magdalene in the centre, flanked by eleven apostles and the Virgin Mary. The sanctuary floor is also laid with the chequered tiles that he later used at Westminster Abbey.

Sadly, during repairs to surrounding stonework in the 1940s, unsuitable materials were used, resulting in extensive moisture damage to panels and stonework over the following decades. To carry out the highly-skilled conservation work was far beyond the resources of Geddington PCC, and so a very generous grant of £5,000 from the NHCT was an absolutely crucial part of the 'funding cocktail' that got this project off the ground.

The conservation work revealed some intriguing details. When Comper's painted panels were removed, traces of George Gilbert Scott's decoration scheme could be seen; and two ancient heads below the reredos, when cleaned, were found to be decorated with a deep red ochre. One head appears to be a jester, and the other a monkey. Their origins and significance are unknown, but one possibility is that they came from the former royal palace.

Carried out by Hirst Conservation Ltd, the work involved testing and careful manual cleaning of the stonework with removal of previous inappropriate overpainting, followed by consolidation and reconstitution of missing stone elements and re-touching of missing paintwork. The zinc panels were removed to Hirst's workshop where they were cleaned, corrosion removed and damaged areas repaired, followed

by re-touching and re-creation of lost paintwork. This was all done in a 'reversible' way in accordance with best practice. Zinc is a very unusual material for painted artworks and some innovative techniques were required throughout the conservation process.

Great East Window

Cleaned and repaired as part of the same project, the window's stonework dates from around 1300, but its stained glass was also created by Ninian Comper taking the theme of 'The Power of Divine Love shown in Overcoming Evil'. Many will find its superbly detailed artwork and Latin texts obscure, but anyone delving its deeper meanings will discover the work of a brilliant and deeply pious artist. Dedicated on 17th December 1892, the window cost £340 (worth about £54,000 today) and was paid for entirely by public donations from villagers!

Reredos and Great East Window, St Mary Magdalene, Geddington

Comper's work at Geddington spanned eight decades: in addition to the reredos and east window, he also designed the choir stalls (1912) and the Lady Chapel's east window (1933 and 1954).

The conservation work was completed in January 2024 and the end result is absolutely stunning! Thank you once again to the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust.

John Bennett
http://geddingtonchurch.org.uk/
www.facebook.com/StMaryMagdalenechurch

ST MARY'S CHURCH, BLAKESLEY-CUM-WOODEND

The work is progressing to schedule, despite the adverse weather conditions. We are grateful to have been provided with detailed weekly updates from the builders, Four Oaks, and also for the monthly progress meetings with representatives from the church, our architect, Mr Bryan Martin, and our surveyor, Mr Gordon Cain.The clerestory windows have been removed and taken away for renovation and cleaning. The masonry around the windows was found to have been in a poor condition and will be restored when the windows are replaced. Suitable glass has been sourced by Heritage Glazing. Works are coming along well and are ahead of the original

[*Continues p.20*]

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2023.

INCOME .	**2023**		**2022**	
Ride and Stride :	£	£	£	£
Year ended December 31st 2021	0		2573	
Year ended December 31st 2022	1206		41308	
Year ended December 31st 2023	44162		0	
		45368		43881
Income Tax Recovered		7117		6639
Friends' Subscriptions		3165		3275
Donations		1595		1645
Investment Income : Charinco	1952		1952	
: Bank & Building Society Interest	918		118	
		2870		2070
		60115		57510
EXPENDITURE .				
Grants Paid (Note 1 A) (Grants pledged but unpaid at the year end are shown in Note 1 B)	58595		38000	
Less Part Grant Returned	2778		0	
	55817		38000	
Ride & Stride - Refunds to participating churches	22441		21806	
Administrative expenses including printing .	2115		2218	
Upgrading Website	262		2540	
		80635		64564

(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR .		-20520		-7054
ACCUMULATED FUND				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2023		334033		353532
(Deficit) for the year		-20520		-7054
Increase/(decrease) in Market Value of Investments		13486		-12445
Balance carried forward December 31st 2023		326999		334033
RESTRICTED FUND (ALLCHURCHES TRUST LTD. Re ALARM SYSTEMS)				
(NOTE 3)				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2023		0	24000	
Less : Repaid to Allchurches Trust Ltd		0	24000	
Balance carried forward December 31st 2023		0		0
		326999		334033
REPRESENTED BY :				
Investments **(NOTE 4)**		198940		185454
Bank : Current account	2061		19499	
: Deposit account	42546		44110	
Building Society account	83452		84970	
		128059		148579
E.W.Byland - Honorary Treasurer		326999		334033
07/02/2024				

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .

NOTES TO THE INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2023

1. GRANTS : ACCUMULATED FUND.

A) PAID : YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2023 .

	£	Year of Pledge
Ss.Peter & Paul, Chipping Warden	500	April.2021
St.Mary, Southwick (£ 10,000 , less returned £ 2778)	7222	April.2021
Emmanuel Church , Northampton	3000	April.2022
St.Michael & All Angels,Creaton	5000	April.2022
St.Mary Magdalene, Ecton	595	April.2022
St.Andrew, Cotterstock	2000	Nov.2022
St.Mary, Staverton	4000	Nov.2022
All Saints, Sutton Bassett	2000	Nov.2022
St.Leonard, Glapthorn	2000	Nov.2022
All Saints, Kettering	1500	Nov.2022
All Saints, Earls Barton	3000	April.2023
Wellingborough United Reformed	5000	Nov.2023
St Mary Magdalene, Geddington	5000	Nov.2023
St.Alban the Martyr, Northampton	1000	Nov.2023
St.Mary, Easton Neston	1500	Nov.2023
St.John the Baptist, Abthorpe	4000	Nov.2023
St.John the Baptist, Quinton	2000	Nov.2023

B) PLEDGED AND NOT YET PAID AS AT DECEMBER 31st 2023.

	£
All Saints, Adstone(water supply)	1000
St.Martin, Welton	3000
St.Andrew, Kettering	6000
St.Mary, Blakesley	10000
Ss.Peter & Paul, Kings Sutton	3000
Raunds Methodist	2500
All Saints, Wilbarston	5000
St.Michael & All Angels,Creaton	5000
St.Katherine, Irchester	3000
All Hallows, Wellingborough	3000
Ss.Peter & Paul, Harrington	10000
St.Mary, East Haddon	2500
St .Mary, Titchmarsh	2000
St.Peter, Brackley	5000
St .Leodagarius, Ashby St.Ledgers	4000
St.Peter, Weston Favell	2000
Broughton Baptist Chapel	3000
St.James the Great, Syresham	6000

55817	Note : Pledged grants lapse if unclaimed	81000
	after three years of being made available.	

23. RESTRICTED FUND .

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust received an advance in February 2019 of £ 50,000 from Allchurches Trust Ltd (ATL) to be used exclusively for providing grants for the installation of roof alarm systems .
In accordance with the agreement with with ATL , details of this scheme are shown as a Restricted Fund.
ATL kindly extended the scheme to December 31st 2021 . Repayment was made in January 2022.

3.INVESTMENTS	Cost at 31/12/22 & 31/12/2023 £	Market Value @ 31/12/2022 £	Market Value @ 31/12/2023 £	Change in Mkt.value y/e 31/12/23 £	Interest y/e 31/12/23 £
BLK Charities UK Equity Fund Accumulation 5896.125 Units	14970	137986	150688	12702	0
BLK Charities UK Bond Fund Income : 32527.563 Units	60000	47468	48252	784	1952
	74970	185454	198940	13486	1952

4. GENERAL NOTE RE: DONATIONS .

Under Solicitors` Accounts rules, client funds held by a solicitor which cannot be allocated or returned, may be distributed as charitable donations . The Trust received such a donation from Hewitsons (Solicitors) in the sum of £ 3,545 in year ended December 31st 2014, and has given an indemnity to the effect that , if this sum is requested, it will be repaid . The Trust is obliged to maintain its resources at a sum in excess of the above amount .

[*continued from p.15*]

time scale. Replacing the windows will be one of the final pieces of work. The windows spaces are currently protected by sheets of polythene and additional protection provided by strong black out materials on frames which can be removed at need, for example for weddings or special services.

Blakesley church exterior showing tower cleared of moss

The brick-built flue has been removed from the tower. This exposed further damage to the internal masonry (described as a 'bulge') and this has been repaired along with the work to the internal walls as originally planned. The voussoir has been repaired. This work is now complete and all internal scaffolding removed.

The floor at ground level below the tower has been taken up and a damp proof floor laid. Suitable tiles have been bought to pave the area in keeping with the existing tiles in the church. This will be one of the final pieces of work along with the clerestory windows. This has enabled the church to function as normal by allowing the bells to be rung for two weddings.

Elements of the external masonry are currently being repaired and/or replaced as per the schedule of work. The vegetation has been removed from the wall to the south tower elevation, with some re-pointing taking place which has been interrupted by the rain but is now in hand.

The guttering and rainwater goods are currently being re-painted, with suitable colour in keeping with the original, in preparation for being re-fitted.

The builders have been considerate of the church and its services throughout and we are grateful for their co-operation.

Mary Barnett

St Mary's, Blakesley

Ride and Stride

Ride and Stride is an event like no other! A chance to explore our wonderful county and find out what extraordinary treasures lie behind the churchyard gates of Northamptonshire's churches and chapels

RIDE AND STRIDE 2024 will be held on Saturday 14th September

RIDE and Stride is the single largest source of income for Historic Churches Trusts across the country and enables them to make grants to places of Christian worship. Taking place countrywide on the second Saturday of September, the funds raised are split between the nominated Trust and the participants' chosen church or chapel.

Coffee morning at Cotterstock to greet riders

As the main fund-raising event for Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust, 50% of the money raised and any Gift Aid is retained by the Trust and a cheque for 50% of the money raised is sent to the church chosen by each of the participants. The money raised, along with other funds, is used to provide grants for preserving and restoring churches, chapels and meeting houses in Northamptonshire, whether they are historic or not.

Ride and Stride is a unique event, where participants seek sponsorship from friends, relations and colleagues – so much per church visited or a lump sum. Some participants challenge themselves to visit as many churches as they can by their chosen mode of transport. Others prefer a more leisurely approach, visiting fewer churches and taking more time at each. They can take part as an individual, with friends or as a cycling group, walking or even on horseback! Planning their own route with the help of a list of places of worship that have agreed to take part in the event, all raise sponsorship money to support the work of the Trust.

Cotterstock's famous bicycle biscuits

Churches are usually open from 10am to 6pm and a list of participating churches is produced and made available on our website at www.nhct.org.uk, as are churches in neighbouring counties. Sponsor forms are also downloadable from the website.

Local Organisers ideally arrange for each church to be open and manned from 10am to 6pm, with a register for participants to sign. Where this is not possible the register can be left in the porch, but participants really appreciate a welcome and some sort of refreshments. An open church or chapel attracts visitors, whether participants or not, and it is a good chance to show what the church or chapel has to offer. Some churches and chapels run coffee mornings and many take pride in drawing visitors' attention to their special features, or they may put on events such as talks about the church or chapel together with displays. It also coincides with Heritage Weekend in the Northampton Deanery.

Riders in the heat at Cotterstock: Kate and Jon Grussing and Diana Hart

Local Organisers also advertise the event in their Parish magazine, with posters or announcements on social media, to try to encourage parishioners, whether churchgoers or not, to take part. Of course, those parishes who can find participants to be sponsored either by riding or striding or as church sitters can be assured that half the money raised will be coming back to the church.

Ride and Stride 2023

Phew - it was hot!

A Great Big Thank you to all who braved the heat and helped to make it another really successful year allowing us to give grants out to those churches who need it so desperately.

Duncan Martin, Elizabeth Collins and Virginia Henley at Church Brampton

The heat was definitely this year's challenge, after last year being two days after the Queen's death. This year, last-minute reminders were sent to churches to make sure they provided water and perhaps opened earlier. Many riders and striders did start early and may not have signed registers if churches weren't open. They were assured that they could shorten their routes and that sponsors wouldn't mind! In any case, most sponsors give a lump sum rather than an amount per church visited. Most churches were open as promised and Riders and Striders really appreciated the respite from the sun in our historic churches and

welcome cold drinks. 342 churches took part this year (332 in 2022). Out of these, 199 (187 in 2022) were manned for at least part of the time, 108 (89 in 2022) were open with a register available and 25 (32 in 2022) with just a register outside.

Riders from Warmington (Christine Roberts, Mary Marvin, John Miley and Ray Roberts) at Fotheringhay

Numbers recorded on the registers are down, but we are hoping that sponsorship would already have been sorted and that the income money will not be affected too much. 156 churches have sent sponsor money to our Treasurer already.

Publicity and promotion is always a challenge and we are grateful to those who encouraged Riders and Striders via their parish magazines and websites. We would love to find someone to help us with marketing and promoting Ride and Stride, particularly with social media. Could that be you? If so, email Liz Doherty on liz.nhct@hotmail.com.

The total for 2023 received by 2nd February 2024 is £44,441.87 excluding Gift Aid. A magnificent total and we are grateful to all those churches who helped reach this figure. The following churches raised over £1000 each: Brackley, Oundle, Stoke Doyle and Welton. A special thank you to them.

This is yet another really good year, and a real tribute to all those volunteers who work to make Ride and Stride in Northamptonshire the success that it is.

Particularly:

- The enthusiasm of Local Organisers who kept us informed of their church arrangements as they changed and persuaded folk to ride and stride and find sponsors
- All our Area Organisers, who show great tenacity in contacting churches

Dee Frankling with Lemmy

- Particular thanks to two Area Organisers who are leaving us. Arthur Wright has been involved with the Trust for over twenty years and has quite rightly, with his 90th birthday coming up, decided to step down from the Area Organiser role in Higham Deanery. We are pleased that he will continue as Local Organiser for Chelveston. Penny Pardoe has been an Area Organiser, originally for the whole of Towcester Deanery and later for half, for about fifteen years and was Membership Secretary from 2010 to 2014 when the role became Friends Secretary and Ruth Fitch took over.

• Andrew Presland who has agreed to take over from Arthur, and Crofton and Alison Brierley who are taking on Penny's churches.

• Everyone else who helped to make the day such a success: of course, our Treasurer, Eddie Byland for his calm encouragement and advice and sorting out all the money side so efficiently - and lastly all the Riders and Striders!

Liz Doherty and Val Hartley - *County Organisers*

REPORTS FROM RIDERS AND STRIDERS

Jenny Smith at Bulwick

'I was the only visitor to Easton on the Hill. Managed to stride round several churches in Stamford.'

Jenny Smith

'Despite the hot weather, we thoroughly enjoyed taking part and the hospitality at all the churches we visited was lovely. I hope this year's event raises lots of money.'

St Peter and St Paul, Abington

'Our new vicar did all five churches in the Benefice - ours was the last and he looked very hot!'

All Saints', Rushton

'I felt a lot of sympathy for those who came through our door clearly feeling the heat (one man even dripped sweat onto the sheet as he filled it in!). Often people would take a break and sit down or have a look around the church while they were here, but this time they wanted to get on and get finished!'

St Matthew's, Northampton

'You may recall that Saturday, September 9th, Ride and Stride day, was exceedingly hot. This did not deter some of the congregation of St. Margaret's, Crick from raising money for the Northants Historic Churches Trust. As well as 2-legged participants, we had Lemmy, a regular church attender, pictured with owner Dee Frankling. Lemmy wore a wet scarf and trotted faithfully to Yelvertoft with frequent 'pawses'! Thanks to the manager of Crick Marina, who placed a collecting tin in the office, Dee raised £127 towards our total of £564.'

Sally Knight and Charlotte Barford recovering at Stoke Doyle

St Margaret's, Crick

'Sally Knight and Charlotte Barford, raising money for St Rumbald's, had a very hot walk across the benefice, and fully appreciated the cold stone floor of our church.'

St Rumbald's Church, Stoke Doyle

'It must have broken records for the hottest sponsored bike ride day, but it was a wonderful day out - there are always some beautiful and even quirky features to discover and engaging people to meet along the way who can tell the story behind their local church.

The “church sitters” who welcome people in and provide refreshments are definitely as important as the riders and walkers. The lady on duty at Pilton kindly gave me a guided tour of the windows with their jewel-coloured panels showing various animals and birds which Baron Lilford installed to commemorate his menagerie, as the east window with the unusual series of scenes from the story of Adam and Eve, with the Crucifixion in the panels above. Even the finials at the end of the choir stalls have animals carved into them.’

‘Other highlights I had not noticed before include the font in Tansor church with its gargoyle heads on the supporting pillars, and the lovely windows there - the Resurrection and the Nativity; the beautiful statue in a niche above the door at Cotterstock - unusual because of so many being lost in the Reformation. Cotterstock is always a favourite, such a lovely setting above the river and amazing homemade refreshments - including the famous bicycle biscuits...’

Diane Martini

Diane Martini from Kings Cliffe at St Rumbald’s, Stoke Doyle

Finally, Arthur Wright is retiring after more than twenty years of service to the NHCT:

It was in the late 1980s that the Rev Grant Brockhouse, then vicar of Higham Ferrers and Chelveston churches, asked me as churchwarden of Chelveston if I would get people to support the Ride and Stride efforts in aid of the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust. As someone born in Higham Ferrers, but currently living in Chelveston, and interested in all things historical, I agreed, not realising that it would be a near twenty-five year commitment that came with it – firstly just as Local Organiser, and then as Area Organiser looking after the Higham area.

NHCT has been fortunate in having dedicated people to run it and here I pay tribute to Richard and Val Hartley for their organisational skills, the late John White who was chairman of NHCT for many years and the work that Treasurer, Eddie Byland, has done in collecting the money and getting Gift Aid sorted. I pay tribute also to Liz Doherty, who has been a pleasure to work alongside in this part of the county.

In my early years, I borrowed a friend’s mountain bike to visit local churches as my slimline bike had been borrowed by our son at university. Several members made a day of it and we were usually lucky with the weather. Hospitality was, and still is, generously offered at many churches visited, and it was always interesting to discuss church matters with the people keeping them open for visitors. It gave me a greater understanding of the problems of maintenance in our wonderful medieval buildings and the dedication, despite dwindling congregations, to doing all they could to make them relevant, with perhaps a new servery or toilet facilities, or rewiring them to add heating and better lighting.

A plus was always the Presentation Evening - the annual distribution of cheques at various interesting houses whose occupants had put them at the disposal of NHCT due to some useful connections and made it a most pleasant evening.

Arthur Wright and Russell Hodgson in the Model T

We now have a new Area Organiser for Higham in Andrew Presland of Rushden, but I shall still hope to continue my support with journeys in the Model T, and I know that Sue Wagner from Chelveston will continue her sterling cycling efforts with others to add much-needed funds and keep our church well up in the list of contributions to Ride and Stride.

Arthur Wright

Views from the diocese

The challenges facing our parish churches

IN 1945 Arthur Mee wrote The King's England: Northamptonshire. There are entries on virtually every town and village in the county with fascinating descriptions from the pre-motorway and pre-expansion landscape. In the introduction he says:

"In wealth of treasure within the church Northamptonshire can vie with most of its neighbours. Of brass and glass, of carved wood and carved stone, of monuments to knights and ladies of long ago, Northamptonshire has much to show. Of the beauty wrought with loving hands, whether inspired by native genius or simple reverence, Northamptonshire has ample share."

He continues:

"Throughout Northamptonshire, the traveller will find rich reward – a splendid church, a rare village, a stately home on the horizon, an historic corner of this Blessed Plot, this Realm."

St Peter's, Oundle, whose parishioners raised over £1000 for Ride and Stride

Arthur Mee could certainly paint a picture. The church buildings he visited towards the end of the war still stand in their communities. They may look the same but around them the whole world has changed. The Christian church in parts of Africa, Asia and South America is expanding faster than anyone could have predicted and there are 2.3 billion Christians across the world. Christianity is the largest global religion – but it doesn't feel that way in Western Europe and the UK in particular. For the Christian church in the UK, autumn is here and winter is coming.

Churches in Northamptonshire market towns and villages are still often the focus for baptisms, weddings and funerals; Remembrance Sunday and Christmas are the two occasions when the church feels full. The clock chimes are loved by many and hated by some; and the parson (with a group of five or six parishes to pastor) is expected to do everything that was being done when there was the luxury of only one church to care for. On a normal Sunday, some village churches have single figure attendance. Heating is costly and used sparingly.

In the urban areas, civil celebrants have largely taken the place of clergy at funerals and civil marriages offer a wealth of exotic locations. Arthur Mee would have been stunned to see the way that the ministry of the church in England has slipped quietly into the background. When working with young people we have to remember that it's Football on a Saturday and Rugby Union (always the smart choice) on a Sunday. The number of children and young people engaging with Church of England churches in the whole of Northamptonshire on a Sunday has dropped to 1000 over the past ten years. However, more positively, that number has risen to 5000 midweek. Our social habits are changing, and the church is responding well.

Meanwhile, our buildings are being cared for by small groups of volunteers. With some glorious exceptions, congregations are getting older. Considerable sums of money have to be raised by the same small group of people to keep our churches open. It's a never ending, exhausting and thankless task. Even the smallest Quinquennial Inspection work can cost thousands – while Historic England, The Georgian Society, The Victorian Society, The Twentieth Century Society, The Church Building Council, The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and local councils all have the right to be involved in the decision-making of even the smallest of local churches regarding the maintenance of their buildings. It can seem overwhelming. PCCs have a primary task of paying Parish Share and only then are they free to think about keeping the building in a good state of repair or making improvements, such as the provision of serveries and toilets.

St Michael's, Newnham

The Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust is an absolute godsend to churches that have so much to do and so few resources. The clergy need to be freed from fund raising to minister throughout the community, amongst all ages and in all contexts. That's not rocket science, it's old-fashioned parish ministry. Many churches have become inspirational, Jesus-centred, shining lights in their communities with the provision of food banks, credit unions, drop-in facilities, transport, warm hubs, cafes,

lunch clubs, Messy Church and Muddy Church, Wellbeing cafés and so much more. The NHCT helps to make that ministry possible, by offering grants for the upkeep of our church buildings and by relieving some of the pressure on our wonderful but massively stretched PCCs.

The Venerable Richard Ormston
Archdeacon of Northampton, Chair of the Peterborough Diocesan Board of Education

Church Development in an Uncertain Future

CHURCHES are unique sites and despite being an anchor of English heritage and identity for over 1000 years, they are often overlooked within national narratives. They are, unlike most historic buildings, open to everyone free of charge, often welcoming visitors from dawn until dusk. They have watched over our cities, towns and villages like guardians withstanding conflicts, revolutions, pandemics, and today climate change and global uncertainty. Our churches bear the scars of anguish and discontent that existed before us, and continue to exist, but so too does our perseverance and devotion to our beloved churches of England.

The Venerable Archdeacon of Northampton reflects on the present state of the church observing 'autumn is here and winter is coming'. As an historically Christian country, we are perhaps in a period of hibernation, and like the snowdrops that are appearing within our churchyards, there are signs of a warmer future. Our churches and their parishes are currently preparing for their futures through development projects, many of which would not be possible without the grants provided by the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust (NHCT). The Trust has fundraised and helped to promote our historic churches, encouraging communities and tourists to visit and supporting the historic churches of Northamptonshire, a county known for its 'squires and spires'.

The future of the church perhaps does not lie in the traditional Sunday service. As shown by The Venerable Archdeacon, our post-modern society has different expectations and lifestyles. The future of the church instead demands a multi-functional purpose (with modern comforts of course), enabling these historic buildings to be placed within the centre of their communities once more. The world Arthur Mee understood was smaller, slower: for some, church was entertainment on an otherwise quiet day in the village. To bring people back we need to ask what communities need from society and from the church, and then ask ourselves how our church buildings can facilitate those needs.

The Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) encourages parishes to contact our office with the first ideas of development or first hint of a problem. The Committee consists of experts in a variety of church building (and contents) care, management, and development working together with parishes to discuss best approaches in line with legislation, policy and best practice. The DAC will also work on the parish's behalf to consult stakeholders, such as Historic England, the Victorian Society, the Church Buildings Council and many more.

Whilton (St Andrews)

However, none of this could happen within Northamptonshire if it was not for the NHCT. Your hard work and financial support allow churches to develop to respond to societal needs. The world is an increasingly lonely place, which evidence suggests significantly increases mortality rates. Society needs spaces to socialize that are warm and welcoming. The NHCT's money goes towards just that, keeping these precious buildings watertight and providing toilets and serveries which not only support churches but rebuild communities. God's word can be found in many places, but most of all we find it in the actions of others.

Emily Elliott
DAC Church Buildings Caseworker
01733 887038
emily.elliott@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

2023 Church tour led by Bruce Bailey

Saturday 10th October 2023

Cottesbrooke, Lamport, Southwick, Stoke Doyle, Stanion

THE 2023 Study Day comprised visits to five Georgian (at least in part) churches in the northern part of the county, ably guided by Bruce Bailey.

Interior of All Saints', Cottesbrooke

We started at **Cottesbrooke**, described by our guide Bruce Bailey as "a medieval building refitted with box pews and three decker pulpit and a manorial pew". Its distinctive furnishings, provided by the Langham family of Cottesbrooke Hall, comprised box pews down the nave, a three-decker pulpit and a family pew complete with fireplace and painted curtains – dated to approximately 1750 and restored in 1959/60.

Our next stop was **Lamport**, a Georgian building containing memorials for several generations of the Isham family, the earliest to Jane Isham (d. 1638). The most impressive is to Sir Justinian Isham (d. 1737) and was traditionally believed to be by Scheemakers but more recent evidence suggests that it was by Michael Rysbrack. Sir Charles Isham (d.1903), a poet who also illustrated books, probably designed some of the stained glass in the church – and introduced garden gnomes to England. The chapel containing the memorials was possibly designed by John Webb, assistant to Inigo Jones, being similar to his earlier work at Lamport Hall across the road. A much later addition was an ironwork screen, built in the 1950s by Frank Wright of Wellingborough. Other items include the font by G F Bodley and some 1849 stained glass, which our guide described accurately as 'good, but a bit heavy going'.

All Saints', Lamport

We then had a lunch break before moving on to **Southwick**, a medieval and Georgian building with heavy Victorian restoration, where the newly cleaned Roubiliac monument to George Lynne (d.1758) is looking spectacular, thanks in part to the NHCT. The church is a fascinating mausoleum to the Lynne family, whose line came to an end with the tragic figure of Mary Lynne whose husband and four children all predeceased her. The last, Augusta, died aged fifteen in France, despite the best efforts of Mary's friend Anne Lister, 'Gentleman Jack' from the BBC series, who was also (unofficially) a physician.

We then had tea and cake at **Stoke Doyle**, a Georgian building with box pews. We also learned about the various impressive memorials there, including to Edward Ward, who purchased the Manor in 1694 and died in 1714, remembered in an impressive memorial by J M Rysbrack of Antwerp. We learned of an older church, with a spire, as documented by John Bridges, which Sir Edward's son replaced with the present building between 1722 and 1725.The multi-skilled Thomas Eayre of Kettering was active in this construction as mini-architect, surveyor, bell founder and clockmaker, with his surveying activities including the earliest one inch map of the whole county.

Monument to George Lynne, by Louis-François Roubiliac, at Southwick

Our final visit was to **Stanion**, another medieval church refitted with pews in an unusual formation and with work dating from over several centuries within a thirteenth-century building. It includes fifteenth-century arcades, tower and broach spire and an impressive medieval wall painting showing a kneeling stag — probably a resident of nearby Rockingham Forest — and unicorn gazing at an empty shape probably previously occupied by a statue. Our guide quoted from an 1829 article in the British Newspaper Archive referring to the church being refitted with elegant mahogany pews. It is likely that they survived the push towards sacramentarian Gothic architecture promoted by Pugin from the 1830s for the very practical reason that they were still quite new.

Wall painting at Stanion

An enjoyable day was had by all, leaving us looking forward to the 2024 event.

Andrew Presland

Friends of Northamptonshire Historic Churches

From: Name(s) ……..

Address: ……..

……..

Postcode: ……

E-mail (PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS): ……

I/We would like to join the Friends of Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust.

I/We

a. Have completed the Banker's Order below. (*preferred option for NHCT)*

b. Enclose a cheque for £……. (payable to Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust)

Gift Aid Declaration

If you are a UK taxpayer and able to donate under the Gift Aid Scheme, it will cost you nothing and will increase the value of your donation to the Trust by 25%. Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to offset any gift aid payment against your personal Income Tax.

I am a UK taxpayer and I will pay in the year an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax to be reclaimed by the Trust.

Signed …… **Date:** ……..202

The minimum donations requested are: £10 for individuals
£20 for Churches / PCCs

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust is registered with the Charity Commission No. 1021632

Banker's Order

To (Bank/Building Society): ……

Bank Branch address: ……

Postcode: ……

Sort code: | | | |

Name: ……

Signed: …… **Date:** ……202

Please pay to: Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

C/o NatWest Bank plc Sort code: 56-00-60 Acc No 05608961

On the …… day of (month) …….. 202

The sum of £…….. (words) ……

And the same sum annually until further notice.

Please send application form to:
Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust, Friends' Secretary
E-mail: nuala.salter@peterborough-diocese.org.uk
c/o Bouverie Court, 6 The Lakes, Bedford Rd, NORTHAMPTON, NN4 7YD

Dates for your diary:

CELEBRATION EVENING (by invitation):
Thursday, 18th July 2024
at Southwick Hall
by kind permission of Christopher Capron Esq

CHURCH STUDY DAY (for Friends of NHCT):
A visit to the churches of St Mary, Grendon, St Mary, Whiston, St Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby and St Peter and St Paul, Easton Maudit, led by Bruce Bailey
Saturday, 31st August 2024

RIDE AND STRIDE:
Saturday, 14th September 2024

Church of St Leodagarius, Ashby St Ledgers

With thanks to all those who contributed to this Report.

Designed and printed by Inkwell Printing Ltd. www.inkwell-printing.com

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1021632

Accounts

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

THE vast majority of our church buildings in Northamptonshire are still used primarily for religious worship – maintaining a function which has usually continued for centuries. They are among the most significant examples of a dwindling set of buildings in this country whose functions have continued over such a timespan, including ancient pubs, civic buildings, schools and Oxbridge colleges. But these buildings are even more than that: they are repositories of our community history, not just in terms of registers and memorials, but also by witnessing the life events of their congregations. As Stephen Meakins eloquently says in his Ride and Stride account later in this report: they are 'the custodians of the emotions of successive generations'. Non-believer Philip Larkin recognised in his 1954 poem, Church Going, that a church is:

> 'A serious house on serious earth …
> In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,
> Are recognised, and robed as destinies',

a place consecrated not only by generations of worship, but also by the baptisms, weddings and funerals which have taken place there.

The Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust welcomes applications from all the church buildings in Northamptonshire – even those built in the twentieth century – a point reinforced in this report by articles by James Miller explaining how to apply for a grant, and by Andrew Presland examining our support for church buildings outside the Church of England. We exist to support the tireless work of churchwardens, PCCs and other supporters of all these special places to preserve them for the future.

Eleanor Townsend *(editor)*

Supporting the Trust

Become a Friend - Leave a Legacy - Give practical help

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

Patron: Her Late Majesty the Queen

President: James Saunders Watson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire

Vice-Presidents: The Rt Revd. Donald Allister, The Bishop of Peterborough; The Rt Revd. John Holbrook, The Bishop of Brixworth; David Laing Esq

Trustees: James Saunders Watson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of NorthamptonshireThe Rt Revd. Donald Allister, The Bishop of Peterborough

Mrs Hilary Aslett	Bruce Bailey Esq
John Barker Esq	Edwin Byland Esq
Mrs Liz Doherty	Revd. Robert Farmer
Dr Martin Gaskell	Mrs Val Hartley
Ms Virginia Henley	The Rt Revd. John Holbrook
David Laing Esq	Gareth Lugar-Mawson Esq
James Miller Esq	Michael Moore Esq
The Ven. Richard Ormston	Mrs Susan Parkinson
Canon Andrew Presland	Ms Eleanor Townsend
Ms Rosalind Willatts	

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire and The Lord Bishop of Peterborough are trustees of the charity by virtue of their offices, and they appoint the remaining trustees. The number cannot exceed sixty, but cannot be less than four, and every trustee has one vote. These trustees administer the management of the charity.

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust was constituted by a Trust Deed dated 10th March 1955.

Registered Charity Number: 1021632

Registered Address: Lancaster House, Nunn Mills Road, Northampton, NN1 5GE

Trust Officers

Chairman: Gareth Lugar-Mawson	Vice-Chairman: John Barker
Treasurer: Eddie Byland	Grants Secretary: Michael Moore
Secretary and Friends Secretary:	Ruth Fitch (to November 2022)
County Ride and Stride Organisers:	Val Hartley and Liz Doherty

www.nhct.org.uk

Front cover: St Mary's, Weldon. Previous page: St Andrew's, Harlestone

Chairman's Report

Holy Trinity, Northampton

I AM pleased to report that 2022 was a successful year for the Trust, both in terms of funds raised and grants awarded.

Grants

In 2022, the Trust awarded eleven grants to a value of £38,000, the details of which are set out later in this Annual Report. These grants were made possible by the excellent level of income generated by the annual Ride and Stride and from donations, for which the Trust is most grateful.

As you know, the Trustees' policy is to draw on their reserves to meet current needs at current prices while keeping a core amount of £100,000 as a long-term reserve.

In making grants, the Trustees continue to give priority to those churches and chapels which have a history of participation in the Ride and Stride, particularly to those churches which raise sponsorship money.

The Trustees are grateful to Michael Moore for undertaking the role of Grants Secretary and to John Barker and Rosalind Willatts for visiting the applicant churches and chapels and reporting on their circumstances. Sadly Eric Peplow has had to stand down as one of the visitors due to health reasons. The Trustees are very grateful to him for undertaking this role for many years.

Annual Ride and Stride

At the time of writing, the 2022 Ride and Stride raised £42,514, plus £6,453 from Gift Aid, a total of £48,967. This excellent result reflects the sterling efforts of the Riders and Striders, the Area Organisers, the Church and Chapel Organisers and the Church and Chapel sitters. The Trustees are most grateful to them, as they are to the County Organisers, Val Hartley and Liz Doherty, for their enthusiasm and the many hours they spent in planning and coordinating the event. The Trustees are equally grateful to Eddie Byland, the Trust's Treasurer, for dealing with the numerous individual payments involved and making the Gift Aid claims to HMRC.

Once again, I would like to record the Trust's thanks to Eddie for the excellent and timely way in which he looks after the Trust's accounts.

The Ride and Stride support from the churches and chapels in Northamptonshire is the Trust's main fundraising source. It is largely from the monies raised by the Ride and Stride that we derive our funds to make grants to the County's churches and chapels.

Planning for September 2023's Ride and Stride is well underway and I hope that your church or chapel will take part in it.

Donations

I am pleased to report that the Trust received donations amounting to £1,645 in the year. The Trustees are most grateful to all of our donors for their generous support.

Celebration Evening

After three years of being unable to hold one, we held our Annual Celebration Evening at the home of David and Mary Laing in Grafton Underwood on Wednesday, 20th July and sixty-two guests attended. It was a very warm, slightly overcast, evening, but fortunately the rain held off and everyone enjoyed the occasion very much. The Trustees are very grateful to David and Mary Laing for making their beautiful garden available for this event.

The annual Celebration Evening is an important part of the Trust's calendar, giving the trustees the opportunity to meet representatives from the churches and chapels to which the Trust has made grants, and to thank them for their hard work in looking after their historic buildings. We are also honoured to meet those who work so hard in raising significant funds for the Trust in the Ride and Stride. Traditionally it is held in the gardens of one of the notable houses in the county on a weekday evening in July. The occasion is not only very enjoyable, but also encouraging to those involved in the difficult and time-consuming business of caring for Northamptonshire's beautiful churches and chapels.

Annual General Meeting

We were able to hold our April 2022 Annual General Meeting as well as our November Ride and Stride Review Meeting at the Northampton offices of HCR Hewitsons. My thanks to the partners of HCR Hewitsons for making their conference room available to us for these meetings.

Church Study Day

In August, our annual Church Study Day involved a fascinating visit to four beautiful churches in South Northamptonshire: St James, Edgcote, St John the Baptist, Plumpton, St Botolph, Slapton and St Mary, Easton Neston, all of which are tucked away well beyond the beaten track. My thanks to Bruce Bailey for organising this visit and explaining the features of the churches to us. My thanks also to James and Mary Miller for hosting the picnic lunch in the grounds of their house at Slapton.

Our 2023 Study Day will be on 2nd September, kindly organised again by Bruce Bailey and visiting a sequence of Georgian churches from Cottesbrooke to Southwick..

Trust Secretary and Friends Secretary

Just before Christmas Ruth Fitch stood down as both the Trust's Secretary and the Friends' Secretary. Ruth held both positions for many years and was excellent in both. She was very helpful to me when I took on the role of Chairman and I miss working with her very much. For the moment, the Charities Team at HCR Hewitsons are very kindly helping the Trust with its secretarial work but we would like to appoint a volunteer, or volunteers, to both roles. If anyone reading this report is interested in taking up the challenge, I would very much like to hear from them.

National Churches Trust

We maintain our links with the National Churches Trust (NCT), which operates at a national level to promote the care of our heritage of England's wonderful churches - fundraising, making grants, lobbying where appropriate, and acting as a focal point for the efforts of the individual county trusts of which the NHCT is one. However, NCT no longer participates in a partnership scheme under which it delegated aspects of its grant-making functions to the county trusts.

Website

The website which contains details of the Trust's activities was redesigned and updated in 2022, it now has a more 'professional' look to it. Please let me know if you have any suggestions for additional items or improvements to the site.

A New Report Editors

The Revd. Canon Brian Withington, who took over from Dr Martin Gaskell as the Annual Report's co-editor, stood down as a trustee in 2022. The new editor is Eleanor Townsend who joined the board as trustee at the AGM and co-edited the Report with Brian last year. We are grateful to Brian for his work on the Report last year, and to Eleanor for taking the job on single-handed this year. We wish both of you well.

The Future

I've said it in previous Reports and I say it again, I continue to be impressed with the time and effort spent by what are often relatively small groups of people in maintaining the wonderful churches and chapels in our County.

In Northamptonshire we have some of England's finest examples of church and ecclesiastical architecture and memorials, covering well over 1,000 years of church building. We are fortunate to be able to continue to enjoy them, but they have to be looked after. This very great responsibility lies ultimately with local people, the parishioners and worshippers, as well as those who may have no strong faith, but love and respect the Christian tradition in England. Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust is here to support those who care for these fine buildings.

We do this in order that those who come after us can continue to enjoy and worship in them and play their part in ensuring that they, and the generations after them, may do so too; not only for the next 1,000 years, but for many centuries after that.

The small part Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust plays in achieving that object is the result of the efforts of the Trustees and Council Members and I thank them, our President, James Saunders Watson, HM Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, and our Vice-Presidents David Laing, Bishop Donald Allister, and Bishop John Holbrook for their strong continuing friendship, support and encouragement.

In Conclusion

I hope you enjoy this Report. If you have any comments or suggestions about it, please send them to Eleanor or me.

Gareth Lugar-Mawson
Chairman
Tel: 01327 830219; Mobile: 07452 930801
Email: lugarmawson@msn.com

Grant Committee Report 2022

THE year that has just ended has been a lot busier year than the previous two years, with eighteen churches applying for grants. Several withdrew their application, and two others were rejected, which allowed us to distribute £61,500. As you will recall, the Trustees in 2021 decided to limit the time of a grant to three years. As a result, the Trust wrote to several churches advising them of this and asking them to re-apply when their project is ready to run, and when they have revised costs and can complete within a three-year period. Therefore, in the future potential applicants should ensure that they can carry out the work within the three-year period. The Trustees also agreed to improve the NHCT website which would allow applicants to apply initially online, and subsequently submit the documentation via the post. This would include a copy of the last set of accounts, to enable us to process the application and take a better view of an applicant's finances.

At the end of 2021, the alarm grant scheme funded by Allchurches Trust came to an end, and we had, unfortunately, to return £24,000. Despite the scheme being open for three years, we were unable to assist some churches in preventing theft of lead from their roofs as they did not take up the offer. Hopefully they will not regret that decision.

As we have stated in the past when considering applications, the Grant Committee takes into consideration all the criteria laid down by the Trustees, in addition to the history of past applications and in particular, previous contribution to Ride and Stride, which is our main source of income. We encourage all churches to participate in this national event which benefits all churches.

I would like to thank Rosalind Willatts for assisting on the trips, replacing Eric Peplow who had to withdraw for health reasons, and also John Barker for his expertise and Gareth Lugar-Mawson for attending meetings.

You can see from the schedules below the grants and pledges made during the year but, in summary, the Trust contributed as follows:

Building works	6
Porch work	2
Internal work	1
Roof works	3
Servery/toilet installation	1
Churchyard walls	1

All Hallows, Wellingborough

Town/Church	Works	Grant Given
Abington, Northampton – St Peter's & St Paul's	Removal of asbestos prior to repairing leak in heating system.	£2,000
Blakesley – St Mary's	Tower and roof work.	£10,000
Boughton – St John the Baptist	Rebuild of collapsed wall.	£500
Castle Ashby – St Mary Magdalene	Repairs to mullions in west tower. This included erecting scaffold and removing windows.	£5,000
Great Creaton – St Michael & All Angels	Installation of toilet facilities and improved servery. Removal of screen and some pews to provide greater access.	£5,000
Irchester – St Katharine's	Repair of roof and gutters.	£3000
Kings Sutton – St Peter's & St Paul's	Internal decoration and plaster work.	£3,000
Lowick – St Peter's	Provision for a temporary rubber membrane roof replacement, following lead theft, while funds are raised for a permanent solution.	£6,500
Raunds - Methodist Church	Roof upgrade access to meet current standards.	£500
Southwick - St Mary's	Groundwork to stop damp to church and monument.	£10,000
Sutton Bassett - All Saints'	Re-slate south side of chancel roof.	£2000
Wellingborough - All Hallows	Specialist cleaning of stained-glass windows.	£3,000
Weston by Welland – St Mary the Virgin	Replacement of dangerous ceiling.	£6,000
Wilbarston - All Saints'	Opening north doorway to provide level access, and new porch in incorporate a WC.	£5,000
		£61,500

Until 2018 the Trustees were able to also recommend churches to the National Churches Trust (NCT) under the partnership agreement between the Trust and NCT, however this scheme has unfortunately changed, and we are no longer able to do this. The Trust continues to welcome applications and tries hard to publicise the availably of funds to make grants.

M J Moore
Grant Secretary

The Bede House, St Mary the Virgin, Higham Ferrers

NHCT Makes a Difference

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, HIGHAM FERRERS

In 2020, St. Mary's faced a series of problems, including the need for a new heating system and work on the roof, stonework, and the iconic spire, as well as the need for a fitting servery and welcome centre, and once that was done (some £300,000) the requirement for £200,000 of work on Chichele's Bede House. And, of course, the Parish Share.

To support this Grade 1 listed church and its superb outbuildings, an Appeal Committee was formed, and we set out to break the appeal into bite-sized chunks. No-one eats an elephant at one go! We decided to break the appeal into two major phases: Phase 1 would deal with the church, Phase 2 with the Bede House. And no work would begin on Phase 2 until we had completed and fully paid for Phase 1.

You will not want to hear about the schemes and fundraising events, the examples of personal generosity and of minor disappointments, and the hours of hard work. If you have been involved in fundraising, you will know all about this. Suffice it to say that by October 2022, we had raised — with the help of fundraising, legacies, and above all, grants from awarding bodies — the £300,000 we needed, and could then move on to Phase 2.

One of those awarding bodies was the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust, which supported St. Mary's in the development of a fine oak servery, now in regular use for the congregation, and for the wide number of more secular events that regularly take place in the church.

All of which means that now we can turn our attention to the Bede House. And that in turn means that grant-giving bodies may be hearing from us again in the not-too-distant future. Our grateful thanks to them all.

If you want to know more about St. Mary's, go to the church website and follow "The Treasures of St. Mary's" which will give you a tour of a dozen "treasures" with photographs and a two-minute explanation of each. Or you can download the "Walking Tour of Higham Ferrers" from the town website which will take you on a 40-minute audio conducted tour of the historic sites of this ancient town. Enjoy!

Richard Oberman

Discreetly designed servery at St Mary the Virgin, Higham Ferrers

Window by John Reyntiens in the south aisle, All Hallows, Wellingborough

ALL HALLOWS CHURCH, WELLINGBOROUGH

The ancient Parish Church is an iconic building in Wellingborough, famed for its lofty spire, its interior but above all its array of stained glass dating from earliest times up to the twentieth century, which adorns every wall of the church.

We are in the process of raising the funding to have all the windows (both inside and out) cleaned as well as new guards being fitted. The windows are in a dirty state at the moment but when completed, they will all look stunning like new. We are very grateful to the Trust for awarding us a grant towards the work which we hope to have completed by next year.

Anthony Edwards

ST PETER'S & ST PAUL'S, ABINGTON, NORTHAMPTON

In February 2022 our heating system stopped working and we had to provide temporary heating. The heating engineers could not get water pressure in the pipes and determined we had a leak in the pipework. A lot of our pipes are above ground but some are necessarily below ground, across doorways and the like. We took up some stone floors in these areas but found no leak. The engineers brought in thermal imaging cameras and filled up the system and kept the water level up by hoses and turned on the heating and it worked enough to show where the pipes were holding the hot water. We eventually found the leak in a heating pipe duct concealed 60cm deep below the clergy vestry floor.

In doing so we also identified asbestos insulation on the offending pipes. The duct was immediately sealed and thankfully no contamination occurred.

Samples of the asbestos material were carefully collected by licensed contractors and scientifically tested to confirm it was a notifiable type.

The removal of both the pipes and asbestos required the breaking out of the suspended concrete ground floor under strictly controlled conditions. Following notification to the HSE, the breaking out of the floor and removal of the pipes and insulation was carried out by a specialist asbestos removal contractor. We partnered with Oracle for the controlled asbestos removal.

Once the pipes and asbestos were removed the heating pipework had to be reinstated. We employed heating engineers Labrum of Northampton to reinstate the pipework.

Once the pipework was reinstated the system was filled and tested before the floor could be reinstated. The reinstatement of the floor, carried out by S.C. Builders of Thrapston, comprised the preparation of the existing heating duct brick walls to receive the new precast concrete duct covers together with a cement and sand screed on top in preparation to receive the carpet tile floor finish.

As a result of this work some of the plastered walls of the vestry required repair and redecoration then a carpet tile floor was laid on the new screed to replace the original carpet taken up to expose the duct.

It took from February until the end of August to complete the works. We were ready to do the work in May but waited until the quieter August period for weddings because the work took about four weeks from start to finish and the vestries had to be vacated and sealed until the asbestos contract was completed and a Certificate of Reoccupation was received to carry on the rest of the work. We are grateful to the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust for their grant to help us defray the costs.

Donald Loe

Pipework at Abington – before and after

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2022.

INCOME .	**2022**		**2021**	
Ride and Stride :	£	£	£	£
Year ended December 31st 2020	0		273	
Year ended December 31st 2021	2573		46159	
Year ended December 31st 2022	41308		0	
		43881		46432
Income Tax Recovered		6639		7937
Friends' Subscriptions		3275		3560
Donations		1645		63020
Investment Income : Charinco	1952		1952	
: Bank & Building Society Interest	118		27	
		2070		1979
		57510		122928
EXPENDITURE .				
Grants Paid (Note 1 A) (Grants pledged but unpaid at the year end are shown in Note 1 B)	38000		55850	
Ride & Stride - Refunds to participating churches	21806		22892	
Administrative expenses including printing .	2218		2544	
Upgrading Website	2540		0	
		64564		81286
(DEFICIT)/ SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR .		-7054		41642

ACCUMULATED FUND				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2022		353532		298941
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		-7054		41642
(Decrease)/ Increase in Market Value of Investments		-12445		12949
Balance carried forward December 31st 2022		334033		353532
RESTRICTED FUND (ALLCHURCHES TRUST LTD. Re ALARM SYSTEMS)				
(NOTE 3)				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2022	24000		33000	
Less: Grants to Churches	0		9000	
: Repaid to Allchurches Trust Ltd	24000		0	
Balance carried forward December 31st 2022		0		24000
		334033		377532
REPRESENTED BY :				
Investments **(NOTE 4)**		185454		197899
Bank : Current account	19499		25671	
: Deposit account	44110		69034	
Building Society account	84970		84928	
		148579		179633
E.W.Byland - Honorary Treasurer		334033		377532
02/02/2023				

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .

NOTES TO THE INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2022

1. GRANTS : ACCUMULATED FUND.

A) PAID : YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2022 .

	£
Holy Cross, Pattishall ##	2000
St.John the Evangelist, Whitfield ##	3000
St.Mary, Weston by Welland	6000
St.Mary, Badby ##	5000
All Saints, Pitsford ##	5000
St.Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby ##	5000
St.Leonard, Aston le Walls ##	2500
St.John the Baptist, Tiffield ##	5000
St.Mary, Higham Ferrers	2000
St.John the Baptist, Boughton	500
Ss.Peter & Paul, Abington	2000
	38000

= pledged as at December 31st 2021

B) PLEDGED AND NOT YET PAID AS AT DECEMBER 31st 2022.

Year of Pledge		£
April.2020	All Saints, Great Addington	5000
April.2020	St.John the Baptist, Abthorpe	4000
April.2021	All Saints, Adstone(water supply)	1000
April.2021	Emmanuel Church , Northampton	3000
April.2021	St.Martin, Welton	3000
April.2021	St.Mary Magdalene, Geddington	3000
April.2022	St.Andrew, Kettering	6000
April.2022	St.Mary, Southwick	10000
April.2022	St.Mary, Blakesley	10000
April.2022	St.Peter, Lowick	6500
Nov.2022	Ss.Peter & Paul, Kings Sutton	3000
Nov.2022	Raunds Methodist	2500
Nov.2022	All Saints, Sutton Bassett	2000
Nov.2022	All Saints, Wilbarston	5000
Nov.2022	St.Michael & All Angels,Creaton	5000
Nov.2022	St.Katherine, Irchester	3000
Nov.2022	All Hallows, Wellingborough	3000
		75000

Note : Pledged grants lapse if unclaimed after three years of being made available.

3. RESTRICTED FUND .

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust received an advance in February 2019 of £ 50,000 from Allchurches Trust Ltd (ATL) to be used exclusively for providing grants for the installation of roof alarm systems .
In accordance with the agreement with with ATL , details of this scheme are shown as a Restricted Fund.
ATL kindly extended the scheme to December 31st 2021 . Repayment was made in January 2022.

4.INVESTMENTS	Cost at 31/12/21 & 31/12/2022 £	Market Value @ 31/12/2021 £	Market Value @ 31/12/2022 £	Change in Mkt.value y/e 31/12/22 £	Interest y/e 31/12/22 £
BLK Charities UK Equity Fund Accumulation 5896.125 Units	14970	138146	137986	-160	0
BLK Charities UK Bond Fund Income : 32527.563 Units	60000	59753	47468	-12285	1952
	74970	197899	185454	-12445	1952

5. GENERAL NOTE RE: DONATIONS .

Under Solicitors` Accounts rules, client funds held by a solicitor which cannot be allocated or returned, may be distributed as charitable donations . The Trust received such a donation from Hewitsons (Solicitors) in the sum of £ 3,545 in year ended December 31st 2014, and has given an indemnity to the effect that , if this sum is requested, it will be repaid . The Trust is therefore obliged to maintain its resources at a sum in excess of the above amount .

Ride and Stride

What is Ride and Stride?

'A chance to explore our wonderful countryside and discover England's churches whilst raising money to help with their upkeep and restoration and keep them thriving in our communities'

Date for your diary - RIDE AND STRIDE 2023 will be held on Saturday 9th September

RIDE AND STRIDE was 'born' in Suffolk in 1982 as a sponsored cycle ride or walk, and is held annually in virtually every county in England. It was started in Northamptonshire ten years later, in 1992, and was initially sponsored by Nationwide Building Society. A director of Nationwide asked the late Ray Masters, of Weedon, to set up Ride and Stride in Northamptonshire based on the Church of England Deaneries, with an Area Organiser for each Deanery, and a Local Organiser at each church whatever the denomination. He asked his wife, Isabella to be the Area Organiser for Daventry Deanery and she has continued in that role ever since. She has recently decided to retire, after looking after the whole Deanery for 31 years and we thank her for her dedication and support for all this time.

Cyclists at Silverstone in memory of David Cooper

Ride and Stride is the main fund-raising event for all the county Historic Churches trusts and, in Northamptonshire, 50% of the money raised is retained by the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust and a cheque for 50% of the money raised is sent to the church chosen by each of the participants. The money raised, along with other funds, is used to give grants for preserving and restoring churches, chapels and meeting houses in Northamptonshire which take part whether they are historic or not.

Some participants challenge themselves to visit as many churches as they can by their chosen mode of transport. Others prefer a more leisurely approach, visiting fewer churches and taking more time at each. Both approaches raise sponsorship money to support the work of the Trust.

Churches are usually open from 10am to 6pm and a list of participating churches is produced and made available on our website at www.nhct.org.uk, as are contacts in neighbouring counties: Ride and Stride is a countrywide event always held on the second Saturday in September.

Ride and Stride 2022

As we approached the date of Ride and Stride, we were happy with the response from Local Organisers and churches were pleased to be opening again 'normally' and expecting to welcome participants. Then two days before the day, the news of the death of the Queen was announced and there were questions as to whether the event should be cancelled.

After consulting with the National Committee and the Archdeacons a note was sent out to all Local Organisers:

We are not suggesting cancellation of Ride and Stride but suggest that churches should be open, and welcome desks should be placed so that those in our communities wishing to spend time in their local church can enter unhindered but welcomed.This has the full endorsement of the Archdeacon of Northampton and Archdeacon of Oakham.

In essence we left it to churches to decide the appropriate way to respond; most churches were open as promised and around 308 churches took part, and of them the majority were open with a welcome inside. Visitors do appreciate a friendly face, and of course the churches that are remembered and noted are those which have refreshments – see the 'News from Riders and Striders'. Taking part in the urban areas like Northampton is obviously different to riding around our beautiful countryside and more churches can be 'clocked' in the towns.

We are very grateful to those who write telling us of their experiences. Numbers recorded on the registers were down, but we were hoping that sponsorship would already have been promised and that the income money would not be affected too much.

145 churches found Riders and Striders to take part and sent in sponsorship money to our Treasurer compared to 163 in 2021. The total raised was £42,514 excluding Gift Aid compared to £48,731 in 2021. A magnificent total and we are grateful to all those churches who helped reach this figure.

The following churches raised over £1000 each: St Peter's, Brackley, St Mary's, Roade, St Michael's, Silverstone and St Rumbald's, Stoke Doyle. A special thank you to them.

A particular thank you also to those individuals who raised the bulk, if not all the money for their church – Sheila Edwards from Christchurch Northampton, Pat and Lesley Shrubb from Roade, Kate Cooper from Silverstone and Felicity Thistlethwaite from Kingscliffe.

Publicity and Promotion is always a challenge and we are grateful to those who encouraged Riders and Striders via their parish magazines and websites. We are very pleased with our updated website which allows us to report back on the stories and success of the Ride and Stride Day. It would be good to find a social media savvy volunteer to help us with promoting Ride and Stride on Facebook.

This is yet another really good year and a real tribute to all those volunteers who work to make Ride and Stride in Northamptonshire the success that it is particularly in these difficult times.

Particularly:

- The enthusiasm of Local Organisers who kept us informed of their church arrangements as they changed, and persuaded folk to ride and stride and find sponsors.
- Our team of Area Organisers who each have a group of Local Organisers, work tirelessly, starting in the spring collating information about which churches will be open. We are grateful to Ruth Fitch for all her support with the Methodist churches over the years, and in her role as Secretary and Friends Secretary for the NHCT, and wish her well in the future.

- Eddie Byland, our Treasurer who sends cheques for 50% of the amount received in sponsorship to each church.

And of course, thank you to all the Riders and Striders - without their enthusiasm and grit Ride and Stride Day wouldn't happen!

Liz Doherty and Val Hartley - *County Organisers*

Welcome refreshments at St Mary the Virgin, Weston by Welland

Reports from Riders and Striders

News from Riders and Striders

'We had a lovely day with the Chapel open not just for Ride and Stride callers but visitors wishing to pay respects to Her Majesty the Queen, a very poignant day. We did not have Sitters and Shufflers as I once suggested for those unable to walk and cycle but a rota of members who enjoyed being in the Chapel, sometimes alone, finding it a peaceful time.'
Anitra Bull, Deanshanger Methodist Church

'Not a lot of visitors, but the church got a good clean and we were sponsored for doing that so some money will be raised!'
Bea Martin, St Leonard's, Loddington

'My final total was fourteen churches but perhaps the most interesting church was Sts Peter's & St Paul's in Abington Park. They had organised a special ribbon and prayer royal mourning tribute on the railings which made the day more special (an elderly volunteer on duty offered drink and a selection of biscuits). I enjoyed the event and will hopefully take part again as it raises important support for all churches.'
Joan Lee, All Saints' Northampton

Sheila Edwards is a churchwarden at Christ Church, Northampton. One of her favourite pastimes is walking, and over the years Sheila has walked many miles for Ride and Stride. Christ Church, and Sheila's friends, have sponsored her for the last five years, and each year the sponsorship has increased. In 2022, after walking to nine churches, in four hours and thirty minutes, Sheila raised the huge sum of £705.

'Less than forty-eight hours after the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11, the Head of the Church of England, I found myself sitting in my parish church ready to receive and welcome Riders and Striders.

My eyes were drawn to a framed manuscript that recorded the installed Rectors since 1238. I was reminded of hearing how our late Queen had presided over fifteen Prime Ministers during

Sheila at the halfway checkpoint at Christ Church, Northampton

her reign and as I studied the manuscript further I observed that the building I was sitting in had presided over nineteen monarchs beginning with Henry III.

This gave me a sense of perspective and highlighted, in my mind, how important it was to preserve the many churches throughout the United Kingdom, not as historic legacies but as living and breathing edifices which have as much meaning today as they did at the time of their building.

Over the years the church has inspired architects, artists, musicians and craftsmen, but more importantly they have become the custodians of the emotions of successive generations. They have witnessed the joy of christenings, weddings, first communions and the sadness of funerals. They stand as non-judgmental silent and trusted bastions of vows we have taken, and probably broken. They are the sacred repositories of our innermost confessions.

As we move into the third Carolean era, remember the church is always at our service and ask ourselves are we at the churches' services?'

Stephen L Meakins, Castle Ashby

Kate Cooper who raised £1,120 in total, was our biggest contributor this year. This was using Just Giving.

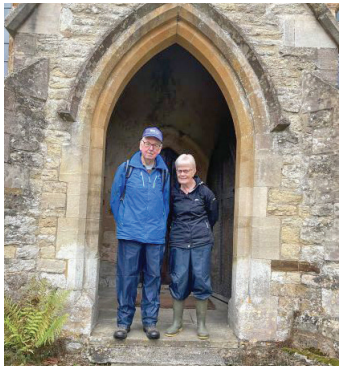
'We raised the money in memory of my late husband, David Cooper. He died just as the pandemic was starting and we never had any event in his memory. He had done the Ride and Stride twice before with Peter Coles and was a keen cyclist so it seemed fitting. He had been confirmed into the church the year before his death and we liked going into churches wherever we went. His daughter was keen on the idea and from our families, we just managed her and her boyfriend along with my daughter and son-in-law with whom David had a good relationship. However, as was evident from the amount raised, all David's friends and family were pleased to contribute to something in his memory.'

Kate Cooper, St Michael's Silverstone

'Les and I walked to all the churches in the benefice on Saturday 10th September. The weather stayed dry and the temperature was comfortable to exercise in.

Les and I would like to say a big thank you to Karen Stubbs who kindly did the transport for the day and was on standby if needed. Karen dropped us both off at Courtenhall church where we started the sponsored walk by going across the fields to St Mary's Church, Roade.

.Over the course of the day there were volunteers who manned the foyer of St Mary's to register the riders and striders and serve refreshments. We were welcomed by Jenny Dudley with her beaming smile and would like to say a big thank you to her and all the volunteers including Glenys Linford who set everything up first thing in the morning.



Les and Pat Shrubb at Courtenhall

We walked on to Roade Methodist Church where we met some cyclists who were raising funds for toilets to be installed in their church. After a little chat we carried on to Ashton church where we ate our lunch in the porch. After lunch we carried on to Hartwell Church where we enjoyed some more refreshments from Denise Brack and Susan Cross. Hartwell had a Hat exhibition which was very interesting.

Karen came to Hartwell and enjoyed refreshments with us and kindly gave me a lift home. Les took a brisk walk home after ambling along with me for a few hours.

Les and I would also like to say a big thank you to Eric Linford, the Ride and Stride co-ordinator [Local Organiser], who sourced all the volunteers for St Mary's and all the sponsors who have donated £1,034, of which Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust will give 50% back to St Mary's church.'

Pat Shrubb, St Mary's Roade

Our "Ride and Stride" round Northampton Churches

'Catherine J and myself started our day off at St Mark's at 10 am and had the chance to pay our respects to the Queen who had sadly passed away two days before. St Mark's is a modern building established just over 60 years ago for the residents of Whitehills, Spring Park and Obelisk Rise.

This was my fourth time of taking part in the Ride and Stride and I've taken pictures of the outside of churches many times so this year I was looking for something different in the places we visited.

Our second stop after walking down Welford Road and into High Street was our home church – Kingsthorpe Baptist – tucked away and quite a simple building. Some of our congregation quite a few years ago, made this beautiful banner with this wonderful text "God so loves the world". The original church building dates from 1835.

Banner in Kingsthorpe Baptist church, Northampton

After walking through into the heart of Kingsthorpe village we visited our third church – St John the Baptist or the Church on the Green as I've always known it (having been born in Kingsthorpe). This building has been around since the twelfth century. Another banner but this time for Kingsthorpe's Mother's Union.

We then crossed Harborough Road, walked along Clarence Avenue and came across Holy Trinity Church in Balmoral Road, and I chose to reflect on the memorial to the fallen from the Great War and the Second World War. At one of the later churches we visited, there was an exhibition around WW1 and it emphasised how common it was for individual streets to lose quite a few young men in the same battle. I wonder if that was the case for those named.

We then continued down Kingsthorpe Grove into Kingsley Road, through a couple of terraced streets and on to Kingsley Park Terrace and Kingsley Park Methodist church – which has served the local community for over 133 years. I liked the quirky picture outside – very true words "Without God you're snookered".

Continuing up Kingsley Park Terrace and crossing the road, we found ourselves in St Matthew's Parade and in St Matthew's Church. This church was built by the Phipps family as a memorial to Mr Pickering Phipps (1836-1890), the head of Phipps Brewery in Bridge Street. I quite liked this christening font that you can see as you enter the Church – I wonder how many Northamptonians have been christened here?

St Peter's & St Paul's was our next stop and another banner, this time for Abington's Mother's Union. We were invited to sign the book of condolence for HM the Queen here and it seemed right to do so. The church is in the middle of Abington Park and as Lois had now joined us, we made the most of the surroundings, walked through the park, found a bench to sit on and enjoyed our lunch in view of the rose garden and many squirrels and pigeons!

Font in St Matthew's, Northampton

At the end of Christchurch Road is Christ Church, and we liked how the building incorporated new and old. Christ Church was consecrated in 1906 and its parish extends from the boundary of Abington Park towards the town centre. Local architect, Matthew Holding designed the church in the fourteenth-century style. The west end of the church was completed in the 1980s, designed by another local architect, Maurice Walton. The church houses a fine Aeolian organ, a gift of the Barratt family in 1961 when it was moved from their family home in Kingsthorpe.

We then walked along Wellingborough Road cutting through towards Billing Road to get to Victoria Road Congregational Church, which was established in 1873. I loved the flowers and the banner - "Holy Spirit, fill this place."

Next up for us was All Saints' Church in the town centre. There has been a church in this spot since the eleventh century and as many people know the church was rebuilt again after the Great Fire of Northampton in 1675. The church has a very grand feel to it and an immense sense of history, and of course many civic occasions are held here. The friendly churchwarden showed me a nativity scene that's normally shut away in a cupboard until it's displayed at Christmas time.

Moving across town to walk down Gold Street we eventually reached St Peter's Church, Mare Fair. This Anglican church ceased to hold regular worship here in 1995 but since then has been lovingly restored by the Churches Conservation Trust so that its architecture, decorations and furnishings can now be fully appreciated. Having visited previously I chose to take a picture that does show off the ceiling but also an unusual hanging decoration that was left, I was told, by a performing group after one of their productions in the church.

Then literally over the road to Doddridge Street and Castle Hill United Reformed Church. The building, as confirmed in the banner, dates from 1695 and is the oldest surviving non-conformist Church in Northampton. The eminent preacher Dr Phillip Doddridge was Minister here from 1729 for 22 years. So much has changed in the Spring Boroughs area of town, but this church still remains.

And through the underpass that takes you under Horsemarket to our last Church – Holy Sepulchre, we arrived here at 3.35 pm. It is one of only four remaining medieval "round" churches in England. It is steeped in history, but manages to include modern-day features (like a coffee shop area), which do feature in a few of the other churches we visited. The picture I have chosen is another christening font but this time with a lovely display of flowers on top instead of its usual cover.

Outside St Peter's, Northampton (L-R Lois, Catherine B, Catherine J)

So finally – this is us, outside St Peter's! We had a great day enjoying each other's company, the weather was kind to us and collectively we've raised over £470.

Hopefully this short report gives you a flavour of what there is to see in these individual Churches around Northampton. They all have their own different style but what is clear is that over the years so much has been done to help fellow Christians to worship and support their faith in these beautiful buildings. And through Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust – long may that continue.'

Catherine B, Kingsthorpe Baptist Church

'The weather was perfect cycling weather, mostly sunny, not too hot and only a light breeze. Having not ridden my non-electric bike in more than a year, I was a little sceptical about how I would cope with the hills but as Ride and Stride isn't about racing or speed, I just took my time, enjoyed the beautiful countryside and surprisingly didn't have to get off and push once.

I didn't pay enough attention to the list of open churches and found one or two that were shut, or open but with no registration form... I even turned up at one where a wedding was scheduled! But with the wonders of technology I just took a selfie next to the church sign or noticeboard and pedalled to the next one. I met some very friendly ladies and gentlemen manning the churches, and a few made biscuits, sweets and cold drinks available which was most welcome. One lady at Church Langton had people sponsor her to man the church for 8 hours! And a young man manning the ruin of St Mary in Arden in Market Harborough was very friendly.

Ali Carver and friends outside St Mary's, Weston by Welland

He manned the site all day but only had a few visitors which is such a shame as it is such an interesting place.

My final stop was in my home church of St Mary the Virgin, Weston by Welland, where a team of villagers had held a coffee morning which they extended to 6pm to accommodate all riders and striders, offering them free drinks and cakes to encourage them on their way. I was very glad of the refreshments and friendly chat and I think that it was so appreciated by all the visitors that plans are already being made to do the same again next year. I should say that the coffee morning had been planned long before the news of our lovely Queen's death, and we were mindful of the rules regarding activities in the church so considered cancelling it, but decided a relaxed and friendly space to come and share thoughts and memories would be a good thing. Quiet music was played, space for prayer and quiet contemplation was not intruded upon, and indeed it was a friendly and supportive place.'

Ali Carver, St Mary's, Weston by Welland

Getting a Grant For Your Church or Chapel

THE FIRST thing to say is that getting a grant is very straightforward. So, if you have a problem with your church building or its fixtures and fittings, and need additional funds beyond your own resources – apply.

The funds held by the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust are there to be used. The process is straightforward so just print off the form, fill in and send back by post.

Just go to www.nhct.org.uk and almost the first thing you will find is a drop-down menu for Grants. Click on Information, and from there click on apply for a grant which takes you to the form. The form has just two pages to fill in, divided into six parts. NB During 2023 the form will be replaced by an online system.

Part One asks you to provide the basic details of your church/chapel – where it is, what is its designation, which diocese is it in – mainly in this county Peterborough though for Roman Catholic churches it will be Northampton, and for chapels non-denominational affiliations. If your building is listed you can note that, then a few questions about use, population of your parish, average church attendance etc. A larger space is provided so that you can make further observations about your church and its community, its historical and architectural features and generally demonstrate its continuing role in your community. There is also an opportunity to send in images of your church and let the trust know if you have a guidebook, whether it is opened regularly and what you normally spend on maintenance each year.

Part Two is the nub of the application dealing with the nature of the repairs you have to undertake. Here there are no questions, simply room for you to set out the work that needs to be done. Keep this brief but make sure all essential information is given.

Part Three deals with the likely cost of the work. Here you need to give details of your architect and/or builder with their reports and costings, including both professional fees and construction work. Make some allowance for contingencies (perhaps 10% of the above) and do not forget VAT even though you are likely to be able to recover this.

Now we come to the money in Part Four. The trust needs to know all potential sources. You need to declare what exists in funds that you already have, backed up with a copy of the last year's accounts, any pledges received and brief details of other grant-funding bodies you might well be considering, eg Heritage Lottery Fund, National Churches Trust etc. Fill in what you already have or is pledged against the total cost, which will provide the trust with your deficit. This will be the figure that is taken into account, alongside the nature of the work, as to what grant you will receive.

Part Five is called Professional Advisor and Permissions. What is required here is details of your architect or surveyor, whether you have detailed drawings from them and if you have, whether you are including them with the application. For buildings governed by the Church of England, a simple

yes or no is required to any approval given by the Diocesan Advisory Council and an indication as to whether you have been granted a Faculty.

You are now almost there. All that is required in part 6 are the details of the applicant and the digital signatures of your incumbent and church treasurer. Also indicate whether your church takes part in the annual Ride and Stride (the chief source of NHCT's revenue) and whether your church is a Friend of NHCT - again just a yes or a no.

Once done, email the form to the Grant Secretary, Michael Moore michael.moore@breathe.com; or send it by post to 1 Horrocks Way, Kettering NN15 5DH. Michael will then take over and oversee the application until it finally goes in front of the whole committee who jointly make the final decision on grants. This part of the process can take up to six months, but it is often shorter. Initially Michael will get in touch to arrange an onsite visit, probably with another member of the board, to meet the applicant and to see what is involved. He will assess not only the work that is to be done but also the architectural/historic importance of the building and the religious and non-religious activities that take place there.

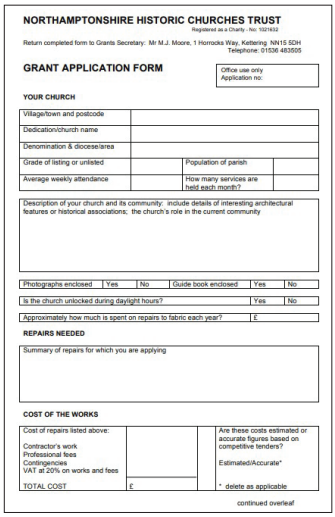
The application, plus Michael's report, then goes to the Grant Committee which currently includes the chairman Gareth Lugar-Mawson, Michael Moore, the chartered building surveyor John Barker and the historian Rosalind Willatts. It is their job to consider all applications, keeping in mind the total amount of money available at any time. Their fiscal recommendation then goes before the whole board which meets twice a year in April and November.

The applicant will then be advised by letter or email of the decision. If successful, the money is paid once the work is completed and a certificate from the architect, or builders' invoice is forwarded to Michael. To protect funds for other projects, the work has to be completed within three years of the grant.

There are rare occasions when a repair becomes urgent and cannot wait till the trust board meets. In these circumstances the Grant Committee has the facilities to make a grant immediately available to assist.

As a Trust we encourage grant applications, indeed it is our major raison d'etre. So if your church needs supporting, do get in touch!

James Miller, Trustee, NHCT



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

Registered as a Charity - No. 1001932

Return completed form to Grants Secretary: Mr M.J. Moore, 1 Horrocks Way, Kettering NN15 5DH
Telephone: 01536 483505

GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Office use only
Application no:

YOUR CHURCH

Village/town and postcode			
Dedication/church name			
Denomination & diocese/area			
Grade of listing or unlisted		Population of parish	
Average weekly attendance		How many services are held each month?	

Description of your church and its community: include details of interesting architectural features or historical associations; the church's role in the current community

Photographs enclosed	Yes	No	Guide book enclosed	Yes	No
Is the church unlocked during daylight hours?				Yes	No
Approximately how much is spent on repairs to fabric each year?				£	

REPAIRS NEEDED

Summary of repairs for which you are applying

COST OF THE WORKS

Cost of repairs listed above:		Are these costs estimated or accurate figures based on competitive tenders?
Contractor's work		
Professional fees		
Contingencies		Estimated/Accurate*
VAT at 20% on works and fees		
TOTAL COST	£	* delete as applicable

continued overleaf

Application form from the NHCT website

"Grants To Churches In Northamptonshire Of All Denominations…"

THE TRUST'S website (https://www.nhct.org.uk) set out that the Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust was founded in 1955 with the object of raising funds to make grants to churches in Northamptonshire of all denominations for their "preservation, repair and maintenance, improvement, upkeep, beautification and reconstruction".

Grants paid

Since then, the vast majority of grants have been paid to churches within the Church of England, although other denominations aren't totally unrepresented. In particular, the website (https://www.nhct.org.uk/Main/GrantsMade) records that between 2013 and 2021, grants were paid to Baptist

churches at Gretton, Kettering (Rockingham Road), Litchborough and Ringstead; Astcote Methodist Church and United Reformed Churches at Brigstock, Creaton and Great Doddington. Since then, in 2022, a grant has been awarded to Raunds Methodist Church.

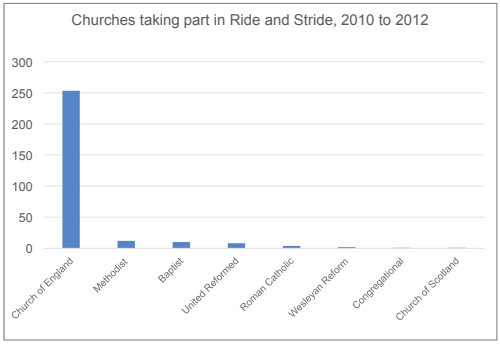
Raunds Methodist Church

Participation in Ride and Stride

Looked at another way, in terms of churches taking part in Ride and Stride, the latest Ride and Stride spreadsheet show that, of the 291 churches taking part between 2010 and 2022, 253 (87%) were Church of England churches, with 38 (13%) therefore belonging to another denomination. These 38 can be broken down as follows:

- Methodist 12
- Baptist 10
- United Reformed 8
- Roman Catholic 4
- Wesleyan Reform 2
- Congregational 1
- Church of Scotland 1

Or, for readers who prefer a graph:



The amounts raised by Ride and Stride tend to be lower for other denominations, accounting for 8% of the total altogether, albeit still over £36,000 out of a total of £471,000 over the twelve years.

The report on Ride and Stride in this year's Annual Report includes a brief account by some members of Kingsthorpe Baptist Church on their participation in the 2022 event in the Northampton area.

Friends

A third measure of involvement in NHCT activities is the number of churches of other denominations which are Friends of NHCT. At the time of writing, there are two: Astcote Methodist, Towcester and Wellingborough United Reformed Church.

Wellingborough United Reformed Church

But aren't most historical churches Church of England ones anyway?

Yes. It's not at all surprising that the Church of England dominates the graph above for this reason, although it's hard to find precise figures on how the historical churches (however defined) in Northamptonshire are spread across denominations.

The website www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk nevertheless provides some useful information as far as listed buildings are concerned, although it recognised that many historical church buildings aren't listed, either because it has been decided that they are not of sufficient merit, or because they simply haven't been assessed.

To delve into the figures (from accessing the site https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/northamptonshire#.ZALuUbfLc0H as at 18 March 2023):

- Of the 197 **Grade 1** listed buildings in Northamptonshire, 120½ could be said to be Church of England churches, where the "½" is the Anglican and Methodist Church of St Giles in Desborough and just one is of another denomination: St John's Roman Catholic church, Northampton
- Of the 306 Grade 2* listed buildings in the county, 141 are Church of England and two are United Reformed Churches, at Rothwell and Wellingborough.

Hope Methodist Church, Higham Ferrers

Counting the **Grade 2** listed buildings in the county is more complex because they are listed separately by civil parish or ward and further work would be needed to assemble comprehensive information. Delving into some entries reveals some examples, such as the former Park Road Methodist Church in Rushden, Towcester Roman Catholic Church and Woodford Halse Moravian Chapel all being Grade 2 listed, as well as various chest tombs in some Church of England church yards, such as Desborough and St Mary's, Rushden.

Delving deeper, some other churches within other denominations aren't listed at all, but are within a **conservation area,** suggesting that they may be historical. Hope Methodist, Higham Ferrers, comes into this category, for example.

Details of the current conservation areas within the county are accessible from the North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Council websites at the following links:

- https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/search?type=search&searchTerm=conservation%20areas
- https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/conservation-andheritage/conservation-areas

Making the most of the opportunities provided by NHCT

Any umbrella organisations, individual churches or individuals of any denomination are invited to join in with one or more or the following:

- **Taking part in Ride and Stride** by contacting Val Hartley (richardvalhartley@btinternet.com) or Liz Doherty (07713396130 or emdoherty@sky.com); or
- **Becoming a Friend**, by visiting https://www.nhct.org.uk/Main/Friends
- In addition, individual churches in need of funding for any "preservation, repair and maintenance, improvement, upkeep, beautification and reconstruction" are encouraged to **apply for a grant** by visiting https://www.nhct.org.uk/Docs/NHCTApplication.pdf.

Andrew Presland, Trustee, NHCT

Brigstock United Reformed Church

Summer 2022 Church Tour Led By Bruce Bailey
Edgcote, Plumpton, Bradden, Slapton And Easton Neston

1

FOR SEVERAL decades Bruce Bailey has led Friends of the NHCT on an annual tour of the county's churches. His incomparable knowledge of them was quietly imparted to those on the tours, and his skill in organising co-ordinated visits to remote churches impressive. The year 2022 was no exception. On the hottest day of a very hot summer, we visited the far west of the county, starting at EDGCOTE, by the River Cherwell, where in 1469 so many Welshmen lost their lives in battle. A church with a massive yew tree, a manor house and an old stone Rectory. That was all. The church was a gem, seemingly untouched by the twentieth century. Box pews, ledger stones, slabs which formerly contained brasses, and a wonderful set of Tudor and later monuments, some in relief with figures and sets of weepers of children, many wall monuments – some by Rysbrack.

2

And then to PLUMPTON. Two or three houses only on the road and the church behind trees a field away. But what a church! It looks like a model one might put on a wedding cake: tower, nave, chancel and porch. With no settlement to support it, the church had been declared redundant. But a consortium of local people (including one of the NHCT trustees) purchased the church and repaired it so that it might be open for occasional special services and concerts. The church had been rebuilt in 1822 by Jesus College, Oxford as a plain, small "standard" church. Full of light from clear glass, painted Regency box pews and on the south-east wall of the nave a delightful wall plaque of 1683 by Cibber from the original church. An earlier three-sided sundial under a ball had also been reset externally on the 1822 porch. Plumpton showed one way of dealing with a redundant, remote rural church.

During the long lunch break at Slapton, where a wedding was taking place, the tour visited nearby BRADDEN. A small, pretty stone village with a church at its end looking medieval, but on entering had been drastically "restored" in the mid nineteenth century. Parts of the church, such as the tower, were medieval but the rest had been happily Victorianised with pews and small red tiles.

SLAPTON village is tiny and remote with only a few houses around. The church is ancient and small with interesting decorated tracery to its small windows. The glory of the church is its wall paintings on every wall. The Trust recently grant-aided new lighting for these. An enormous St Christopher is in his usual place opposite the south door, walking through fish-filled water where there is a mermaid looking in a hand mirror. Amongst the many medieval themes of the paintings is a large one showing St Eloi, a seventh-century missionary Bishop of Noyon who was a skilled goldsmith and blacksmith. He is depicted shoeing a horse's leg which he removed, shod, then replaced on the horse.

3

The last church, EASTON NESTON, too was remote being reached via a long drive through the estate village, past the great house of Easton Neston and through its parkland. But it was not a small country church. It was a substantial medieval church and very much an estate church with family monuments from Tudor brasses to seventeenth-century large monuments with recumbent figures. The north chapel acting as a private family chapel was full of seventeenth-century chairs and had a beautiful modem monument of delicate italic writing on a glass sheet. A tiny feature was an exquisite, small medieval alabaster. Ladies of the church provided excellent cake and tea to round off the tour.

Our thanks to Bruce Bailey for organising and leading the tour, and to Trustee James Miller who opened his gardens and outbuildings for people to eat picnic lunches in the much-needed shade.

Rosalind Willats, Trustee, NHCT

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1. Original door and doorway to the North room, off Edgcote chancel. 2. Sun dial, St John the Baptist, Plumpton. 3. St Christopher wall painting, St Botolph's, Slapton.

Friends of Northamptonshire Historic Churches

From: Name(s) ……..

Address: ……..

……..

Postcode: ……

E-mail (PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS): ……

I/We would like to join the Friends of Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust.

I/We

a. Have completed the Banker's Order below. (*preferred option for NHCT)*

b. Enclose a cheque for £……. (payable to Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust)

Gift Aid Declaration

If you are a UK taxpayer and able to donate under the Gift Aid Scheme, it will cost you nothing and will increase the value of your donation to the Trust by 25%. Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to offset any gift aid payment against your personal Income Tax.

I am a UK taxpayer and I will pay in the year an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax to be reclaimed by the Trust.

Signed …… **Date:** ……..202

The minimum donations requested are: £10 for individuals
£20 for Churches / PCCs

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust is registered with the Charity Commission No. 1021632

Banker's Order

To (Bank/Building Society): ……

Bank Branch address: ……

Postcode: ……

Sort code: | | | |

Name: ……

Signed: …… **Date:** ……202

Please pay to: Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

C/o NatWest Bank plc Sort code: 56-00-60 Acc No 05608961

On the …… day of (month) …….. 202

The sum of £…….. (words) ……

And the same sum annually until further notice.

Please send application form to:
Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust, Friends' Secretary
E-mail: lugarmawson@msn.com
c/o HCR, Lancaster House, Nunn Mills Road, Northampton, NN1 5GE

Dates for your diary:

CELEBRATION EVENING:
Wednesday 26th July 2023, at Rockingham Castle by kind permission of James Saunders-Watson (by invitation)

CHURCH STUDY DAY (for Friends of NHCT):
2nd September 2023

RIDE AND STRIDE:
9th September 2023

St Luke's, Cold Higham

With thanks to all those who contributed to this Report.

Designed and printed by Inkwell Printing Ltd. www.inkwell-printing.com

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2022.

	2022		2021	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME .				
Ride and Stride :				
Year ended December 31st 2020	0		273	
Year ended December 31st 2021	2573		46159	
Year ended December 31st 2022	41308		0	
		43881		46432
Income Tax Recovered		6639		7937
Friends' Subscriptions		3275		3560
Donations		1645		63020
Investment Income : Charinco	1952		1952	
: Bank & Building Society Interest	118		27	
		2070		1979
		57510		122928
EXPENDITURE .				
Grants Paid (Note 1 A) (Grants pledged but unpaid at the year end are shown in Note 1 B)	38000		55850	
Ride & Stride - Refunds to participating churches	21806		22892	
Administrative expenses including printing .	2218		2544	
Upgrading Website	2540		0	
		64564		81286
(DEFICIT)/ SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR .		-7054		41642
ACCUMULATED FUND				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2022		353532		298941
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		-7054		41642
(Decrease)/ Increase in Market Value of Investments		-12445		12949
Balance carried forward December 31st 2022		334033		353532
RESTRICTED FUND (ALLCHURCHES TRUST LTD. Re ALARM SYSTEMS) (NOTE 3)				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2022	24000		33000	
Less: Grants to Churches	0		9000	
: Repaid to Allchurches Trust Ltd	24000		0	
Balance carried forward December 31st 2022		0		24000
		334033		377532
REPRESENTED BY :				
Investments **(NOTE 4)**		185454		197899
Bank : Current account	19499		25671	
: Deposit account	44110		69034	
Building Society account	84970		84928	
		148579		179633
E.W.Byland - Honorary Treasurer		334033		377532
02/02/2023				

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .

NOTES TO THE INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2022

1. GRANTS : ACCUMULATED FUND.

A) PAID : YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2022 .

	£	Year of Pledge
Holy Cross, Pattishall ##	2000	April.2020
St.John the Evangelist, Whitfield ##	3000	April.2020
St.Mary, Weston by Welland	6000	April.2021
St.Mary, Badby ##	5000	April.2021
All Saints, Pitsford ##	5000	April.2021
St.Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby ##	5000	April.2021
St.Leonard, Aston le Walls ##	2500	April.2022
St.John the Baptist, Tiffield ##	5000	April.2022
St.Mary, Higham Ferrers	2000	April.2022
St.John the Baptist, Boughton	500	April.2022
Ss.Peter & Paul, Abington	2000	Nov.2022
	_____	Nov.2022
	38000	Nov.2022
	_____	Nov.2022
## = pledged as at December 31st 2021		Nov.2022
		Nov.2022
		Nov.2022

B) PLEDGED AND NOT YET PAID AS AT DECEMBER 31st 2022.

	£
All Saints, Great Addington	5000
St.John the Baptist, Abthorpe	4000
All Saints, Adstone(water supply)	1000
Emmanuel Church , Northampton	3000
St.Martin, Welton	3000
St.Mary Magdalene, Geddington	3000
St.Andrew, Kettering	6000
St.Mary, Southwick	10000
St.Mary, Blakesley	10000
St.Peter, Lowick	6500
Ss.Peter & Paul, Kings Sutton	3000
Raunds Methodist	2500
All Saints, Sutton Bassett	2000
All Saints, Wilbarston	5000
St.Michael & All Angels,Creaton	5000
St.Katherine, Irchester	3000
All Hallows, Wellingborough	3000
	_____
	75000
	_____

Note : Pledged grants lapse if unclaimed after three years of being made available.

3. RESTRICTED FUND .

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust received an advance in February 2019 of £ 50,000 from Allchurches Trust Ltd (ATL) to be used exclusively for providing grants for the installation of roof alarm systems .
In accordance with the agreement with with ATL , details of this scheme are shown as a Restricted Fund.
ATL kindly extended the scheme to December 31st 2021 . Repayment was made in January 2022.

4.INVESTMENTS

	Cost at 31/12/21 & 31/12/2022 £	Market Value @ 31/12/2021 £	Market Value @ 31/12/2022 £	Change in Mkt.value y/e 31/12/22 £	Interest y/e 31/12/22 £
BLK Charities UK Equity Fund Accumulation 5896.125 Units	14970	138146	137986	-160	0
BLK Charities UK Bond Fund Income : 32527.563 Units	60000	59753	47468	-12285	1952
	74970	197899	185454	-12445	1952

5. GENERAL NOTE RE: DONATIONS .

Under Solicitors` Accounts rules, client funds held by a solicitor which cannot be allocated or returned, may be distributed as charitable donations . The Trust received such a donation from Hewitsons (Solicitors) in the sum of £ 3,545 in year ended December 31st 2014, and has given an indemnity to the effect that , if this sum is requested, it will be repaid . The Trust is therefore obliged to maintain its resources at a sum in excess of the above amount .

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

Charity Name: NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST.

On accounts for the year ended 31/12/2022. **Charity no (if any)** 1021632

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

[~~The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]~~]. *Delete* [ ] *if not applicable.*

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (~~other than that disclosed below~~ *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed: [signature] **Date:** 23rd FEB 2023

Name: BRIAN DENNIS BEHAGG

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body ASS. INSTITUTE OF BANKERS (RETIRED)

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1021632

Accounts

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

(Registered Charity No. 1021632)

THE MOST HOLY TRINITY, HINTON IN THE HEDGES

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

President: James Saunders Watson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire

Vice-Presidents: The Rt Revd. Donald Allister, The Bishop of Peterborough; The Rt Revd. John Holbrook, The Bishop of Brixworth; David E Laing Esq.

Trustees: James Saunders Watson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire; The Rt Revd. Donald Allister, The Bishop of Peterborough

Mrs H Aslett
J C Barker Esq
Mrs E M Doherty
Miss R Fitch
Mrs V E Hartley
The Rt Revd. John Holbrook
G J Lugar-Mawson Esq
M Moore Esq
Mrs S Parkinson
Ms R Willatts
B Bailey Esq
E W Byland Esq
Revd. R Farmer
Dr S M Gaskell
Ms V Henley
Mrs B Lancaster
J P Miller Esq
The Ven. Richard Ormston
Canon Andrew Presland
The Revd. Canon Brian Withington

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire and The Lord Bishop of Peterborough are trustees of the charity by virtue of their offices, and they appoint the remaining trustees. The number cannot exceed sixty, but cannot be less than four, and every trustee has one vote. These trustees administer the management of the charity.

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust was constituted by a Trust Deed dated 10 March 1955.

Registered Charity Number: 1021632

Registered Address: Elgin House, Billing Road, Northampton, NN1 5AU

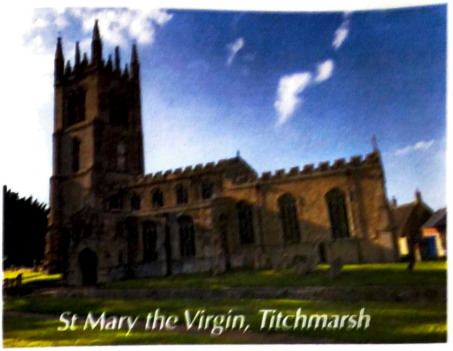
Trust Officers

Chairman: Gareth Lugar-Mawson
Vice-Chairman: John Barker
Secretary: Ruth Fitch
Treasurer: Eddie Byland
Friends Secretary: Ruth Fitch
Grants Secretary: Michael Moore
County Ride and Stride Organisers: Val Hartley and Liz Doherty

www.nhct.org.uk

Front cover: St John the Baptist, Cranford – Previous page: St Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby

Chairman's Report


St Mary the Virgin, Titchmarsh

I AM pleased to report that despite all the problems caused by the ongoing Covid-19 epidemic, 2021 was a very successful year for the Trust, both in terms of funds raised and grants awarded.

Grants

In 2021, the Trust awarded 32 grants with a total value of £55,850, the details of which are set out later in this Annual Report. These grants were made possible by the excellent level of income generated by the annual Ride and Stride and from donations, for which the Trust is most grateful.

The Trustees' policy is to draw on their reserves to meet current needs at current prices while keeping a core amount of £100,000 as a long-term reserve.

When making grants, the Trustees continue to give priority to those churches and chapels which have a history of participation in the Ride and Stride, particularly to those churches which raise sponsorship money.

The Trustees are grateful to Michael Moore for undertaking the role of Grants Secretary and to Eric Peplow, John Barker and Rosalind Willatts for visiting the applicant churches and chapels and reporting on their circumstances.

Annual Ride and Stride

2021 despite the problems the epidemic caused, was our best Ride and Stride year yet. At the time of writing, it has raised £48,732, plus £7,640.50 from Gift Aid, a total of £56,372.50. This truly excellent result was reached in the most difficult of circumstances and reflects the sterling efforts of the Riders and Striders, the Area Organisers, the Church and Chapel Organisers and the Church and Chapel sitters. The Trustees are most grateful to them, as they are to the indefatigable County Organisers, Val Hartley and Liz Doherty, for their enthusiasm and the many hours they spent in planning and coordinating the event. Richard Hartley and Paul Stothard stepped down as County Organisers in 2020, but I know that Richard continues to offer strong support to Val and Liz from behind the scenes. The Trustees are equally grateful to Eddie Byland, the Trust's Treasurer, for dealing with the numerous individual payments involved and making the Gift Aid claims to HMRC.

In mentioning Eddie, I would like to record the Trust's thanks to him for the excellent and timely way in which he looks after the Trust's accounts.

The Ride and Stride support from the churches and chapels in Northamptonshire is the Trust's main fundraising source. It is largely from the monies raised by the Ride and Stride that we derive our funds to make grants to the County's churches and chapels.

There will be a 2022 Ride and Stride on 10th September, and Val and Liz will be sending out the entry form and details shortly. I hope that your church or chapel will take part in it.

Donations

I am pleased to report that, once again, the Constance Travis Charitable Trust made a most generous donation of £50,000 to the Trust this year. We also received a donation of £10,000 from the George Cadbury Fund and £1,540 from the White family in memory of John White. The Trustees are most grateful to the Constance Travis Trust and the Cadbury Fund trustees, and John's family for their generous support.

Celebration Evening

Unfortunately, the lockdowns caused by the Covid epidemic meant that we had to cancel the Celebration Evening due to be held at the home of David and Mary Laing on 16th July. This was a great pity as the Celebration Evening gives the trustees the opportunity to meet the representatives from the churches and chapels to which the Trust has made grants, and to thank them for their hard work in looking after their churches and chapels. The representatives also have the opportunity of sharing their experiences and information. These occasions are not only enjoyable, but also encouraging to those involved in the difficult and time-consuming business of caring for Northamptonshire's beautiful churches and chapels. We have recently confirmed that this year's Celebration Evening will be held on Wednesday 20th July, at the Laings' home in Grafton Underwood.

Annual General Meeting

We were able to hold our 2021 Annual General Meeting by Zoom in April and our Ride & Stride Review Meeting in person at the offices of HRC Hewitsons in November.

Church Study Day

In August, our annual Church Study Day was to the church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Higham Ferrers and its associated buildings of the Chantry Chapel and the Bede House, where we were made very welcome by the Revd. Michelle Dalliston and the twelve Bedesmen and the Bedeswoman (all in their ceremonial cloaks). 2021 marked the 600th anniversary of Archbishop Chichele's founding of the Chantry Chapel and the Bede House. To mark that event, Saint Mary's church has initiated the Saint Mary's 600 Appeal in which the church hopes to raise £600,000 towards the costs of preserving this important group of historic buildings. My thanks to Bruce Bailey for organising this visit and explaining the features of the buildings. We will be holding another Study Day on 13th August 2022, in which we will visit a few of the county's forgotten churches.

Friends

As well as taking on the role of the Trust's Secretary, Ruth Fitch remains our Friends' Secretary. The Trustees are very grateful to Ruth for dealing with this aspect of the Trust. Our aim is to continue to increase the number of Friends, both individual and corporate. We now have 120 individual Friends and 105 Church Friends. New Friends do not just appear, they need to be recruited and that is an aspect with which we can all help. An application form is in this Report.

National Churches Trust

We maintain our links with the National Churches Trust (NCT), which operates at a national level to promote the care of our heritage of England's wonderful churches – fundraising, making grants, lobbying where appropriate, and acting as a focal point for the efforts of the individual county trusts of which NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST is one. However, NCT no longer participates in a partnership scheme under which it delegates aspects of its grant-making functions to the county trusts.

Roof Alarms

Lead theft remains an ongoing problem with all churches. Three years ago, we were fortunate to receive funding of £50,000 from Allchurches Trust Ltd to be expended in grants towards the installation of roof alarms in churches and chapels which did not have such systems. The scheme was due to end in December 2020 but, because of the problems caused by the epidemic, Allchurches Trust allowed it to be extended to 31st December 2021. It has now ended, and the unspent funds have been returned to Allchurches Trust. While the scheme was in being we were able to make grants of £1,000 each to twenty-six churches.

Allchurches Trust still make grants towards the installation of roof alarms, but the application must be made to them. Please direct any enquiries to the roof alarms page on Allchurches Trust's website: https://www.allchurches.co.uk/what-we-fund/roof-alarm-grants/. The Trust will still make grants towards the cost of installation of roof alarms from its own funds. Applications for these should be made to the Grants Secretary.

Website

The website (www.nhct.uk) contains details of the Trust's activities. We are still looking for a website developer to update it and run it for us. Please let me know if you have any suggestions for additional items or improvements to the site.

John White

It was with great sadness that the trustees heard of the death, on 29 April 2021, of John White, our former Chairman and Secretary. John was an outstanding Chairman of the Trust and I am very grateful to him for the help and advice he gave to me when I took on the role. He will be sorely missed. A tribute to John is in this Report.

New Report Editors

Dr Martin Gaskell, who edited this Report for many years, stood down from the role after the publication of the 2020 Annual Report. The Trustees are grateful to Martin for undertaking this arduous task for so many years. The Report's new editors are the Revd. Canon Brian Withington and Eleanor Townsend. We are grateful to them for volunteering to do the job and wish them well.

The Future

As I have said in previous Reports, I continue to be impressed with the time and effort spent by what are often relatively small groups of people in maintaining the wonderful churches and chapels in our county.

In Northamptonshire we have some of England's finest examples of church and ecclesiastical architecture and memorials, covering well over 1,000 years of church building. We are fortunate to be able to continue to enjoy them, but they have to be looked after. This is a very great responsibility, which lies ultimately with local people, the parishioners and worshippers, as well as those who may have no strong faith, but who love and respect the Christian tradition in England. Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust endeavours to support those who care for these fine buildings in facing those considerable challenges and responsibilities. We do this in order that those who come after us can continue to enjoy and worship in them and play their part in ensuring that they, and the generations after them, may do so too; not only for the next 1,000 years, but for many centuries after that.

The small part Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust plays in achieving that object is the result of the efforts of the Trustees and Council Members and I thank them, with our President, James Saunders Watson, HM Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, and our Vice-Presidents David Laing, Bishop Donald Allister, and Bishop John Holbrooke, for their strong continuing friendship, support and encouragement.

In Conclusion

I hope you enjoy this Report. If you have any comments or suggestions about it, please send them to Brian, Eleanor or me.

Gareth Lugar-Mawson
Chairman
Tel: 01327 830219; Mobile: 07452930801
Email: lugarmawson@msn.com

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

AGM: Tuesday, 19th April 2022

Agenda Item 4 - Chairman's Report

I am pleased to report that despite all the problems caused by the Covid-19 epidemic, 2021 was a very successful year for the Trust, both in terms of funds raised and grants awarded.

Grants

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I am grateful to Michael Moore for undertaking the role of Grants Secretary and to Eric Peplow, John Barker and Rosalind Willatts for visiting the applicant churches and chapels and reporting on their circumstances.

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When making grants, priority is given to those churches and chapels which have a history of participation in the Ride and Stride, particularly to those churches which raise sponsorship money.

Annual Ride and Stride

The monies raised by the Ride & Stride are main source of the funds from which we make our grants to the County's churches and chapels. Despite the problems the epidemic caused, 2021 was our best Ride and Stride year yet. At the time of writing, the 2021 Ride & Stride raised £48,557, plus £7,638 from Gift Aid, a total of £56,195. This truly excellent result was reached in the most difficult of circumstances and reflects the sterling efforts of the Riders and Striders, the Area Organisers, the Church and Chapel Organisers and the Church and Chapel sitters. I am most grateful to them, as I am to our indefatigable County Organisers, Val Hartley and Liz Doherty, for their enthusiasm and the many hours they spent in planning and coordinating the event. Richard Hartley and Paul Stothard stepped down as County Organisers in 2020, but I know that Richard continues to offer strong support to Val and Liz from behind the scenes.

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Dr Martin Gaskell, who edited the Trust's Annual Report for many years, stood down from the role after the publication of the 2020 Annual Report. I am grateful to Martin for undertaking this arduous task for so many years. The Report's new editors are the Revd. Canon Brian Withington and Eleanor Townsend. I am very grateful to them for volunteering to do the job and wish them well.

The Future

In Northamptonshire we have some of England's finest examples of church and ecclesiastical architecture and memorials, covering well over 1,000 years of church building, and I continue to be impressed with the time and effort spent by what are often relatively small groups of people in maintaining these wonderful buildings and facing the very considerable challenges and responsibilities of doing so. It's impossible to talk about these things without thinking about Philip Larkin's ***"Church Going"***. The poem was written nearly 70 years ago in 1955 but, even then, he was asking the question that is being asked much more desperately today.

"...wondering, too,
When churches fall completely out of use
What we shall turn them into, if we shall keep
A few cathedrals chronically on show,
Their parchment, plate, and pyx in locked cases,
And let the rest rent-free to rain and sheep.
Shall we avoid them as unlucky places?'

Larkin ended that great poem on a quiet but optimistic note:

'Someone will forever be surprising
A hunger in himself to be more serious,
And gravitating with it to this ground,
Which, he once heard, was proper to grow wise in,
If only that so many dead lie round.'

I'm sure he's right. We won't see the bulldozers move in on (say) Cranford, St Andrew, or any other ancient church, partly because of that respect for the dead and the feeling of seriousness Larkin refers to; partly because of planning rules, but mainly because of the determined efforts of those small groups of people. The small part that our Trust plays in achieving that object is the result of the efforts of the Trustees and Council Members and I thank you, and our President, James Saunders Watson, HM Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, and our Vice-Presidents David Laing, Bishop Donald Allister, and Bishop John Holbrooke, for your strong continuing commitment, friendship, support and encouragement.

(Gareth Lugar-Mawson)
Chairman - Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2021.

	2021		2020	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME .				
Ride and Stride :				
Year ended December 31st 2019	0		609	
Year ended December 31st 2020	273		39643	
Year ended December 31st 2021	46159		0	
		46432		40252
Income Tax Recovered		7937		6427
Friends' Subscriptions		3560		3120
Donations		63020		52635
Investment Income : Charinco	1952		2061	
: Bank & Building Society Interest	27		70	
		1979		2131
		122928		104565
EXPENDITURE .				
Grants Paid (Note 1 A) (Grants pledged but unpaid at the year end are shown in Note 1 B)	55850		47500	
Ride & Stride - Refunds to participating churches	22892		19936	
Administrative expenses including printing .	2544		2423	
		81286		69859
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR .		41642		34706
ACCUMULATED FUND				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2021		298941		267636
Surplus for the year		41642		34706
Increase (2020 : Decrease)in market value of Investments		12949		-3401
Balance carried forward December 31st 2021		353532		298941
RESTRICTED FUND (ALLCHURCHES TRUST LTD. Re ALARM SYSTEMS) (NOTE 3)				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2021	33000		42000	
Less: Grants to Churches (Note 2)	9000		9000	
Balance carried forward December 31st 2021		24000		33000
		377532		331941
REPRESENTED BY :				
Investments (NOTE 4)		197899		184950
Bank : Current account	25671		39856	
: Deposit account	69034		27030	
Building Society account	84928		80105	
		179633		146991
E.W.Byland - Honorary Treasurer 28/01/2022		377532		331941

1. GRANTS : ACCUMULATED FUND.

A) PAID : YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2021 .

	£
All Saints & St.James, Kings Cliffe ##	4000
St.John the Baptist, Achurch <>	500
St.Andrew, Collyweston <>	500
St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches ##	5000
St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches <>	500
All Saints, Dingley ##	2000
St.Rumbald, Stoke Doyle ##	4000
Holy Trinity, Denford <>	500
St.Andrew, Barnwell <>	500
All Saints, Barnwell <>	500
St.John the Baptist, Cranford ##	3000
St.Mary, Little Houghton ##	1000
St.John the Baptist, Plumpton (chancel roof ##)	1000
St.John the Baptist, Plumpton (porch roof)	2000
St.Katherine, Irchester ##	3500
St.John the Baptist, Blisworth ##	1500
St.Andrew, Spratton	1000
St.Mary, Great Brington ##	1500
St.Alban the Martyr, Northampton ##	500
St.Andrew, Brigstock	1000
St.Mary, Little Harrowden <>	500
St.Andrew, Cotterstock ##	4000
St.Mary, Woodford	4000
St.Michael, Bradden ##	500
St.Peter, Aldwincle ##	350
St.Leonard, Rockingham	4000
Ss.Peter & Paul, Weedon Bec ## (electrical upgrade)	1500
St.Denys, Cold Ashby ##	1500
St.John the Baptist, Hellidon ##	1000
St.Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby	2000
All Saints, Adstone ## (heating and electrical work)	1000
St.Andrew, Barnwell (churchyard wall) ##	1500
	55850

= pledged as at December 31st 2020

<> = re: roof alarms

B) PLEDGED AND NOT YET PAID AS AT DECEMBER 31st 2021.

Year of Pledge		£
2012	All Saints, Mears Ashby	1500
2014	St Mary, Staverton	4000
2015	St.Laurence, Stanwick	2000
2015	St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches	1000
2015	St.Leonard, Aston le Walls	2500
2016	St.Mary, Grafton Regis	5000
2016	St.Catherine, Draughton	2000
2017	Ss.Peter & Paul, Weedon Bec (roof)	2500
2017	St James, Gretton (incl £500 <>)	2000
2017	St.Mary, Little Houghton	2000
2018	St.Mary, Barby - North Aisle etc.	5000
2019	St.Mary, Staverton	1500
2019	St.Barnabas, Wellingborough	4000
2019	St.Catherine, Draughton <>	500
2019	St.Benedict, Hunsbury	2000
2020	Gretton Baptist Chapel	1500
2020	St.Mary, Dodford	5000
2020	All Saints, Great Addington	5000
2020	St.John the Baptist, Abthorpe	4000
2020	St.Mary, Badby	5000
2021	All Saints, Adstone (water supply)	1000
2021	Emmanuel Church , Northampton	3000
2021	St.Martin, Welton	3000
2021	St.Mary, Higham Ferrers	2000
2021	St.Mary Magdalene, Geddington	3000
2021	Holy Cross, Pattishall	2000
2021	All Saints, Pitsford	5000
2021	St.John the Evangelist, Whitfield	3000
2021	St.John the Baptist, Tiffield	5000
		85000

2) GRANTS : RESTRICTED FUND. (ALLCHURCHES TRUST)

	£
St.John the Baptist, Achurch	1000
St.Andrew, Collyweston	1000
St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches	1000
Holy Trinity, Denford	1000
St.Andrew, Barnwell	1000
All Saints, Barnwell	1000
St.Mary, Little Harrowden	1000
St.John the Baptist, Cranford	1000
St.Mary, Woodford	1000
	9000

3. RESTRICTED FUND .

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust received an advance in February 2019 of £ 50,000 from Allchurches Trust Ltd (ATL) to be used exclusively for providing grants for the installation of roof alarm systems . The maximum payable per church is £ 1,000, and no church can receive more than one such grant. In accordance with the agreement with ATL, details of the operation of this scheme are shown as a Restricted Fund. Originally, any unallocated balance of that Fund as at December 31st 2020 was to be repaid, but ATL kindly extended this deadline to December 31st 2021 . Repayment was made in January 2022.

4.INVESTMENTS	Cost at 31/12/20 & 31/12/2021 £	Market Value @ 31/12/2020 £	Market Value @ 31/12/2021 £	Change in Mkt.value y/e 31/12/21 £	Interest y/e 31/12/21 £
BLK Charities UK Equity Fund Accumulation					
5896.125 Units	14970	120871	138146	17275	0
BLK Charities UK Bond Fund Income :					
32527.563 Units	60000	64079	59753	-4326	1952
	74970	184950	197899	12949	1952

5. GENERAL NOTE RE: DONATIONS .

Under Solicitors` Accounts rules, client funds held by a solicitor which cannot be allocated or returned, may be distributed as charitable donations . The Trust received such a donation from Hewitsons (Solicitors) in the sum of £ 3,545 in year ended December 31st 2014, and has given an indemnity to the effect that , if this sum is requested, it will be repaid . The Trust is therefore obliged to maintain its resources at a sum in excess of the above amount .

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .

Financial Statements for the year ended December 31st 2021.

List of grants made

	£	£
1955 to 2015 inclusive		603,343
2016		
St.Luke, Kislingbury ##	2,500	
St.Mary, Wollaston ##	2,000	
St.Andrew, Harlestone ##	4,000	
St.Martin, Litchborough (14/3/16) ##	3,500	
St.Martin, Litchborough (10/9/16) <>	500	
St.Mary, Great Houghton ##	1,500	
All Saints Chancel, Barnwell ##	2,500	
St.Peter, Greatworth ##	6,000	
St.James the Great , Paulerspury ##	2,500	
All Saints, West Haddon <>	500	
St.Lawrence, Long Buckby <>	500	
St.John the Baptist, Blisworth <>	500	
St.Leonard, Loddington <>	500	
St.Peter, East Carlton <>	500	
All Saints, Pytchley	500	
St.Mary, Woodford Halse	500	
St.John the Baptist, Harringworth ##	1,314	
St.Mary, Ashley <>	500	
St.John the Baptist, Tiffield <>	500	
St.Mary Magdalene, Ecton (13/10/16) <>	500	
St.Mary Magdalene, Ecton (17/11/16)	1,500	
St.Margaret, Denton	1,500	
Middleton Cheney Methodist	1,500	
St.Mary, Weldon (£ 500 <>)	3,500	
Holy Cross, Pattishall <>	500	
Ss.Peter & Paul, Cosgrove <>	500	
	_____	40,314
2017		
St.Mary & All Saints, Fotheringhay	5,000	
St.John the Baptist, Quinton	4,000	
All Saints, Laxton (incl £ 500 <>)	2,500	
St.John the Baptist, Harringworth	1,000	
St.Edmund, Warkton	500	
St.John the Baptist,Thorpe Mandeville	1,500	
St.Mary, Grendon	500	
All Saints, Flore	5,000	
All Saints, Lilbourne (incl £ 500 <>)	3,500	
St.Mary, Weekley (incl £ 500 <>)	2,500	
St.Andrew, Barnwell	5,000	
St.Peter, Raunds 10000		
St.John the Baptist,Harringworth <>	500	
	_____	41,500

	£	£
2018		
St.Faith, Kilsby ##	2,000	
St.Mary, Woodford Halse ##	2,000	
St.James the Great, Paulerspury ##	2,000	
St.Leonard, Rockingham ##	3,500	
St.James, Syresham ##	2,500	
St.Mary, Badby ##	3,000	
St.Andrew, Cransley <>	500	
St.Mary & St.Peter, Lois Weedon <>	500	
St.Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby ##	4,000	
St.Margaret of Antioch, Crick ##	3,000	
St.Michael & All Saints, Creaton	3000	
St.Mary, Warmington, (incl £ 500 <>)	2500	
Zion Christian Church, Wellingborough	1000	
St.James, Thrapston	2,000	
Christ Church , Northampton ##	5,000	
St.Mary, Easton Neston (incl £500 <>)	2,000	
All Saints, Flore <>	500	
St.Catherine, Draughton (incl £500<>)##	3,500	
All Saints, Wilbarston	4,000	
St.Giles, Desborough <>	500	
All Saints, Kettering	1,500	
Holy Cross, Pattishall	4,000	
St.James, Thrapston <>	500	
St.James the Great,Thurning (£500 <>)	4500	
St.Michael & All Angels, Great Oakley	1000	
St.Botolph, Church Brampton	2000	
St.Michael & All Angels, Wadenhoe (incl £ 500 <>)	4,500	
St.Mary, Everdon ##	4,000	
Ss Peter & Paul, Scaldwell ##	4,000	
All Saints, Brixworth	2,000	
St Mary, Staverton <>	500	
	_____	75,500
2019		
Ss.Peter & Paul, Chacombe <>	500	
St.Botolph, Church Brampton <>	500	
St.John the Baptist, Upper Boddington ##	4,000	
St.Mary with St.John, Great Brington ##	4,000	
All Hallows, Wellingborough ##	3,000	
Ringstead Baptist Chapel ##	1,000	
St.Michael and All Angels, Bugbrooke ##	4,000	
St.John the Baptist, Quinton <> 500		
St.Andrew, Yardley Hastings	3,000	
All Saints, Flore	4,000	
St.Andrew, Wellingborough ##	3000	
St.Katherine, Irchester <>	500	
All Saints, Middleton Cheney	4000	
St.Botolph, Slapton	2,000	
Ss.Peter & Paul, Kings Sutton <>	500	
Ss.Peter & Paul, Sywell <>	500	
St.Andrew, Harlestone ##	2,000	
St.Mary, Higham Ferrers	3,000	

Financial Statements for the year ended December 31st 2021.

List of grants made .

	£	£
2019 continued		
Ss.Peter & Paul, Watford <>	500	
St.John the Baptist, East Farndon <>	500	
St.Andrew, Broughton <>	500	
St.Faith. Kilsby <>	500	
St.Mary, Wollaston	1000	
Ss.Peter & Paul, Nether Heyford <>	500	
St.Denys, Ravensthorpe	2000	
St.Peter, Oundle	2000	
St.Mary, Barby <>	500	
Astcote Methodist Chapel ##	350	
The Sacred Heart of Our Lady,Aston le Walls	1,000	
St.Mary Magdalene, Ecton	2,000	
St.John the Baptist, East Farndon	3,000	
Ss.Peter & Paul, Watford ##	5,000	
	_____	59,350
		_____
2020		
St.Nicholas, Islip (incl £ 500 <>) ##	4,500	
St.Michael & All Angels, Newnham <> ##	500	
St.Lawrence, Towcester <>	500	
St.Luke, Kislingbury ##	4,000	
St.Mary, Woodford Halse ##	2000	
St.Nicholas, Great Doddington ##	500	
St.Mary, Everdon <>	500	
All Saints, Croughton ##	2,000	
St.Nicholas, Twywell <>	500	
St.Mary, Barby - South Chapel ##	4,000	
Ss.Peter & Paul, Nether Heyford ##	1,500	
St.Bartholomew, Greens Norton <>	500	
St.Peter, Greatworth <>	500	
St.Mary, Culworth ##	1,500	
St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches ##	5,000	
St.Michael & All Angels , Newnham ##	3000	
Brigstock United Reformed Church ##	500	
St.Leonard, Loddington ##	4000	
Holy Trinity, Northampton ##	2,000	
St.James the Less, Sulgrave <>	500	
Ss.Peter and Paul, Sywell <>	2,000	
St.Peter & St.James, Brackley	4,000	
Hope Methodist, Higham Ferrers	1,000	
St.Faith. Kilsby ##	2,000	
St.Nicholas, Potterspury <>	500	
	_____	47,500

	£	£
2021		
All Saints & St.James, Kings Cliffe ##	4000	
St.John the Baptist, Achurch <>	500	
St.Andrew, Collyweston <>	500	
St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches ##	5,000	
St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches <>	500	
All Saints, Dingley ##	2000	
St.Rumbald, Stoke Doyle ##	4000	
Holy Trinity, Denford <>	500	
St.Andrew, Barnwell <>	500	
All Saints, Barnwell <>	500	
St.John the Baptist, Cranford ##	3,000	
St.Mary, Little Houghton ##	1,000	
St.John the Baptist, Plumpton (chancel roof ##)	1,000	
St.John the Baptist, Plumpton (porch roof)	2,000	
St.Katherine, Irchester ##	3,500	
St.John the Baptist, Blisworth ##	1,500	
St.Andrew, Spratton	1,000	
St.Mary, Great Brington ##	1,500	
St.Alban the Martyr, Northampton ##	500	
St.Andrew, Brigstock	1,000	
St.Mary, Little Harrowden <>	500	
St.Andrew, Cotterstock ##	4000	
St.Mary, Woodford	4,000	
St.Michael, Bradden ##	500	
St.Peter, Aldwincle ##	350	
St.Leonard, Rockingham	4,000	
Ss.Peter & Paul, Weedon Bec ## (electrical upgrade)	1,500	
St.Denys, Cold Ashby ##	1,500	
St.John the Baptist, Hellidon ##	1,000	
St.Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby	2,000	
All Saints, Adstone ##	1,000	
St.Andrew, Barnwell (churchyard wall) ##	1500	
	_____	55,850
		_____
		923,357
		_____

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ ~~members~~ of (Charity Name) NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST.

On accounts for the year ended 31.12.2021. **Charity no (if any)** 1021632.

Set out on pages 1 TO 3. (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below~~ *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed: [signature] **Date:** 17TH FEB 2022

Name: BRIAN DENNIS BEHAGG.

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF BANKERS (RETIRED)

Address: 28 DRYDEN WAY
HIGHAM FERRERS
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE NN10 8DH

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1021632

Accounts

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

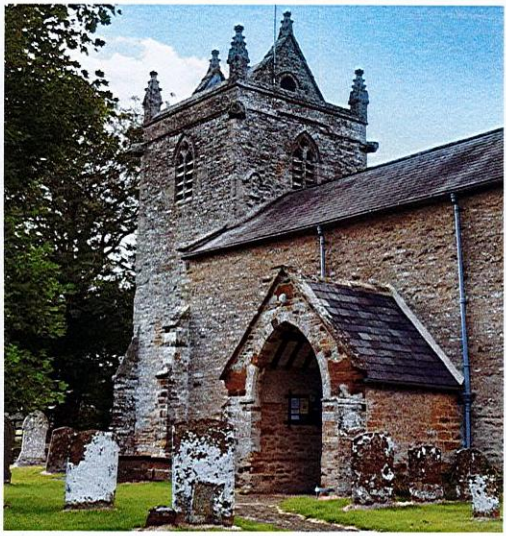
ANNUAL REPORT 2020

TAKEN together, Britain's churches and chapels constitute one of the finest freely accessible collections of art and architecture in the world.

"Nowhere else in the world can you walk into a building that might contain a Saxon sculpture, a 13th century brass memorial, 15th century arches, 18th century box pews, 19th century stained glass designed by a famous pre-Raphaelite painter, and lovingly crafted kneelers made by today's parishioners."

"Some of these buildings and their contents are among the greatest works of art anywhere and from any time. But among these astonishing riches there are always objects that remind us that churches and chapels were built and used by ordinary people and that ordinary people often have thoughts other than holy. Humour and strangeness are often met in churches - perhaps in a carved misericord depicting a drunkard, or a couple at each other's throats on a carved bench-end."
(Exploring Britain's Churches and Chapels)

Every aspect of human life is reflected somewhere, somehow, in our churches and chapels. At the same time, they document more than a thousand years of styles, fashions, ways of worship and changing tastes in art and design.



Supporting the Trust

Become a Friend - Leave a Legacy - Give practical help

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

President: James Saunders Watson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire

Vice-Presidents: The Rt Revd. Donald Allister, The Bishop of Peterborough; The Rt Revd. John Holbrook, The Bishop of Brixworth; David E Laing Esq.

Trustees: James Saunders Watson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire; The Rt Revd. Donald Allister, The Bishop of Peterborough

Mrs H Aslett	B Bailey Esq
J C Barker Esq	The Revd. Canon G L Brockhouse
E W Byland Esq	Mrs E M Doherty
Miss R Fitch	Dr S M Gaskell
R M Hartley Esq	Mrs V Hartley
Ms V Henley	The Rt Revd. John Holbrook
Mrs B Lancaster	G J Lugar-Mawson Esq
J P Miller Esq	The Ven. Richard Ormston
Mrs S Parkinson	The Ven. Gordon Steele
P Stothard Esq	J A White Esq
Ms R Willatts	The Revd. Canon B Withington

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire and The Lord Bishop of Peterborough are trustees of the charity by virtue of their offices, and they appoint the remaining trustees. The number cannot exceed 60, but cannot be less than four, and every trustee has one vote. These trustees administer the management of the charity.

Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust was constituted by a Trust Deed dated 10 March 1955.

Registered Charity Number: 1021632

Registered Address: Elgin House, Billing Road, Northampton, NN1 5AU

Trust Officers

Chairman: Gareth Lugar-Mawson	Vice-Chairman: John Barker
Secretary: Ruth Fitch	Treasurer: Eddie Byland
Friends Secretary: Ruth Fitch	Grants Secretary: Michael Moore
County Ride and Stride Organisers:	Richard Hartley, Val Hartley Liz Doherty and Paul Stothard

www.nhct.org.uk

Front Cover: St John Baptist, Quinton – Previous Page: St John Baptist, Thorpe Mandeville

The President

THE Lord-Lieutenant of the County is a Trustee of NHCT by virtue of his office and serves as President. In March 2020, David Laing stepped down as Lord-Lieutenant on reaching the statutory retirement age. David had succeeded Lady Juliet Townsend as President of NHCT in 2014, and since then he has been regular in his attendance at Trustee meetings, and Mary and he have welcomed us to their home for Celebration Evenings.

David has consistently supported the Trust for its contribution in preserving our rich Northamptonshire heritage, and also its role in helping to maintain and enhance focal points of community life. He championed the importance both of conservation and of recognising the ongoing needs of churches as living and working buildings. He does not want our churches to survive just as historic monuments, but rather as places with a unique life and purpose.

At the same time, through his promotion of Northamptonshire Surprise, David expressed his belief that visiting our churches enhances people's appreciation and enjoyment of our county.

WE welcome as President of the Trust the new Lord-Lieutenant, James Saunders Watson.

James was born in 1961 and moved to Rockingham Castle in 1971 when his father inherited the estate. He served with the Royal Navy, and subsequently had a varied career, primarily in the asset management industry. He is currently a partner in Warhorse Partners, a brand, communications and marketing consultancy.

James, with his wife Lizzie and their children, returned to Rockingham Castle in 1999. Together they manage the estate, which includes a portfolio of agricultural, commercial and residential property, an arable farming operation and the visitor attraction associated with the Castle and its Park.

He is a Board member of Historic Houses, a Trustee of the Country Land and Business Association Pension Fund, and a Council Member and Trustee of the White Ensign Association. He has previously been a Director of the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership.

James was High Sheriff of the County in 2018-19.

Chairman's Report

I AM pleased to report that, despite all the problems that the Covid-19 pandemic caused, 2020 was another very successful year for the Trust, both in terms of funds raised and grants awarded.

A new President

You may be pleased to hear that I'm not referring to Joe Biden. Mr James Saunders Watson, who succeeded David Laing as HM Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, has accepted the office of the Trust's President. Under our governing document the Lord-Lieutenant of the County is one of the Trust's trustees by virtue of his office. David Laing has very kindly accepted appointment as a Vice-President of the Trust. I express my thanks to David and to his fellow Vice-Presidents, Bishop Donald Allister and Bishop John Holbrook, for their continuing support and encouragement.

Grants

In 2020 the Trust awarded 25 grants to a value of £47,500, the details of which are set out later in the Annual Report. These grants were made possible by the excellent level of income generated by the annual Ride and Stride, and by the donations, for which the Trust is most grateful.

The Trustees' policy is to draw on their reserves to meet current needs at current prices while keeping a core amount of £100,000 as a long-term reserve.
In their grant-making role the Trustees continue to give priority to those churches and chapels which have a history of participation in Ride and Stride, and particularly to those which raise sponsorship money.

The Trustees are grateful to Michael Moore for undertaking the role of Grants Secretary, and to Eric Peplow, John Barker and he for visiting the applicant churches and chapels and reporting on their circumstances.

Details of the grants made in 2020 are given later in this Report.

Annual Ride and Stride

2020, despite all the problems the epidemic caused, was our best Ride and Stride year yet. At the time of writing it has raised £39,643 plus £5,978 from Gift Aid, a total of £45,621. This is a truly excellent result, reached in the most difficult and trying of circumstances, and reflects the sterling efforts of the Riders and Striders, the Area Organisers, the Church and Chapel Organisers and the Church and Chapel Sitters. The Trustees are most grateful to them, as they are to the indefatigable County Organisers, Richard and Val Hartley, Liz Doherty and Paul Stothard, for their enthusiasm and for the many hours they spent in planning and co-ordinating the event. The Trustees are equally grateful to Eddie Byland, the Trust's Treasurer, for dealing with the numerous individual payments involved and for making the Gift Aid claims to HMRC.

In mentioning Eddie, once again I would like to record the Trust's heartfelt thanks to him for the excellent and timely way in which he has looked after the Trust's accounts.
The Ride and Stride support from the churches and chapels in Northamptonshire is the Trust's main fund raising source. It is largely from the monies raised by the Ride and Stride that we derive our funds to make grants to the County's churches and chapels.

Donations

I am pleased to report that the Constance Travis Charitable Trust, once again, made a most generous donation of £50,000 to the Trust this year. The Trustees are most grateful to the Constance Travis Trust trustees for their generous and continuing support. We also received two generous donations from other benefactors.

Celebration Evening

Unfortunately, the pandemic meant that we had to cancel the Celebration Evening due to be held at the home of David and Mary Laing on 16th July. This was a great pity as the Celebration Evening gives the Trustees the opportunity to meet the representatives from the churches and chapels to which the Trust has made grants, and to thank them for their hard work in looking after their churches and chapels. The representatives also have the opportunity of sharing their experiences and information. These occasions are not only enjoyable, but also encouraging to those involved in the difficult and time-consuming business of caring for Northamptonshire's beautiful churches and chapels. Hopefully, we will be able to hold the Celebration Evening again in July 2021.

Annual General Meeting

The coronavirus lock-down led to the postponement of the Trust's 2020 Annual General Meeting in April; this was held by Zoom in October and proved very successful.

Church Study Day

For the same reason, we had to cancel the annual Church Study Day organised by Bruce Bailey, scheduled to be held in August. We hope to be able to hold a Study Day in August 2021.

Friends

As well as undertaking the role of the Trust's Secretary, Ruth Fitch remains our Friends' Secretary. The Trustees are very grateful to Ruth for dealing with this aspect of the Trust's work. Our aim is to continue to increase the number of Friends, both individual and corporate. We now have 109 individual Friends and 101 Church Friends.

New Friends do not just appear, they need to be recruited and that is an aspect with which we can all help. An application form is to be found at the end of this Report.

National Churches Trust

We maintain our links with the National Churches Trust (NCT), which operates at a national level to promote the care of our heritage of England's wonderful churches - fund raising, making grants, lobbying where appropriate, and acting as a focal point for the efforts of the individual county trusts of which the NHCT is one. However, NCT no longer participates in a partnership scheme under which it delegates aspects of its grant making functions to the county trusts.

Roof Alarms

Lead theft remains an ongoing problem for very many churches. Two years ago we were fortunate to receive funding of £50,000 from Allchurches Trust Ltd to be expended in grants towards the installation of roof alarms in churches and chapels which do not have such systems. This grant scheme was due to end in December 2020, however, because of the problems caused by the epidemic, Allchurches Trust has extended that to 31st December 2021. They have also confirmed that, in appropriate circumstances, grants may be made towards the cost of replacing obsolete roof alarm systems.

Details of the scheme and how to apply for a grant of up to £1,000 towards the cost of installation of an alarm can be found on the Trust's website. Applications for funding under this joint scheme should be made to Michael Moore, NHCT's Grants Secretary, at: michael_moore@breathe.com. Please, if your church needs a roof alarm, make an application as soon as possible. Funds are limited, and Allchurches Trust is unlikely to continue with the scheme past December 2021.

Website

The website contains details of the Trust's activities. We are grateful to Mike Fulcher for helping us keep it up-to-date over many years. Mike has now had to give up running the site, and we are currently looking for a website developer to redesign and run it for us. Please let me know if you have any suggestions for additional items or improvements to the site.

The Future

I continue to be impressed with the time and effort spent by what are often relatively small groups of people in maintaining the wonderful churches and chapels in our County.

In Northamptonshire, we have some of England's finest examples of church and ecclesiastical architecture, covering well over 900 years of church building. We are fortunate to be able to continue to enjoy them, but they have to be looked after. This is a very great responsibility, which lies ultimately with local people, the parishioners and worshippers, as well as those who may have no strong faith, but love and respect the Christian tradition in England. Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust endeavours to support those who care for these fine buildings in facing those considerable challenges and responsibilities. We do this in order that those who come after us can continue to enjoy and worship in them and play their part in ensuring that they, and the generations after them, may do so too; not only for the next 900 years, but for many centuries after that.

The small part Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust plays in achieving that object is the result of the efforts of the Trustees and Council Members and I thank them for their strong support and friendship, and wish them well in the future.

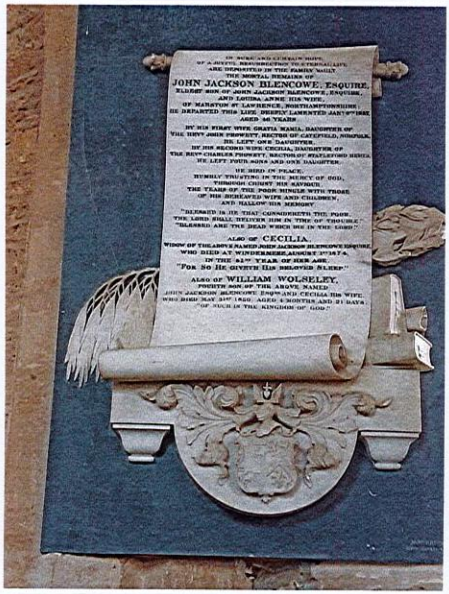
In conclusion

I hope you enjoy this Report, even though, because of the current circumstances, it is somewhat shorter than usual. The Trustees are grateful to its editor, Dr Martin Gaskell, for putting it together. If you have any comments or suggestions about it, please send them to Martin or me.

Gareth Lugar-Mawson *Chairman*

Contact: lugarmawson@msn.com.

Tel: 01327 830219. Mob: 07452930801



St Lawrence, Marston St Lawrence

∞ **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .**

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2020.

	2020		2019	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME .				
Ride and Stride :				
Year ended December 31st 2018	0		609	
Year ended December 31st 2019	609		38536	
Year ended December 31st 2020	39643		0	
		40252		39145
Income Tax Recovered		6427		6922
Friends' Subscriptions		3120		3661
Donations		52635		52798
Investment Income : Charinco	2061		2602	
: Bank & Building Society Interest	70		139	
		2131		2741
		104565		105267
EXPENDITURE .				
Grants Paid (Note 1 A) (Grants pledged but unpaid at the year end are shown in Note 1 B)	47500		59350	
Ride & Stride - Refunds to participating churches	19936		19250	
Administrative expenses including printing .	2423		2769	
		69859		81369
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR .		34706		23898

ACCUMULATED FUND				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2020		267636		218186
Surplus for the year		34706		23898
Decrease (2019 : Increase)in market value of Investments (Note 4)		-3401		25552
Balance carried forward December 31st 2020		298941		267636
RESTRICTED FUND (ALLCHURCHES TRUST LTD. Re ALARM SYSTEMS)				
(NOTE 3)				
Balance brought forward January 1st 2020	42000		0	
Advance : Allchurches Trust Ltd .	0		50000	
Less: Grants to Churches (Note 2)	9000		8000	
Balance carried forward December 31st 2020		33000		42000
		331941		309636
REPRESENTED BY :				
Investments as schedule (Note 4) .		184950		188351
Bank : Current account	39856		11220	
: Deposit account	27030		54993	
Building Society account	80105		55072	
		146991		121285
E.W.Byland - Honorary Treasurer		331941		309636
01/02/2021				

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .

NOTES TO THE INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2020 .

1. GRANTS : ACCUMULATED FUND.

A) PAID : YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2020 .

	£
St.Nicholas, Islip (incl £ 500 <>) ##	4500
St.Michael & All Angels, Newnham <> ##	500
St.Lawrence, Towcester <>	500
St.Luke, Kislingbury ##	4000
St.Mary, Woodford Halse ##	2000
St.Nicholas, Great Doddington ##	500
St.Mary, Everdon <>	500
All Saints, Croughton ##	2000
St.Nicholas, Twywell <>	500
St.Mary, Barby - South Chapel ##	4000
Ss.Peter & Paul, Nether Heyford ##	1500
St.Bartholomew, Greens Norton <>	500
St.Peter, Greatworth <>	500
St.Mary, Culworth ##	1500
St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches ##	5000
St.Michael & All Angels , Newnham ##	3000
Brigstock United Reformed Church ##	500
St.Leonard, Loddington ##	4000
Holy Trinity, Northampton ##	2000
St.James the Less, Sulgrave <>	500

B) PLEDGED AND NOT YET PAID AS AT DECEMBER 31st 2020.

Year of Pledge		£
2012	All Saints, Mears Ashby	1500
2014	St Mary, Staverton	4000
2015	St.Laurence, Stanwick	2000
2015	St.Mary, Great Brington	1500
2015	St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches	1000
2015	St.Leonard, Aston le Walls	2500
2016	St.Mary, Grafton Regis	5000
2016	St.Catherine, Draughton	2000
2017	Ss.Peter & Paul, Weedon Bec (roof repairs)	2500
2017	St James, Gretton (incl £500 <>)	2000
2017	St.Mary, Little Houghton	2000
2017	St.John the Baptist, Blisworth	1500
2018	St.Mary, Barby - North Aisle etc.	5000
2018	All Saints, Dingley	2000
2019	St.Mary, Staverton	1500
2019	St.Katherine, Irchester	3500
2019	St.John the Baptist, Cranford	3000
2019	St.Barnabas, Wellingborough	4000
2019	St.Catherine, Draughton <>	500

Ss.Peter and Paul, Sywell <>	2000
St.Peter & St.James, Brackley	4000
Hope Methodist, Higham Ferrers	1000
St.Faith. Kilsby ##	2000
St.Nicholas, Potterspury <>	500
	47500

= pledged as at December 31st 2019
<> = re: roof alarms

2) GRANTS : RESTRICTED FUND. (ALLCHURCHES TRUST)

St.Nicholas, Islip	1000
St.Michael & All Angels, Newnham	1000
St.Lawrence, Towcester	1000
St.Mary, Everdon	1000
St.Nicholas, Twywell	1000
St.Bartholomew, Greens Norton	1000
St.Peter, Greatworth	1000
St.James the Less, Sulgrave	1000
St.Nicholas, Potterspury	1000
	9000

2A) RESTRICTED FUND GRANTS PLEDGED AND NOT PAID

£ 1,000 each : St.Faith, Kilsby ; St.Catherine, Draughton

2019	All Saints & St.James, Kings Cliffe	4000
2019	St.Benedict, Hunsbury	2000
2019	Gretton Baptist Chapel	1500
2019	St.Mary, Dodford	5000
2019	St.Rumbald, Stoke Doyle	4000
2020	St.John the Baptist, Plumpton	1000
2020	St.Andrew, Barnwell	1500
2020	All Saints, Great Addington	5000
2020	St.Mary, Little Houghton	1000
2020	Ss.Peter & Paul, Weedon Bec (electrical upgrade)	1500
2020	St.Alban the Martyr, Northampton	500
2020	St.John the Baptist, Abthorpe	4000
2020	St.John the Baptist, Hellidon	1000
2020	St.Mary, Badby	5000
2020	All Saints, Adstone	1000
2020	St.Denys, Cold Ashby	1500
2020	St.Peter, Aldwincle	350
2020	St.Michael, Stowe Nine Churches	5000
2020	St.Michael, Bradden	500
		92350

Report from the Grants Committee

WELL, I guess that this will not be the only annual report saying 2020 has been a very difficult, nothing year. The number of applications was considerably down and, due to the lockdowns etc., churches were not keen on visits. As I am sure will be reported elsewhere, meetings were cancelled or postponed, so this year we only had one meeting to consider grants. We received 27 applications and we pledged a total of £33,850. We hope that 2021 will be a better year for applications, and the Grants Secretary is always available to discuss applications. Once you have filled in a simple application form which requires details about the church, the project and the finances, the church is then visited by members of the Grants Committee prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

In 2019 the Trust was fortunate, with the support donated by Allchurches Trust, to be able to make a great offer of £1,000 to the first 50 churches that came forward towards the cost of installing a roof alarm. Sadly the take-up of the offer was slow, and was due to expire on 31 December 2020. I am delighted to report that Allchurches Trust has left the offer open to 31st December 2021. In addition to this, the NHCT continues to make grants of £500 for this purpose. Bearing in mind that, unless an alarm is installed, insurance companies will pay no more than £7,500 per theft, I therefore ask you to do the maths and consider installing an alarm.

Applications for funding under this joint scheme should be addressed to:
Michael Moore, NHCT's Grants Secretary – email: michael_moore@breathe.com

As we have stated in the past, when addressing applications to NHCT, the Grants Committee takes into consideration all of the criteria laid down by the Trustees along with the history of past applications from an individual church, and, in particular, its contribution and commitment to Ride and Stride, which is our main source of income.

You can see from the schedule below the grants and pledges made during this past year. In summary the Trust contributed as follows:

Building works	2	Heating system	2	Roof alarm	9
Churchyard works	2	Servery installation	1	Roof installation	9
Development of new church	1	Lighting installation	1	Roof works	4

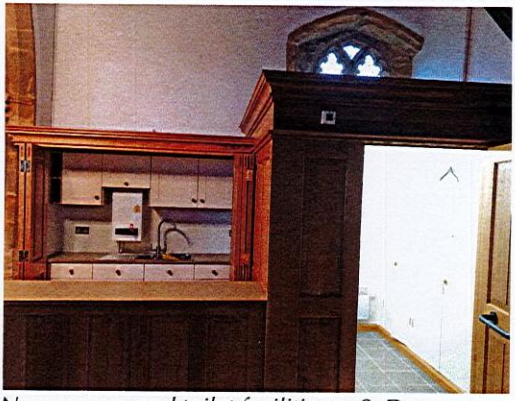
Church	Work	Amount NHCT	Amount ACT
Abthorpe St John Baptist	Installation of servery including a new stone floor, heating power, and provision of water.	£4,000	
Adstone All Saints	Replacement of heating system and new fuse board.	£1,000	
Aldwinkle St Peter	Repairs to leaking lead lights and repainting of wall.	£350	
Badby St Mary	Repairs to roof and guttering, and checking timbers.	£5,000	
Barnwell St Andrew	Repairs to collapsed churchyard wall.	£1,500	
Brackley St Peter	Urgent repairs to tiles in the north aisle.	£4,000	

Bradden St Michael	Building works to enable restoration of clock dial.	£500	
Cold Ashby St Denis	Repair of crumbling wall within the churchyard.	£1,500	
Daventry Holy Cross	Installation of roof alarm.	£500	£1,000
Everdon St Mary	Installation of roof alarm.	£500	£1,000
Great Addington All Saints	Installation of new roof.	£5,000	
Greatworth St Peter	Installation of roof alarm.	£500	£1,000
Green's Norton St Bartholomew	Installation of roof alarm.	£500	£1,000
Hellidon St John Baptist	Building works to enable restoration of. clock face	£1,000	
Higham Ferrers Hope Methodist Church	Redevelopment of new church.	£1,000	
Little Houghton St Mary	Renewal of lighting scheme.	£1,000	
Northampton St Alban	Repairs to copper roof.	£500	
Plumpton St John Baptist	Roof repairs.	£1,000	
Stowe-Nine-Churches St Michael	Emergency repairs to stonework, leadwork and rainwater channels.	£5,000	
Sulgrave St James	Installation of roof alarm.	£500	£1,000
Towcester St Lawrence	Installation of roof alarm.	£500	£1,000
Twywell St Nicholas	Installation of roof alarm.	£500	£1,000
Weedon St Peter	Upgrading of the electrical components of heating system.	£1,500	

Until 2018 the Trustees were able also to make recommendations to the National Churches Trust (NCT) under the partnership agreement between the Northamptonshire Trust and NCT. However, this scheme has been removed, and unfortunately we are no longer able to make such recommendations.

The Trust continues to welcome applications and tries hard to publicise the availably of funds to make grants.

The Grants Secretary is Michael Moore who can be contacted at:
michael_moore@breathe.com



New servery and toilet facilities at St Denys, Ravensthorpe

NHCT Makes a Difference

ALL SAINTS, CROUGHTON

"In June 2018 most of the lead roof of our lovely historic church was stolen, sadly in the week before our roof alarms were due to be fitted! This left the church vulnerable to damp and put the medieval wall paintings at great risk.

By August 2018 we had managed to obtain promises of donations from local organisations and our own resources, including insurance . . . Then in November we heard that NHCT had awarded us a grant of £2,000 towards the shortfall. With the Archdeacon's permission, this enabled us to book the contractors for early spring 2020, and the work was carried out just ahead of the pandemic.

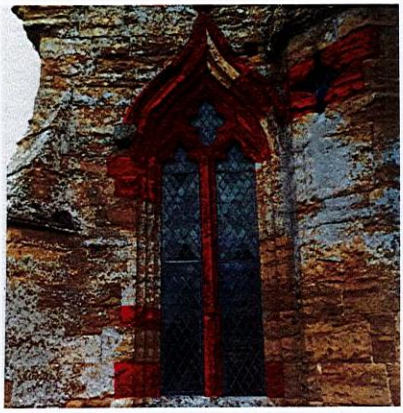
Many thanks to NHCT for making it possible to complete the repairs so speedily."

ST JOHN BAPTIST, PLUMPTON

"The trustees could not be more grateful for the grant of £1,000. That money, alongside funds they raised locally, will enable us to complete the unforeseen repairs to the chancel roof. After renewing the nave ceiling in 2019, which completely absorbed our funds, we were shocked to discover that the north side of chancel roof was unsafe. The trustees dug deep into their own pockets and managed to replace it, but then were confronted by the need to do likewise on the south. . . . We are delighted that our plea for help was heard and thankful that over the years we have built up a good relationship with the Trust through Ride and Stride."

ST ANDREW, HARLESTONE

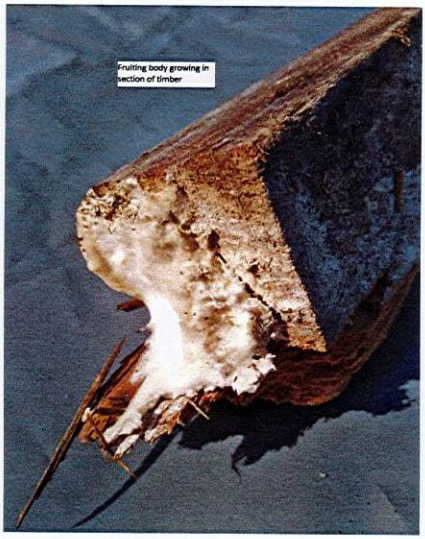
"Our project was straightforward. The stonework around the windows was crumbling and some of the windows and their component parts were broken, rotten and in danger of falling out. Under consideration for some years, costs were constantly spiralling out of our reach, and we acknowledged that we could only afford to address the worst areas. Your grant [together with other fundraising] made this possible . . .



Being able to carry out this project has enabled us to plan to use the church building for a wider variety of activities (when the pandemic is over) because it is warmer (no broken window panes and crumbling frames), drier and less dirty. Events, particularly those involving children, can now take place in a more pleasant ambience . . .

We are grateful for all the support you have given us in recent years and assure you that our building has certainly benefitted from it."

ST MARY MAGDALENE, ECTON



"The quinquennial report in 2018 advised replacement of the lead roof over the chancel as it had reached the end of its life. The cost of the work escalated due to the need to replace more timber than originally anticipated and a structural beam being found to have a dry rot 'fruiting body' within it which also added significantly to the expenditure. The overall cost was well above £40,000. The lead was replaced with terne coated steel.

There are weekly services and frequent church events (in normal times), and the church is also regularly used for many other events as it is conveniently situated at the heart of the village. Now the chancel roof has been replaced we can safely use that area along with the rest of the building for any events we may hold. Additionally, the chancel houses several valuable heritage features which are now fully protected from water ingress

Whilst the majority of funding came from the village residents, the grants, including that from NHCT, enabled us to complete the work without eating into dwindling reserves. We are very grateful to NHCT for supporting our church and the work within it."

ALL SAINTS, MIDDLETON CHENEY

"A Grade 1 listed medieval church with noted Pre-Raphaelite stained glass windows and a roof with an internal intricate design by William Morris. Regrettably the 1864 lead covering on the roof had begun to leak; in addition, the building had suffered three lead thefts, leading to water damage to this unique decorative scheme. It had become imperative to try to preserve it.

Even though the roof was alarmed, a permanent deterrent to metal theft had to be found. Historic England gave permission for the roof to be re-covered in terne-coated stainless steel, and the Heritage Lottery Fund provided a substantial grant. But this still left the parish having to raise the remaining £50,000. Other grants, including that from the NHCT, helped us achieve this target, and the building is watertight again. The new roof is weathering beautifully, developing a patina which makes it indistinguishable from one covered in lead, but now there is no longer any lead to steal. We look forward to the time when we can open the building again to visitors who come to view this great artistic heritage."

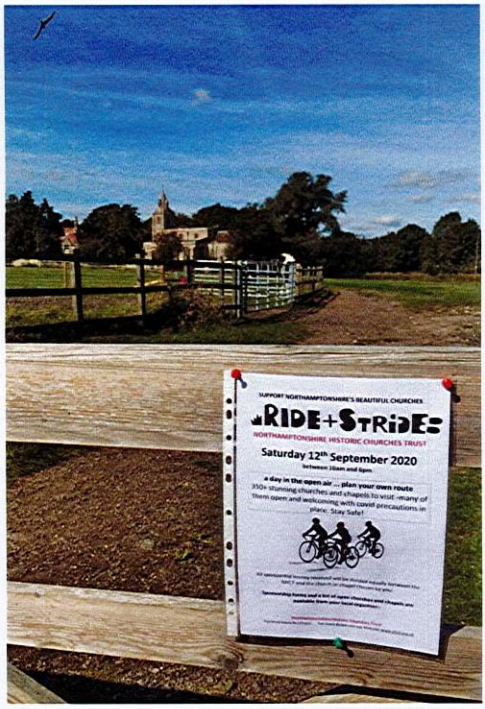
Ride and Stride

A great day out enjoying England's churches, towns and countryside

Ride and Stride - the foremost annual fun fund-rasing event to help preserve churches and chapels, and keep them active in our communities.

Date for your diary - RIDE AND STRIDE 2021 will be held on Saturday 11th September.

RIDE and Stride is a sponsored event for cyclists, joggers, walkers and horse riders. Any mode of transport can be used as long as sponsors are happy; a couple of people have used vintage cars! Some participants challenge themselves to visit as many churches as they can by their chosen mode of transport. Others prefer a more leisurely approach, visiting fewer churches and taking more time at each. Both approaches raise money to support the work of the Trust. Money raised will help Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust to continue supporting our marvellous churches across the county with essential repairs and improvements. As usual, Ride and Stride is an opportunity to raise money not only for the Trust, but also for your own church, as we return 50 per cent of the money to individual churches where asked to do so.



Churches are usually open from 10.00am to 6.00pm, and a list of participating churches is produced and made available on our website at www.nhct.org.uk, as are contacts in neighbouring counties. Ride and Stride is a countrywide event always held on the second Saturday in September.

Ride and Stride 2020 - *certainly a strange year!*

A very different Ride and Stride this year. There were lots of deliberations as to whether we should encourage churches to take part and riders to get on their bikes. We knew that there was even more of a need to raise money for the NHCT as, without normal fund-raising events, the need for grants for churches is even more needed. Also, many churches had not been able to have their own normal fund-raising events and so used the Ride and Stride as a source of extra income. This resulted in more churches than usual raising money. In the end it was all a great success, thanks to the determination and support of all those churches who did everything they could to support the event.

Most of the communication this year was by email and via the website, which meant that we could have much more of a dialogue with Local Organisers as restrictions changed and churches were allowed, or not allowed, to open. Everyone had to be flexible and riders were warned that the only thing we could guarantee was that there would be a church there! We are planning on using the internet more in 2021 and reducing the amount of paper produced, much of which is not used.

Participants were expecting many churches to be closed, but were delighted that so many found ways round it and still extended a warm welcome from their porches with generous refreshments outside. The sunny day meant that many churches took the opportunity to have socially distanced events in churchyards.

The grand total to-date for 2020 was £45,621 including Gift Aid.

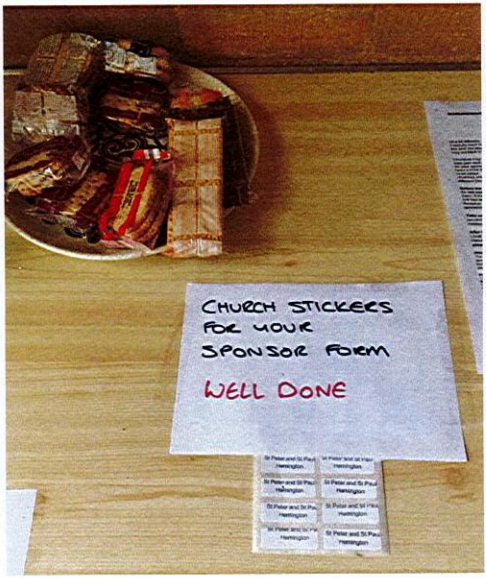
As ever, we would like to thank all those who worked hard to make Ride and Stride in Northamptonshire the success that it is, particularly in this very difficult year:

- The enthusiasm of Local Organisers who kept us informed of their church arrangements as they changed and persuaded folk to ride and stride and find sponsors.
- Our team of Area Organisers who each have a group of Local Organisers and who worked tirelessly, firstly in the spring collating information about which churches would be open, and then later sending out all the information to Local Organisers.
- Eddie Byland, our Treasurer, who sends cheques for 50 per cent of the amount received in sponsorship to each church.

Lastly, thank you to all the Riders and Striders and all their sponsors. Without them we would not have reached that record breaking total!

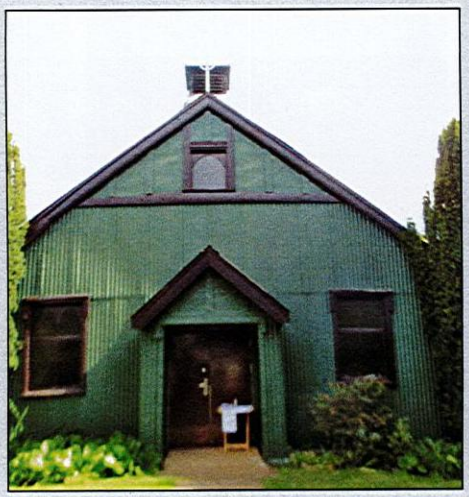
Richard Hartley, Val Hartley, Paul Stothard and Liz Doherty - *County Organisers.*

Mike Simpson's 21st Ride and Stride



"Having been the local organiser for Barnwell for the past nine years, I approached this year's Ride and Stride with some trepidation, mainly due to the ongoing restrictions imposed and the uncertainty of the practical side of access to the churches. I had no need to worry, people and places responded accordingly and the churches visited were either manned and very welcoming or provided very good registration facilities. What a great day . . ."

Michael Burns



"Normally the Ride and Stride coincides with our annual fund raising church fete, but this year that had not been possible due to Covid.

We hope to be back next September when you will be most welcome to join us.

Please stay a while and take a walk around our newly installed Prayer Garden.

Thank you for visiting our little oasis."

Notice on the door of the tin tabernacle, St Michael's Church, Kettering

Friends of Northamptonshire Historic Churches

From: Name(s).....

Address: .....

..... Postcode:.....

Email:.....

I/We would like to join the Friends of Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust.

I/We
a. have completed the Banker's Order below.
b. enclose a cheque for £..... (payable to Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust)

Gift Aid Declaration
If you are a UK tax payer and able to donate under the Gift Aid Scheme, it will cost you nothing and will increase the value of your donation to the Trust by 25%. Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to off-set any gift aid payment against your personal income tax

I am a UK tax payer and will pay in the year an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax to be reclaimed by the Trust.

Signed ..... Date / /

The minimum annual donations are: Individuals: £10; PCCs: £20.
Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust has a registered Charity No. 1021632

Banker's Order

To.....

Bank Branch address .....

Sort code - - - Postcode.....

Name .....

Signed ..... Date / /

Please pay to: Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

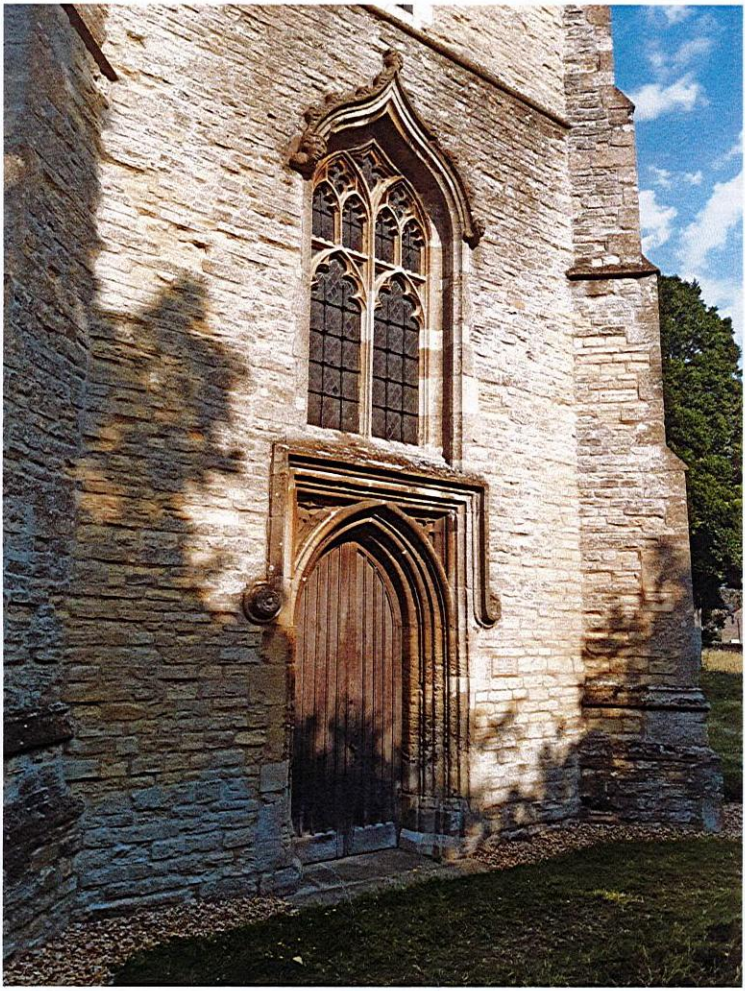
c/o Natwest Bank Plc Sort code 56-00-60 Acc. No 05608961

On the.....day of..... 20.....

The sum of (words) £.....
And the same sum annually until further notice.

Please send completed application form to:
Ruth Fitch, Friends' Secretary
Elgin House, Billing Rd Northampton NN1 5AU
Tel. 01604 463325

Donations can also be made via our website: www.nhct.org.uk



St Mary, Bozeat

With thanks to all those who contributed to this Report.

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