



Autumn Newsletter 2023



Harvest at Hingham,

A warm welcome to the final Norfolk Churches Trust Newsletter of 2023. As another year draws to a close here is a quick round up of what has been happening at the Trust over the last few months.



The final two private, member only, tours of the year led by Justin Nolan took place. These included the sell out *There were Giants in the Earth in those Days*, which took place on Sunday 9th July at All Saints, Swanton Morley and St Mary, Elsing, followed by *Behold, I am making all things new: The rise of new families at Salle and Cawston*, which took place on Saturday 21st October. These informative tours were very well received, and we hope were enjoyed by those who attended, the tea provided by Elsing PCC certainly looked inviting.

This year's **Holkham operas**, raised £16,200 for the Trust. These took place on the 28th and 29th of July with performances by *Diva Opera* of Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto* and *L'elisir d'amore* by Gaetano Donizetti.

The Trust was once more in attendance at the Royal Norfolk Show. Once the rain cleared it was lovely to chat to those of you who stopped by. We were able to show people photographs of restoration work being undertaken at churches that the Trust has awarded grants to. It was good to be able to share news of the work that is enabled by our supporters who contribute with their subscriptions, donations, and attendance at our fundraising events. We almost sold out



of our beautiful, Trust branded Emma Bridgewater pottery which is so very kindly donated to the Trust by Emma. We do hope to see you again next year at the show taking place on 26th and 27th June 2024.

The Presentations for the 2022 Bike Ride and Walk

The presentations for the 2022 Bike Ride and Walk took place on Thursday 31st August at Prior's Hall in the grounds of Norwich Cathedral. The event was presided over by the Very Revd Dr Andrew Braddock, Dean of Norwich. The Dean stated how important events like the bike ride are in keeping our churches open and welcoming for our communities. He also relayed how one of his first dates, with his now wife, was taking part in the bike ride 25 years ago. Whilst we cannot claim to have played cupid we love to hear how the bike ride can make a difference.



Representatives, pictured left, from Filby All Saints were on hand to receive the £1,000 cheque for the Most Improved Church. Treasurer Bernard Chase said that the prize would be used to secure an internet connection for the church which would enable them to place All Saints, even more, at the heart of the community.

There were two recipients of the inaugural Lord Lieutenant's Certificate in recognition of outstanding contribution to the event. The first to Mary Heather, who in her 94th year raised £15,000, with half of the proceeds going to Burnham Thorpe, All Saints where she still plays the organ. Mary will be doing the bike ride again this year, but by car with her nephew. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend the presentation, but her certificate was delivered to her by Chair of the Bike Ride Committee, Charles Inglis. Here she is proudly putting her certificate on the wall next to her Prince of Wales Certificate from a previous year.



The second recipient of a Lord's Lieutenant's Certificate was Anthony Meynell, who for his 70th birthday set himself the task of visiting 70 churches on the day. Well, he managed that and two more for good measure. He told us of the amount of reconnaissance and planning, which sounded very much like a military operation, which is involved in such a challenge and how tricky it can be to find some of our rural churches. After hearing of nonagenarian Mary's feat, he said he may be tempted to do an 80 for 80 challenge!

It is wonderful to see that age is no barrier for our bike ride participants.

A hearty congratulations to all our winners.

Results of the 2022 Photography Competition

We love to see photographs of your day, so thank you to those of you who sent in your images. The Bike Ride Committee have selected the following three entries as their winners for 2022.



Our first winner is Julia Hoskins for her photograph of Heydon church, pictured left. The judges felt that the contrast of light, texture and the framing portrayed a feeling of stillness and peace.



Tim Lees' photograph, above right, of a flower arrangement incorporating a bike was taken at St Botolph's, Limpenhoe. This was one of several lovely such images that he submitted that amalgamated bikes within flower arrangements.

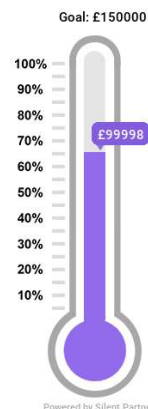


Our third winner was Ducan Lingard with this photograph of Holkham, which was not only well composed, but also emblematic of our magnificent churches which dominate the Norfolk skyline, and our judges like to see images of people enjoying their day.

If you have not already done so, please send in your photographs from this year's event, we do love to see them. Please email your images to us at :- info@norfolkchurcheTrust.org.uk.

Bike Ride and Sponsored Walk, 2023

To date the amount received for 2023 is tantalisingly just under the £100k figure at £99,998.52. Once again we are delighted with the generosity of those who take part and those who sponsor them. A big thank you to those who have already sent in their funds, if you have yours still to send, please do, we love to see that thermometer rise!



This year marked the 40th anniversary of the first Norfolk Churches Trust Sponsored bike ride. The first event took place in July 1983 during a heatwave, ironically it was remarkably similar weather that our participants experienced on 9th September, so well done to those who took part in temperatures that were in the thirties.

We asked for your memories of those first days and would like to share some of those with you.

We heard from Chris Bradford, who took part in the very first Bike Ride in 1983, aged just 7. Combining two of his hobbies, cycling and Norfolk churches. His route that day was visiting the churches of Ashwellthorpe, Wreningham and Hapton with his mum in the morning, and Tacolneston and Fundenhall with his dad in the afternoon. He particularly remembers the stickers; after the event he displayed his sticker proudly on his wardrobe for years, along with those from subsequent years. He took part in the next ten rides, doing his final one solo in 1993, aged 17. That year he reached his target of visiting 50 churches without venturing into Norwich, which is quite a feat. Unfortunately, other commitments have stopped him taking part since then, but he has nothing but fond memories of those rides, the churches and the people manning them.

We also heard from Eleanor Sidgwick, who also took part in that first year. She recalls taking a group of Great Massingham Sunday school children on the Sponsored ride. This was memorable, she said, because one of the little girls fell off her bike as they cycled down the Great Massingham hill towards Little Massingham. Although it was a Saturday, the surgery in Great Massingham was open and the doctor put a stitch in the girl's cut forehead. Eleanor then took the girl back to her home before cycling on to rejoin the rest of the group. She vowed never to take other people's children on a bike ride again but has enjoyed taking part in the Norfolk Churches Trust Bike ride most years since then.

Elaine Burbidge and her family have taken part in the event since the 1980s. Last year one of her sons, Steven topped our Wall of Fame visiting a staggering 126 churches in a day. Elaine no longer cycles and would not be able to get round many churches on foot. So, this year she 'went green' and used her bus pass and do her 'bike ride' on public transport.

With her planned route of Fakenham - Walsingham - Wells - Cromer - Sheringham - Holt – Fakenham she hoped to visit 18 churches on the day. Here is Elaine, bus pass in hand, ready for her journey.

Thank you to those that have shared your stories with us, we hope that you too have good memories of your own bike ride.



Charles Inglis, pictured left with the Dean of Norwich, has been the Chair of the Bike Ride Committee for the last ten years. His sterling efforts have brought in more than £1.1 million in sponsorship and donations during his tenure.

Charles is stepping down from his role this year, so we are hopeful that the 40th anniversary event, will see him going out on a high. Not only has he helped to organise and promote the event, but he has been a stalwart participant on the day, raising funds for Hempstead, All Saints.

Thank you to Charles for all of his efforts in making the Norfolk Churches Trust Bike Ride and Walk such a fundraising success.

Our fundraising events and the Sponsored Bike Ride are crucial to the Trust as they facilitate our continued work to support our Norfolk Churches with advice and grant aid. So, we are delighted to share with you the recipients of financial assistance from our most recent grants meeting.

Grants Awarded News

The Grants Committee met on 9th November and has awarded £60,458 which has been shared between the following thirteen churches.

Billington, St Peter	6,000	Herringfleet, St Margaret	5,000
Brockdish, St Peter & St Paul	2,000	Litcham, All Saints	2,000
Burgh Parva, St Mary	4,000	Narford, St Mary the Virgin	5,298
Chedgrave, All Saints	7,000	Runhall, All Saints	8,000
Fornsett, St Peter	6,000	Tattersett, All Saints	2,160
Haveringland, St Peter	7,000	Weeting, St Mary the Virgin	4,000
Heigham, St Barnabas	2,000		

In the month that contains All Saints Day, November 1st, a quartet of All Saints churches have been offered a grant from the Norfolk Churches Trust.



These include **Chedgrave All Saints**, where sadly four windows, including the east window, pictured left, were damaged by vandalism in August. The east window has been removed and will take months of work to repair. This window has a unique collection of continental glass, some of which came from the church of Saint Nicolas le Peintre in Rouen after the church was closed in 1791 during the French Revolution.



Tattersett, All Saints has been awarded their grant to provide a condition report on its medieval wall painting, pictured left, and to make recommendations for its conservation.

Runhall, All Saints, pictured right, is on the Heritage at Risk register. Their current project aims to tackle urgent repairs and to install a new surface water drainage system to take water away from the walls, which have serious cracks in the nave, tower, and porch. This will include catch pits for tower drainage, and superficial repairs to the cracks.



Finally, **Litcham, All Saints,** pictured left, has been awarded a grant to assist with the opening up and investigation of the north aisle roof and to prepare a specification for replacing it.

Update on Grants Awarded

Once grants have been awarded it is always pleasing to hear of the progress being made on repairs to those churches who have benefited.



Tower at Hemsby, St Mary, pictured above.

After eight years of fundraising the scaffolding went up at **St Mary's Hemsby**. The church was awarded a grant by the Trust of £10,000 in November 2021 and a further grant of £4,000 in June this year to bridge the shortfall in their funding. This enabled work to commence on major repairs to the tower. We hope repairs go well and that St Mary's will soon be weathertight and open for generations to enjoy in the future.

Another church that has been fundraising for some time for major repair works on its chancel roof and ceiling, is **Wilby, All Saints**.



Scaffolding at Wilby, All Saints

The Trust has contributed in the form of two grants, one awarded in 2020 for £7,000 towards phase 1 and 2 and an additional amount of £12,000 earlier this year. We are pleased to see that the scaffolding is now up for phase 3 of these major repair works.



Architect, Ruth Blackman, is photographed left atop a cherry picker conducting part of her survey work at **Toftrees, All Saints** Parish Church. The Trust is pleased to announce its assistance in this work by awarding a grant of £5,665 to the parish earlier this year, which resulted in this inspection of the high level masonry, and for urgent repairs to the building.

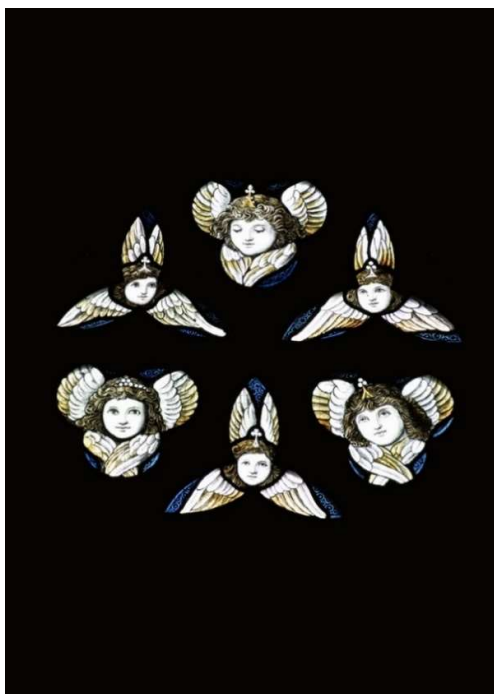
After seeing those sad images from February 2022 of the devastating fire at **Beachamwell, St Mary**, a reminder from that time is pictured right. It is wonderful to see the progress that is being made to restore this Grade 1 listed church.



The roof trusses, see left, were installed last month, and the building is starting to take shape. The Trust initially awarded a grant of £3,000 to St Mary's in 2020 for repairs to the roof following damage from lead theft. A further grant of £5,000 was awarded last year to cover uninsured repairs identified during further inspections to the fabric of the building.

It is fantastic to see the church taking shape and being returned once more to the heart of its community.

Other ways to support the Trust.



This year's Trust Christmas card is on sale now.

Featuring detail of angel's heads from a nave window in the Church of St Michael & All Angels, Booton, they cost £7 for ten cards and are available to buy via our website - <https://norfolkchurchestrust.org.uk/shop/>

Here you will also find a selection of other cards and Norfolk Churches Trust branded merchandise including, tea towels, aprons, canvas bags, and mugs, ideal Christmas gifts.

Available too is *Do the Stones Speak?* This booklet, pictured right, is a recent history of St Peter's Corpusty, and a guide to the Lettering Arts Trust headstones that have been installed in the churchyard.



St Peter's is one of thirteen redundant churches in the direct care of the Norfolk Churches Trust.

Looking forward to 2024.

Our Events Committee met recently and are actively arranging some unique and informative events for our members and supporters to enjoy, whilst also raising funds so that the Norfolk Churches Trust can continue to offer assistance and grant aid to our wonderful county's churches and chapels.

Keep an eye on our website for www.norfolkchurchestrust.org.uk for details of forthcoming events and other news relating to the work of the Trust.

In 2023, as in every year, the Norfolk Churches Trust relies upon our members and supporters, without your backing we would not be able to support the many wonderful churches in our county, so a big THANK YOU.

On social media, why not follow the Trust on Facebook or Instagram?



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