

Newsletter – April 2021.

Dear All

Blue skies and new buds appearing and the glorious sunshine prompted thoughts of summer sunshine and time well spent outdoors.

We are enormously grateful for all the support we received last year. Your photographs and blogs only went to illustrate how much we all enjoyed and appreciated the day in the sunshine whether we travelled by bike, foot, car, horse or canoe last September. The lockdown and time spent taking exercise in the countryside has, we believe, made us even more appreciative of the beautiful churches in our Norfolk landscape? We hoped that the bike ride would be a success as the Norfolk Churches Trust, like many charities, had lost most of its fundraising opportunities. However a 50% increase in participants to 831, who raised a staggering £174,382 for the Norfolk Churches Trust, was beyond our wildest dreams. This made Norfolk the top performing county in the country. We are, as always, but particularly following the events of last year, humbled and hugely grateful for your support. Thank you.

However, with the blue skies and sunshine our thoughts can and must turn to the year ahead. The 11th September is in the diary and we are looking forward to maintaining this wonderful momentum and positivity and encouraging friends and family to join us again in our efforts this year.

We were delighted to award Mary Heather with the Prince of Wales certificate for her staggering achievement in raising over £25,000. In addition Mary was awarded £1,000 for her nominated church, recognising its achievement for most improved fund-raising on the previous year. Huge congratulations to Mary Heather and a reminder that the Prince of Wales certificate will be awarded again this year for the participant who raises the most funds. A further £1,000 will again be awarded to the place of worship which sees the highest increase on last year in funds raised.

The bar has been set high in terms of number of churches visited with Susannah Towning and Amanda Marshall biking around a calf-crunching 72 churches in total. Kate Smith managed a blistering 42 churches on foot. They certainly earned their place in the Wall of Fame on the website, recognising those who have visited the most churches.

Please do send us your photographs. It is always wonderful to see the images which you send whether they are stunning landscapes, artistic architectural shots or just great pictures of a fun day in the sunshine. We will be giving £50 to those of you who took our three favourite photographs and we hope they will be published in the *Eastern Daily Press*. Please polish your lenses again ready for September.

Our most exciting news is the launch of our new website which will be coming very soon. The Bike Ride will have a strong presence and details of how to take part, an on-line registration form, suggested routes, how to donate and the various competitions which will be running this year. These will be available alongside photographs, blogs and updates from our stalwart supporters. In addition, if you are not following us on social media already please do so by following the links on the website, www.norfolkchurchestrust.org.uk.