



**Northamptonshire
Historic
Churches
Trust**

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2011**

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Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust

Registered Charity Number:1021632

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
President: Lady Juliet Townsend LVO

Trustees:	Lady Juliet Townsend (President)	B Bailey Esq
	The Bishop of Peterborough	J C Barker Esq
	The Bishop of Brixworth	P F Haddon Esq
	J A White Esq (Chairman)	R M Hartley Esq
	E W Byland Esq (Treasurer)	Mrs V Hartley
	The Venerable Christine Allsopp	Mrs B Lancaster
	The Revd. Canon G L Brockhouse	Mrs S A Parkinson

Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for 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

7 Spencer Parade, Northampton NN1 5AB
is registered with the Charity Commissioners (Number 1021632)
and is constituted by a Trust Deed dated 10 March 1955

Objects

The object of the charity is to assist in the preservation, repair, maintenance, improvement, upkeep, beautification and reconstruction of churches in Northamptonshire and the monuments, fixtures and fittings, stained glass, furniture, ornaments and chattels in these churches. The Trustees may also at their discretion make transfers from the fund to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust for any similar charitable expenditure outside Northamptonshire.

Secretary	Chris Knight
Treasurer	Eddie Byland
Membership Secretary	Penny Pardoe
Report Editor	Hilary Aslett
Visits Organiser	Keith Thomas

Cover picture; LAMPOR T All Hallows
Photos throughout by Eddie Byland or The Editor

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting the annual report for the year ended 31 December 2011

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am pleased to report that the Trust has continued to make good progress in 2011.

Grants

The Trust was able to distribute grants of £22,358 in 2011, details of which are set out later in the Annual Report, to maintain a level of grant making established in recent years. It also made pledges of support to churches of £3000 to be paid when the projects are further advanced. This is all made possible by the excellent level of income generated by the annual Ride and Stride event and by 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 addition, under the Partnership Agreement between the Trust and the National Churches Trust, grants of £20000 were awarded in 2011 to churches in the County. £10000 will be available to the Trust under the Partnership Agreement in 2012.

It is disappointing to have to record that the Trust had to consider grant applications which were the result of lead thefts. The Trust tries to support churches in these dispiriting circumstances.

The Trustees publicise the funds available in the Trust but rely on architects, church officers et al to alert churches to the possibilities of making grant applications.

The Trustees continue to keep under review the priorities they apply in considering grant applications. They recognise the benefits which can flow from the creation of serveries and toilets in churches. These facilities may encourage the greater use of the church building, which in turn may bring more people in contact with the church, which in turn may lead to the generation of more money for the care of the church. But given the limited resources of the Trust, the Trustees' priority is to make funds available for the preservation and restoration of the fabric of the churches.

The Annual Ride and Stride

The 2011 Ride and Stride raised £30,782 at the time of writing this report which is a splendid sum but 10% down on the sum raised in 2010. In 2009 and 2010, the County bucked the national trend which saw a reduction each year of about 10%. I fear that the effects of the economic climate have now reached Northamptonshire so far as the Ride and Stride is concerned notwithstanding 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, Richard and Val Hartley, for their enthusiasm and for the many hours they spent in planning and co-ordinating the event and to Eddie Byland, the Trust's Treasurer for dealing with the numerous individual payments

involved and making the detailed Gift Aid claims to the Revenue. Gift Aid generates a significant contribution to our income, £4296 in 2011.

It bears repeating that the Trust relies on support from the churches in the County in our main fund raising activity. It is largely as result of the monies raised by the Ride and Stride that the Trust is able to make grants to churches.

Celebration Evening

Each year representatives from the churches to which the Trust has made grants are invited by the Trustees to a Celebration Evening. These Evenings give the Trustees the chance to talk to the people who are undertaking the hard work of looking after their churches. More importantly, the representatives have the opportunity of sharing experiences and information. We hope these occasions are not only enjoyable but also encouraging for those involved in the difficult and time consuming business of caring for churches.

In 2011, we held the Celebration Evening at Burdyke in Weekley by the kind invitation of Mr and Mrs David Reynolds – a most enjoyable evening.

Lady Julia Townsend presenting cheques to grants recipients



Draughton



Lamport

Church Study Days

Although the Trust's major concern is the raising of funds and their distribution in the form of grants, it also encourages interest in the County's churches. In this respect, we are very fortunate to have Bruce Bailey, a most distinguished architectural historian, as one of our Trustees. On a Saturday in August in each of the past ten years, Bruce has taken us round churches in the County sharing his great knowledge and enthusiasm with us. What a great variety of churches we have seen – from the ancient at Brixworth and Earls Barton to the relatively modern at St Marys Wellingborough, from the imposing and decorated at Higham Ferrers and Fotheringhay to the small and simple at Weston and from the rural at Cottesbrooke and Fawsley to the urban of All Saints Northampton. They are a great joy to

visit in their different guises and even better, there are many more to be visited. We are most grateful to Bruce for organising these splendid Study Days.

We hope these Church Study Days provide something of interest for our members. They also encourage an increase in our membership. They are, however, becoming the victims of their own success. With increasing numbers of people wishing to attend, we have to monitor the numbers who can attend so early application is advised.

There is a report on the 2011 Study Day later in this Annual Report.

Sculpture Tour

James Miller took the splendid initiative of organising a Sculpture Tour in the County in May 2010 which he repeated in 2011. This included lectures and a reception at Boughton House by the kind invitation of the Duke of Buccleuch.

In 2011 the tour started with coffee and pastries at Wakefield Lodge, Potterspury. Then the participants made their way to various churches, including those across the county border at Lillingstone Lovell and Lillingstone Daryell, before meeting again at Great Brington where the splendid tombs of the Spencer family were enjoyed. A picnic lunch was taken at Cottesbrook before a talk was given about the sculptor of the family tombs in the local church. During the afternoon more churches were visited, including Harrington and Rothwell. The final lecture was about the Tresham family and their tombs at Rushton church. The net funds generated were divided equally between the Warkton Church Monuments Charity and this Trust for which the Trust is most grateful. The Charity and the Trust each received £4650. We are most grateful to James Miller and to Nicola Hopkinson at Boughton House for their efforts in making the Tour such a success. James is kindly organising another Tour in May 2012. Sadly, but understandably, that may be the final one.



The Spencer Chapel, Great Brington



Sir Timothy Clifford at Cottesbrooke

Membership

I am pleased to report that thanks to the efforts of membership secretary, Mrs Penny Pardoe, we have increased the membership in 2011 as part of our plan to extend the membership to widen interest in the Trust in the County.

In my Report in 2010, I wrote that we were hoping to organise trips from time to time to cathedrals within convenient distances if there was sufficient interest. I am pleased to tell you

that we held a very enjoyable trip to Lichfield Cathedral expertly organised by Keith Thomas who has kindly agree to organise a trip to St Albans Cathedral on 3rd May 2012.

Website

The Trust has a website www.nhct.org.uk which contains details of the Trust's activities. We are grateful to Mike Fulcher for helping us to keep it up-to-date. Please visit the site and if you have any suggestions for additional items or improvements, let me know. It includes a section on the arrangements made in Gayton for the creation of a Church Heritage Trust to widen the support for the care of the church beyond the church's congregation to the village as a whole.

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 wonderful churches – lobbying where appropriate and acting as a focal point for the efforts of the individual County Trusts of which the Northamptonshire Trust is one. We received a visit from a representative of NCT in 2011 who gave us some ideas of how other County Trusts operate. As mentioned above, our Trust participated in a partnership scheme with the NCT in which NCT delegated an aspect of its grant making function to County Trusts such as the Northamptonshire Trust..

Thanks

I have already expressed the thanks of the Trust to various individuals but I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the work of the Trust in 2011. The Trustees are most grateful.

We congratulate the Rt Rev'd John Holbrook on his appointment as Bishop of Brixworth and thank him for agreeing to become a Vice President and Trustee of the Trust.

The Future

My hope is that we can increase the income of the Trust from the Ride and Stride, from donations and legacies and from grants from grant making trusts to increase our ability to make grants to churches in the County. To this end, it will be necessary to increase both public awareness of the work of the Trust and the membership of the Trust.

We are very fortunate to have such a rich heritage of historic churches in this County. We have a great responsibility to make sure they are cared for and maintained for the benefit of our descendants.

John White

Chairman

SUPPORTING THE TRUST

Become a member

This involves an annual payment of £10. You will swell the funds of the Trust thereby helping to preserve our rich heritage of churches. You will also receive an invitation to our Church Study Day. We have plans to organise lectures and trips to cathedrals with an occasional social event such as a quiz night. These activities become more feasible if our membership base increases.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Trust's website at www.nhct.org.uk Otherwise our membership secretary, Mrs Penny Pardoe, will be pleased to send you the form. Her telephone number is 01327 358474.

Leave a legacy

Please consider leaving a legacy or a share of the residue of your estate to the Trust. Your solicitor will be able to advise you on the wording to be included in your will or codicil. No inheritance tax will be payable on the amount of the gift. The name of the Trust is Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust (registered charity no. 1021632).

Give practical help

Help to organise the Ride and Stride. Richard and Val Hartley on 01327 831162 will be pleased to point you in the right direction. Seek grants for the Trust from grant-making trusts. Organise a lecture. Act as the Trust's Grant Secretary. If you think you can contribute in these or any other ways to the work of the Trust, please speak to the Chairman, John White, on 01604 423207.

DIARY DATES

Wednesday 4th July

Celebration Evening - by invitation

Saturday 4th August

Church Study Day in the old Soke of Peterborough
Led by Bruce Bailey followed by tea with Bishop Donald.

Early booking advised, please contact The Chairman for details

Saturday 8th September

Ride & Stride Day
Sponsor forms and other details from your parish
organiser

REPORT FROM THE GRANTS COMMITTEE

The Committee meets quarterly to consider grant applications and to make recommendations to the Trustees. The Committee is given a degree of discretion to make grants not exceeding in total £5,000 if there is some urgency involved in the case.

Applicants supply detailed information about their project by completing our application form. Eric Peplow, one of the members of the Committee, visits the applicant churches in cases in which the Committee does not have knowledge of the church and the works involved.

In considering applications, the Committee takes into account the Grant-making criteria laid down by the Trustees.

The Committee also takes into account the Partnership Agreement which the Trust entered into with National Churches Trust (NCT). Under this Partnership Agreement, NCT made £20000 available in 2011 for grants to churches in the County which met certain criteria and which were recommended by our Trust.

In 2011, the Trust made grants totalling £22358 as follows:

Church	Works	Grants
St Mary Warkworth	Repairs to organ, porch and walls - heating and audio	£1000
St Mary Everdon	Repairs to tower	£5000
St Margaret of Antioch Crick	Major repairs to roof and windows	£5000
Badby URC	Electrical works	£250
St Catherine Draughton	Heating and electrical works	£2000
All Hallows Lamport	Stonework and electricals	£2000
All Saints Pytchley	Works on tower including installation of wc	£2000
St Mary Lower Benefield	Repairs to bell frame	£1500
All Saints Great Addington	North aisle roof repairs after lead theft	£2500
Wellingborough United Reformed Church	Upgrade toilets and creation of washing up area	£1000
St Mary Easton Neston	Window damage	£108
	Total	£22358

made pledges totalling £3000 as follows:

St Mary Blessed Virgin Great Houghton	Provision of wc and servery	£1500
St Nicholas Great Doddington	Provision of wc and servery	£1500
	Total	£3000

and made grants under the Partnership Agreement with NCT totalling £20000 as follows:

St Mary the Virgin Maidwell	Repairs to roof	£5000
St Andrew Cransley	Renovation of clerestory window	£5000
St James the Great Paulerspury	General repairs – roofs, tower, windows etc	£5000
All Saints Yelvertoft	Stonework repairs, repointing and reglazing	£5000
	Total	£20000

The Committee regretted to note that the effects of lead theft were coming to its attention. It tries to help where it can and in appropriate circumstances is prepared to recommend grants towards the cost of anti-theft devices.

The Committee wrestles with the dilemmas involved in applications for grants towards the costs of restoring bells and organs and of installing wcs and serveries. Again, we try to help where we can. The creation of wcs and serveries may well result in the building being used more which, in turn, may mean that more people are involved in the care of the church. Generally, however, we see the preservation and restoration of the structure of churches, which includes windows and monuments, as being our primary concern,.

The Committee welcomes applications and does what it can to publicise the availability of funds to make grants.

RIDE AND STRIDE REPORT FOR 2011

The Ride and Stride, held annually on the second Saturday of September, is a major fundraiser for the Trust, and all the churches that take part are entitled to apply for a grant for suitable works, whether they are historic or modern. Taking part can range from putting a Register in the porch for cyclists and walkers to sign when they visit (and returning it to us afterwards), to opening and manning the church and welcoming visitors with drinks and refreshments, to raising sponsorship money by having people walking or cycling from church to church in the event. Each church raising money receives a cheque for 50% of their total amount raised.

In 2011 more churches than ever took part and receipts from sponsorship were just under £31,000, half of which was returned to the churches sending money.

Half of the churches taking part had people cycling or walking for them which is a wonderful figure. We could not operate without our network of Local Organisers who are the people at each church who encourage the others and we extend our grateful thanks to them. We will be sending a new design of poster this year which may catch the eye of some keen cyclists or walkers in your village or town who would like to raise money for your church or chapel, as well as for the NHCT.

We deal with a total of 376 churches of different denominations asking them to take part in the "Ride and Stride". This involves a lot of paperwork which comes from us, then goes to our 17 Area Organisers and then to the individual churches! This year with rising postage costs we have started trialling a web based system on a limited basis where the Local Organisers update the database online with regards to their Church. The data collection system is working well but we have had problems with e-mails going into spam boxes! Over the summer we will be correcting this and sending out newsletters to test it. Next year we look forward to it being up and running and reaping the benefits of the time it will save.

As far as we are aware we are the only County Trust to take this leap forward but Northamptonshire was always progressive! Some people have found it burdensome but others have taken to it wholeheartedly; one of our Area Organisers who started e-mailing us two years ago, always finishing off "sent with the help of my daughter", has been on the system and sorted out how to use it on her own.

Once again our thanks to everyone who takes part in any way, as without you the Trust is nothing.

Richard and Val Hartley County Organisers

CHURCH STUDY DAY

Saturday 6 August 2011

For the past ten years, Bruce Bailey, an architectural historian and one of the trustees of the Trust, has led an annual Church Study Day. These Days have taken us to various parts of the County and have demonstrated the rich variety of churches and chapels in Northamptonshire. Happily they are many in number and as a result, there are more to still to explore.

In the morning, we visited:

Middleton Cheney – with its superb medieval spire and renowned William Morris period glass.

Warkworth – set outside the village with an interesting access – very fine brasses and splendid monuments. Sadly since our visit, it has suffered a very significant lead theft.

Kings Sutton – with a superb medieval spire and much 14th century work.

Lunch was provided most kindly by the parishioners of Kings Sutton in the church hall in the corner of the churchyard. The numbers attending were such that the overflow from the hall had to avail themselves of the tombs in the churchyard as temporary resting places.

In the afternoon, we visited :

Aynho – a very impressive Georgian church behind a medieval tower – with excellent monuments.

Croughton – a medieval church with very fine wall paintings.

Steane Chapel – an intriguing chapel in the grounds of Steane Park with fine monuments.

Newbottle – a medieval church with interesting monuments

The Day concluded most congenially with tea in the delightful garden of Newbottle Manor by the kind invitation of our President Lady Juliet Townsend

Bruce Bailey was happy to share his great knowledge of the churches with us – not only architectural but also historical aspects. Bruce is currently undertaking the vast task of revising the Northamptonshire volume of Pevsner's Buildings of England and during the day, gave us a preview of the draft entries he had prepared for the churches we were visiting. All of which made for a most successful and enjoyable day. And the sun shone again for most of the day.

Bruce is planning the next Church Study Day which will involve venturing out of the County into the old Soke of Peterborough.



Studying the exterior of Aynho Church



At Newbottle Church



Chatting at Teatime

CATHEDRAL VISIT

6TH OCTOBER 2011

It has been decided that we should offer members of NHCT a little extra as well as participating in Ride and Stride. To this end a visit was arranged to Lichfield Cathedral. Twenty six members went by coach, to a cathedral not well known to many.

First impressions are of a magnificent West Front and the only medieval cathedral with three spires. The interior showed the expected medieval splendour but an interesting mix of the more modern. The screen is an ornate metal one designed by Gilbert Scott and, more recently, during renovations a medieval stone sculpture, now known as the Lichfield Angel, has been discovered in the floor of the nave. This was on display in a side chapel. At the site of the discovery is now a unique hydraulic platform which can be raised or lowered to make maximum use of the nave. This was a fascinating combination of old and new.

We were able to walk around the Close before tea, provided for us by the Cathedral. Finally we all attended Choral Evensong, sitting in the Choir immediately behind the boys.

By the time you read this report a second cathedral visit this time to St. Albans will have taken place and it seems that an annual pattern has been established.

If anyone has a particular suggestion for a future visit please make them known.

Keith Thomas Organiser

THE BENEFIELD BELL PROJECT 2010/2011

The bells at St Mary's Church, Lower Benefield were in need of renovation as they had not been safe to be rung since the 1970s. The frame was in need of replacement.

Firstly two steel beams had to be erected in the spire so that the frame and bells could be lifted allowing access ladders to be installed. Together with a platform at the top of the ringing chamber this made it easier to climb into the bell chamber.

Three quotations were obtained for the work and various sources of funding were approached, including the NHCT and the Peterborough Diocesan Bellringers, both of whom provided grants, for which we were very grateful.

Whites of Appleton, Oxfordshire, were asked to carry out the work. Firstly they opened the trap doors on two floors to remove the bells and fittings, leaving just two RSJs that were supporting the main frame.

One of the bells was found to be cracked, so it was sent for welding, the cast iron frames were in reasonable order after sand-blasting and were repainted. All the old frame steel work was replaced with galvanised steel in identical layout to the original. The headstocks were fitted with new gudgeons to accommodate ball bearings, making the bells easier to ring, the clappers were rebushed and annealed and the woodwork, including the bell wheels was completely replaced. Pulley boxes were fitted with ball bearings. A visit was paid by several members of the congregation to the workshop at Appleton to see the work in progress and it proved to be a fascinating experience. Finally where necessary the steelwork was painted.

The bells and fittings were then ready to be hoisted back into the tower by electric winch, the bell ropes were put in place and all was ready for the service of rededication.

This was held on at the end of May 2011, taken by a local retired bishop and attended by members of the Oundle benefice. The bells rang out joyfully after the service whilst refreshments were being enjoyed by all.

The building work, ladders and platform cost about £5000; the haulage to and from Appleton was carried out by church members, as was some of the ironwork.

The cost of the bellhangers work was £32,600 and it was possible to claim back some of the VAT!. The whole organisation and work of the project was completed within a year.

Peter Knight Project Organiser

*(The bells are now being rung regularly by local ringers:
To quote a ringer at the dedication service "It was a job very well done")*

Editor and bellringer!



DRAUGHTON St Catherine



CRANSLEY St Andrew



WARKWORTH St Mary