

# NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST



## ANNUAL REPORT 2023



**T**HE 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	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: 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](http://www.nhct.org.uk)

# Chairman's Report - 2023

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

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



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

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?**

**T**HE 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*

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## Grant Committee Report 2023

**A**NOTHER 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 participating 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



<b>Town/Church</b>	<b>Works</b>	<b>Grant Given</b>
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
Glaphorn – 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 availability of funds to make grants.

***M J Moore***

*Grant Secretary*

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## 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!

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](http://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



*Reredos and Great East Window, St Mary Magdalene, Geddington*

*[Continues p.20]*

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST .  
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st 2023.**

	2023		2022	
	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOME .</b>				
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
		<u>60115</u>		<u>57510</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE .</b>				
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	
		<u>55817</u>		<u>38000</u>
Ride & Stride - Refunds to participating churches	22441		21806	
Administrative expenses including printing .	2115		2218	
Upgrading Website	262		2540	
		80635		64564

**( DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR .**

**ACCUMULATED FUND**

Balance brought forward January 1st 2023	334033	-20520	-7054
(Deficit) for the year	-20520		
Increase/(decrease) in Market Value of Investments	13486		
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	0

**REPRESENTED BY :**

Investments ( NOTE 4 )			185454
Bank : Current account	2061	19499	
: Deposit account	42546	44110	
Building Society account	83452	84970	
		128059	148579

E.W.Byland - Honorary Treasurer

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	1000
St.Mary, Southwick ( £ 10,000 , less returned £ 2778 )	7222	April.2021	3000
Emmanuel Church , Northampton	3000	April.2022	6000
St.Michael & All Angels,Creaton	5000	April.2022	10000
St.Mary Magdalene, Ecton	595	April.2022	3000
St.Andrew, Cotterstock	2000	Nov.2022	2500
St.Mary, Staverton	4000	Nov.2022	5000
All Saints, Sutton Bassett	2000	Nov.2022	3000
St.Leonard, Glapthorn	2000	Nov.2022	3000
All Saints, Kettering	1500	Nov.2022	10000
All Saints, Earls Barton	3000	April.2023	2500
Wellingborough United Reformed	5000	Nov.2023	2000
St Mary Magdalene, Geddington	5000	Nov.2023	5000
St.Alban the Martyr, Northampton	1000	Nov.2023	4000
St.Mary, Easton Neston	1500	Nov.2023	2000
St.John the Baptist, Abthorpe	4000	Nov.2023	3000
St.John the Baptist, Quinton	2000	Nov.2023	6000

**B) PLEDGED AND NOT YET PAID AS AT**

**DECEMBER 31st 2023.**

	£	Year of Pledge	£
All Saints, Adstone( water supply)	500	April.2021	1000
St.Martin, Welton	7222	April.2021	3000
St.Andrew, Kettering	3000	April.2022	6000
St.Mary, Blakesley	5000	April.2022	10000
Ss.Peter & Paul, Kings Sutton	595	April.2022	3000
Raunds Methodist	2000	Nov.2022	2500
All Saints, Wilbarston	4000	Nov.2022	5000
St.Michael & All Angels,Creaton	2000	Nov.2022	3000
St.Katherine, Irchester	2000	Nov.2022	3000
All Hallows, Wellingborough	1500	Nov.2022	10000
Ss.Peter & Paul, Harrington	3000	April.2023	2500
St.Mary, East Haddon	5000	Nov.2023	2000
St .Mary, Titchmarsh	5000	Nov.2023	5000
St.Peter, Brackley	1000	Nov.2023	4000
St .Leodagarius, Ashby St.Ledgers	1500	Nov.2023	2000
St.Peter, Weston Favell	4000	Nov.2023	3000
Broughton Baptist Chapel	2000	Nov.2023	6000
St.James the Great, Syresham			



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

**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 window 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.

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**



*Blakesley church exterior  
showing tower cleared of moss*



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**

**R**IDE 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.

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*



*Coffee morning at Cotterstock to greet riders*

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](http://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.

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## 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](mailto: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
- 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.



*Dee Frankling with Lemmy*



- 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

'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.'



*Jenny Smith at Bulwick*

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***

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.



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

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.

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**



Arthur Wright and Russell Hodgson in the Model T

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## 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.

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,



St Michael's, Newnham

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

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## 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.

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.



Interior of All Saints', Cottesbrooke

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

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.

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



Wall painting at Stanion

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



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

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.

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

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## Banker's Order

To (Bank/Building Society): .....

Bank Branch address: .....

Postcode: .....

Sort code:

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**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](mailto: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.