

AUTUMN 2020 NEWSLETTER AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS



The Britten family from Haverhill outside Holy Trinity, Long Melford – winners of the inaugural Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride Photography Competition

Suffolk Historic Churches Trust

Registered Charity No. 267047

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I do hope all our members are keeping safe and well. The easing of the lockdown and falling cases in the summer looked then to herald in more normal times. But alas we now find ourselves in second wave territory with new restrictions - albeit mercifully Suffolk is at the lower end of the risk spectrum.

Despite all this I am pleased to report that your Trust has managed to continue to discharge its essential functions, and its finances are sound. With improvisation, hard work and a touch of Zoom, the Trustees and some loyal supporters have kept the show on the road. I am only sorry that the various waves of restriction have meant we were unable to offer our members the usual gatherings at the Spring Field Day, the Annual Service and the annual Friends' evening.

It was not an easy call as to whether the Ride and Stride should proceed, but we decided that with sensible precautions we should go ahead. After those weeks of lockdown we felt we all needed to get out, and we knew that the churches and chapels - following months of little if any church plate - would certainly need our help. So both the Ride and Stride and the associated Pedal and Drive car tour went ahead as planned on 12 September. God smiled, the sun shone, most - if not all - churches were open and welcoming (thanks to Bishop Mike for encouraging them), and everyone loved their day. Suffolk was awash that day with cyclists of all ages, walkers and an array of extraordinary vintage and classic cars. My heartfelt thanks go to all the Ride and Stride organisers, to the Pedal and Drive team and to all who participated or supported the participants.

Importantly for the Trust, it meant our coffers were replenished. The monies are not all in yet but we look to have raised well over £100,000 from the Ride and Stride, plus additional significant returns from the Pedal and Drive. And we have received this summer two generous and substantial legacies. So we are in a much happier position than most charities.

Meanwhile our doughty Grants Committee have been very much open for business and have found new and ingenious ways to keep receiving, evaluating and awarding grants. This note gives me a chance to give special thanks to Celia Stephens for ten successful years as Chair of the Grants Committee. In July she handed the baton on to John Devaux.

July also saw the launch of our Alarms for Churches II scheme, made possible by generous grants from the Allchurches Trust and the Lord Belstead Trust. Our goal is to get the last 20 per cent of 'lead' churches protected by an alarm system. Anyone who knows of a 'lead' church that is not yet protected should get in touch with the office (see page 2 for contact details). The stripping of lead in February off the porch of All Saints, Little Cornard reminded us that even porches and vestries are vulnerable to this upsetting and expensive form of sacrilege.

I hope this little piece gives members reassurance that the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust is still very much up and running, and that we continue to execute our role of supporting the upkeep of Suffolk's glorious legacy of churches and chapels.

Geoffrey Probert

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

The administration of the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust will continue to function during the COVID-19 pandemic, and correspondence, emails and telephone calls received at our office in Long Melford will be dealt with as usual. Our contact details can be found on page 2.

We are always happy to hear from members and supporters about Trust-related matters. In particular, we remain open for grants applications (details on the Grants tab of the Trust website).

In order to accommodate the restrictions imposed by the government in response to the pandemic, the Trust continues to keep its normal programme of events under review. We will continue to update our members and supporters on developments.

As always, this Newsletter is also available on the SHCT website – shct.org.uk – under the “Latest Newsletters” tab

SUFFOLK CHURCHES RIDE AND STRIDE 2020

On Saturday, 12 September the annual sponsored event took place on a glorious sunny autumn day. Although numbers were down on last year, hundreds of riders and walkers called at ancient churches and chapels all over the county. Classic and vintage cars rumbled around the lanes supporting the event, and in spite of the worrying times, a challenging and amusing day was enjoyed by all. One granny aged 75 cycled 54 miles and visited 20 churches. What a hero.

We had carefully risk assessed every aspect of the day to make this a Covid secure event, and everywhere I went, I was glad to see that people were observing the rules of social distancing and wearing masks at churches. It is too early to know the sums raised, but we will let people know in due course.

My thanks to Area and Local Organisers and their teams, and to riders, striders and all the generous sponsors. COVID notwithstanding, the Trust and its supporters remained enthusiastic and steadfast, and continue in the task of funding and supporting Suffolk's precious and vulnerable heritage of churches and chapels.

Patrick Grieve SHCT Bike Ride Chairman



The ruins of Leiston Abbey

SOCIAL MEDIA, SHCT AND YOUR CHURCH

We hear so much negativity about social media that sometimes it is worth stopping to take a look at the positive side of Facebook, Twitter etc. Could it help your church, chapel or meeting house to connect with people, pass on news of events etc? Many more organisations are using social media because of coronavirus. There are many social media 'platforms' (Snapchat, Tiktok, LinkedIn, Pinterest etc), but I am going to explain which ones the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust use that I think may help your organisation too.

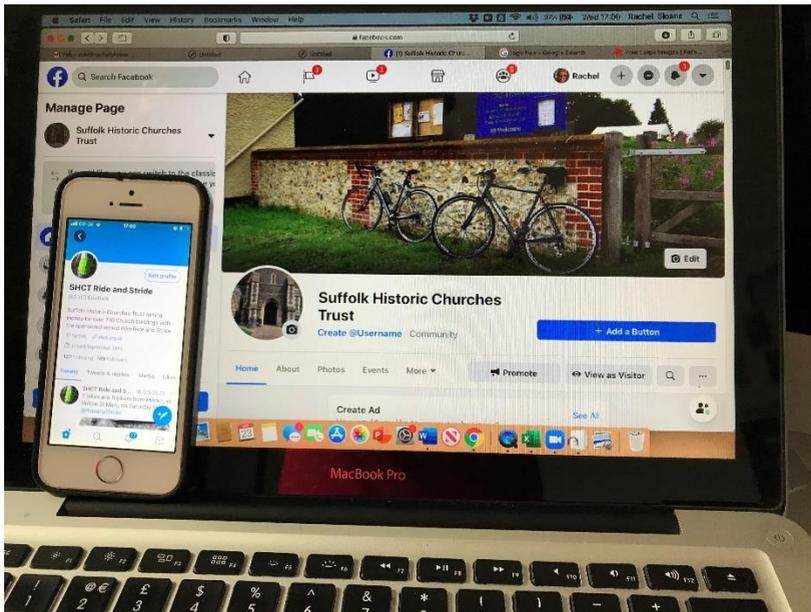
For social media novices here is an easy guide.

Messages (or 'posts') on an organisation's **Facebook Page** usually reach the friends or followers of that organisation or person, who can then pass it on to their followers (unless limitations are placed on the post). People who read your post can click a button to 'like' it, 'share' or they can add a comment. The length of the Facebook message can be longer and you can link to a website with more details.

Attaching a photo or video will ensure more interest. It is a good way to communicate with supporters and those who may be interested in what you do. For example, the Trust Facebook Page reached 6,088 people between 11 August and 7 September 2020. Then, a reminder about Ride and Stride posted on 8 September had, two days later, been seen by over 4,000 people! (Remember copyright of photos and videos. They need to be your own images or ones that the photographer has agreed you can use and share online).

Twitter is used for shorter messages but can also link to a longer article on your website. Again, a photo or video will help attract attention. Twitter is open for anyone to see and 're-tweet' (pass on), comment on or 'like' by clicking on a heart. When a post goes 'viral' it means that hundreds or thousands of people have shared it. Recently, Twitter allowed users to control who can comment to reduce the risk of inappropriate responses. One option is not to post anything too controversial! If you want to raise interest, include the Twitter address of someone, e.g. @SHCTBikeRide, and they will see it, or add a hashtag (e.g. #rideandstride) for anyone who is interested in the topic. The hashtag is used as a search term for most social media.

Instagram is used to share photos and videos, and followers can view, follow or 'like' them. Currently the Trust is not enrolled on Instagram but may do in the future.



As the Honorary Publicity Officer (and now a Trustee too), I run the social media accounts for SHCT and you will need a volunteer who is willing to 'own' your account, monitor it and update it regularly. For example, in the run up to a big event such as Ride and Stride, I try to post something daily and on the day itself I will post many times, with photos and comments. Other riders and striders add their photos and comments too. The national Ride and Stride team also re-tweet and share posts, and I do the same for other counties when relevant.

The Trust website is also set up so that every time I post a comment on Facebook or Twitter it appears on the Home Page. It is a good way to make your website look very up to date. One warning – if, like me, you run several different accounts (the Trust, my choir and my personal ones), it is very easy to add a like or comment from the wrong site. My apologies to the Trust if a comment about my choir or my family has ended up on its Facebook page by mistake, and I didn't spot it and delete it quickly!

We would love to hear your stories of how your church or organisation uses social media. Please contact the editor, Mike Kiely, on mekiely@gmail.com and we will publish suggestions and comments in the next edition of the Newsletter.

Rachel Sloane SHCT Trustee and Hon. Publicity Adviser

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5 APRIL 2020

	Unrestricted Income Fund 2019-20 £	Designated Funds 2019-20 £	Restricted Funds 2019-20 £	Total Funds 2019-20 £	Total Funds 2018-19 £
Income					
<i>Donations and legacies:</i>					
Annual donations	11,645	-	-	11,645	14,003
Other donations	3,754	-	-	3,754	2,264
Tax reclaimable	7,339	-	-	7,339	18,888
Legacies/donations in memoriam	-	25,598	-	25,598	5,000
<i>Activities for generating funds:</i>					
Investment income	2,499	-	796	3,295	3,035
Fundraising events	79,002	-	64,983	143,985	140,993
<i>Other income:</i>					
Grants received for Alarm Scheme	-	-	25,000	25,000	-
Total incoming resources	104,239	25,598	90,779	220,616	184,183
Expenditure					
Raising funds	19,965	-	-	19,965	19,596
Net incoming resources available for charitable application	84,274	25,598	90,779	200,651	164,587
<i>Charitable expenditure</i>					
Direct charitable expenditure	115,510	-	67,983	185,653	188,755
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	(31,236)	25,598	22,796	20,158	(24,168)
Transfers between funds	34,528	(34,528)	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	3,292	(8,930)	22,796	17,158	(24,168)
Unrealised investments gains/ (losses)	-	(45,551)	-	(45,551)	1,258
Net movement in funds for the year	3,292	(54,481)	22,796	(28,393)	(22,910)
Total funds brought forward	224,339	483,625	108,763	816,727	839,637
Total funds carried forward	227,631	429,144	131,559	788,334	816,727

BALANCE SHEET AT 5 APRIL 2020

	Unrestricted				
	Income	Designated	Restricted	Total	<i>Total</i>
	Fund	Funds	Funds	Funds	<i>Funds</i>
	2020	2020	2020	2020	2019
	£	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-
Investments	-	334,490	-	334,490	380,042
	-	334,490	-	334,490	380,042
Current assets					
Debtors and accrued income	12,655	-	-	12,655	14,815
Cash at bank and on short term deposit	331,610	94,654	131,559	557,823	521,102
	344,265	94,654	131,559	570,478	535,917
Creditors:					
amounts falling due within the year	(116,634)	-	-	(116,634)	(99,232)
Net current assets	227,631	94,654	131,559	453,844	436,685
Net assets	227,631	429,144	131,559	788,334	816,727
Represented by:					
Restricted funds					
James Mair legacy fund	-	-	109,559	109,559	108,763
Roof alarm fund	-	-	22,000	22,000	-
Unrestricted fund					
Income fund	227,631	-	-	227,631	224,339
Designated funds:					
Capital fund	-	94,654	-	94,654	103,584
Reserve fund	-	334,490	-	334,490	380,041
Margaret Gilbert legacy fund	-	-	-	-	-
Anthony Wheeler legacy fund	-	-	-	-	-
	227,631	429,144	131,559	788,334	816,727

JOY ROWE – 1926-2020

Joy Rowe was a leading historian of Catholicism in East Anglia for over fifty years, a committed educationalist and a valued and loyal supporter of Suffolk Historic Churches Trust. For these and many other reasons her recent death has occasioned much sadness: she will be missed by all at the Trust who have worked with her over the last forty years.

When she was appointed a Trustee of the recently established Trust in 1979, she became a significant instrument in its development. Early on, it was decided that highlighting the importance of church buildings, not only as repositories of history but also as centres of their parish communities, was an important aspect of the Trust's work. Joy liaised with the county education department and between them they organised a seminar for teachers, Trust advisers and local planning officers. Following the success of this event, Joy organised a Field Day in April 1980, encouraging groups to visit a number of churches and learn about the buildings and the treasures contained within them. These two initiatives were funded by the county education department and led to the establishment of the Trust's annual Field Day, to which, in 1987, was added the annual Study Day. These remain popular events, which are well supported and which still follow the pattern established by Joy.

In 1982, Joy joined the Grants Committee, which she went on to chair from 1987 until 1993. Her knowledge of Suffolk's churches and chapels and their history was very extensive and made her a particularly valuable member of the Committee, added to which she was a Roman Catholic, which was important as the Trust has always adopted a non-denominational stance in all aspects of its work. Joy left the Grants Committee in 2018 when increasing infirmity made it difficult for her to attend meetings. In 2002, the Trust showed its appreciation of Joy's remarkable commitment to Suffolk churches and their communities by appointing her a Vice President.

Of course there is a wider community, especially the Catholic Diocese of East Anglia, which will be mourning Joy's death. In honour of her exceptional contribution to their work, her parish priest, Father David Finegan, of the Deanery of Bury St Edmunds, presented Joy with the Diocesan Medal on the occasion of her 90th birthday. The ceremony was witnessed by her family and many of her friends, including the well known church historian Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch, who grew up near Joy's home village and to whom she acted at one time as a mentor.

Joy's researches led to various publications including, in 2004, the addition of eight of her articles on East Anglian Catholics to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. All at the Trust who knew and worked with Joy will miss her greatly, but remain very grateful that in her busy life she found the time to further the work of the Trust with distinction for over forty years.

Diana Hunt and Celia Stephens



A major grant was awarded to Hargrave, St. Edmunds in 2019. Very serious movement in the chancel east wall required underpinning to the wall and buttresses and other repair work to be undertaken. The PCC was grateful for the early intervention of SHCT, which helped get a successful project underway with local fundraising plus grant aid from several other organisations. We are delighted that the repairs are nearing completion.

GRANTS COMMITTEE REPORT 2019-20

During the financial year 2019-20, SHCT grants totalling £119,500 were awarded to 38 Suffolk churches. Thirty grants were in relation to repair work. Eight went towards the provision of modern facilities.

In April 2020, awards totalling £19,000 were made to five churches. In September the Committee had the same sum available, when it was shared between seven churches and one meeting house. Four applications were considered by the Committee in October. Given recent restrictions, the Committee has not been holding face to face meetings and these are unlikely to resume before 2021.

Since publication of the Trust's last Newsletter, the National Lottery Heritage Fund has been operating a Heritage Emergency Fund in support of the heritage sector as a response to the COVID-19 crisis. The final deadline, extended to 31 July, has now expired.

Our Chairman, Celia Stephens, has decided that it is time to stand down from the position that she has held with distinction for the last ten years. Throughout this period she has regularly contributed articles to the Newsletter. She has visited nearly three hundred churches, including Catholic and Non-Conformist places of worship. There can be few who have her breadth of knowledge of the churches in the county. Whenever I mention a church by name she knows at once which church I am talking about. Happily, Celia's knowledge, experience and advice will not be lost to us as she has agreed to remain a Committee member in addition to undertaking other roles within the Trust. She will continue to help in organizing the Trust's study and field days when these can resume. She will also be helping to administer the Trust's website.

In succeeding Celia as Chairman of the Grants Committee I am conscious that I have a great deal to learn. However, it has become clear that the Committee has an enthusiastic secretary in Adrian August, while members, who include a former Committee secretary, have vast experience which they are only too happy to share with me on an informal basis. I look forward to carrying out my role and to the opportunity it brings to get to know many of our fine places of worship.

At the time of writing, Yalda Davis has played her cello in four hundred and thirty-five churches in Suffolk. She hopes to play in the remaining churches during the next twelve months. This is a magnificent achievement. In addition to paying private visits, she has held a number of concerts from which she has donated a proportion of the proceeds to trusts involved in the care of churches. She expects her final church concert to be held in 2021. She also hopes to make a CD recording in a church during 2021.

John Devaux Chairman, Grants Committee

GRANTS AWARDED 2019-20

Aspall, St Mary	£4,000
Barnham, St Gregory	£3,000
Beccles, St Michael	£2,000
Bentley, St Mary	£3,000
Blaxhall, St Peter	£4,500
Bradfield St George	£3,000
Butley, St John the Baptist	£7,000
Creeting St Mary	£2,000
Creeting St Peter	£5,500
Elmsett, St Peter	£2,000
Frostenden, All Saints	£2,000
Great Blakenham, St Mary	£4,000
Great Wenham, St John	£1,500
Hargrave, St Edmund	£9,000
Harleston, St Augustine	£1,000
Ipswich, Unitarian Church	£10,000
Ipswich, United Reformed Church	£5,000
Kentford, St Mary	£1,500
Leavenheath, St Matthew	£2,500
Little Bealings, All Saints	£2,000
Monewden, St Mary	£2,500
Norton, St Andrew	£1,500
Old Newton, St Mary	£1,000
Palgrave, St Peter	£4,000
Risby, St Giles	£1,500
Saxmundham, St John the Baptist	£1,000
Saxtead, All Saints	£2,000
South Elmham, St James	£4,000
Southwold, Sacred Heart	£2,000
Sproughton, All Saints	£2,500
Stuston, All Saints	£2,000
Sudbury, All Saints	£1,500
Thelnetham, St Nicholas	£2,000
Wangford, St Peter & St Paul	£5,000
Wickham Market, All Saints	£6,000
Wickham Skeith, St Andrew	£4,000
Yaxley, St Mary	£2,500

Total: £119,500

SOUTH PORCH CHURCH TOWERS

There are several churches with south porch towers in England, but outside Suffolk and Norfolk most of these are Victorian builds or have a tower added on the south at a much later period.

There are just three genuine south porch towers which fit the pattern and period of the Suffolk south porch towers. They are all built entirely of stone and are in the west country - two in Somerset and one in Gloucestershire - and it seems that the lie of the land is the most likely reason for this pattern being used.

In Norfolk there are nine churches that conform to the south porch tower pattern: these are at Brinningham, Colkirk, Little Ellingham, Hardingham, Sculthorpe, Spixworth, Stanhoe, Whinburgh and Wicklewood. Almost all these churches fall within the area to the west of Norwich and were reachable via the head waters of the Rivers Wensum and Yare, suggesting that the particular mason/builder might have been Norwich based or possibly, because of the similarity of design, the same mason responsible for the Suffolk south porch towers. The exception is Stanhoe, which might have been accessible via the coast at Burnham Ovary, as was the nearby Creake Abbey; both were built in the thirteenth century.

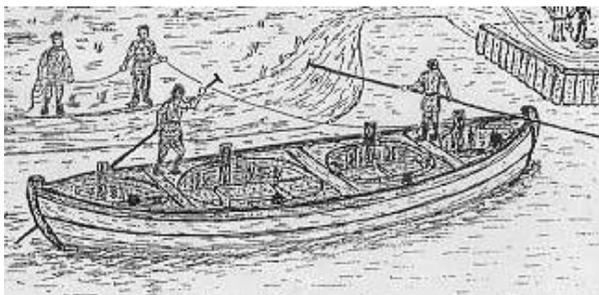
We have 23 south porch towers in Suffolk, but I shall discount Wickham Market, which is a one-off octagonal tower and Ipswich St Mary le Tower, which is a Victorian build. The remainder are medieval builds and 19 of them lead directly into the nave. Only at Haughley and Stonham Aspal does the porch tower lead into the south aisle, the inference being that the majority were built before any attempt was made to enlarge the church by the addition of an aisle. But we will come back to this.



St Botolph, Burgh

Much of the stone for our medieval churches was shipped down the rivers Witham and Welland in Lincolnshire, both of which drain into the western corner of the Wash. Cross-loaded to a sea-going vessel, it was then shipped around to the east coast ports.

If you plot these south porch towers on a map you will find that they lie within the watershed of the Stour, Gipping and Deben valleys, and in medieval times, with the use of comparatively shallow barges, these rivers were navigable much further than they are today. For instance, there are records of barges carrying goods up the Gipping to Haughley and to Brettenham via the Stour and River Brett. The exception here is Timworth, which is the wrong side of the watershed and was probably fed via the Great Ouse and the River Lark. Of course, all our churches of the more standard design, with the tower at the west end, also had their stone



A typical 13th Century river barge

brought up, as far as possible by river. So the south-porch towers are not unusual in that respect but the inference is that the mason who preferred this style of build was probably based at or near Ipswich.

But why at Stonham Aspal and Haughley alone is the tower attached to the south aisle? In the case of Stonham Aspal, we know that the tower was rebuilt in the 18th century to house a new ring of 10 bells. If the tower stands on exactly the footprint of the former tower, then the tower appears to have been built at the same time as the south aisle and possibly some time after the construction of the original church.

At Haughley, it is a different story. We are told that over the centuries and through many re-orderings and upgrades, the one thing that never changes is the threshold between nave and chancel, mainly because this is the division point for the responsibility of upkeep between the clergy and patrons who were responsible for the chancel, the parish being responsible for the upkeep of the nave. There are very few exceptions to this rule, but nearby Stowmarket is one and it seems likely that Haughley is another. If you look at the tower and the south aisle you will find that they are built as one with a continuous string course along the aisle wall and around the tower; the aisle and tower buttresses also follow the same pattern. The aisle itself is relatively large, certainly as large as many other medieval churches. Thus, it points to the aisle and tower being the original build, possibly around 1200, and the current nave and chancel, both of which are large, being added later.



Haughley, St Mary the Virgin. The string course along the south aisle and around the tower indicates that they were built at the same time. Note the 'Y' tracery window giving the tower a date of say 1200, possibly a little earlier. (The aisle windows were replaced in the decorated period, possibly when the current nave and chancel were added).

That later date could well be around 1300, for we know that the honour of Haughley was given to Isabella, the wife of Edward II in the late thirteenth century. She became Lord of the Manor and we know from the records that she spent some time at Haughley Castle. The Royal couple, by now King and Queen, are known to have spent Christmas there in 1325 and their son Edwardⁱ, the future King Edward III, was christened there in 1326. Isabella would have brought personal wealth and a large entourage to the village and so we can see how and why such a church, much too big for the normal needs of Haughley, might have come to be built.

We shall never know the name of the mason who masterminded this design, and although we cannot be sure, it is tempting to think that it was the work of one man and his team using the Suffolk rivers and possibly even up the Rivers Yare and Wensum to the Norfolk south porch towers. It is one of the fascinations of our churches that, whilst we can read them and learn much about them, they still hold their secrets.

The Suffolk medieval south porch towers are: Akenham; Barham; Belstead; Brettenham; Burgh; Clopton; Culpho; Gosbeck; Grundisburgh; Haughley; Holbrook; Little Bealings; Mickfield; Newbourn; Playford; Rishangles; Stonham Aspal; Stutton; Thorndon; Timworth; and Witnesham.

ⁱ Possibly an illegitimate son, as Queen Isabella had spent time in France in 1325 and had an affair with Roger Mortimer, an exiled opponent of Edward II.