Welcome to our first newsletter

One of the Forum’s objectives for 2014 is to celebrate and share good news stories and information from around the country, and to help us to learn from each other. I do hope that you find the newsletter enlightening and useful.

I would like to thank all of those who have contributed and also to express my gratitude to the staff of the National Churches Trust for their unstinting support in bringing the newsletter to fruition.

The range and value of the work of our trusts helps everyone to maintain, improve and keep alive the mission of our many and varied places of worship.

Please celebrate and share your successes with us and let us know if there is something you have done, or are doing, by sending your contributions for the next issue to: alison.pollard@nationalchurchestrust.org

John Mills, Chairman, Churches Trust Forum

Fundraising is a growing issue for trusts. The CTF aims to assist trusts that are struggling

Call for your input
Please tell your CTF representative what guidance would be useful for your trust, from help with publicity to current guidance on best practice for trustees of small charities.

The Churches Trusts Forum is supported by the National Churches Trust
We were pleased to welcome delegates from 26 County Churches Trusts to Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, London for the 2014 Annual Conference on May 15. Organised and administered with the support of the National Churches Trust, this year’s theme was 'Diversity - helping churches, chapels and meeting houses today'.

The day started with words of welcome from Sarah de Rohan, Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust and Luke March, Chairman of the National Churches Trust. They highlighted the vital work being carried out by County Churches Trusts in caring for churches, chapels and meeting houses. Both also spoke of the importance of sharing best practice between County Churches Trusts and of working together with the National Churches Trust on matters of common concern.

The welcome was followed by a morning of presentations from some excellent speakers: Zoe van Zwanenberg from the Good Society Project of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Kate Streeter from Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) Maintenance Co-operatives Project, Diane Evans, Head of Listed Places of Worship Advice, English Heritage and Sarah Holloway, the Heritage Open Days Co-ordinator.

Changes and inspiring ideas

**Good Society Project**
Zoe van Zwanenberg gave a presentation on behalf of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland about church-based and faith groups’ contribution to society. She explained that many churches exist not as closed gatherings but as communities with a deep concern for everyone in their neighbourhood.
**A Good Society** emerges as a place that re-builds the spirit by offering hope. It integrates different generations and faiths, and models healthy ways of living and being. Church buildings are a sanctuary for creating a Good Society, being both holy places and places of welcome for all.

**SPAB Maintenance Co-operatives Project**
The subject of Kate Streeter’s presentation was ‘How best to maintain church buildings’. She spoke about how people from the whole community, not just the congregation, should look after church buildings.

The aim of the project, Kate explained, is to create a network of volunteers and develop their skills to carry out essential preventative maintenance of their local places of worship. Free training, online resources and access to professional advice are offered as part of the project — as well as being part of a sociable network of volunteers who share resources, skills and ideas.

Currently, the project is working to build capacity at community level in five target areas of the country: Lincolnshire, Cumbria, North East, Worcestershire/Herefordshire, Dorset and Somerset.

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**English Heritage**
The third presentation, on the future of English Heritage and its role in caring for places of worship, was given by Diana Evans. She explained that from 2015, the statutory and other support and advice division of English Heritage will become the responsibility of a new organisation called Historic England.

* English Heritage will continue to care for and run the outstanding historic places which help to explain England’s history.
* Historic England will continue the work of English Heritage in prioritising help, support and advice to places of worship and also to promote their value.

Diana stressed that places of worship should have the support of people who do not worship in them. Shared use and new uses would be key to safeguarding church buildings in the future.

**Heritage Open Days**
Completing the morning agenda was Sarah Holloway, who spoke about how more places of worship could take part in Heritage Open Days (HODs) - helping to promote Ride+Stride.

HODs celebrate England’s fantastic architecture and culture by offering free access to places that are usually closed to the public. This year, HODs will take place on 11–14 September, coinciding with Ride+Stride.

Places of worship that register with HOD are offered a mention on its website and highly visible welcome signs.

Sarah went on to suggest other ways to maximise visitor appeal. Ideas included organ playing ‘taster sessions’, displays of vestments, graveyard tours and of course, tasty food and drink.

Photos: courtesy of HOD (above and left) and English Heritage (above left)
There was then the opportunity, over a light buffet lunch, to meet with friends and exchange ideas.

A presentation about the history and mission of Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, given by Faith Bow- ers, was attended by delegates during the lunch break.

Focused on fundraising
Fundraising was the subject of the two workshops held in the afternoon.

Andrew Day, Director of Compton Fundraising Consultants offered advice on how to run fundraising campaigns and how to attract donors. While Chris Field from JustGiving outlined ways in which the online fundraising platform can be used by small charities.

Chris was joined by Andy Hamfleet from AAM Associates who spoke about the benefits of text message donating — ease being one.

At the close of the conference, delegates were invited on a tour of St Giles in the Fields, Holborn, followed by a service of Evensong held in the church’s vestry building — one of the few such buildings still to survive in London today.

Originally opened as Bloomsbury Chapel, the church opened in December 1848, the first Baptist chapel to stand proudly on a London street, visibly an ‘ecclesiastical edifice’.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the event. The feedback, particularly on the relevance of the topics, has been positive, together with some very useful comments to consider for next year’s conference, when we hope to see you.

Copies of the presentation slides and website addresses are available on the National Churches Trust website, under News. www.nationalchurchestrust.org

Future events

Managing Major Buildings Projects in Places of Worship, 24 June 2014
- Places still available -

Following previous, very successful, training days, Historic Religious Buildings Alliance’s (HRBA) third training day in partnership with Purcell is to be on 24 June in All Saints Church, Oakham in the Diocese of Peterborough.

This is an important opportunity to hear expert speakers on how to manage a major project in a place of worship, and to meet others who are carrying out such work.

The purpose of the day is to help with the management of all stages of a building project in a place of worship, from start up through to making sure benefits are achieved over the long term. It is aimed at those concerned with places of worship of all sizes, types and location, and will be relevant both to new build, alterations and repairs.

Although focusing on projects of a significant size, many of the principles apply in simplified form to smaller projects, and the day should be useful whatever the size of project being considered. It will be useful both to those who are directly responsible for a single project in a single building, and those who have an oversight role for a number of religious buildings.

The day is open to anyone
The programme and booking form is available to download from the News & Events section of the website www.purcelluk.com

The HRBA is an independently-funded group within the Heritage Alliance. This is the biggest alliance of heritage interests in the UK, set up to promote the central role of the non-Government movement in the heritage sector.
This year the Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust (LHCT), formed in 1964, is celebrating its 50th Anniversary. It is also the 25th Anniversary of Leicestershire Ride+Stride — so we have a Golden/Silver Anniversary to enjoy!

We shall be celebrating around Leicester and Leicestershire and everyone is welcome at any of the events, which will include refreshments and a short presentation on the work of the Trust.

Our celebrations will culminate in a Thanksgiving Choral Evensong on Sunday, 28 September at the wonderful church of St James the Greater, London Road, Leicester LE2 1NE, followed by a reception.

Photo competition
Since March, the Leicester Mercury has been running a church photo competition to celebrate the Trust’s 50th Anniversary.

The twelve winning photos will be made into a beautiful 2015 calendar, which will be on sale at the Thanksgiving Service and then throughout Leicester and Leicestershire.

Details of the competition and all our events can be found at: www.lhct.org.uk/anniversary

Janet Arthur, Chairman LHCT
chairman@lhct.org.uk
0116 279 3995

Fond farewells & warm welcomes
The Northumbria Historic Churches Trust, which helps churches in Northumberland, County Durham, Newcastle and Tyne & Wear, is losing its long serving secretary and familiar face at the Annual Conference, Peter De Lange, who is retiring. Peter’s replacement, Tot Charlton, will be in role by the early summer. The new general address for the Trust is: Ryton Grange, Ryton NE40 3UN; tel: 0191 413 3878; email: secretary@northumbriahct.org.uk

Peter Sandberg, Chairman of the Lincolnshire Churches Trust, retired earlier this year following the trust’s 2013 Diamond Jubilee. In its first 50 years, the Trust made 1,157 grants to 495 different places of worship, totalling £1.5 million. Peter’s chairmanship saw help being given to many places of worship including the handling of the annual block grant from WREN. Henrietta Reeve D.L. succeeds Peter as Chair.

At the close of 2013, Charles Baker stepped down as Chairman of the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust (OHCT). Over the last five years OHCT has delivered over £1,000,000 in grants under his chairmanship. He is to be succeeded by Basil Eastwood.

Christopher Walton, President and previous Chairman has retired from both his roles at OHCT and as CTF representative for Oxfordshire, Warwickshire & Coventry, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. His enthusiasm and insight will be much missed. Richard Lethbridge succeeds him as President.

Martin Thompson, long serving OHCT Secretary, has also retired, to be succeeded by Jonathan Scheele.
The Friends of Somerset Churches and Chapels held a celebration and re-launch at the Town Hall in Wells in November 2013 and announced that, from 1 January 2014, its name would change to the Somerset Churches Trust. It was a very successful and happy evening.

The Trust’s President, Lady Gass, the Abbott of Downside and Tessa Munt MP were among the 120 guests who filled the hall to its capacity. Chairman, David Sisson talked about the change of name and celebrated the Trust’s achievements in its first eighteen years — over £500,000 given in grants to churches and chapels in the county — and expanded on its mission for the future. The Trust now supports work that not only keeps church buildings in good repair but also enables greater use of buildings by the whole community through the addition of facilities, such as serveries and toilets, and easier access.

The Trust was fortunate in its main speaker for the evening. Under the theme ‘A perspective on the 21st century Parish Church: continuity and change’, Dr John Goodall, historian and Architectural Editor of Country Life, gave some encouraging and sensible advice to custodians of church buildings. Some of the best projects he had seen in village churches were those, executed on a small budget and planned over a longer time to allow flexibility and for the needs of the village community to become clear as work progressed.

The evening also saw the launch of the Playfair Prize, named in honour of the Trust’s founder, Hugh Playfair. The prize will be awarded in November 2015 to the church or chapel that, during the period 1 January 2005 to 31 March 2015, has completed work to enhance and extend the use of its building by its wider community. Subsequent competitions may be every five years.

Full details of the SCT’s events and grants can be found on the new website: www.somersetchurchestrust.org

"Somerset has many beautiful churches and it is wonderful to see the sensitive and imaginative ways in which some are being adapted to meet modern life. We gladly offer help and, in recognising work that has already brought new life to many, we hope that our Playfair Prize will encourage and inspire other congregations to grow and make fuller use of their buildings."
— David Sisson
Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust

Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust (OHCT) was pleased to welcome TRH the Earl and Countess of Wessex to a special service at Dorchester Abbey in April, to celebrate its 50th Anniversary.

As well as attending the service, their Royal Highnesses took the opportunity to meet participants in the OHCT’s annual Ride+Stride, which last year raised more than £127,000.

Even greater impact
As part of its celebrations, OHCT is running a major campaign to raise an endowment fund to provide sustainable funding for churches. The Anniversary Campaign aims to have a greater impact by increasing average funding for each successful project applicant.

The OHCT’s new website, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is now live! To read more about these items and more, visit: http://ohct.org.uk/

Building on experience
In February OHCT published Churches for Communities: adapting Oxfordshire’s churches for wider community use by Becky Payne. Formerly Policy Officer at the Church of England’s Cathedral and Church Buildings Division, Becky now works as Historic Religious Buildings Development Officer at The Historic Religious Buildings Alliance. The book looks at the way some of Oxfordshire’s churches have been adapted for wider use.

Copies are available through booksellers, including Amazon and Waterstones, and all proceeds go to the work of OHCT.

“The intention of the book is to inspire other churches that may be about to embark on similar undertakings and hope that they will benefit from the experience of those who have gone before.”

- Becky Payne
Nottinghamshire Historic Churches Trust

Nottinghamshire Historic Churches Trust (NHCT) together with Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Southwell & Nottingham Diocesan Advisory Council (DAC) held a training day in April entitled ‘Funding and Faculties’ aimed at clergy, churchwardens and other interested parties.

NHCT started the day off with a brief history of the Trust, followed by information on how the Trust works, what it can offer churches and how to apply for grants. It is hoped that this will lead to more applications for funding.

HLF in the East Midlands gave a similar presentation on what it can offer to churches and how to apply for grants, with an explanation of some of the information they need in order to assess applications. Interestingly, in Nottinghamshire applications for grants are lower than a few years ago, as are applications for faculties — this is in contrast to neighbouring Lincolnshire.

After a pleasant break for soup and sandwiches, there was information about the DAC — its role, advice and the application process, how this linked with the Registry, and its role with approvals and the faculty process. Both were in light of new national procedures. After these presentations there were questions on the details of the process.

**Working together**
The day was well received by an audience of about 40 and was an excellent example of ‘working together’ in the interest of our churches. It is hoped that this will be a pilot for future events, and that the County and the Diocese, as well as other denominations, can build on the successful format of the day to promote the help available to those caring for our historic churches.

**Festival of Churches**

Last year saw a co-operative effort in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire to promote and encourage church tourism.

The Herefordshire Historic Churches and Shropshire Historic Churches Trusts were leaders in enabling this exciting initiative involving the Diocese of Hereford.

With plans for 2014 in development, the festival looks to become a regular event in some form or another.

If you would like more information, please email Sarah de Rohan.

**Anthea Moat, Nottinghamshire Historic Churches Trust**

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Send us your news stories
If you have a story, update or best practice to share in the next CTF newsletter, we would love to hear from you. Please email your contributions to: alison.pollard@nationalchurchestrust.org
The CTF, Ride+Stride National Committee and National Churches Trust are committed to helping trusts to maintain, cultivate and develop their fundraising events.

As well as a page highlighting the relationship between local and national organisations, the website contains contact information for each trust and a link to the Ride+Stride national website. This will help to open up promotional opportunities.

Earlier this year the National Churches Trust launched its new website. For the first time, the website features dedicated pages to the work that the National Churches Trust carries out to support and promote local churches trusts.

The CTF welcomes this development and asks trusts to check the contact information for their trust, which is displayed in the listings section on the National Churches Trust website. Please send updates to: alison.pollard@nationalchurchestrust.org

This section of the newsletter includes some of the ways the National Churches Trust is working with and supporting local trusts. There is also news of important changes that will effect local trusts. We hope that you find this section of value.

The CTF, Ride+Stride National Committee and National Churches Trust are committed to helping trusts to maintain, cultivate and develop their fundraising events.

Started in 1982, Ride+Stride is one of the biggest national fundraisers for churches, with more than 8,000 places of worship opening their doors to walkers and cyclists on the second Saturday of September, each year. To coincide with Open House London the Heritage of London Trust will this year have its event on 20 September.

The National Churches Trust supports this annual fundraiser by running a national Ride+Stride website, and promoting your Ride+Stride events. This is also an opportunity for trusts to use their JustGiving sites to widen their fundraising reach.

This year, we aim to raise more than £1.5 million and will be doing this with the support of adventurer, writer and television presenter Bear Grylls.

“Wherever you go, your Ride+Stride journey will help ensure that historic churches remain at the heart of our national heritage and the soul of local communities for generations to come.”

- Bear Grylls

To find out how your trust can make the most of the national Ride+Stride website, email Georgina at: georgina.rogerson@nationalchurchestrust.org

Don’t forget to also send Georgina your photos for www.rideandstrideuk.org and the CTF newsletter!
The first set of figures is in for the agreement between the online fundraising platform, JustGiving, and the National Churches Trust.

Within the first few months of the arrangement an enormous £250,000 has been raised by county churches trusts and places of worship. The potential is clear and we hope that following the workshop at this year’s CTF conference trusts will have the confidence to develop online fundraising further.

Local churches trusts qualify for a monthly fee free account under this arrangement negotiated by the National Churches Trust. Through the special partnership, churches, chapels and meeting houses can join JustGiving for free via the National Churches Trust, giving access to the whole JustGiving platform, and saving the usual £15 a month subscription fee. Churches that already have a JustGiving subscription are also eligible to take part, although fees already charged will not be refunded.

A free text giving number is also offered as part of the arrangement, and both online and text donations can be gift aided to maximise the benefit of the donation. To apply for your JustGiving page through this partnership, please fill in the registration form on the National Churches Trust website.

Information can be found via the ‘How we help’ pages on the National Churches Trust website by choosing the ‘Justgiving for churches’ option.

The National Churches Trust and JustGiving hope to hold a workshop on how trusts can maximise the many features available to them on the JustGiving platform. The workshop is expected to follow a practical ‘how to’ format, an idea that was welcomed by many of the CTF Annual Conference delegates. Once finalised, information about the workshop will be circulated to trusts. In the meantime, for any advice and information about JustGiving, email: alison.pollard@nationalchurchestrust.org

Important changes to the Listed Places of Worship VAT Grant Scheme *Reminder*

Since 1 October 2013, the scope and operation of the Listed Places of Worship grant scheme have changed, enabling more listed places of worship to claim for grants on VAT through the scheme.

The changes are accompanied by administrative changes to simplify claiming through the scheme, these include:

* Works to pipe organs, turret clocks, bells and bell ropes are now eligible for claims under the scheme.
* Professional services directly related to eligible building work, e.g. architect fees, are also eligible.

These changes apply to works supplied from 1 October 2013.

The scheme accepts applications from religious and charitable groups whose main purpose is to conserve, repair and maintain redundant listed places of worship, which are not in private ownership.

The Norfolk Churches Trust has already successfully campaigned to become able to claim VAT grants for the 13 churches in their care leased from the Church of England.

Full details of the changes and new application forms are available on the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme website: www.lpwscheme.org.uk
# Churches Trusts Forum Members

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## The National Churches Trust is moving office

From 1 July 2014 our new address will be:
7 Tufton Street, Westminster, London SW1P 3QB

Registered charity no: 1119845