



DEVON HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

Dedicated to providing funding for our church buildings in their hour of need

Patrons:
The Lord-Lieutenant of Devon. The Lord Bishop of Exeter.

www.devonhistoricchurches.co.uk
Charity No 1189807

Welcome to the Summer 2024 Newsletter

We began fund raising in March this year with an Open Garden event at the Bishop's Palace in Exeter. This secret, walled garden is a haven of peace, bird song and scented shrubs, and a wonderful opportunity to meet DHCT friends and visitors from all over the county, who travelled by foot, cycle, train or car to enjoy the garden.



The Rt Reverend Bishop Jackie welcomed us this year as Acting Bishop of Exeter. We welcomed visitors over four days raising £1,769 for Trust funds. Visitors were offered hot cross buns on the two Sundays in March and afternoon tea with home made cakes after Easter. Thank you Archdeacon Andrew for such an attractive poster.



Bishop's Open Garden

The garden of the Bishops Palace is one of the best-kept secrets in Exeter. It covers three acres and is one of the most ancient in Devon. Bounded by the old Florman bank and city wall to the east and by the Cathedral to the west, it is a haven of peace in the middle of the city.

DHCT Chairman, Lady Mary Burnell-Nugent, thanked James, Head Gardener, for spending his afternoon joining visitors around the garden and sharing his knowledge of plants and shrubs and trees.



WEBSITE N E W S

Devon Historic Churches Trust : New website. Our website designer has made good progress and the Trustees are so grateful to him for persevering with us as a client at a very difficult time for him. He has now sent us the first draft of the new 'home page' and we are gathering recent project pictures and reports, as well as all the policies, financial information, Charity Commission requirements, etc., etc., to upload to the new website. We are reviewing text, font, colour and content and are excited at the possibility of launching the new website in the late Autumn.



The Trustees of Devon Historic Churches Trust are thrilled to receive from Douglas Young the most generous gift of his website, social media platforms and his amazing portfolio of photographic images of Devon churches. Douglas has visited and recorded over 100 Devon churches in recent years and continues his passion for photography for the ongoing benefit of DHCT and the churches that we support with grant funding at their time of need. Please do visit www.devonchurchland.co.uk and the linked social media platforms, including Instagram, to enjoy the photos of historic church buildings and their amazing treasures of heritage, history, art, skills, beauty and craftsmanship, and donate through the QR code to Devon Historic Churches Trust's 'Just Giving' page www.devonhistoricchurches.co.uk

PROJECTS SUPPORTED AND GRANTS AWARDED

In the North East of the County, Rose Ash Parish Church of St Peter is at the southern-most tip of the Edgemoor Mission Community, a group of 11 churches on the edge of Exmoor. *'Replace gable copings'* involved a considerable repair project, more than just three words suggests. The nine copings that needed to be replaced were the South Porch copings, main East copings and side East gable copings, a £25,000 + VAT project undertaken by skilled stonemasons. The PCC had hoped to save some of the replaced gutting stones but found that they crumbled as they fell to the ground.



In an email to thank DHCT for their grant, the PCC's Project Manager, Murray Hammick, said, "The stone used is Witton Fell Yorkstone, a much more durable stone than either the orange gutting or doulting used previously and which deteriorated so quickly. The Yorkstone was approved at a site meeting with the DAC and a representative of Historic England on the basis that the somewhat harsh conditions high on this cold and wet North Devon ridge justified the use of a more durable stone. That said, it was quite hard to tell the difference between a sample of doulting or gutting and the Yorkstone, other than by the rather smoother feel; the colour was very similar. Saving rural English churches in small villages might not hit the national headlines, but it is so very, very important to communities such as ours, and we very much appreciate your help." Murray provided all the photographs. DHCT released a grant of £5,000 on receipt of a copy invoice from the Stonemasons.



Chawleigh Parish Church of St James is one of the 12 essentially rural churches in the Little Dart Mission Community, in the heart of beautiful countryside between Exeter and Barnstaple. Paul Holmes, DHCT Deanery Representative presented his report to the Trustees in October 2023. On his visit to the church, it was immediately obvious to Paul that the interior damp patches near the top of the tower west wall and damage at the top of the chancel south wall were the result of rain penetration from the roof. The PCC had hoped to begin work in 2022 but ongoing discussion with the Diocese over the type of slate to be used had delayed the start of work. At an estimated project cost of £48,543, including interior plasterwork repair and decoration, the church community had raised £40,000. Paul recommended to the Trustees that a grant of £6,000 towards roof repairs would encourage the ongoing necessary fundraising.



← Multiple slipped roof slates to be replaced.



Failed guttering causing interior damp walls. →



→ Damp, north west corner before gully repairs and interior decoration.



← Churchwarden's photo of Chawleigh church after roof/guttering repairs and scaffolding taken down.

The Congregation enjoy refreshments after the Service at decorated north east area of nave. → Inset custom built serving counter.



Chawleigh Church has a particularly fine, 12 bay, C16 Rood Screen that was renovated in 1910 but, sadly, had been concreted to the floor. Conservation remedies were advised at an estimated cost of £4,272. Concurrently, the PCC is undertaking a project to create a small kitchen area estimated at £3,600. The church community had launched a roof repair appeal, received a small legacy and drawing on limited investment funds but faced considerable ongoing fund raising. The Churchwarden, Andrew Walton, has been Project Manager and, with the PCC, sourced funding with resourcefulness, attended meetings with the DAC, Conservation Architect, contractors with skilled craftsmen, and encouraged a pragmatic approach to a project that might be affordable to a small rural community. Andrew has sent me a few 'before' images of the damp affected west wall internal and roof / guttering now all refurbished or replaced. On a visit to Chawleigh church at the end of July 2024 I was able to join the congregation enjoying refreshments in the newly decorated, custom built, 'kitchen' area after a Sunday morning Service. The photo of Chawleigh Parish Church was taken by Andrew at the end of the project, after the scaffolding was taken down.

[Fundraising for Net Zero Carbon and the Environment | The Church of England](#)

Copy and paste or click the link to this Church of England website for useful information on sources of grant funding for environment and church projects. The advice focuses on Net Zero Carbon projects but applies more widely to other environmental projects and also to any building project that will reduce carbon emissions as part of what it aims to achieve, e.g a new lighting scheme or major reordering. Lists of suitable funders and advice on how to apply to environmental funders.

‘The Meshaw Project’

Meshaw Parish Church of St John the Baptist sits in the heart of the village. It was rebuilt in 1838 and comprises just a nave and a bell tower. Paul Cooper, Deanery Representative, visited the church and reported to the Trustees that in 2018, the Meshaw Parish Meeting and the Parochial Church Council started serious discussions about the wider community being able to become more involved with the Church and using the building as a village hub, as Meshaw did not have a village hall of its own. Initially a feasibility study was carried out and the necessary planning issues were tackled, resulting in agreement from the Church of England to alter and make improvements to the fabric of the building to provide not only improved facilities for church goers but also provision for wider community use.



Project Manager, Jeff Souch, said, “Much of the reordering funds were raised by a multitude of grants from 16 different grant funders requiring over 36 grant applications to be written and submitted for consideration. We are very grateful that Devon Historic Churches Trust felt able to support us. The project started in 2018 with Faculty approved in April 2022. Final architectural plans thereafter and tendering from Builders in November 2022 - February 2023 meant fund raising with the local population finding £4,500 very quickly by the formation of a Friends Group holding various events. The Friends are now very active in providing activities for the community and fund raising in support of our "Village Hub". Church services continue as usual with added benefits such as teas and coffees after a service and wc facilities. The Friends have held a plant sale, treasure hunt, pig roast, pumpkin festival, fete. We estimated that circa £171,000 was raised in total! This has the makings of being a real example of the Church of England embracing Village needs and Reordering whilst retaining a fully operational Church Mission. Come and have a look.” **Thank you Jeff for all your work in securing such a successful project outcome for the benefit of the Meshaw community and beyond.**



On Sunday 12 May 2024, Archdeacon Verena Breed led a service of Rededication and Holy Communion following the reordering of the Church. The picture to the left shows Vicar Adrian Wells with members of the congregation.



Emergency and Small grants

Just one more slide to tell you of some of the emergency or small grants that the Trust has supported in recent months. This slide was included in the presentation that we gave at 'Meet the Funders' event organised by the Exeter Diocese in June.

Abbotsham Parish church of St Helen is Grade II* early 13 century with a c.1300 tower, restored in 1870. Within the North Devon National Landscape, the church is exposed to the Atlantic Ocean. In May the PCC reported that the DHCT grant of £4,000 will help significantly towards the cost of the urgently needed repairs to the church tower roof. Work is progressing well and an invoice from the specialist roofing contractor provided evidence of expenditure on the project.

The PCC also confirmed that St Helen's parish will be taking part in the DHCT Fund Raising day in September.



Retirement of Lady Anne Boles

At the Trustees' Meeting on 15th July Lady Mary Burnell-Nugent announced the retirement of Lady Anne Boles and said, "After many years of amazing service and commitment to Devon Historic Churches Trust, today we say goodbye to Lady Anne Boles. Lady Anne is a terrific lady and we owe her a big debt of gratitude. The Trust was the idea of the Bishop of Exeter and the Lord Lieutenant in 1973 and Anne was in it from the start. Several years later Anne, who was one of the leading lights of the Trust and had played a big role in raising the wonderful endowment money, became Chairman. She was Chairman for 15 years and led with great strength, humour and knowledge. She recruited wonderful Trustees, some of whom are here today.

In the first 40 years 400 churches, chapels and a synagogue received grants, some several times over. The Trust was punching often above its level and making a great difference to the Churches and Chapels of Devon. Anne encouraged the friends and Trustees and annually organised a wonderful bus tour of Devon Churches. I have a great memory of the bus being stuck in a very narrow lane and Anne taking full charge of the situation. It was always a fascinating and enjoyable day.

In 2013 Anne decided to stop being the chairman but after a short break returned as a trustee for a further 10 years. We are all so impressed by her wonderful service. Anne encouraged many churches in Devon to apply for a grant in order to modernise, improve and maintain their building. She admits that she will miss the talking and sometimes gossip with the people who, like her, really care for our Devon Churches. We will miss you too, Lady Anne and thank you again for all your service. We all wish you the very best."

Lady Anne was presented with a bouquet of flowers and a card of thanks from the Trustees.

WELCOME TO NEW TRUSTEES

And then we were 12!! At the risk of sounding like an Agatha Christie novel, the remaining Trustees began to search for new Trustees who might bring new skills, experience and words of wisdom to our team. We particularly felt the need for people with skills in social media and associated platforms who could contribute to the design and management of our new website. The General Purposes Committee advertised the vacancy in 'Roots and Shoots', the Diocesan Newsletter. We interviewed applicants and selected four potential candidates to meet the Board of Trustees in July. We are pleased to report that all four candidates were appointed. We welcomed and congratulated them on their appointment. We hope that on the next occasion we seek to recruit Trustees, suitably qualified ladies will respond to our vacancy advertisement. Our new Trustees are:-

Canon Nick Fennemore. A former NHS Chaplain and Canon of Winchester Cathedral, now retired to live in Chagford where he serves as a Priest in the Moreton Mission Community. Nick has served DHCT as a Deanery Representative for some two years.

Professor Roger Kain, CBE. A Fellow of the British Academy. A professor of Humanities. He has served Withycombe Raleigh and Lymptone PCC and, as a family, has taken part in Ride & Stride cycling raising funds for DHCT.

Mr Richard King. A Charity Law Consultant Solicitor. Retired Chairman of Tozers LLP and Consultant on charity matters. Chair of Trustees of Teign Heritage. Chair of HCPT's Westcountry Region.

The Venerable Nick Shutt. Canon of Exeter Cathedral. Retired Archdeacon of Plymouth. Previously a Solicitor. Recently appointed a Member of the New Cathedral Chapter. He lives on the western side of Dartmoor.

The names of all Trustees appear on the Charity Commission's Register in the public domain.

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[How the new Government can help keep UK churches open and in use | National Churches Trust](#)

This link will take you to the National Churches Trust website and suggests what the new UK Government needs to do to help us all keep our amazing churches open and in use. This includes reinstating ringfenced funding, keeping in place the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme, which allows historic churches to reclaim the VAT on repairs, new incentives for the public to give and for philanthropy to play a greater role, a strategy to boost tourism, more use of churches for community support services, and regular opening during the week. *(published by Sir Philip Rutnam, Chair of the National Churches Trust; 4th July 2024)*

And finally, to finish where we began - Devon Historic Churches Trust

FUND RAISING 2024



Have a fun day out
visiting our glorious
churches & countryside



Send a donation or
gain sponsorship for
an activity



Arrange a Flower
Festival or Open
Gardens day



Musical
entertainments are
always a delight



Cream Teas & Coffee
Mornings are always
popular



Arrange something
Fun for all the Family

Claire, the Trust's Fund-Raising Secretary, has scrutinised the Trust's current website www.devonhistoricchurches.co.uk to ensure that all documents have the correct Charity Commission Registration No., policy review dates and marketing material for the September 2024 Fun Day. Thank you so much to those of you who have already sent Claire details of your fund-raising events and posters to upload to our website and include in the online 'Guide to Open Churches'. Here is the link: Devon Historic Churches Trust Wow! Three posters have just been received and uploaded to DHCT website as I am drafting this Newsletter!! Thank you, Woolsery, Clyst St Lawrence and St Clements, Powderham. You are terrific!

Thank you to all you wonderful people who have already told us about the events that you are planning. Parishes in Barnstaple and Cadbury Deanery have already told us about the inspirational events that they will be holding on or near the second weekend in September. Do please send us pictures and reports. How steep is Heanton Hill??? Tower tours, community lunches, history talks, poetry and cream teas. It is so encouraging. Thank you!!! The Trustees and Deanery Representatives will try and join as many of you as possible to cheer you on.

P O S T E R C O M P E T I T I O N !

You are all so clever at designing posters to promote your Devon Historic Churches Trust Fun Day event that we thought you might like a challenge!

The Trustees are offering a small prize for the best, most attractive, eye-catching, poster that promotes Devon Historic Churches Trust Fun Fund-Raising Day 2024 and is promoted on the Trust's website. Judge's decision final!

Please send your Posters to Claire as soon as possible at contact@devonhistoricchurches.co.uk for her to upload to the DHCT website and 'Guide to Open Churches'.

Good luck to everyone. Have fun in your fund-raising but please stay safe. Please send me photos and any press articles about your challenges.

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