



Chairman's Welcome



A warm welcome is extended to all our readers with the first Newsletter of the year. As we continue to cautiously move forward, with covid still having an impact on our lives, the signs of spring continue to grow all around us, encouraging us to enjoy and appreciate the outdoors. The setting of our churches throughout the County displays the colour and a symbol of hope for the future.

We have some exciting news to share with the imminent relaunch of our website which looks very good indeed. Our use of social media continues to develop with Cameron Bonser and a great team working closely on this, so please also follow us in particular on Instagram and Twitter.

Planning is progressing well for this year's Ride+Stride event to be held on Saturday 10th September, and Ed Compton, who has been a great supporter over a number of years, joined a small group of trustees in the New Year to discuss some new initiatives. The Ride+Stride remains a strong contributor to our finances and we are looking to raise over £20,000 for the Trust and supporting churches. Look out for more information on the website or through the participating churches. If you have not heard anything yet, please do contact Margaret Lowe.

We had an extremely useful meeting in January with Paul, Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, and Martin Cooper, Chief Executive of the Diocese and a past trustee of the NHCT, and we have already seen some promising results as we seek to re-establish a closer contact with the Diocese. We are also exploring how we can work more closely with other denominations in the County.

As I write this introduction I am looking forward to the first Friends' meeting on the 23rd April with a visit to St Swithin's church, Wellow and St Paulinus church, New Ollerton. If you have not been able to book this time, do look out for our further visits and take the opportunity to introduce the Trust to new Friends and supporters. In the meantime enjoy the Newsletter and do share with your friends.

Graeme Renton - *Chairman*

Friends' Visit

St Swithin's church, Wellow and St Paulinus church, New Ollerton

It was such a pleasure to be able to have a proper outing for the Friends after more than two years of restrictions. The visit was a real afternoon of contrasting churches; St Swithin's at Wellow is basically a medieval church of the 12th to the 14th century, while the foundation stone for St Paulinus church at New Ollerton was laid in 1931. It was most interesting to visit two very different churches, both full of such fascinating and varied details.

St Swithin's is a stone church with a wide south aisle, almost as wide as its nave. Its tower is 12th century at the bottom, 12-13th century in the middle, and is topped with perpendicular crenellations and four crocketed pinnacles of the 15th century. St Paulinus church is built from unusually thin Butterley bricks of mixed colours of greys and browns. It consists of a nave, chancel, and sanctuary under a continuous roof. St Swithin's is in the medieval gothic style while St Paulinus is Romanesque with more than a hint of Art Deco.



St Paulinus, New Ollerton

The visit was finished off with a very generous afternoon tea in the community hall adjoining St Paulinus (coincidentally designed by the Trust's chairman, Graeme Renton). Delicious sandwiches and homemade cakes washed down with freshly brewed tea was a super way to end this most interesting Friends' visit – hopefully the first of several for 2022!

Green Men... A Variation on a Theme

Images of heads with foliage coming out of their mouths, the famous 'Green Men' are a feature of many churches and it's fun to spot them when you're visiting new places. They've been found across the Christian world, seen as far away as Istanbul, and they turn up in pre-Christian Roman buildings as well. Hiding in plain sight, they have been described as pagan spirits subdued by the Christian church, or as bits of mischief carved by unsupervised masons and carpenters. Could these be popular versions of stories from classical mythology, where mortals, usually women, are turned into trees to protect them from unwelcome advances from the gods, or do they come from darker stories of hidden evil forces from the mysteries of the forests? There's no simple answer, but they do have an enduring interest. You can find a whole range of people, or creatures like this hairy head at Ripon on one of the misericords, with tendrils of plants coming out of their mouths, or simply surrounding their heads. Others are more extreme and the plants appear to grow out of their noses, or even their eyes.



"Hairy Head" misericord - Ripon Cathedral



Green Man with Birds - Southwell Minster



Green Lady with Hat - Southwell Minster

Anywhere that has carvings of foliage is likely to have one or more of these figures, and that, of course, includes Southwell Minster. Its world-famous Chapter House carvings, the 'Leaves of Southwell' have quite a few of these leaves inhabited with figures and some of them are Green Men, or women. The triangular spaces of the gables over the wall benches are perfect sites to fill up with foliage, so why not add in a face for extra interest. There's a plump face with seaweed, a young chap who's accompanied by two birds pecking at the flowers on his plant, and a lady with a smart hat who has two different types of plant, one from each side of her mouth.

One thing that you usually notice about these heads is that none of them looks particularly cheerful about having leaves and stems pouring out of their mouths; they look as if they're in pain, which is probably reasonable in the circumstances, but Southwell goes one better, and there are two examples here of a type not seen elsewhere, so far. These Green Men have just one stem, but it's growing straight out of their foreheads. From their expressions this isn't something they're enjoying; could they be suffering from headaches? There are two of these in the Chapter House, one high up and not very easy to see, the other is in the vestibule, so do look out for him next time you're there. Of course, if you happen to find others like them, do let me know.



"Headache" at Southwell Minster

Dr Jenny Alexander - NHCT Trustee

Grant Aided Project

Replacement windows at St Mary's church, Newstead

Nestling close to the famous Newstead Abbey and its estate, lies the small village of Newstead which grew up to meet the needs of the colliery which had steadily expanded since the initial opening in 1878. Those living in the area walked through the estate to worship in the Abbey Chapel, and the need for a more local place of worship was realised in 1928 with the opening of the new church set in a prominent central position facing west towards the main entrance road into the village.

The building was designed by the architect Cyril Hasledine and the resulting design and scale was quite modest with a simple duo-pitch roof and a local red brick chosen for the walls. As with many buildings constructed in the 1920s and 1930s, steel



A rather cold and draughty St Mary's in the snow



Original Crittall steel windows

windows were being introduced to replace timber with the well-established firm of Crittall becoming the most prominent manufacturer.

Sadly, with minimal funds being available to maintain the windows, a number had fallen into serious disrepair, with the frames badly corroded, some with holes, while the opening lights were buckled and beyond repair. The resulting cold and draughty interior was becoming a serious issue not only for the church members but for attracting or keeping community users.

The church sought quotes to replace the existing in 2020 using uPVC double-glazed frames which was the cheapest solution. Unfortunately, this would have had a significant impact on the appearance of the building, and the church architect became involved, and looked to achieve a more sympathetic design.

However, a change from the existing single-glazing required planning consent even though the church building was not listed.

Looking at the options available, a double-glazed solution using a polyester powder coated finish was explored with either the use of the Crittall steel profile or a matching aluminium profile.

The aluminium frame solution provided the most economical one to best replicate the existing window design subdivision of panes at a cost of £13,000. Utilising the steel option was over four times the price and clearly was out of the reach of this small church community. Another option suggested by the Conservation Officer was to replace the existing single-glazed windows with new matching Crittall steel windows and supplement with secondary glazing. However, while this would provide an ideal solution externally, it would cost even more than the steel double-glazing option, and would compromise the internal appearance.

Due to the change to double-glazing, the high level opening light unfortunately could not be replicated and the compromised solution of doubling the lower opening light resulted. Overall the final design does not significantly impact on the appearance of the church.

Finally, planning consent was achieved in 2021 and with the new windows installed, the church now has the sound basis to continue with more improvements and welcome the community into a draught free, warmer building. Nottinghamshire Historic Churches

Trust provided an important contribution towards the final costs and also identified and helped procure further finance. Failure to have secured funding could well have resulted in the closure of this church and a huge loss to the community



New aluminium windows

Fund Raising

Saturday 10th September 2022



Ride+Stride is a chance for cyclists and walkers to explore Nottinghamshire's historic churches whilst raising much-needed funds for their preservation. But what if you haven't heard of our great event yet? Whether you're a church warden looking to welcome visitors or a family looking for a great day out, here are seven great reasons to dust off those walking boots and pump up those tyres!

1. You'll be saving beautiful churches for the next generation

There are over 300 historic churches and chapels across Nottinghamshire, the focal points of many villages and towns up and down the county. Nottinghamshire Historic Churches Trust awards grants to preserve these buildings. But we can't do that without the money you help raise by taking part in Ride+Stride.

2. You'll be able to explore the fine heritage these special buildings have to offer

Have you ever wondered what's behind those arched doors? We admire the stained glass windows and gargoyles from the outside but now is your chance to explore the interiors of these fascinating buildings. Every church tells a story; with Ride+Stride, now is the chance to let curiosity get the better of you.

3. And you won't have to travel far to see it

As this is a county-wide event, there will be an open church near you. You needn't travel far to find stunning heritage - it's much closer to your doorstep than you think. That makes it easier for families and those less able to visit churches over a wide area. Participating churches will be open from 10am-6pm to welcome visitors, allowing you to discover all the stories.

4. Anyone can take part

You needn't be a church goer; from families looking for a great day out to groups of friends and colleagues looking for a new challenge, Ride+Stride is truly an event for everyone. Why stop at bikes and boots? Joggers, drivers, horse riders and mobility scooters are most welcome to join in - whatever mode of transport suits you. Whether it's a leisurely stroll from the doorstep or an epic cross-county ride, you decide your route and what churches to visit along the way.

5. You'll get a physical and mental boost

Lockdowns may be behind us but the uptake in cycling and walking certainly isn't. We have all realised just how important it is to stay active, not only for the physical benefits, but the mood-boosting powers a simple stroll or cycle can have. Not only that, this is a great opportunity to explore parts of your local areas never visited before, maybe getting to know a building you might have walked past every day without ever giving it a second glance. Taking part in Ride+Stride combines both these uplifting things.

6. It brings you closer to nature too

It's not just the inside of churches that you can explore. Churchyards are some of the most peaceful places, not just for us, but also for the insects, birds and mammals that call it home. And there's all that beautiful Nottinghamshire countryside for you to enjoy in between the churches too, of course.

7. And there's tea and cake!

Still need more incentive? Some open churches will be offering tea and refreshments to fuel your day. Essential to keep you going!

So why not join in this year? Keep Saturday 10th September free!

The sponsorship forms and information about the event will be available this summer on Nottinghamshire Historic Churches Trust's website www.nottshistoricchurchestrust.org.uk or available from Margaret Lowe, the Ride+Stride Administrator, at info.nhct@gmail.com or 07757 800919.

The Trust can be contacted via:

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www.nottshistoricchurchestrust.org.uk

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