

DEVON HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

Dedicated to funding repairs and maintenance to places of
Christian worship in the Diocese of Exeter and throughout Devon

NEWSLETTER

July 2023

“Welcome to our annual Newsletter. The support of so many parishes and individuals enable Devon Historic Churches Trust to continue providing grants to help Devon’s churches in their hour of need. This newsletter provides a small sample of some of the work undertaken recently with your help and gives a glimpse of a selection of our supporters out and about raising funds and having fun in the process, on our Devon Historic Churches Day (incorporating the Ride+Stride) – half of which is returned immediately to participating churches.” “Everyone is a Winner!” These were the words of Judith Kauntz CBE whose passing has been a huge loss to Devon Historic Churches Trust. The DHCT Trustees miss her enormously. Her knowledge, skills, energy and commitment are irreplaceable in any one person but, gradually, between us, we are sharing the roles and responsibilities that Judith carried with such dedication. Judith wrote, designed and edited the DHCT Newsletter and for the 2023 Newsletter we have used the same format of Judith’s design to tell you about some of the Devon churches that we have supported. We hope you will enjoy reading about some of the wonderful work that the volunteers in the Parishes, Churchwardens, PCCs, DCCs, Treasurers, Parishioners, Fund-raisers and Friends have been undertaking to conserve and maintain our glorious Devon churches and how we, as DHCT, have been able to help with grant funding.

Grants Awarded during 2022/23 to 25 churches totalled £44,050 with a further £13,050 in Small and Emergency Grants. A selection of works enabled by grants are illustrated here:



Hatherleigh, St. John the Baptist. This Grade 1 Listed church in the heart of the market town of rural Devon, has an impressive 1990 wood shingle spire that was rebuilt following storm damage. Items listed in the 2021 QI requiring attention included, rotten oak wall plates on the left and right side of the porch, rotten oak rafters above the porch entrance, rotten battens beneath the slate porch roof and roof adjacent to the porch. Danny Semorad, DHCT Okehampton Deanery Representative, visited the church to assess the project for grant funding. DHCT was able to support the project with a total of £5,000 released in August 2022 on completion of the project and against a receipted copy of the contractor’s invoice. With a 200 seat capacity, the church regularly plays host to the ‘Two Moors Festival’ for classical concerts.

Wembworthy, St Michael & All Angels. In August 2022 we released £3,000 towards leaded glass repairs to this Grade II* Listed Church, one of 14 churches in the Little Dart Mission Community in the heart of beautiful North Devon countryside.

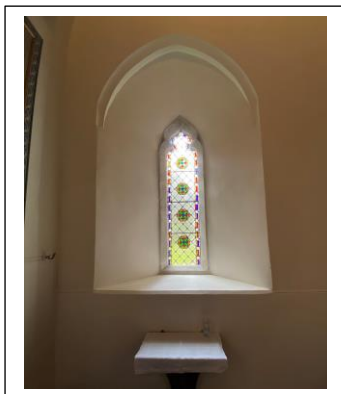


Kingsteignton Parish Church of St Michael



Here, the work comprised investigation of all ceiling panels to the North and South aisles; replacing defective panels with oak riven lathes and lime plaster; replacement of defective wall plaster; decoration of ceiling and wall panels. The work involved extensive scaffolding and use of traditional lime based materials and the final cost of the work increased by almost £15,000 above the original quotation. DHCT awarded £2,000 towards the cost of these works. DHCT Trustees visited the church in June and met Jackie Edwards (recently elected Churchwarden and a stalwart supporter and fund raiser for DHCT) and Fr Mark Smith (who took part in Ride & Stride in 2022 cycling from Kingsteignton to Okehampton).repairs.

Woolfardisworthy, All Hallows. In August 2021, the Churchwarden reported that the Lady Chapel in this Grade 1 Listed Church was in a “very sorry state of repair. Plaster and paint are coming off the three walls due to water ingress brought about by failure of the pointing on the external walls.” Paul Cooper, DHCT Trust’s Representative for Barnstaple Deanery, visited the church and met Churchwarden, Colin Pomeroy, who explained that both external pointing restoration and interior lime washing of walls required the hire of scaffolding. Despite experience of a major problem in raising funds since the Covid outbreak began, the All Hallows church community had raised 50% of the estimated cost and was awaiting the outcome of funding bids. By August 2022 the work had been completed. DHCT was able to release the grant of £1,500 against a copy of the contractor’s receipted invoice.



Talaton, St James the Great has some beautiful stained-glass windows but many were in a poor state of repair. Andrew Johnson, Master Glazier, was appointed and, in addition to major repairs, he suggested restoring the opening vents to improve ventilation. A representative of Talaton Parish Church said, ‘This generous grant has allowed us to carry out much needed work and we are really pleased to have the windows looking so fantastic.’ £2,000 was awarded by DHCT.

Teignmouth East Parish Church of St Michael The Archangel applied for funding towards the cost of urgent structural repairs to decayed tracery of 4 windows using the full repertoire of conservation repair techniques. The church is one of the closest to the sea and under constant battering from sea salt spray. The main cause of the decay is the disaggregation of the stone (and mortar repair) from the crystallisation of salts. DHCT Trustees visited the church in June when PCC Treasurer,



Christine Vince, explained that the bid for Heritage Lottery Funding began in 2016 with a first-round pass of £118,000 (62%) of the project cost of £190,376, and including a development grant of up to £11,800 (71%) of total eligible development work cost of £16,648. The following two years were spent in complying with the HLF grant conditions and £15,000 from a programme of fund-raising events. In DHCT awarded a grant of £4,000 towards the shortfall in funding. The Trustees congratulated the Treasurer, PCC and church community on their commitment and perseverance in raising the funds to look after the fabric of this historic, seaside church.

FUND RAISING EVENTS : OPEN GARDEN AT THE BISHOP’S PALACE in EXETER

Earlier this year, DHCT Patron, the Rt Reverend Bishop of Exeter, generously invited DHCT to hold ‘Open Garden’ days in the Bishop’s Palace Gardens. We were thrilled at this exclusive opportunity and accepted three dates in the Spring months to welcome visitors to enjoy the beautiful gardens in the heart of Exeter. The garden covers three acres and is one of the best kept secrets in Exeter. In his welcome, Bishop Robert said, “It is a privilege to be the custodian of this historic garden and a pleasure to share it with you in support of *Devon Historic Churches Trust.*” Exeter residents and visitors from throughout the county enjoyed the early Spring flowers in March and in May the blossoms, species shrubs and ancient trees that had burst into leaf. Many visitors were generous in making a donation in addition to the £4 admission charge, raising a total of £3,671 for DHCT to distribute by way of grants to Devon parishes that need help with repairs and maintenance of their historic churches. Thank you to all of you who supported DHCT.



A kind and knowledgeable visitor correctly identified the Wedding Cake Tree – *Cornus controversa Variegata.*



In his welcome to the Palace Gardens, Bishop Robert said, “As you stroll round its borders, I hope you will find renewal in the deep down things of God, of which the tranquility of the garden speaks and to which our cathedral bears witness in stone, prayer and praise.” I know how much “the glories” of my garden have meant to me, especially during the ‘lockdown’ years. We are certainly blessed to live in such a beautiful part of the world. Perhaps you will be opening your garden to visitors in September to raise funds for DHCT?

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2023 DEVON HISTORIC CHURCHES FUN DAY : The Second Weekend in September, or any date that suits you and your amazing community volunteers that support our beautiful Devon churches, their heritage and history. The DHCT Trustees truly recognise the time, energy, imagination and hard work that you all contribute to raising funds so that we can support communities, rural, coastal, city or countryside, that need our financial help for the conservation of our historic churches.

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Some Anecdotes from supporters of our Devon Historic Churches Day in earlier years:

CONGRATULATIONS to one of our top performing parishes: **Ideford Parish Church of St Mary** David and Janet Aylmore, with the support of Ideford village community, have taken part in DHC Day for many years, taking on the baton from the late Ann Rigby-Jones. For several years David and Janet have toured Devon in their 1934 Austin 7 (100 miles in 2021). In 2021 David and Janet completed a sponsored walk from Ideford to Ashcombe raising £220 for DHCT and St Mary’s Ideford. In 2022 they completed a sponsored drive on a circular route to North Devon raising £195.



Hot Off the Press!! Ideford Parish Newsletter for July/August 2023 already reports of the Aylmore family’s plan to hold a DHCT Stall at Ideford Village Fete on 12 September (what a great idea!) as well as another sponsored drive in the Austin 7 on Sunday 13th September. Brilliant, Janet and David. Thank you.

We look forward to hearing from everyone about your fund-raising plans for 2023. We have leaflets, posters and literature to help you promote your event, activity, sponsored ride, cycle, drive or fun ride with your horses and ponies. Let us know what you plan to do so that your event

The 2023 ‘Guide to Open Churches’ will soon be available at www.devonhistoricchurches.co.uk

Will you be holding a DHCT stall at your local village Fete? Organising a Fun Ride for your local equestrians? A teddy bear absail from the church tower? A Coffee Morning, Cream Tea or Barbecue? A Silent Auction, Cheese & Wine, Pasty & Cider or Community Lunch? A Pudding Bake-Off, Children’s Races on the Green, Family Dog Show or Flower Festival in your Parish Church? We always enjoy hearing about the activities of our supporters and appreciate all those who raise funds to enable us to continue giving Grants to our Devon Churches.”

Contact us by email contact@devonhistoricchurches.co.uk. Where our Fundraising Secretary, Claire Sherlock will make sure that your event is included in the DHCT ‘Guide to Open Churches’

The Newsletter Editor, Lee Martin, would be delighted to hear from you with news and pictures of your event. Newsletter Editor: underhayes01@outlook.com or text: 07552302293

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It's a volunteering thing!

In his departing letter at the end of his 12 month appointment as High Sheriff for Devon, Richard Youngman reflected on the crucial role that volunteers play in the community.

Devon Historic Churches Trust was inaugurated in 1972 with a purpose to preserve, beautify and reconstruct churches and chapels of all denominations in the county of Devon. The Trust's new status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation includes in the Trust's objectives the words "**for public benefit**". Whether regular worshippers or not, many feel it to be a nationwide duty to preserve their heritage of buildings for our successors. Our churches and chapels are in so many places the focus of communal life as well as places of pilgrimage for visitors. These historic buildings of special architectural and cultural significance still provide a place for family celebrations, community festivals, shelter and sanctuary, concerts, exhibitions and fairs, bellringers and choirs, as well as quiet prayer and reflection at times of personal spiritual need. Devon Historic Churches Trust is supported by a dedicated team of people from all areas of Devon and by expert advisers, dedicated to the upkeep of these important historic buildings at the centre of Devon's town, village, rural and coastal communities. The Trustees are all volunteers, are responsible for compliance with the charity's governance, manage the charity's resources in its best interests, are accountable and act with reasonable care and skill. They are supported by a team of volunteer Deanery Representatives and Assessors who serve the charity by providing a critical communication link with the volunteers in the Parishes and advise the Trustees on the quality and public benefit of the bids for funding received.

Devon Historic Churches Trust needs your help!

Deanery Representatives are critical to the Trust's communication with the Parishes. Devon is a huge county and DHCT Trustees rely on Deanery Representatives to be a point of contact in the Parishes, to offer encouragement in fund raising and facilitating grants. We have found that where there is an active representative, support for the Trust increases dramatically.

Do you have an interest in the historic churches and chapels of Devon and keen to see them preserved and maintained? Are you a good communicator who enjoys meeting people and offering them support in the parishes to raise funds for the maintenance of their parish church or help them facilitate a grant from DHCT?

This is an exciting time to support DHCT as the Trustees are on the verge of developing a new website. Would you like to attend quarterly Trustee meetings to experience and get involved in the wider work of the Trust? Some of our Trustees are also Deanery Representatives and Assessors of grant bids and would be happy to talk to you if you would like to know more about the role.

We have vacancies for DRs in Aylesbeare, Cadbury, Hartland, Ivybridge, Plymouth, Tiverton & Cullompton, Torrington, Totnes. Please contact Trustee, Mrs Lee Martin, in the first instance on Tel/text: 07552302293 Follow the link www.devonhistoricchurches.co.uk for a full list of current DHCT Deanery Representatives.