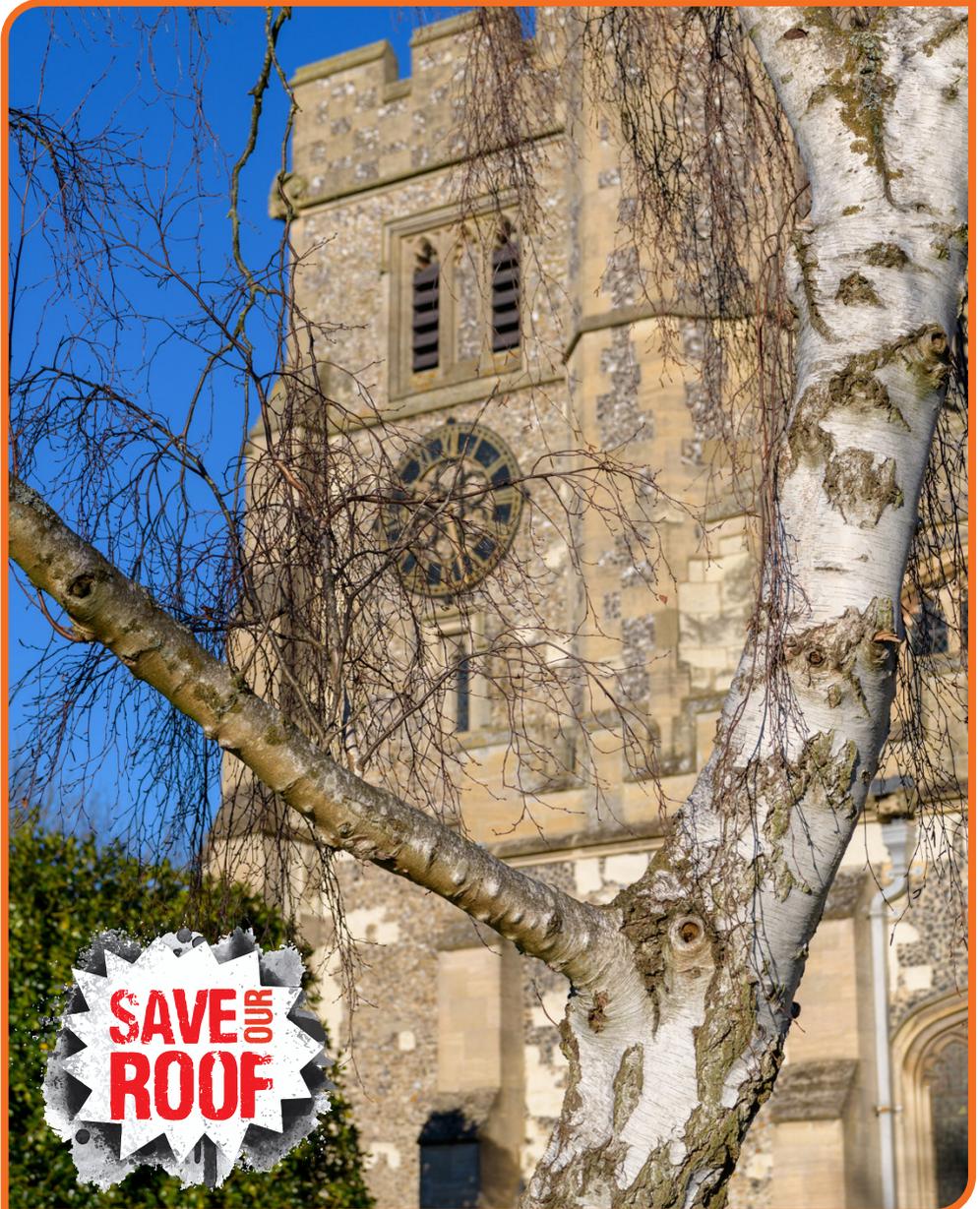




FRIENDS OF TRING CHURCH HERITAGE

MAGAZINE
AUTUMN 2024



**SAVE THE
ROOF**

NO ROOF - NO FUTURE



2025 APPEAL



NOW IT'S OUR TURN TO HELP!

Who are the Friends of Tring Church Heritage?

Tring's ancient Parish Church building and its surrounding grounds right on the High Street look great and are an important part of the character of the town.

All old historic buildings need regular maintenance, and in a large medieval Church building that doesn't come cheap! The building also needs to be updated from time to time, so that it doesn't just look beautiful but continues to be a great place for schools, community groups and the Church congregation to use and hold events.

The Friends of Tring Church Heritage (FOTCH) is a local heritage charity dedicated to maintaining Tring's historic Parish Church and grounds for future generations.

Over the past 30 years or so, FOTCH has made grants of over £300,000 for projects ranging from repair of 600-year-old walls to a new sound system and modern lighting to make the building more usable for schools and other groups.

No one is too young or too old to take part and we welcome volunteers to join in and be part of the FOTCH community.

For more details, visit the website www.fotch.co.uk



A word from the Editor

Summer flies away quickly and it's already time for the Autumn issue of FOTCH magazine.



FOTCH recognises St Peter and St Paul's Church in Tring as a historic building in the centre of our community and celebrates the secular life of this place. As well as a place of worship, the Church is the venue for numerous happenings and events. These activities are important for the town, as they are the lifeblood of our society – the location where charitable organisations are based, where social meetings take place, where support is provided and where big musical performances happen.

Without this building in our midst, the town would not have a heart. And the green space around the Church provides the focal point for the town, providing a tranquil and peaceful space to spend time and which presents a beautiful backdrop to the High Street.

The Church is important and FOTCH are committed to providing the financial support to enable the upkeep and maintenance of this cherished medieval structure. And we need your help...

This issue contains an article from our Honorary President (Grahame Senior) about how FOTCH is launching a 'Save our Roof' appeal campaign this autumn. Andrew Kinsey from the Fabric Committee provides a report which details the work that needs to be done.

We hear from Maria and Lottie Lashley about this year's Tring Family Fun Day, with photographs from the day – including the Beat the Goalie stall which featured your Editor between the posts!

There is further insight into what goes into the maintenance of the ornamental borders and flowerbeds in the Churchyard.

And we continue to take a look at what happens in the Church other than the religious services that take place. Janet Goodyer writes about the Craft and a Cuppa group that meets every Tuesday afternoon, and Vivianne Child imagines what would happen if 'these stones could talk' and the activities that take place in the Church on a typical day.

Please do continue to send your articles in as this is a theme I plan to develop further in future editions – looking at the meetings, the clubs, the musical performances, the social occasions etc that take place in the Church during the week.

Many thanks again to Steve Kitchener for the cover photograph and for the images in the centre pages. I challenged Steve to capture some shots of the Church, photographed from unusual angles – a glimpse of the outside of the Church from an unexpected perspective or little details from inside the Church. This is what he came up with! If you would like to contact Steve, you can email at stephen@imagebysteve.co.uk or visit www.imagebysteve.co.uk. Many thanks to all our contributors for their articles.

We hope you enjoy the magazine!

Phil Dowden
Editor

There are some Big Challenges Ahead but Together we can Beat Them!

Over 800 years ago in Norman Britain, the faithful people of Tring raised the tall walls of our splendid heritage building – and they built it well.



Through the centuries that followed, the citizens of Tring have continued to cherish this priceless asset at the heart of our community and maintain its integrity. They have often been supported by generous benefactors. No matter how well built, a medieval structure such as this requires constant vigilance to keep it in robust health. That requires substantial funding in addition to the normal maintenance costs.

In 1989, the whole community came together to form a dedicated charity, The Friends of Tring Church Heritage, in order to ensure that in the long term the funds would be available to meet whatever future needs the building would require.

In the thirty-five years since, FOTCH has already donated well over £300,000 to long-term improvements and pre-emptive maintenance. Last year, we committed some £60,000 to the wholesale restructuring of the drainage works that were essential to keep the walls and foundations in good order.

Another Hill to Climb

The latest surveys of the whole building have now revealed that we are facing the urgent need to strengthen the walls at the East end of the Church (the oldest part of the structure) and urgent works on the tower and turret roofs, as well as the reconstruction of the clergy vestry. In the next eighteen months or so, we will need to invest some £150,000 in essential care and maintenance which means it will be 'all hands to the pump' to raise the necessary funds

It is, of course, the primary function of FOTCH to provide grants for substantial long-term repairs and improvements where it can and this set of pre-emptive repairs would appear to comply with FOTCH's Grant Policy. However, £150,000 is way above the grant level that FOTCH could provide, particularly in the light of substantial 100% grants provided during the COVID emergency and, more recently, for the medieval drainage system.

Thus, it is unavoidable that the Church and the town, and other supporters and grant providers, will need to be called upon to work together to provide the bulk of these very substantial costs.

Working Together as a Team

We have now formed a working group with the Church finance and fabric team

to launch and manage the fund-raising appeal that will be essential in order to meet these costs. We have started the process of defining the project precisely and putting together a strategy to engage the widest level of support from the whole community. We need a dramatic communications programme to spread awareness and a sense of involvement, ownership and understanding that it involves all sectors of our community.

The Friends was founded on the principle that our historic Church in its splendid green setting is appreciated as a much-loved asset by the whole community of Tring and not just those who worship within it.

We have worked together with the church authorities and the whole community on such projects before (The 'Wallworks' initiative in 2005 successfully met the considerable costs of restructuring the North Wall).

We know that the community of Tring – including the many new resident families who have come to live here because of the unique qualities and environment of our town – will get behind this appeal and respond to the best of their ability.

Over the coming months, you will start to see a steady stream of communications in all media forms getting this 'Save our Roof' message front-of-mind for everyone in Tring. We are developing a mailing programme and members of the Friends will be very much in the forefront. In particular, the many Founder/Life members who have been

such an important part of the successful development of the Friends will be asked to consider making dedicated donations to this cause. We are looking at a variety of ways to support it and we would very much appreciate your generous engagement.

Throughout our history previous generations have done great things to ensure that our 'Heritage Heart' remains in robust health and continues to beat strongly. Now it is our turn in 2025 to keep up the good work.

An Event we can all support

At the moment we are planning a major launch event in June 2025 to get the ball rolling. As well as being the launch of a vital fundraising campaign, this is going to deliver a great deal of FUN! Fun and Fundraising have always been our twin defining activities – so watch this space!

If you would like to be involved in getting this initiative together and making sure it flies, please get in touch with Chairman Richard Abel, Secretary Trish Dowden or myself.

Together we can get this done.

On behalf of Richard and the Trustees and the whole Society of the Friends I should like to thank you for all that you have done so generously in the past; and all I know you will help with in the coming months.

It is a big job but we know that Tring has a big and very generous heart.

Grahame Senior
Honorary President

The Icknield Way brought the World's goods to Tring

ICKNIELD WAY
PUBLIC
FOOTPATH

ICKNIELD WAY

History was Written in the Heritage Heart of Tring

1066

King William granted the Manor of Tring to his Cousin Earl Eustace

1799

The completion of the Canal at Tring Summit opened up the Industrial heartlands of the World

1823

Tring became "Little Manchester" - a centre of the silk industry

1872

The Rothschild Family settled in Tring Park



Preserving the Heart of Tring
for Everyone's Future



For further information please contact the Secretary at info@fotch.co.uk

The Churchyard: A Community and Natural Asset

When my turn comes around to mow half of the Churchyard every six weeks or so, I usually find several people at least spending time there.



Some will be reading, some having a picnic (we're not mowing in winter, obviously). Others checking socials or emails on their phone on one of the benches, in the 'Quiet Area' or up near the war memorial and the lovely flowerbeds at that end of the Churchyard.

On a couple of occasions, I have given help to families trying to find the relevant gravestone or other clues in the fiendish Tring historical trail quiz. Other people are focused on the natural wealth of the Churchyard. The deliberately uncultivated (but actually carefully managed) wild area at the rear of the Church has been a riot of wildflowers and you can see birds and insects attracted by this area.

In the front of the Church, the verges against the walls are also deliberately left with an uncultivated fringe to promote wildlife. The grass needs to be cut and hedges trimmed after the bird-nesting season for two reasons. First, this area is used for events of many different sorts and needs to be usable – and in the case of hedges and trees not become

a hazard to pedestrians or vehicles. Second, keeping the area looking attractive is an important part of the visual value the Churchyard gives to the Church building behind it and to the High Street.

If you would like to be part of the team helping keep the Churchyard in good shape for people and for nature, please contact Barry Anscombe (bandb33@talktalk.net) or me. Otherwise I hope you get a chance to enjoy it by walking through it, spending time in it (however briefly) and attending events there – including, of course, the Tring Family Fun Day in May next year!

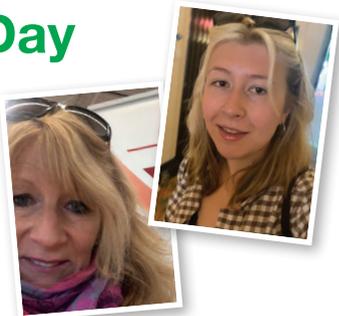
Given that you are reading this magazine, you *do* value the building and the Churchyard. So, please gear up to support the big fundraising push for the roof and walls (that Grahame Senior, Honorary President, sets out elsewhere), so that this lovely Churchyard continues to be the backdrop to a functioning building with a sound tower roof and walls for generations to come!

Richard Abel
Chair of Trustees



A Glorious Day for Tring Family Fun Day

The Tring Family Fun Day kicked off bright and early this year, with volunteers



ready to take on the day. The weather couldn't have been better – sunny skies and a gentle breeze set the perfect scene. It felt like a blessing as everything came together seamlessly.

Building on the success of last year, the same plan was followed – with a few improvements to keep things fresh. The key to the day's success was teamwork.

Every volunteer played a crucial role, whether it was setting up stalls, managing the BBQ, or simply ensuring everything ran smoothly. The community spirit was strong, and it was inspiring to see everyone work together toward a common goal.

Their efforts paid off in a big way. The fundraiser brought in a substantial £5,594, which will significantly support FOTCH.

There were plenty of highlights throughout the day. The flying teddies, as always, drew in a crowd, showcasing the cutest teddies within the community and creating memories that will be cherished forever. The raffle added a dash of excitement, with everyone eager to see who would walk away with the top prizes. Our amazing jewellery, book and plant stands were busy all day!

As the day drew to a close and the last of the stalls were packed away, there



was a shared sense of accomplishment. The event was a true success, thanks to the collective efforts of the community.

With this year's success in the books, there's already excitement building for next year's fundraiser. The goal is to make it even bigger and better, continuing the tradition of coming together for a great cause. The planning has already begun, so be sure to mark your calendars 10th May 2025 for what promises to be another fantastic day of community spirit and fun.

Looking forward to seeing everyone again next year, ready to do it all over again.

Maria and Lottie Lashley



Beat the Goalie

It was last year that Richard Abel, the Chair of Trustees, talked to me about the Beat the Goalie stall at the Tring Family Fun Day for the first time. He had just spent several hours throwing himself around between the sticks that day, and in a moment of enthusiasm I heard myself saying: “I can help you with that next year, Richard!”



Fast forward 12 months and I find myself in charge of the Beat the Goalie stall. Richard has more important things to do (supervising the Teddy Tower of Terror, I think) and I find myself the solo goalkeeper for the day. The young, fit and energetic person who had been assigned to help me during the long, hot day ahead has been unavoidably detained and will not show up as planned. I contemplate the prospect of throwing myself around trying to save penalty kicks for the next four hours and remember I haven't actually played football since the previous summer. I wonder if I am up to the challenge?

To be fair, Richard gets up early that morning and he sets me up with everything I need for the day. He acquires the goalposts (from Tring Tornadoses, I believe), provides all the signage and donates the prize for the draw (a signed football). Who signed it I don't recall – was it Harry Kane? The signature is a bit blurry so it's difficult to say. Most importantly, I have two assistants assigned to me for front of house duties

– Barbara Anscombe and Gerry Miller. These guys are my cheerleaders for the next few hours, offering me all the praise and encouragement I need to keep going. I just need to concentrate on the football, as they organise getting the money from passers by to have a go.

The format is that for the princely sum of £1 you get to take three penalties. If all three penalties are scored, you enter the prize draw for the football. (If I don't let in three goals from anyone, I get to take the football home – this is a rule I just make up).

All is quiet initially. Who will be the first customer to have a go? Everyone is very shy. After a while, a chap wearing an Arsenal top is persuaded by Barbara to have a go. We are off...

The first goal is side-footed with some pace into the left-hand corner. I don't get near it. The second one is put into the opposite corner with similar ease. The thought goes through my mind... this





is going to be a long day. Then the third one is taken, I dive... and I save it! Phew!

The day proceeds and actually goes amazingly quickly. Some get three goals but most don't. One chap keeps having go after go and go, but can't quite get the three goals he needs (he scores the first two easily and then with the third I either save it, or he hits the post, or he puts it over the bar into the gravestones beyond). I have a lunch break to get a bite to eat and some much-needed rehydration. I wisely decide against a pint of beer from the Tring Brewery stall and opt instead for a very large coffee from the cake stall inside the Church. I resume in the afternoon. Kids under a certain age get to take the shot from a penalty



spot that is nearer the goal. One steely-eyed young teenager takes advantage of this set-up and calmly gets himself three entries into the prize draw.

At the end of the day, we close up the stall. I think there are about 15 or so entries in the prize draw. Lottie Lashley draws out the winner. It is my steely-eyed Nemesis who wins it – and he deserves it!

I finish the day feeling elated and pleased with how things went. It was great fun! That evening, I catch up with friends for a barbeque in the garden. I am still buzzing from the day but my back is beginning to ache...

A few weeks later, Malcolm Rogers, the FOTCH treasurer, sends around an email with details of how the stalls have done. The Beat the Goalie stall has taken £172. A quick calculation shows that this means I faced down 516 penalty kicks. No wonder I was tired!

And yes, at the end of it all I heard myself saying to Lottie: "I really had a great time. Put me down again for Beat the Goalie next year!"

Phil Dowden
Editor

Craft and a Cuppa



We meet every Tuesday afternoon in Tring Church, 2-4pm.

I started this group about seven or eight years ago, as there was a need to have more things going on in the Church during the week and keep a presence of people in there. There were also one or two people I knew that would benefit from socialising in a group setting. Huw, Tring Church Rector, was happy that we used the Church, so I advertised it and waited to see what would happen. That first week, the first person through the door was Lilian who said, "Thank you for starting this, I've waited a long time for this!" I asked her if she could knit and she replied she could but hadn't done for 20 years but was

willing to give it a try. She started knitting poppies for us, as we were preparing for a big display of poppies in Tring Church to commemorate the centenary of the end of WW1. More joined in and so the group was born. Although we advertise it as Craft and a Cuppa, the focus is on socialising rather than the craft, and we have some members who don't craft, but they make a good cup of tea! They also help with cutting out and helping with other things that are needed in Church.

We share ideas, patterns, yarn and knowledge. We have invited each other to other groups and social events. We welcome anyone of any age regardless of whether they are Church members or not. Probably three quarters of our members live alone so they enjoy coming out to mix with friends. Covid lockdown was a big blow to us as we really missed the fellowship of being together, but once we had mastered Zoom, we joined



together from the comfort of our homes and had show and tell with others. But that didn't help those who didn't do technology. A number of us made face coverings that were made and sold for Church funds. When we were allowed to meet under the rule of six, we had two tables up but had to keep to our own corners!

We have over the years welcomed more members, and lost some through death and moving away. We now have around 20+ on the WhatsApp group, and probably have around 15 on average in attendance. We sometimes go out together for lunch or afternoon tea visits so that is good fun. There is always room at our table for more people!

What started as a 'not sure if this will work' group has blossomed into a thriving friendship group. Don't take my word for it, these are some of the comments from our members:

"What does this group mean to me? Well meeting up with old friends and making new friends and getting out of my home."

"It's lovely to meet new people, sharing skills and learning new things. (Thank you Sue for teaching me to crochet)."

"Mindfulness – both the craft and spending time with such lovely people



Lillian our first member

boosts my mental health."

"Friendship."

"A lovely way to meet people if recently moved to the area."

"Happy place to meet folk, chat and craft together."

"Even if you are no good at craft, very welcoming and such a happy place."

"A very welcoming, kind group of friends."

"Connecting through craft, nattering over a cuppa, with kind and thoughtful friends."

"For me, it's meeting lovely new people and having a chance to relax. I love that someone makes me a cup of tea – and it keeps me on track with my knitting projects!"

"I enjoy this group because of the joyful atmosphere. The sisterly teasing and banter, with the wealth of knowledge and experience freely given to help others."

Janet Goodyer

Focus on Tring Church – the Gore Memorial

The Gore Memorial is an imposing monument by any standards and represents the achievements of one of our most successful sons. Sometimes attributed to Grinling Gibbons, it is now known to have actually been completed by his pupil, John Nost.

This imposing monument in black, grey and white marble reaches almost to roof level. Beneath a rounded arch, Sir William and his wife Elizabeth, who died in 1707 and 1705 respectively, recline on either side of a pedestal urn. The background behind them displays a civic trophy and civic arms appear beneath them on the plinth of the urn and the deep plinth below.

On the west side, Sir William wears a full-bottomed



wig and the Lord Mayor's collar with a pendant pearl. He also wears the Lord Mayor's fur-trimmed cloak. A cartouche has the coat of arms of the City of London surmounted by a wyvern's head superimposed on crossed olive branches.

On the east side, Dame Elizabeth also wears a wig and is dressed in an embroidered overskirt and lace-edged bodice with embroidered stomacher.

The Gore Memorial is arguably the most striking artefact in the Church and commemorates the life and dynasty of one of our greatest benefactors. The Gore family is responsible for a huge amount of the Church as we see it today and their generosity was responsible for much of the significant restoration in the

early part of the 18th century. There is also a significant bequest of silverware which currently lies in the vaults but may one day be displayed in the Church or a local museum for all to see.

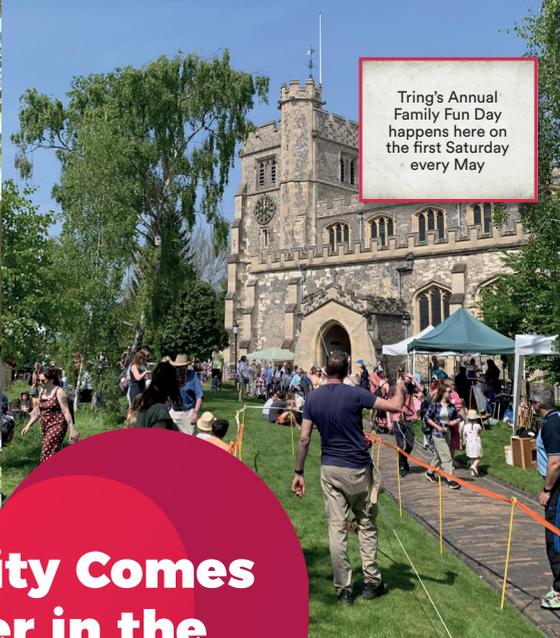
The memorial was originally erected on the north wall of the chancel, much closer to the altar, and was moved in 1882 when the Church was significantly remodelled.



Phil Dowden
Editor



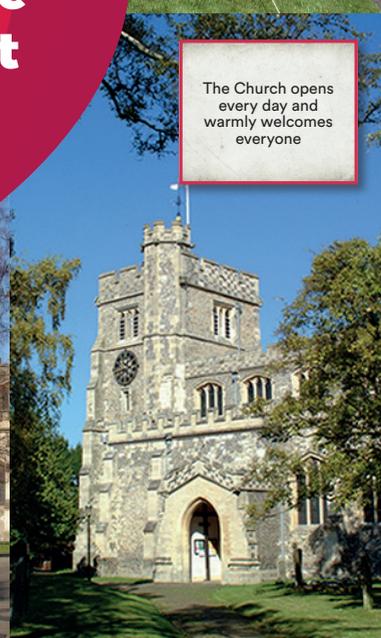
The First English
WW1 Memorial
is the centre of
our annual
Remembrance Day
service



Tring's Annual
Family Fun Day
happens here on
the first Saturday
every May



Community Comes Together in the Heritage Heart of Tring



The Church opens
every day and
warmly welcomes
everyone



Our ancient market
has met here since
1315



Coronations,
Jubilees and
National events are
celebrated here



Preserving the Heart of Tring
for Everyone's Future



St Peter & St Paul

A fresh look at familiar objects from Steve Kitchener.





Fabric Committee Update

First there is some good news to report. Following a grant application made earlier this year, the Diocesan Advisory Committee have approved the installation of a cast iron bollard to be painted with black rust-resistant paint (like the one shown below) housing a twin 13-amp RCD protected socket with 100m of steel wire armoured cable. This will be installed at the Churchyard boundary near the hedge, so it is somewhat screened from view. The lockable electric outlet will avoid the need for trailing power cables across the Churchyard during events such as the Tring Family Fun Day, making it much easier and safer for everyone.



Roof works

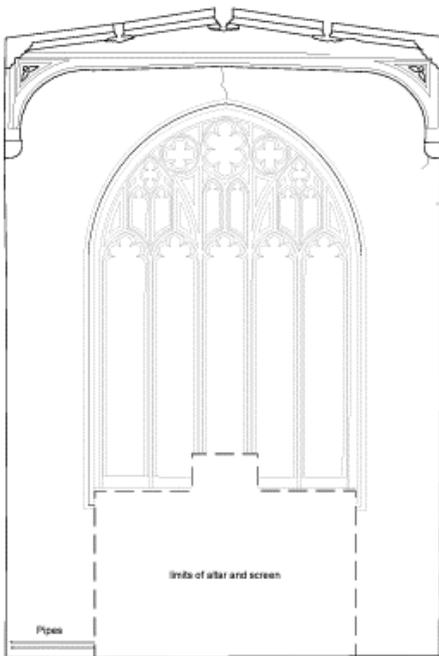
Unfortunately, the recent heavy rain we've experienced in the past few months has revealed some issues with the Church roof. A leak in the turret roof and main roof tower above the bells need to be immediately fixed. The Parish Grants Committee have provided a grant of £2,750 towards some of the costs, but this is really a small percentage of what's needed. Aside from repairing the leaks, we know the main aluminium roof is coming to the end of its designed life. Significant sums of money will be needed to carry out urgent pre-emptive repairs to our heritage building. Some initial planning has been carried out ahead of a meeting to progress fundraising efforts at the end of September.



Surveys

Some drone surveys were also completed over the summer to review the state of some of the cracks on the outside of the building, as shown in the picture opposite.

The east end of the Church has also been subject to a structural survey at a cost of around £1,000 to date. This survey made some recommendations on securing the safety of the structure in this area, as there is a very large crack running from the roof at the top of the window, as illustrated here.

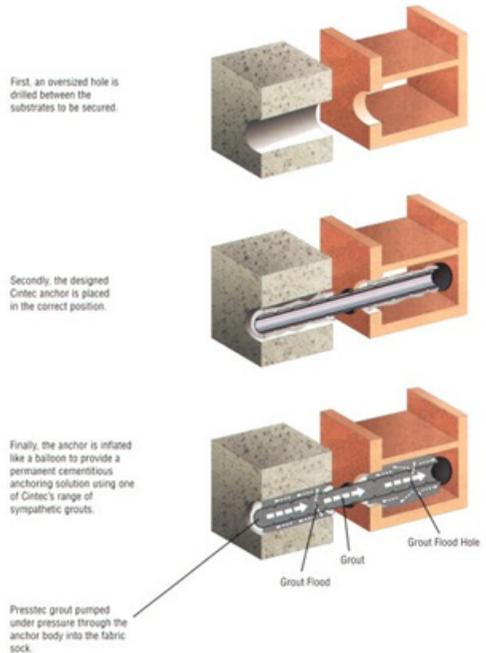


The installation of a Cintec anchor was recommended to help stitch the two parts of the building together. This comprises a steel bar enclosed in a mesh fabric sleeve into which a specially developed grout is injected under low pressure, providing a versatile internal

structural reinforcement which is tailored to meet the specific situation of this wall.

The anchor is fire resistant and once installed will be invisible to the naked eye, making it a suitable method to preserve the visual integrity of the building.

The diagram below provides an illustration of how the anchor would be installed and how it works.



The costs of this essential work are estimated to be around £10,000, and the support of FOTCH members to help fund this work is greatly appreciated.

Andrew Kinsey
Fabric Committee

Tring is special

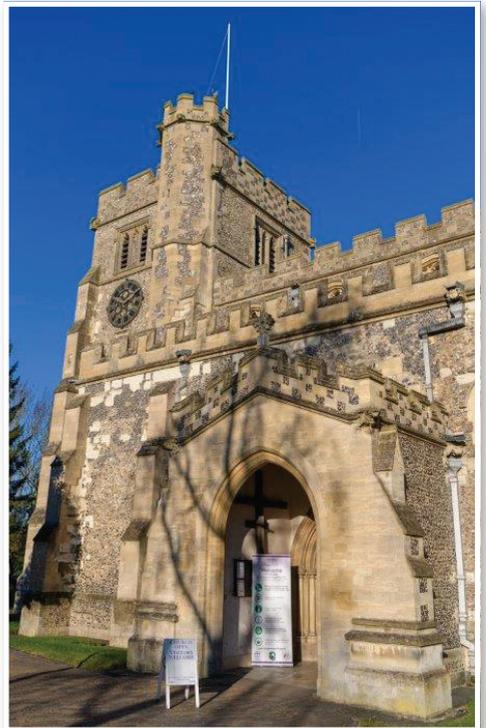
Tring is special, isn't it? That's why we love it so much. The congregation of St Peter and St Paul's are unique, aren't they? Well of course they are, each one of us is unique and individually known and loved by God as a beloved child. However, I have a sneaking feeling that maybe collectively we aren't all that special or unique at all. In fact, one of the things I love about the Church of England is the commonality we find in congregations up and down and across the land.

I used to love the BBC comedy Rev about the Reverend Adam Smallbone and his failing inner-city London parish. It was a context about as far away from ours as you can get and yet it was incredibly familiar. The same characters that we know so well from our congregations and wider community exist in this fictional comedy.

And then there are real churches. Do you go visiting churches whenever you are away? During a recent half term break, Jane and I went to Hereford. (I can particularly recommend a wonderful farm cider called Gwatkins – their dry scrumpy cider was so dry it had an astringent effect, but I digress.) One of the towns we potted around was Ross on Wye. The church, St Mary's, was comfortingly familiar. Outside we were greeted by a noticeboard and the same logos were recognisable: Arocha Eco



Church Silver award (annoyingly we are only Bronze at the moment but hope to get Silver before the end of this year), as well as the Inclusive Church and Fairtrade logos. We knew immediately that this was our kind of church, just from the 'badges'. Reading the noticeboard, one almost has to check we really are in Ross on Wye and not Tring. They also had an afterschool drop-in for secondary school kids, the Mothers Union and a craft group. But there were differences. They had installed new glass doors and a heat curtain at the entrance so that the church was open and accessible, yet warm. The pews had been removed and the piano was in the centre of the church ready for a monthly 'Piano and More' (our phrase not theirs) concert. Some chairs were



around the piano and others were set out with tables in café style – there was also a wonderful new serving kitchen ready for the refreshments. It seems great minds do think alike as this is what we would love to do.

Last week our travels took us to Derbyshire. Sadly, the cider was somewhat limited but I can recommend Peak Ales, obviously not up to Ridgeway or Side Pocket standards but then we have already established Tring is special! Derbyshire led us to Bakewell, a market town which still has a livestock market. As you do, I got chatting to the auctioneer and he automatically knew of Tring and when the livestock market closed. It was another town I felt at home in. Bags of pork scratchings outside the butchers (not quite as good as Trevor's but not bad) and a decent looking rugby club albeit a few leagues below Tring and not on Cow Lane but on a lane with cows.

So, what of the church? Here it is All Saints, and my first visit was a virtual visit checking service times. What do we find on their website? Firstly, a discussion

about 'Living in Love and Faith', which is familiar to anyone in the Tring congregation.

Secondly, they have an organ appeal; but they only need £135K to repair their pipe organ, not the £330K Tring needs (which is why we will be moving to a digital one).

Finally, you can read about their plans to reorder the church because they want "to effectively use the church building as a worship space, meeting today's diverse needs whilst maximising the benefit to the community and the wider public of realising the Mission and Ministry potential in the 21st century."

It is always wonderful to return to Tring, and to realise that however much we love the place we aren't actually unique. Up and down and across the country there are communities striving to make God accessible and their church buildings accessible and welcoming to all in their locality.

Huw Bellis
Rector of St Peter and St Paul's Church

NO ROOF - NO FUTURE

TRING'S HERITAGE
HEART

**2025
APPEAL**

**SAVE US
ROOF**

NOW IT'S OUR TURN TO HELP!

St. Peter & St. Paul Church Mowing Rota

My name is Barry Anscombe and, according to Huw Bellis (the Rector of the Tring Team) 'the Head Gardener'!

Now I must admit I am not much of a gardener. At home, we have borders which contain shrubs that require minimum attention. In addition, we have one hedge that runs along the rear of the garden. There is no grass and nothing that is very challenging. As a result, I am always willing to accept additional advice, especially from someone who knows what they are talking about.

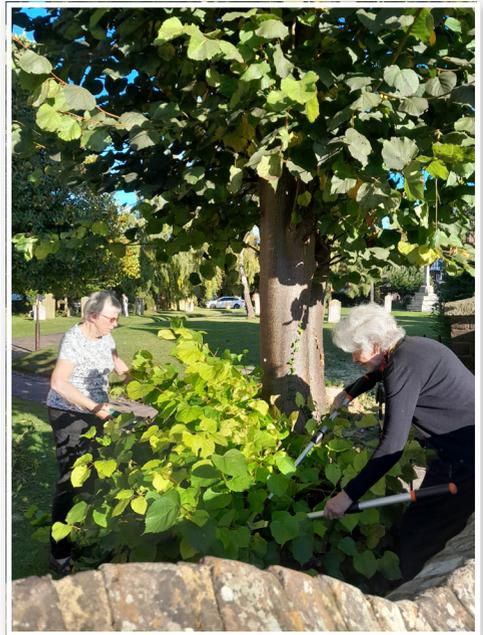
So, what is required to keep the Church grounds smart and tidy?

Mowing: We have two main areas, one either side of the path, which lead down to the main (South) door. Only one of these areas is mowed each week. There is also a mown walkway through the rear garden of the Church. Last year, one of our members kindly donated a Stihl grass strimmer and a John Deere lawnmower with a mulching facility. Once the grass has been reduced to a reasonable height, we can use the mulcher to maintain it. According to one person from last year, it can save half an hour on a normal two-hour mowing session.



Hedges: These are done as necessary, giving due regard to any birds that may have made nests in them. When appropriate, all members of the team who have hedge trimmers will be invited to attend a day of hedge tidying.

Weeding: The edge of the paths need trimming. Also weeding of the paths and around the apron of the Church. Hopefully this can be done during the summer but failing that, a gathering of people at the end of the season may be required. Last year we had a final tidy-up followed by a barbeque and beer, courtesy of Huw and Tring Brewery.



The rear of the Church has been given over as a wild area. Therefore, there is only a pathway for people to walk and not the whole area to mow, as we used to. The 'Justice and Peace' group have kindly agreed to get involved with work in

maintaining the wild area which is a great relief on my part.

One of the joys of working at the front of the Church is the number of people who walk through or past the Church grounds and stop to say how nice it is to see the lawns and hedges being looked after. People appreciate the peaceful haven in the centre of the town. During the spring, people are especially pleased to see the many daffodils that grow among the lawns despite these being an added obstacle for the mowing team.

A final comment before I go. During a memorial service last year, a gentleman approached Huw and started talking to him. The next thing I heard was my name being mentioned and I thought to myself what have I done now? To my amazement, I was told that the gentleman had said to Huw what a wonderful job the mowers had done in looking after the grounds. He even said that the grounds were of the standard demanded by the Commonwealth Graves Commission. Well done to everyone involved!

So, having read this article, if anyone feels they would like to be a part of this special group and help maintain the Church grounds could they please contact me on 01442 828325 or via bandb33@talktalk.net

Barry Anscombe



Flowerbeds

I found the photo below on Facebook in the early spring this year. I complemented the photographer on the unusual angle and mentioned that I look after the Church flower beds. The nearby benches are well used and help folk enjoy the attractive heart of Tring.

These flower beds receive some strange offerings. For example I have found green potatoes, as well as cans or bottles. I found some butterfly shaped fairy lights, sealed in their packet, years ago which was a good find.

Something I would like to offer the



flowerbeds more of is compost. Three compost heaps have been lovingly constructed and these are located at just about the furthest point from the front flowerbeds. I managed to shift five small loads of compost round to the beds in the spring. I hope to shift more later in the year and could do with some help, please!

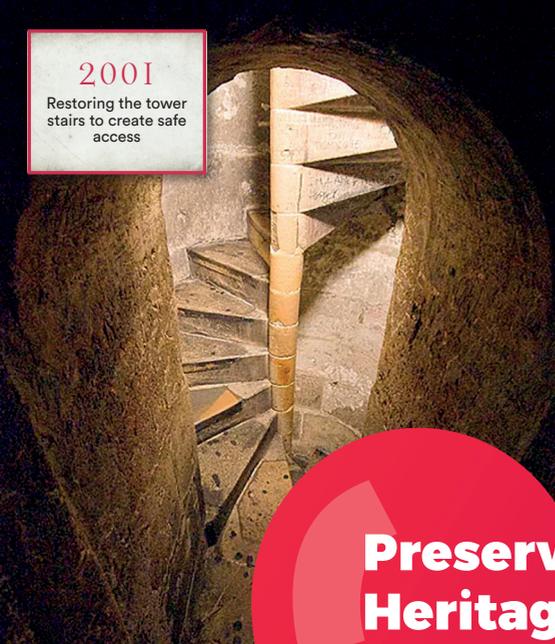
There are many different jobs involved in maintaining the grounds of the Church and there is a rota for cutting the grass, which isn't all cut at the same time. If you know someone who would like to be an active friend and make a practical contribution, then Barry Anscombe is the chap to contact using this email address: bandb33@talktalk.net.

Helena Holliday



2001

Restoring the tower stairs to create safe access



2007

Installing modern lighting, sound and projection systems

Preserving the Heritage Heart of Tring for Future Generations is what we do!



2011

Rebuilding the damp-ridden North Wall



2023

Replacing the worn-out medieval drainage to stabilise the whole building



2025

Currently working to "Save our Roof"



Preserving the Heart of Tring for Everyone's Future



For further information please contact the Secretary at info@fotch.co.uk

If these stones could talk... or listen

Your editor asked for contributions proffering (amongst other things) photographs from unusual angles and this example from 2006 popped into my head.

FOTCH built a magnificent stage in St Peter and St Paul and, together with a cast of hundreds, put on a jolly good pageant with the title “If these stones could talk”. Grahame Senior was the empresario behind the adventure and many of you reading this magazine,



including me, were cajoled into dancing, singing, acting and generally having a great time! Anyway, I digress...

If ‘these stones could talk’ then they must have done a lot of listening over the years! In my imagination, the heart of a building keeps a diary, enjoying all the comings and goings throughout the day. A typical day in 2024...

“Early this morning, I was woken by the comforting sound of the vestry door opening and a small group meeting for Morning Prayer. After all, ministry and worship were what I was made for and I love hearing the same words as I’ve heard for many, many years. After that the kettle goes on and the murmuring gets a bit louder as the staff meeting starts. I’m very interested in all that’s going on around the parish – although



my lips are sealed of course. 'GDPR' gets mentioned a lot. Although the building gets talked about, most of this meeting seems to be about people and I'm happy and sad, glad and dismayed in equal measures. A kind-voiced person arrives to run the Food Bank, giving up the whole morning to look after others. I'm glad to hear that the kettle goes on again.

In amongst all this work, visitors wander in and out. The door often opens nervously and someone always says "come in, welcome, yes of course you can come in". Today there were visitors from Canada, Belgium and someone who moved away from Tring 25 years ago. I'm sure I remember them.



Someone comes and sits in the Lady Chapel for a long time. I can feel that they appreciate the building being open. And someone else comes in with bags and bags of school uniform for Jane to sell. Not to make a huge profit, but to provide a service to parents.

At 3.15pm the kettle is on again, joined by the toaster, as the Youth Café arrive. This is one of my favourite times of the week and I greatly admire the forthright and passionate confidence of the young. (Just take a look at the noticeboard by the kitchen to see the sorts of things they discuss). It's very quiet when they leave.

Cliff comes in to practise the organ. There's a piece he wants to play at a Sunday 10am service and it needs some attention, although it already sounds very good to me. Vivianne comes in to fiddle with the new wi-fi camera. There's quite a lot of huffing.

Finally, the last visitor of the day comes to lock the doors and all is peaceful again. Another busy day and I haven't had a moment to myself!"

Vivianne Child
Parish Co-ordinator and FOTCH member



The Friends of
Tring Church Heritage

NEEDS



YOU

For almost 35 years the Friends of Tring Church Heritage have focused on fundraising and fun events to secure the heart of Tring for all future generations.

It's a long game and we need new friends, new ideas and energy to keep that focus fresh. If you haven't joined the Friends yet – or are new to Tring's unique environment – please consider joining us. We are a very friendly bunch that likes to have fun as well as doing some effective fundraising and providing some serious grants to keep our heart in good condition.

Please use the form opposite to join us, or call Chair Richard Abel, President Grahame Senior or any of our trustees for a chat about how you can get involved.



APPLICATION FORM

Please complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS

Title: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone: _____

If you wish your membership to include other family members, please include the name(s) of all other adults, and the number of children (under 18 as at 1st April, 2024).

Names of other adults in your family group

Number of children (under 18) in your family group:

Please tick the box for the membership category of your choice.

Annual Memberships – I enclose my membership renewal for 2024 - 2025

Individual: £12 Family Group: £20 Junior: £5 (under 16s)
 Corporate: £100 Voluntary donation _____

Life Memberships - I should like to change my/our membership to Life

Individual Life: £100 Joint Life: £150 for couples

To set up a standing order or pay by bank transfer the Friends of Tring Church Heritage bank account details (now Metro Bank, previously Nat West) are as follows:

Account Name: "The Friends of Tring Church Heritage" Sort Code: 23-05-80, Account number: 40555293.

Please add your name in the 'Reference' field. Cheques can be made payable to: The Friends of Tring Church Heritage

Gift Aid

I want to Gift Aid my subscription (and any voluntary donations) I make this year, or have made in the past four years or make in the future to Friends of Tring Church Heritage.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax (other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not apply) than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature _____ Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM WITH YOUR REMITTANCE TO:

Trish Dowden, 6 The Barns, West Leith, Tring, Herts HP23 6JJ or leave in the "C" pigeon hole at the back of the Church.

I understand that the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every pound I give. If you pay Income Tax at more than the standard rate, you can claim extra tax relief through your HMRC tax return. I will notify FOTCH if I wish to cancel this declaration; OR change my name or home address; OR no longer pay sufficient tax for Gift Aid to apply.

Fifty Years A Conductor – Beat That!

Much loved conductor, Colin Stevens, celebrated his 50th anniversary this year as musical director of Tring Choral Society, the Hertfordshire-based classical choir.

Colin was only 27 when he took over the baton in 1974 from his father who had been the previous conductor of the choir. Colin's formal musical training had taken place at Trinity College, London where he studied organ.

This remarkable achievement of 50 years has involved directing some 150 concerts, 1,500 rehearsals and many hours organising orchestral parts and the selection of top professional soloists, whilst at the same time pursuing a successful career and raising a family of four children with his wife, Jane.

Rob Johnston, Co-Director and Choral Manager of the BBC Singers said: "It's staggering to think that one person would have the dedication, stamina and total commitment of running one choir for 50 years! To have done so with such energy, passion and joviality is testament to Colin's ability to inspire generations of singers over so many decades."

Chairman Rob Allnutt, agrees. "At rehearsals, Colin's ability to mix good humour with precision, discipline and encouragement brings much love and respect from the choir. No matter how demanding the work, we always feel in very safe hands."

Colin admits, "It has been a real privilege

for me to have been conducting Tring Choral Society for the last 50 years. I have had the great pleasure of working with an excellent choir, orchestra and professional soloists on a broad range of repertoire including most of the established choral masterpieces and a number of newly commissioned works. I am particularly grateful for the loyalty and commitment shown by so many singers and the help and support freely given to me along the way."

Tring Choral Society performed 'Choral Classics', a selection of some of Colin's favourite pieces at St Peter & St Paul Church, Tring, in July to mark this huge milestone.

Tring Choral Society will be performing Handel's 'Messiah' at 7.30pm on Saturday 21st December at St Peter & St Paul's Church, Tring. They will be accompanied by professional soloists and their regular orchestra.

Tickets go on sale on 16th October at tringchoral.org.uk. It is anticipated that this will be a very popular event so book as soon as you are able.

Lucy Kibble
Publicity Manager, Tring Choral Society



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FOTCH AGM

To include the 100 Club Autumn Draw

Thursday, 26th September 2024
at 7.00pm

St Peter & St Paul's Church

Tring Choral Society Handel's 'Messiah'

Saturday, 21st December 2024
at 7.30pm

St Peter & St Paul's Church

If you have any ideas for things we could do better or differently, or that you would like to have a go at, please get in touch with Richard Abel (Chair) or Grahame Senior (President).

For more details, visit the website
www.fotch.co.uk

If you have any photos of FOTCH events as they occur, please send them to the Editor.



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We would be pleased to hear from you!

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FOTCH newsletter is designed by Kev Holt
Ginger Promo

The Friends of Tring Church Heritage
Registered Charity 1005442



**Everything
Happens in the
Heritage Heart
of Tring!**



**Preserving the Heart of Tring
for Everyone's Future**



For further information please contact the Secretary at info@fotch.co.uk