

SUSSEX HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

January 2017

Dear Organiser,

The 2016 Ride & Stride Event

Last year about 330 adults and children from 130 churches across Sussex took part in the Ride & Stride event and we raised about £48,000 including Gift Aid, compared with £55,000 raised in 2015. This is an excellent effort by all those who took part and also from all the organisers and volunteers who worked so hard behind the scenes to make this annual event so successful. Naturally it is disappointing that fewer people and churches took part, and that the amount raised is less than the previous year, but I believe that there were two key factors that were responsible for this.

I am sure that you will all agree that the weather on the day was appalling. It started raining hard in West Sussex at about 9 o'clock and the rain spread slowly across the whole of the county by the end of the day, resulting in many of those taking part getting soaked to the skin and just having to give up. In addition, some of those who had intended to take part decided that the weather was just too bad. The second key factor was that the webmaster had resigned earlier in the year, and we were unable to find a replacement before the event, meaning that our website, which is fundamental to the running of the event, was not being updated and in addition the paperwork was out of date. I am extremely pleased to say that we now have a new webmaster who has already started, and I am sure you will find the website considerably improved. We realise however that we have quite a lot of catching up to do, and I apologise for the inconvenience this has caused.

There were some vacancies for Area Organisers which we were able to fill during the year, but inevitably other vacancies have now arisen and we are trying hard to find volunteers to take over the key role of Area Organiser in Chichester and Worthing. I am pleased to say that John Andre has taken over the role of Divisional Organiser for West Sussex, following the resignation of Paul Devonshire. I would like to thank all the organisers who have resigned for their help and support over the years, and hope that we will be able to fill all the slots before September.

The Treasurer has said that there has been a major improvement by participants in completing their forms resulting in us being able to claim more Gift Aid from HMRC. Please keep it up. In order to increase our publicity, I am going to purchase some more stickers with this year's date for the "estate agent" boards advertising the Ride & Stride for organisers to be displayed in prominent positions across the areas, to enable previous boards to be re-used. In addition the webmaster is keen that we embrace Facebook and Twitter and is including links to the website accordingly. I also ask that you encourage participants to create their online web pages via justgiving, as experience has shown that online donors are more generous and of course the use of email enables many more friends and relatives to be contacted for sponsorship.

The average amount raised per church that took part this year is about £350. Clearly the more churches that we can get to participate, the more will be raised. We will, therefore, be sending emails before the event to remind all churches of when the Ride & Stride will take place, and encourage them to tell their congregations, and also remind them that 50% of the sponsorship will be returned to their church for them to spend as they wish, which always pleases treasurers!

The Individual Riders Trophy was won by Robert Symmons from St Mary's, Funtington, with 144 stars and the runner up was Luke Doyle from St Bartholomew, Rogate, with 122 stars. The Individual Walkers Trophy was

won by David Twinley from St Nicholas, Arundel, with 48 stars and James Kelly from Holy Trinity, Lower Beding, was the runner up with 47 stars. "Easebourne Easyriders" from St Mary's, Easebourne, won the Team Riders Trophy with 35 stars. The "Willingdon Walkers" from St Mary the Virgin, Willingdon, won the Team Walkers Trophy with 44 stars and "Jimmy's Team" from St James, Birdham were the runners up with 35 stars.

Joseph Satchwell from St Luke's, Stone Cross, won the under 16's Riders Trophy with 51 stars and Callum and Frazer Budd from St Peter and St Mary, Fishbourne, were joint runners up with 48 stars. Brooke and Kyleton Harman from St Peter the Hydneye, Eastbourne, were joint winners of the under 16's Walkers Trophy with 34 stars and Millie Creighton-Moore, from St Mary's, Barnham, was the runner up with 5 stars. The Ignite Youth Group from St Mary Magdalene, Midhurst, won the under 16's Team Walkers Trophy with 12 stars.

Pamela Lade from St John the Evangelist, Eastbourne, raised a total of £1126, but Pat Weeks from St Margaret the Queen, Buxted, raised an amazing £1235 and is the winner of the Special Award.

We have always said that there are many ways in which you can take part in the Ride & Stride and you may recall last year I mentioned a note I received from a church that organised a virtual cycle ride on a static bike in their church. I was, therefore, pleased when this year I got the following note from Allan Plumpton of St Mary's, Goring,

"Up until 2014 I had participated in Ride and Stride over a considerable number of past years as a dedicated cyclist. However I then suffered a major stroke in February 2015 which has sadly ended my 'normal' cycling days. But early in August this year I learned of the Wheels for Wellbeing project being run by CTC [Cycling UK] volunteers at the Croydon Sports stadium [originally built and used for the 1948 Olympics. They claimed anyone could ride a bike there, so I resolved to 'have a go'. I went up there twice – on 5th Aug [for a trial run] and successfully completed 4 laps on an adapted recumbent tricycle. This encouraged me to go there a second time [on 2nd Sept] and do it again on a sponsored per lap basis for the SHCT [as an alternative to the usual annual Ride and Stride, which is now alas beyond my capabilities.

The sponsored ride was a success [12 laps in perfect weather] and attracted 66 sponsors, most of whom have gift-aided their contributions. By my reckoning I have raised £880.40, with a further potential £155 80 of recoverable gift aid!"

This year the Award Ceremony is being held at St Anne's Church, Lewes, on Saturday 4 March 2017 at 2 pm when the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Mr Peter Field, will present the trophies and certificates. All organisers will be very welcome to attend.

A sincere thank you to all of you who have volunteered throughout the year and of course to all those who took part, and I hope we can encourage more churches to take part this year and have an even more successful Ride & Stride event on Saturday 9 September

Graham Pound
County Organiser

Distribution: Chairman and Archdeacons
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