



Sponsored Bike 'n Hike

BEDS AND HERTS HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

The Bike 'n Hike

The Beds. & Herts. Historic Churches Trust is one of many county trusts which run similar sponsored events on the second Saturday of September each year. The objective is to raise money both for the Trust and for the participating churches, with half of the sponsorship money going to each.

The *Bike 'n Hike* is the most important fundraiser for the Trust and key to enabling it to continue to give grants to churches and chapels for the care and repair of their buildings, which are so important in the lives of our towns and villages. The Trust is non-denominational and the Bike 'n Hike is supported by many different denominations. Our grants are available to any place of public Christian worship of whatever age. The church's share of the money raised can be used for any of the church's activities, not just building projects.

It is open to everyone to take part, whether church-goer or not, who is interested in supporting our heritage of church buildings. Often churches are open for the event which normally have to be kept locked so it is a great opportunity for a visit.

The organisation of the event is pyramidal, with a Trustee, Treasurer and Documents Manager working with a team of Area Organisers. Each area has some 30 churches and chapels and each of these has a Church Organiser. The role of the Church Organiser is key in engendering enthusiasm for the event, getting people to take part and ensuring that the church or chapel is open on the day to welcome visitors.

Churches are open between 9am and 5pm. Bikers, hikers and other visitors (whether by car, mobility scooter or horse) sign the card to say they have visited and get their form signed to confirm their visit. Often there are refreshments available and a chance to look round the church.

After the event, everyone who has taken part should give the money raised to their Church Organiser, together with their sponsorship forms. The Church Organiser then submits them to the Treasurer using the supplied remittance form which also asks for the details needed by BHHCT to return the church's share of the money to them.

Sponsorship money can be gift-aided, which increases the amount by 25% courtesy of the tax man. This gift aid is kept by the Trust to add to the money available for grants.

The Trust uses the online site JustGiving to make it even easier to collect sponsorship money. Any participant or team can create a page on JustGiving and use email or Facebook to encourage friends and relatives to sponsor their efforts.

We encourage folk of all ages to take part but do be aware of personal safety and take appropriate care. Remember the Highway Code and use off road routes where possible, which adds to the pleasure of the day.