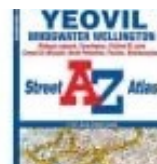




TED MARSH
Ride+Stride hero!



DONATIONS
HOW YOU CAN HELP



CHAIRMAN'S A - Z OF
SOMERSET
CHURCHES

NEWSLETTER

2020 vision - er... not quite what we had planned

There is good news! Somerset Churches Trust is alive and well and looking to help churches and chapels in Somerset.

However, this really is a time of need: regular worship has been impacted, placing great strain on Christian mission; church income is greatly diminished but church buildings still need to be cared for.

That is why I particularly want to thank you, our friends and supporters, for your continued membership. You are the bedrock of the trust – we raise money to help our churches and chapels. Unlike other organisations, we have very low overheads, so funds raised really do go to where it can do good. Membership of the trust really does make a difference and more members will help us do more.

Axel Palmer
Chairman, Somerset Churches Trust

2021 Time to Celebrate our Silver Jubilee

Can it really be 25 years ago since the trust was founded? Well, yes, it will be on 25th April 2021.

This provides a perfect opportunity to recognise that the trust was founded to meet specific issues - these are still with us and, with the world in a very different place, keeping 'Somerset's churches and chapels alive' is a real challenge. After a quarter of a century and raising and distributing over £800,000, Somerset Churches Trust is even more relevant.

We will celebrate our past contributions and look forward to the next decades. Let us be educators, enlighteners and generous benefactors while at the same time having fun!

Over the course of the next few months, we will have plenty to let you know about in further Newsletters. For more information, see www.somersetchurchestrust.org



Ride+Stride

It has been a great sadness this year that we have not been able to hold our usual series of events for which our generous colleagues, Bob Croft, Simon Colledge, Philip Skelhorn, David Sisson, William Newsom and Tony Davies had put in so much work. Let's hope we can mount these events in 2021.



Thankfully, we were able to venture out into daylight in September to promote Ride+Stride, courtesy of the Bishop's Palace enabling us to try out our 'Contactless' capabilities (together with the traditional bucket!). Our 'motley crew' was: Tony Davies, Axel Palmer, Philip Skelhorn & Chris Hawkings.

Ted Marsh

The redoubtable Ted Marsh has completed his epic tour of eight churches on his faithful steed... his mobility scooter.



And along the way the 90-year-old churchwarden of St Mary Magdalene in Sparkford raised over £1,000 for charity.

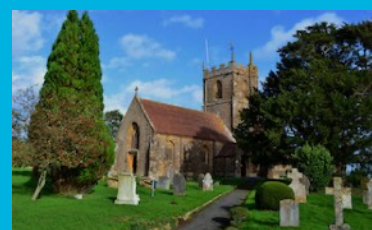
He was taking part in Ride+Stride. Most of the

churches on his route - St Mary Magdalene, Weston Bampfylde, Sutton Montis, West Camel, Queen's Camel, Lovington, North and South Barrow - were closed but he was prepared for that and had made calling cards that he could leave at each of the buildings.

It was the first church that he visited in the afternoon that brought back lots of memories. "On my way to the church door I passed a cremation stone. Looking down I saw it was associated with a former teacher who taught from the late 1930s until 1944 - I was one of her pupils.

"On to North Barrow . I married my late wife Ellen, in this church on September 2, 1950. Then to my final destination - South Barrow. This is the village where I spent four-and-a-half years in the foster care of two elderly spinsters with my late brother and during that period I was taught to play the piano and eventually the organ." It was a rewarding day all round for Ted with its fond memories and fundraising success.

2021 Silver Jubilee 25 years of serving Somerset



Some memories of our activities: meeting of members and tour; recognising excellence; our campaign to highlight lead theft - and provide funds towards roof alarms; grant funding.

The Chairman's A – Z of Somerset Churches

Trust Chairman, Axel Palmer, has set himself an objective of visiting a range of churches and chapels across Somerset to compile his own A – Z!

Axel reports:

"I thought as part of Ride+Stride it would be interesting to visit a variety of parishes and communities, broadly along the lines of completing my own alphabetical list – clearly, some letters require a little ingenuity!"

So far, it has indeed been "interesting"! Only this week, wandering around the outside of a church (looking at the architecture, condition etc) someone watching thought I might be a drug dealer! That's a first for me! So, note to self to dress more appropriately and looking like 'Wurzel Gummidge' can convey the wrong impression! (I have already had minor surgery - haircut!)

Another vignette was venturing over to Exmoor on a filthy day, driving around narrow, twisting lanes (just like Mendip!) with absolutely no traffic! I parked on a lane outside a church (obviously blocking) and then 'out of nowhere' came one of those huge campervans. On going back to move my car, the passenger said "this is where she was murdered you know!" Oddly enough, no, I didn't!

East to West in Somerset

My latest trip was to walk all the way from East to West - which I managed in about 30 minutes!

East Harptree is a little village on the northern side of Mendip, dominated by Harptree Court and St Laurence, a fine twelfth century parish church.



Beside the church is a footpath to West Harptree – ditto twelfth century St Mary's, Tilly Manor and opposite Gournay Court (residence of a cabinet minister!).

An enjoyable two-hour walk across fields and around the lanes via Widcombe and Coley (and carefully negotiating my way past cows!)."



That's letter E then!

How can you contribute to our fundraising?

Donate

Ride+Stride is over for 2020 but you can still help us keep Somerset Churches and Chapels alive by making a donation. Just visit the website, click on the **"DONATE"** button and follow the instructions.

The good news is that all it takes is a couple of clicks. Axel will brave the cold, wet, mud etc and you can obtain that warm glow of assisting by staying at home and smiling!

Membership

Members are the 'life blood' of Somerset Churches Trust - we could not do anything without you. In effect, the Trust is a 'self-help' organisation. Put simply, we raise money from friends and supporters and give to churches to help keep them alive. We endeavour to keep people informed and (when we can get out) promote interest in our christian heritage in Somerset by hosting a range of church tours (Crawls) and talks. We need new members because, say, aggregating 100 subscriptions of £30pa enables us to provide a grant of £3,000. So, please encourage friends to join today by visiting our website, clicking on Membership and then How to Join and following the instructions. If every member encouraged just one person to join, we would double our subscription income!

Amazon Smile



Help Somerset Churches while you shop. Amazon have a scheme where they will donate 0.5% of purchases (Ts & Cs apply, of course) to Somerset Churches Trust. Registration is simple - log into www.smile.amazon.co.uk with your usual details and select charity.



We are 'Cashless-ready' whenever we can get out!

Of course, 'lockdown' and other Covid19 restrictions have made life difficult for everyone but we have been proactive and set up a way of receiving 'contactless' donations, whenever we can get out and about.

We look forward to wearing out the machine! It takes all cards, on WiFi and 3G, and ApplePay and GooglePay.

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