



Annual General Meeting 2019

Wednesday 21st August 2.00pm
Hedley Lodge, Belmont Abbey

1. Present

HCTG committee - Wendy Coombey(chair), Jenny Beard, Tim Bridges, Catherine Fothergill, Marguerite Fothergill, Jane Rigler.

Members – Margaret Hughes (Kings Caple), Gwen Moore (Clodoch Church), Hilary Ross(Hentland and Hoarwithy), Ian Smith(St. Mary's Much Cowarne), Georgina Stewart (Munsley Church), Ronnie Wilkie (St. James, Kinnersley)

Apologies:

Brother Bernard, Annie Calver, James Devreux,
Barbara Andrew (Wellington), Jenny Davies (Eardisley), Anne Edwards (Kington),
Ruth Hewinson (Withington), Fran Rhodes, Geoffrey Sampson, Michael Sumner (Brampton Bryan).

2. Minutes 2018

These had been circulated and were taken as having been read and to be a correct record.
Proposer- Jenny Beard. Secunder- Catherine Fothergill
Everybody present agreed.

3. Chair's report (Wendy Coombey)

Wendy outlined the Resilient Heritage Lottery Fund application for the Virtuous Circle Project. It was felt that HCTG should be doing more for its members but we were without resources and funding to achieve this. The grant application was for two aspects 1.) To increase resources for our members and 2.) To set up an accommodation pod in Turnastone Church, in The Golden Valley. HCTG are the accountable body for and will project manage Virtuous Circles 2. We have 104 members and our membership is growing and we hope that the project will help us to continue to do so, as well as providing valuable resources.

Wendy thanked Jenny Beard (treasurer and vice chair) for all the work that she had put in to make the application and for being treasurer; and she also thanked all those on the committee. New members to the committee will always be welcome.

4. Treasurer's Report (Jenny Beard)

The Profit and Loss Account for 1st January 2018 – Dec 31st 2018 was presented on a PowerPoint slide. The detailed account will be posted on the web site.

Opening balance £1636.19
+ Income £1750.00

Expenditure £3274.90. – included the publication of 2018 – 2019 Guide
Closing balance 111.29.

The current account remained with a good cash flow, due to the majority of members now paying by an annual Standing Order. The current biennial subscription of £50.00 now barely covered the cost of the guide and website entry per member. Jenny suggested that the subscription, as from 1st January 2020 should be increased from £50.00 to £60.00.

Gwen Moore (Clodoch Church) proposed that this should be accepted and Margaret Hughes (Kings Caple) seconded it. Everybody present agreed.

5. Election of officers and committee

The present committee is Wendy Coombey - chair, Jenny Beard - vice chair and treasurer, Jane Rigler – membership secretary, Marguerite Fothergill – minutes secretary, Brother Bernard (Belmont Abbey), Tim Bridges, Anni Calver (SCTG), James Devreux (HHCT), Catherine Fothergill (Pembridge PCC)

All these people are willing to continue, although Wendy did point out that she had been chair for 5 years and so thought that this should be her last year!

Ronnie Wilkie (Kinnersley) Proposed this and Hillary Ross (Hoarwithy) seconded it. Everybody present agreed.

6. 2020-2021 Brochure

There is to be a new guide for 2020-2021.

Jenny will be sending out application forms soon. Updated information and photos would be appreciated for the brochure and web site.

There is the possibility of producing a downloadable phone app. for the brochure.

7. AOB

There was no other business.

The afternoon continued with a short talk from Dom Alex Echeandia, Benedictine monk and world renowned iconographer, from the monastery of The Reincarnation in Peru.

He brought along an icon that he had produced and explained what it all symbolised. He is staying at Belmont Abbey at the moment to lead an iconography course.

Jenny Beard then gave an overview of the Virtuous Circles 2 Project. The prime focus of this innovative church tourism-based project is to create sustainable and commercially viable activities that will give historic church buildings an opportunity to secure their financial sustainability and safeguard these important heritage buildings for the future. This will be achieved through the development of quality tourism initiatives, creating new and enhancing existing visitor experiences. This will be achieved whilst ensuring the building retains its integrity as a place of worship.

HCTG have been awarded £215,231 from the National Resilient Heritage Lottery Fund for both elements of the project. The Accommodation pod development will be managed by Wendy in partnership with the Churches Conservation Trust, with HCTG managing the Churches Tourism Capacity Building element of the project. Partners for this are Shropshire Churches Tourism Group, Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust, National Churches Trust, and the Churches Tourism Association.

What will this mean for HCTG?

Funding for:

- Improving the help we give to our members to use tourism for the benefit of the church by funding a part-time, self-employed Churches Tourism Development Officer in a capacity building and empowering role, to encourage parishes and volunteers to develop a better understanding of how innovative engagement can maximize the tourism potential of church buildings.
- Sharing our skills and knowledge to develop as a key outcome, a Church Tourism Handbook, as a national blue print, giving rural churches the guidance and resources required to realise positive tourism outcomes.
- Developing a series of themed trails, and bookable visitor experiences, those encourage visitors to member churches.
- Measuring the impact, both financially and footfall, of visitors to churches by trialling contactless giving points and electronic counters.
- Encourage Local community involvement.

As member churches please get involved by supporting the work of the Churches Tourism Development Officer and being AMBASSADORS for the project