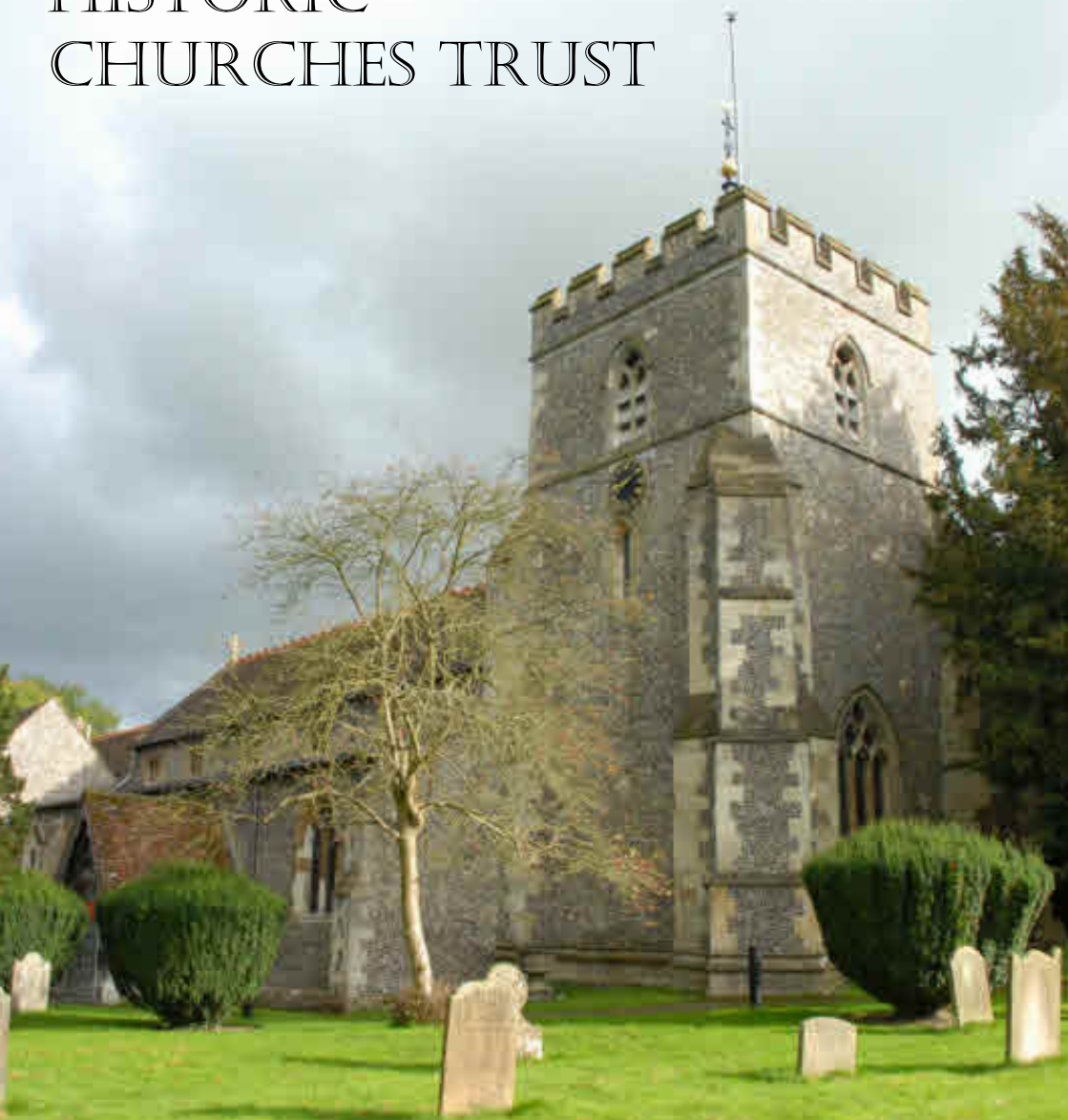


BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST



Annual Report and Newsletter 2009-10



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A good year tinged with unwelcome news

THE TRUST and its Friends have enjoyed another busy year, during which we have been able to help 21 churches, including, for the first time, one from a congregation of the Greek Orthodox denomination. We have also enjoyed ourselves whilst raising a considerable sum of money.

The annual Summer Reception was a success and so was the Ride and Stride, in September, and together they raised a significant sum for the Trust. One might almost add 'as usual'. They also both took place on beautiful sunny days, which, alas, is not always the case.

There has, however, been a cloud over proceedings, in that in future we will no longer have access to money from the WREN project. WREN, as you probably know is the acronym of the Waste Recycling Environmental Project, which was set up to give local communities some benefit from the income raised nationally by the Landfill Tax - some compensation, in effect, for the fact of having the waste sites on their doorsteps.

During the past three years its grants have enabled the Trust to direct some £350,000 towards the repair and restoration of those churches and chapels in Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale District that are located within ten miles of local landfill sites. That money, by taking care of the north of the county, has allowed the Trust to direct larger grants than before from its own funds towards the care of buildings in other parts of the county.

Nearly half the grants approved in 2009-10, worth around £60,000, were from WREN money.

There is, in fact, still money available from WREN, but it will be distributed through the National Churches Trust, to which all county Trusts belong. These grants, though, will be available only for buildings that are Grade I or II* listed.

We can only be grateful to WREN for what we have received over the past three years. We have to become used to relying on our own fund raising efforts, as in earlier years. The annual accounts printed on the inside back cover of this report show that the money we can raise is quite considerable.

Finally, I would like to thank our indefatigable secretary, Penny Keens, for all her hard work and our Trustees for their support. Thank you, also for your interest in the Trust and in the churches and chapels it helps to maintain.



Henry Aubrey-Fletcher

Some words of thanks

THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Historic Churches Trust is only able to function through the continued hard work of the members of the Committees and the “Friends”.

I particularly want, therefore, to thank members of the Appeal Committee, especially Jennifer Moss for the enormous amount of time she gives as secretary of both the Appeal and Inspection Committees and in assisting Bob Bird with the production of this annual report.

This year the annual Summer Reception was held at Hedsor House, by kind invitation of Alexander and Janey Shepherd, who made us so welcome.



Hedsor House

They enabled us to enjoy a lovely and most successful evening in the house and garden. This was due in large part to the tremendous organisational skills of Jenefer Farncombe, who made sure that all the furniture, pates, drinks and flowers were in the right place at the right time.

Thank you, also, to Patricia Burstall and her helpers for another record Ride and Stride.

May I also give a special word of thanks to Mrs Ruth Plowman, who, as Patricia Burstall notes in her report on the Ride and Stride, has just retired at the grand age of 97, after many sponsored years of welcoming Ride and Striders when they arrived at St Mary-le-Moor, in Cadmore End.



How lucky we are to have so many willing volunteers to keep the Trust going from strength to strength.

Cherry Aston

Chairman Appeal Committee

...and finally, grateful thanks to everyone involved in the WREN recycling project for their courtesy and assistance during the project's three years of work with the Trust.



A job that's made to last

THIS annual report tends to record where the Trust's grants go, but it seldom gets down to the detail of the work done with the money.

A welcome, then, to these photos of work in progress at St Peter and St Paul, Great Missenden. Taken by Richard Hawkins, they show Master Mason Glenn Massey and some of his work to restore the clerestory windows there - part of a £50,000 restoration programme, towards which the Trust gave a grant of £6,000.

In the November issue of the church's parish magazine, Mr Hawkins follows the stone used in the restoration from its West Country quarry to Great Missenden, noting that the soft clunch stone used in the restoration can be cut by hand with a tungsten tipped saw.

Not, says Mr Massey, that there's anything of the softie about clunch: it has been used in building throughout southern England for hundreds of years - and the windows at St Peter St Paul have clearly stood the test of time.

He wanted to be a carpenter when at school, but could not get an apprenticeship. Stonemasonry was the next best thing, one that has proved a rewarding alternative and taken him to some of the country's most famous buildings.



Glenn Massey

His first job was at Liverpool's Anglican cathedral. More recently, he has had long stints at Hever and Leeds castles in Kent: the intricate work restoring the Maiden tower at Leeds castle is his work.

He finds it satisfying to be following in the steps of craftsmen from what may be 1,000 years ago, and to know that his work may well last another 1,000.



Before...



...and after

WREN gives a final boost to grants in 2010

Church	Grant	Purpose
Aston Abbotts St James	10,000 (W)	Chancel and tower repairs
Aston Sandford St Michael	2,000 (W)	Stonework and guttering repairs
Dorney St James the Less	2,500	Removal of moss encrustation
Great Hampden St Mary Magdalene	8,000	Tower and stonework repairs
Great Missenden Ss Peter and Paul	6,000	Restoration and glazing of windows
Hanslope St James the Great	8,000 (W)	Floor repairs
Horsenden St Michael and Angels	4,599	Roof repairs
Ickford St Nicholas	3,000	Replastering
Kingsey St Nicholas	8,000	Replacement of roof tiles
Preston Bissett St John Baptist	8,000 (W)	Repair rendering and plasterwork
Princes Risborough St Mary	1,000	Window repairs and waterproofing
Saunderton Ss Mary and Nicholas	3,000	Tower and spire repairs
Shabbington St Mary Magdalene	5,000	Damp prevention
Shalstone St Edward	3,200 (W)	Internal and external repairs
Slapton Holy Cross	10,000	Roof and stonework repairs
Stony Stratford SsAmbrosius & Stylianos	10,000 (W)	Floor repairs
Swanbourne St Swithun	4,000 (W)	Heating overhaul and repair
Upton, Slough, St Lawrence	7,500	Stonework and plaster repairs
Wendover St Mary	5,000	Floor and stonework repairs
Westbury St Augustine	10,000 (W)	Floor renewal and replastering
Whaddon St Mary	5,000 (W)	Heating repairs

(W) = grant from Waste Recycling Environmental Project (Wren)

Churches the Trust helped in 2009-10

THE TRUST AGREED a total of 21 grants to help with the cost of repair and restoration of churches in 2009-10. Twelve were grants made directly from Trust funds. The other nine exhausted the final tranche of money from the WREN waste recycling project. Churches receiving grants were:

Aston Abbotts, St James

This grade II listed church was substantially rebuilt in the 1860s around a 15th century tower. Efforts are now being made to remedy a lack of repair and maintenance over the past 20 years and the Trust has agreed a Wren grant of £10,000 to help with the £14,000 cost of repairs to the chancel and stonework on the tower.



St James, Aston Abbotts

Aston Sandford, St Michael

This Grade II listed church is one of the smallest in the county. Thomas Scott, father of the architect Sir Gilbert Scott was rector in the early 1800s. Repairs to stonework, rainwater pipes and soakaways are costing £9,000, towards which the Trust agreed a grant of £2,000.



St Michael, Aston Sandford

Dorney, St James the Less

This 12th Century church has 17th century additions and a west gallery. A heavy incrustation of moss on the roof has to be removed and precautions taken to prevent its return.

The Trust approved a grant of £2,500.



St James the Less, Dorney

Great Hampden St Mary Magdalene

This Grade II* church is some distance from the village, near Hampden House. It dates from the 14th and 15th centuries. Urgent work is needed on the tower roof, where the lead of the valley gutters has failed, leading to damage to the timber underneath. In addition, stonework repairs are needed around three windows, in one of which the stained glass needs re-leading. The total cost of the work is some £26,000, towards which the Trust agreed a grant of £8,000.



St Mary, Great Hampden

Churches the Trust helped in 2009-10

Great Missenden, St Peter & St Paul

Dating from the 1300s, this church has an unusually widened west tower and stands on a hill overlooking the village. The ten clerestory windows and their glazing were in need of restoration costing £50,000. The Trust has made a grant, of £6,000. (See story on earlier page).



Ss Peter & Paul, Gt Missenden

Hanslope, St James the Great

This church has tallest spire in Bucks. The wooden floor of the light and spacious nave needs replacing following flooding. Existing flooring will be replaced with limestone paving and ultimately the whole nave will be re-floored in this way.

Trust approved a WREN grant of £8,000 towards the repair element of the work.



*St James
Hanslope*

Horsenden, St Michael & All Angels

This little church is the former chancel of a much larger 13th century building, the rest having been demolished in 1765. It houses a monument to one Bathuel Grubb, who died in 1666 at the unlikely, age of 141! Damp and water penetration had rotted a roof beam, which has now been repaired and the lead roofing has been made watertight.

The Trust has agreed a grant of £4,500.



*St Michael and All Angels,
Horsenden*

Ickford, St Nicholas

Another delightful little Grade II listed church, standing on the Oxfordshire border, it is largely unchanged since the 13th century. Gilbert Sheldon, later Archbishop of Canterbury, and builder of the Sheldonian theatre in Oxford, was rector in the 17th century. Parts of the outer walls have been replastered to cure problems with damp.

The Trust is giving £3,000 towards the £10,000 cost of the work.



St Nicholas, Ickford

Churches the Trust helped in 2009-10

Kingsey, St Nicholas

This church is virtually unchanged since it was built alongside the road to Thame in the late 1800s. The original machine-made roof tiles are now failing and need to be replaced at a cost of some £32,000. The Trust approved a grant of £8,000 to help with the cost of the work.



St Nicholas, Kingsey

Preston Bissett, St John the Baptist

Another Grade II* building, this 14th century church is unusual in that its walls slope outwards, to represent Noah's Ark. It has a fine recently restored painting of St John the Baptist. Urgent work is needed to repair and replace the internal rendering and failed plasterwork. In addition, the paviors and brickwork in the graveyard need attention.



St John, Preston Bissett

The Trust is making a Wren grant of £8,000.

Princes Risborough, St Mary

In 2009, the Trust agreed a large grant towards the cost of a new floor, (to be installed in 2011). Now, new problems caused by rainwater penetration in the spire require urgent attention.

The Trust has agreed a further grant of £1,000 to help with the cost of repair and for refurbishing the weathervane.



*St Mary,
Princes
Risboro*

Saunderton, St Mary & St Nicholas

This church was completely rebuilt in the late 1800s, largely using material and features from the original 14th century building.

A Trust grant, of £3,000, will help with the £10,000 cost of repairs.



Ss Mary and Nicholas

Shabbington, St Mary Magdalene

Another Grade II* building, the church dates from Norman times but is largely 15th century.

A £5,000 Wren grant will help deal with damp at the base of the tower and other minor work.



St Mary, Shabbington

Churches the Trust helped in 2009-10

Shalstone, St Edward the Confessor

This Grade II* listed building was much altered in the 19th century and now needs internal and external repairs.

The Trust is making a WREN grant of £3,200 to help the tiny community, whose attention to detail in maintaining the church is admirable.



St Edward, Shalstone

Slapton, Holy Cross

A recent Trust grant helped this church's active congregation with the cost of repairs to the tower and roof. Now more work is needed on the aisle roof. This, with other repairs to stonework will cost £113,000, towards which English Heritage will contribute £87,500.

The Trust approved a WREN grant of £8,000.



Holy Cross, Slapton

Stony Stratford, St Ambrosias & St Stylianos

This Grade II listed building has an unusual history. Built in 1864 as St Mary's Anglican church, it closed in the 1970s to become a community centre. Recently the building was purchased by the 250-strong Greek Orthodox community.

The floor needs repairs which the congregation cannot afford, having exhausted many possible sources of funding in purchasing the building.

The Trust agreed a WREN grant of £10,000 towards the £12,000 cost of the work, while welcoming assurances of longer term plans to remove inappropriate community centre modifications to the structure.



*St Ambrosias & St Stylianos,
Stony Stratford*

Swanbourne, St Swithun

This Grade II listed church dates from the 12th century. A few years ago the Trust helped with the cost of installing a new heating system. The gutters and downpipes now need overhaul and repairs costing £12,700.

The Trust agreed a WREN grant of £4,000.



St Swithun, Swanbourne

Churches the Trust helped in 2009-10

Upton, Slough, St Lawrence

Dating from the 11th century, the church has medieval paintings on the ribs of the ceiling of the chancel. The ceiling of the Victorian south aisle was replaced recently. Now, repairs to stonework and plaster are needed and a large crack in the west wall of the aisle needs investigation.

The Trust approved a grant of £7,500 towards the cost of the work.



11th C painting at Upton

Wendover, St Mary

A large 14th century church which was much restored in the 19th century. There is a large and active congregation and the church is used for concerts etc. A £600,000 refurbishment and re-ordering project is currently in progress.

The Trust deems limit it to making a grant towards the cost of structural repairs to the stonework and floor associated with the improvement project. A grant of £5,000 was agreed.



St Mary, Wendover

Westbury, St Augustine

This church dates from the 12th century with later additions and alterations. Part of the floor needs renewing and plaster repairs are needed to a wall and the ceiling. In addition, some stonework needs re-pointing.

The Trust approved a WREN grant of £10,000



St Augustine, Westbury

Whaddon, St Mary

This church, which dates from the 1100s, has a number of community uses.

The Trust has agreed a £5,000 WREN grant to help with the £23,000 cost of upgrading the heating system. This will include construction of a wood and glass screen to enclose the ringing chamber and prevent heat loss up the west tower.



St Mary, Whaddon

Busy Friends line up an entertaining 2011

SINCE OUR LAUNCH two years ago, the Friends have gained a membership of over 200 and our events, like the church crawl so entertainingly described by Chris Brearley later in this report, attract Friends and non-Friends alike.

One of the main objectives of the organisation is to support the work of the Trust – and this we have done by raising and paying over £18,000 to the Trust, made up of subscriptions and donations from Friends (on which the Trust can claim gift aid), donations from Churches and money raised on our activities. An excellent concert at St Mary's, Aylesbury, attended by nearly 100 people, raised £750 for the Friends, which was a remarkable achievement.

These events help us to fulfil another of our objectives – raising awareness of the Trust. As well as the concert in February and the Church Crawl in May, we held our third annual lecture in September. Roger Evans, a Trustee of the Bucks Historic Churches Trust and one of the first qualified buildings conservation specialists in local government, gave a wonderful illustrated talk in St Mary's, Haddenham, on the subject of *Literary Bucks*. His description was accompanied by readings by the splendid Alfred Bradley, who brought alive poetry by Milton (not the whole of *Paradise Lost*, which was written in Bucks!), Cowper, Gray, and Rupert Brooke, and readings from works of countless others with associations with Buckinghamshire, as far back as Wycliffe and ending with Enid Blyton (sadly no readings from the *Famous Five*) and Roald Dahl. It was a lovely occasion and I for one realised how ignorant I had been about our county's literary heritage.

So what can we tempt you with next year? On 8 March 2011 we have arranged a visit to Temple Church in London, combined with lunch at Middle Temple Hall and a tour of the Hall (If you are interested please contact Nick Morgan on 01844 291217 or email him on nam-morgan@tiscali.co.uk).

Later in the Spring we are planning a Church Crawl in the north of the county, and there will be another talk in the Autumn. Friends will of course also have priority booking for the Trust's summer reception.

We do need more Friends to support the work of the Trust - the more Friends we have the more churches the Trust is able to help.

If you are interested in becoming a Friend please download the application form from www.bucks-historic-churches.org or contact David Peck either on 01844 292110 by email at davepeck@jee.org.

The minimum annual subscription is £20 for one member or £30 for a couple and we are considering introducing life membership. Copies of the Friends' leaflet and application form are held in many churches and churchwardens are invited to request further stocks.

Marilynne A Morgan

Chairman

Friends of Buckinghamshire's Historic Churches

A sunny day for Ride and Stride

SEPTEMBER 11, the day of the annual Ride and Stride, turned into a beautiful summer day, as the several hundred people who took part will remember.

One of the busiest of the participants was Beaconsfield MP Dominic Grieve, who took a few hours off from being Attorney General to pedal with his son, Hugo, around 33 churches, raising over £3,000 in sponsorship money. It was the second time he had taken part.

Mr Grieve said: It is a great pleasure that enables me to see my constituency at a slower pace than usual and to keep fit at the same time'.

Our treasurer has already received more than £33,000 from participants, but donations are still coming in, so it is too early to give a firm estimate of the money raised by the event.



Mr Grieve meets some other riders

As usual, half the income will go to the church or chapel nominated by the participant and half to the Trust.

Thanks to everyone who took part, and especially to Mrs Ruth Plowman, who has just gone into honourable retirement at the age of 97 after many years on sponsored duty at St Mary-le-Moor, Cadmore End, during which time she raised large sums for our very worthwhile cause.

An evening of music for the Friends

DID YOU attend the concert in St Mary's, Aylesbury, back in February? No? Well, you missed a treat.

The well known local pianist Anna Markland gave a recital consisting of two works – Claude Debussy's *First Book of Preludes* and *Pictures from an Exhibition* by Modest Mussorgsky.

Debussy's *Preludes* date from 1910 and are recognised today as among his greatest compositions. Mussorgsky's *Pictures* is probably best known today in one of its orchestral versions. In my opinion the – original – piano version (1874) is more interesting, intimate and revealing. Anna's explanation of each of the works added considerably to their enjoyment but she avoided the trap that artistes often fall into in talking about the music – she did not go on too long!

In both works Anna gave us sparkling performances, displaying a complete command of the music's requirements, a detailed knowledge of the scores and a wonderful sense of the sweep and scope of each piece.

The concert raised £750 for the Friends (and ultimately for the Trust) which I gather was regarded as a triumph.

A Music Lover.

The Friends go on a church crawl

WE ALL HAVE our own ideas about what makes for a really good day out but mine certainly include new places, old favourites, good weather, good company, a nice meal, a church or two, the Chilterns, the Thames and its towns, learning a bit and definitely, not having to do the organising – oh, and good directions.

The Friends' Church Crawl in May effortlessly ticked all these boxes.

We began at All Saints, Bisham, which is in Berkshire, but which is part of the Marlow team ministry. The church and churchyard are right beside the Thames, the church very old and home to the really magnificent Hoby monuments.

We were guided round by Patricia Bur-stall, of whose knowledge and store of anecdotes I am sure we only scratched the surface. The image of the coffins in the crypt disturbing services by floating noisily against the walls when the river was high was quite worrying, as was the story of the gentleman who toured low-lying Thames-side churches seeking permission to bury



Creepy crawling at All Saints, Bisham

his wife in the churchyard, finally settling on Bisham. Later there was concern that her death might not have been entirely natural and the grave was opened, but the man had chosen his location well and no evidence remained one way or the other.

Next, after a social and restorative lunch, to Marlow, and another All Saints. The contrast with Bisham is striking – brick instead of clunch, Victorian instead of mediaeval. We are all used to Victorian improvements to our old churches but in Marlow they carried this to an extreme. Not only did they completely replace the mediaeval church in 1832-35, but they then altered that church out of all recognition over the next 50 years. The result with its spire is a huge success in the landscape, though perhaps less so inside.

Still in Marlow, we went on to the United Reformed Church in Oxford Road. This is a fine nonconformist building recently the recipient of a grant from the Churches Trust. It was of particular interest to my wife and me as her great great grandparents lived about 200 yards away in the 1840s. Perhaps they were among the first worshippers there (it was completed in 1840).

To complete our day we went on to Little Marlow, so close to the rushing traffic on the A404 and the Bourne End road but itself so quiet and largely untroubled by time; an absolute gem. St John the Baptist's parish church is, like Bisham, an outstanding mediaeval church near the river. Inside it is full of treasures and interest.

We bowled home with that elated feeling that you have after a really good day.

Chris Brearley

The Trust's income and expenditure 2009-10

Incoming resources	£		Expenditure	£	
	2010	2009		2010	2009
From donors					
Covenanted subscriptions	859	872	Grants BHCT	54,550	87,500
Annual subs/donations	439	507	Grants WREN	75,200	273,500
Friends Bucks Churches	4,423	7,234			
Grants from PCCs	2,060	2,518	Newsletter	750	543
WREN	<u>100,000</u>	<u>150,000</u>	Printing, stationery, post , etc	257	321
	107,781	161,131			
Ride and Stride (less expenses)	21,481 <u>-765</u>	21,606 <u>- 518</u>	Travel expenses	233	240
	20,716	21,088	Insurance	227	227
Summer reception (less expenses)	4,695 <u>-459</u>	8,745 <u>-666</u>	Bank service charges	313	348
	4,236	8,079	Admin fees	5,200	4,300
Golden Jubilee book	1,042	645	Web site expenses	150	435
Investment income					
Dividends	30,935	30,293	Other expenses	290	475
Interest on investments	366	2,101			
Bank interest	1,510	5,051	Depreciation	9,819	0
Other income	<u>5,000</u>	<u>0</u>			
Total incoming resources	171,586	228,388	Total expenditure	146,989	367,889
<hr/>					
			2010	2009	
Surplus/Deficiency for the year			24,597	-139,901	
Unrealised surplus/loss on investments			84,827	-127,461	
Net movement in funds			109,424	-267,362	
Fund balance brought forward			598,193	865,555	
Fund balance carried forward			707,617	598,193	
Unrestricted funds			697,621	609,225	
Restricted Funds (WREN)			9,996	-11,032	
Total Funds			707,617	598,193	

Note: A copy of the full financial statements are available from the Treasurer,



The Garrard monument at St James the Less, Dorney

Churches are expensive to repair and many of the most precious are in very small communities which cannot carry the whole burden of conservation and maintenance. The Buckinghamshire Historic Churches Trust exists to help. You can help, too, by an annual donation or by remembering the Trust in your will.

For more information, see our website at www.bucks-historic-churches.org or contact our Hon. Secretary, whose address is given on the inside front cover.