





Pentlow

Churches are an essential feature of our towns and villages, valued and enjoyed by the wider community as well as by those who worship in them. As beautiful and historic buildings they rightly demand special care and craftsmanship, and are significantly more expensive to maintain than most other buildings. You can help look after our churches by joining the Friends of Essex Churches Trust.

## ABOUT US

The Friends of Essex Churches Trust was established in 1951 to help places of worship that had been bomb-damaged during World War II. There was a great need for a new source of funding, and this remains the principal purpose of the Friends Trust is to make grants for repairs and improvements to places of worship of all Christian denominations in Essex and the five

London boroughs that are part of the historic county (Barking & Dagenham, Havering, Newham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest). Grants are mostly in the range of £5,000–£15,000. Since 1997 the Trust has given away more than £4 million.

Since 2015 grants have also been given for improvements. This recognises the importance of updating churches by introducing modern facilities and equipment, thereby increasing their suitability for wider community use and helping to ensure their long-term survival. Unlike some county trusts we do not have any criteria based on age or historic importance, but make grants to all churches in need.

Please visit our website for details on how to apply.

## HOW WE RAISE FUNDS

The Trust has no endowment, and all the money that is given in grants has to be raised. Funds are raised through membership subscriptions, donations and legacies. The Events Committee organises social events each year in addition to the annual Essex Gift Fair and also produces the Trust's Christmas card, based on a stained glass window or painting from one of our churches.

## RIDE+STRIDE

Our single biggest fund-raising event, is the annual sponsored bike ride (Ride+Stride), started by the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust and now an important annual event in most English counties. Since 1984 this has raised

about £2.9m in Essex and East London, half of which is given out in grants with the other half returned to the parishes nominated by individual riders.

## STUDY DAYS

One of the primary objectives of the Trust is to promote the education and interest of the public in the history of Christian churches and places of worship in Essex.

We hold two informal Study Days each year, in May and October, when we visit four or five churches or chapels. It is a perfect opportunity to explore Essex and East London. It is also a chance to see churches that might not normally be open, and often to see churches that have been repaired with one of our grants.

## PLEASE JOIN US

Our members are crucial to the life of the Friends. You will be invited to all our events and membership costs very little: £20 a year for individuals and £30 for couples. We welcome churches, chapels and supportive organisations as members too. Please help us preserve and improve our beautiful and historic churches by joining the Friends.



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