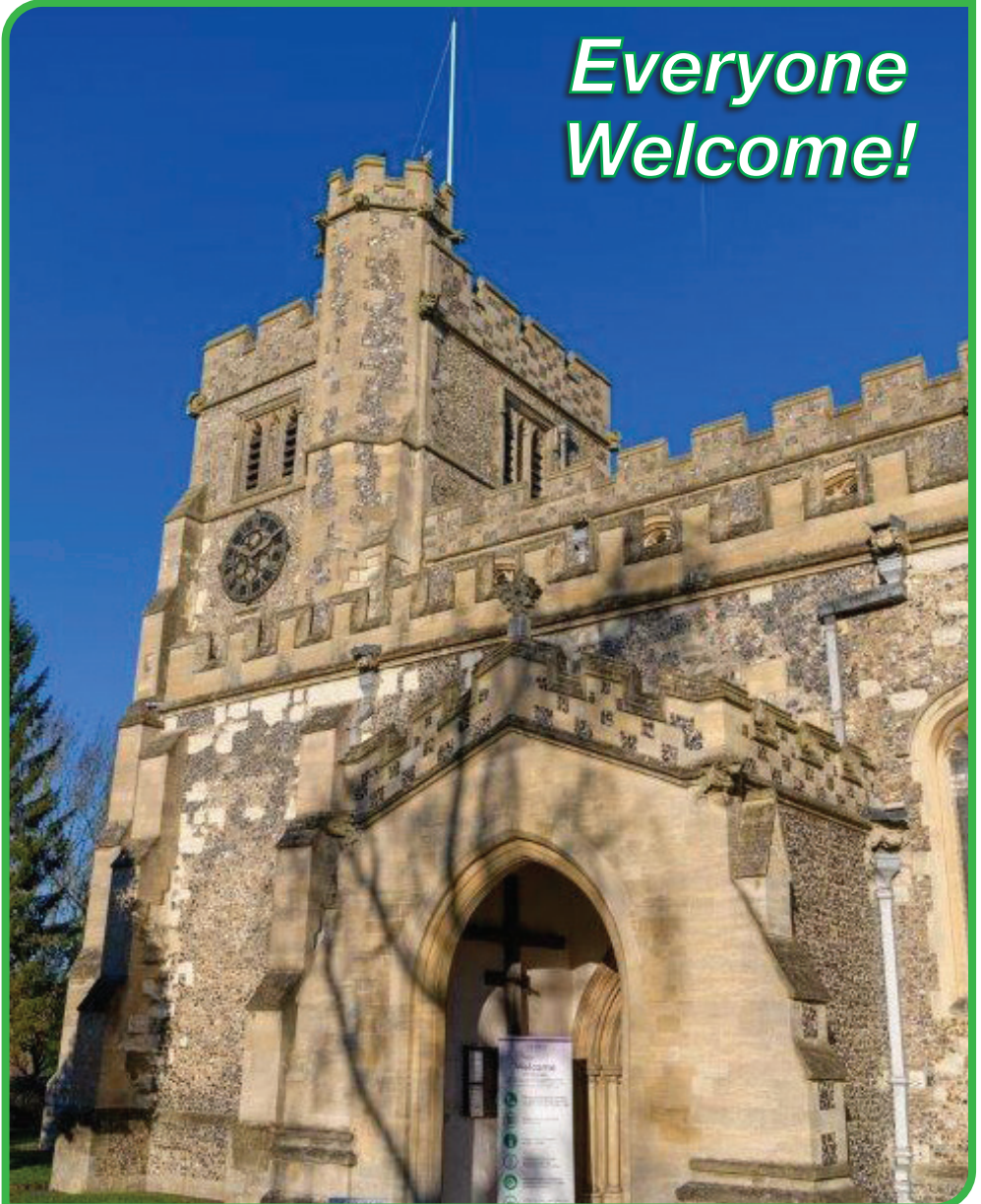




# FRIENDS OF TRING CHURCH HERITAGE

**MAGAZINE**  
SPRING 2024

*Everyone  
Welcome!*





## Who are the Friends of Tring Church Heritage?

Tring's ancient Parish Church building and its surrounding grounds right on the High Street look great and are an important part of the character of the town.

All old historic buildings need regular maintenance, and in a large medieval Church building that doesn't come cheap! The building also needs to be updated from time to time, so that it doesn't just look beautiful but continues to be a great place for schools, community groups and the Church congregation to use and hold events.

The Friends of Tring Church Heritage (FOTCH) is a local heritage

charity dedicated to maintaining Tring's historic Parish Church and grounds for future generations.

Over the past 30 years or so, FOTCH has made grants of over £300,000 for projects ranging from repair of 600-year-old walls to a new sound system and modern lighting to make the building more usable for schools and other groups.

No one is too young or too old to take part and we welcome volunteers to join in and be part of the FOTCH community.

For more details, visit the website [www.fotch.co.uk](http://www.fotch.co.uk)



## A word from the Editor



This issue contains an article from our Honorary President (Grahame Senior) about how FOTCH is being strategically repositioned for the future, providing details of the rebranding exercise that is currently being done for the Friends of Tring Church Heritage to provide the best fit for Tring's community.

Also, we take a look at what happens in the Church (other than the religious services that take place). Vivianne Child recalls the fashion show that was staged a few years ago. This is a theme I plan to develop further in future editions – looking at the meetings, the clubs, the musical performances, the social occasions etc., that take place in the Church during the week.

We hear from Maria and Lottie Lashley about what is involved in this year's Tring Family Fun Day.

We have a couple of articles about the vibrant folk scene in Tring which is taking place in the Churchyard.

There is a word about the ornamental borders and flowerbeds in the Churchyard, and learn about the work which goes on to maintain these.

Finally, we have regular contributions from the Fabric Committee (Andrew Kinsey) and a report from the Treasurer (Malcolm Rogers).

Many thanks to Steve Kitchener for the cover photograph and for the images in the centre pages. I challenged Steve to capture some shots of the Church, photographed from unusual angles – a glimpse of the outside of the Church from an unexpected perspective or little details from inside the Church. This is what he came up with! If you would like to contact Steve, you can reach him on [stephen@imagebysteve.co.uk](mailto:stephen@imagebysteve.co.uk) or see his website at [www.imagebysteve.co.uk](http://www.imagebysteve.co.uk).

Many thanks to all our contributors for their articles.

We hope you enjoy the magazine!  
*Phil Dowden, Editor*

## FOTCH 100 Club – Latest Winners

The latest 100 Club draw took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> March and the three lucky winners were £150 – Joyce Cook; £75 – Simon Underwood (Godfrey Orrell's son in law) and £25 Libby McKerrow.

We are about to enter into year 20 of the 100 Club and at this point there are two available numbers if anyone

would like to take them up. An annual payment of £20 per number gives you eligibility for three draws in the year. These are on Family Fun Day in May, October and March (the 100 Club year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> May each year). (50% of the income goes to FOTCH funds and the other 50% is distributed among the prize winners with 3 prizes per draw.)

If you would like to take up either of the available two numbers please give me a call, Grahame Senior 01442 822770.

# Everyone's included!



## The Heritage Heart of Tring matters to all of us

Tring is growing; vibrant with young adults and new families all drawn here by its unique character and our unspoilt country town environment. We need to welcome the newcomers as well as cherishing our long-standing supporters. We definitely need to pay attention to our relationship with the whole community if we are to meet our long-term objectives and ensure everyone values our 'Heritage Heart'.

## Where we have come from

For the last 35 years FOTCH (the Friends Of Tring Church Heritage) has had a fairly high profile in our town. It has been well regarded for the quality of its social events and attracted a much wider audience than those who simply used the Church as a place of worship. That extensive reputation has faded in recent years and very few people outside the membership



group either really know or care what FOTCH is or does. We have to make sure it seems important and relevant to everyone in Tring.

## Where we are going

In that same time period, the town of Tring has grown and developed to become almost unrecognisable from how it was 35 years ago. It is now a thriving town with a vibrant restaurant and social scene, and already has a considerable number of new houses and new residents. From being rather staid, middle-class and middle-aged, it has now become much more family-oriented and has a very much more youthful vibe.

In tandem with this change of course, it is sadly the case that the overall relevance of places of worship has decreased in our society as a whole. The times have certainly been "a-changing" (to quote Bob Dylan).

## The Heritage Heart of Tring

What has not changed over this period is the way in which the heart of Tring – the historic Church of St Peter and St Paul in the green centre of the community – continues to be valued and appreciated by all



our residents. Not only is it still a vital centre of worship for the Anglican community but it is also increasingly a place where schools and associations meet and cultural events are held. Some time ago, the trustees updated the strategy of FOTCH to ensure that we do everything possible to increase the perceived relevance and value of the building for all constituents of our community.

## Getting the whole town together

One of the most significant occasions in the annual calendar of Tring is the Family Fun Day which has traditionally been held on the second Saturday in May in the Church and Churchyard. It is a great draw, it's free to attend and everyone is welcome. In 2024 we are planning to try and make this event even more popular and more welcoming. The poster on the back cover indicates that the Family Fun Day is going to be bigger and better than ever. As well as attractions such as the ever more popular zipwire ride for teddies, we will be having an increased number of activities for all ages. We will also have an exhibit explaining how the (very costly) renovation of the groundworks and drainage in the Churchyard has been essential to

keep the building standing and safe. Communicating what we do with the money that we raise is very important. Making every occasion that we organise inclusive and welcoming and fun for all is even more vital.

## A great event with something for everyone

Happily, we have a great team making it all happen. Now that Maria Lashley and Andy Hall are co-ordinating the activist groups for Family Fun Day, we have a very enthusiastic set of people who know exactly what they are doing. As well as Ben and Phillip Cartwright controlling the set-up arrangements and Vivianne Child co-ordinating the indoor entertainment with Robin Schafer's Tring Music Partnership and the local schools, we have Lottie Lashley dealing with all the social media communication and Andy Hall dealing with all the graphics. We are also blessed with Mal Goodes and the Halton High Ropes team from RAF Halton, Richard Shardlow's Tring Brewery brigade and Aidan Cahill's barbecue buffs all giving us their essential enthusiastic support. We are also planning some extra activities this year to make sure that all generations and every taste are catered for. Watch

this space for further details and heartfelt thanks to all those individuals who together make this thing happen.

If you are reading this and you have some great ideas about how to make it all better and want to be involved in any aspect, please get in touch with Maria, Richard or me and your contribution will be warmly welcomed.

As you can see from our logo for this edition of the magazine (“Everyone Welcome”) we want everyone who loves living in Tring to feel welcome to join in and be part of the party! Together we can make it an even better event and make absolutely sure that there is something happening for everyone.

### Working together for our long-term future

We all know that Tring is a great place to live, work and bring up a family. We’ve all heard the saying that once people move here, they never want to live anywhere else. We all want to keep it that way for everyone’s future and we know that Tring’s Heritage Heart is a vital part of what makes Tring feel special. That’s why our strategy is to make sure that our wonderful heritage asset is used and enjoyed by all kinds of organisations for all manner of events.

As well as ensuring that the fabric is securely preserved and fit-for-purpose, we are also committed to keeping the facilities up to scratch and capable of supporting all kinds of events and activities.

As the year progresses, we will be increasing our communication efforts to everyone in Tring to make sure that they feel ownership and engagement with this invaluable asset at our town’s heart. Again, watch this space!

Please, please get involved and help us as we evolve together to make sure that Tring’s Heritage Heart remains alive and welcoming for all future generations in Tring.

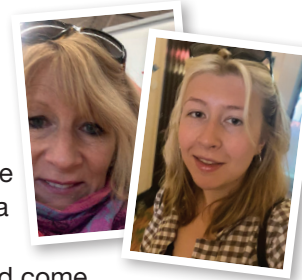
Everyone is included and everyone is warmly welcome!

**Grahame Senior**  
*Honorary President*



## Why come to Tring Family Fun Day?

Of course, you want to come to our Family Fun Day, but we want to give you a few extra reasons as to why you should come.



No matter what age you are, the Tring Family Fun Day is for you. There are stalls for every age and activities for everyone to enjoy. Unlike going out in London, our event will guarantee you a cheaper day out – and will mean you don’t have to worry about getting buggies and wheelchairs into London, as you just have to pop to the centre of our lovely town! The Family Fun Day isn’t just close by, it is full of fun and helps us connect with our local community to fundraise for our Church.



Which brings me to our next point! Our Church, which is our community hub of Tring, needs your help. The Family Fun Day raises money for our Church which desperately needs it. Currently, we are fundraising for many Church repairs, so

this year we have upped the ante and introduced many changes. The biggest change is our name from FOTCH Family Fun Day to Tring Family Fun Day. It encapsulates what our event stands for as it involves everyone in Tring. We’ve also made a few changes that we are keeping under wraps until the day!



Here is what to expect from this year’s Tring Family Fun Day:

- A delicious candyfloss stall,
- a blooming fantastic plant stall,
- a wonderful children’s toys and games stall,
- a tasty cake and preserves stall,
- a gorgeous jewellery and bric-a-brac stall,
- an amusing bouncy slide,
- a footy-fantastic beat the goalie game,
- an enjoyable tombola and raffle,
- an amazing craft stall,
- an awesome tower tour,
- all the scrummy food to fill your day with a BBQ, brewery and Church refreshments
- and finally, as always, our stupendous and tremendous teddy tower zip wire!

We can’t wait to see you there!

**Maria and Lottie Lashley**

## 24/7, 365 days a year, for six plus centuries (and counting)

The rain doesn't just fall on Sundays. The good news is that whatever day it now falls, especially when in heavy volume, it has a reliable route to drain away into the ancient chalk underneath the Churchyard – rather than escaping through old drains no longer able to sustainably disperse the water away fully from the building, risking longer-term and more serious problems.

That's due to the expanded drainage works and repairs for existing damage that FOTCH funded to the tune of around £60,000. That's a lot of money but it was a big, one-off job. As always with a grade 1 listed medieval building and an official graveyard, it a job that rightly required very careful and sometime specialised work.

So, when on Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> May anyone takes part (or even helps out) at one of the activities at the FOTCH Family Fun Day, there's a concrete link to keeping this central heritage community asset in good condition and more access for now and for future generations. The improved drainage works wouldn't have happened without money. We wouldn't have the money without the generosity of people giving their time and putting their hand in their pocket to take part. Every spin of the



tombola, bouncy slide session, raffle ticket, teddy sent down the zipwire, soft toy or book bought or beat the goalie attempt tried, are all directly contributing to making the building and its surroundings safely accessible today and on future days. We'll try to make that tangible connection more visible at the Family Fun Day, on future social media and other communication.

These vital large-scale repair and improvement jobs are funded by a lot of hard work – the everyday business of raising funds for our heritage charity, and the careful stewardship of these funds to allow payment now while building up reserves for future foreseen or unseen future requirements. This work is helped by some very generous bequests from some wonderfully generous and community-minded individuals. It isn't something that's obvious every day. Like the wonderful building with all its centuries of history in our community, it's a long-term commitment that evolves over time. Its continued success depends on us making the effort on Family Fun Day, supporting in other ways and on other days, and taking an active interest at different times of the year.

We are stewards of this super-central, super-prominent heritage asset for the future communities of Tring. What we do day to day, or on special fundraising days like Family Fun Day, is directly linked to ensuring the historic heart of our town is there for future generations. And fortunately, we can have a really enjoyable time doing it!

*Richard Abel, Chair*

## The Market Merrymakers

We have been meeting up on Market mornings, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month usually, since around 2019. In the summer we play outside the Church and this year the Church kindly allowed us to play inside on cold Saturday mornings and this has been very appreciated by us.

We are a mix of adult musicians. Some learning new instruments into their 80's, others very experienced musicians with 50-plus years of musical experience.



Everyone is welcome and we support all levels of playing and enjoy supporting newer musicians and playing together as a group. We play a range of instruments including fiddle, guitars, squeeze boxes of many varieties, percussion, mandolins and banjo amongst others.

Many of us also play for local Morris sides, predominantly New Moon Morris, and we are very embedded into playing at local events and supporting local charities. Our small but appreciative audience often donate money and last month our collection tin tally for DENs was over £100. We play for our own and others' enjoyment.

We look forward to continuing to play at the Church and if you ever feel we may be useful in any way, please do let us know.

*Louise Yeoman*



# Looking after the heritage of Tring Parish Church flowerbeds

Masterminded by Celestria Bell, the Church ornamental borders or flowerbeds originated over 30 years ago, and many shrubs are still flourishing.

I retired aged 60 in 2015. After years in an office, I craved outdoor pursuits. Probably for the first time, I noticed the flowerbeds in the grounds of St Peter and St Paul. They contained weeds... a week later, the weeds had not moved. Something had to be done. I contacted John Luddington, who was in charge of the grounds at the time, and he welcomed my offer to have a go with the flower beds – without reviewing my own garden! We had always been members of Friends of Tring Church Heritage (FOTCH) and this was my chance to contribute.

The flowerbeds had not been tended for a few years and there were some brambles and so on. More alarming was the absence of worms. Manure to the rescue! Someone gave me a talking to about parking on the Church grass. I waved a paw at the sacks of manure in the back of my trusty Ford Fiesta but that made no impression. Other folk have been more appreciative and I have had many welcome chats about gardening. The comment I most treasure was from a lady who said

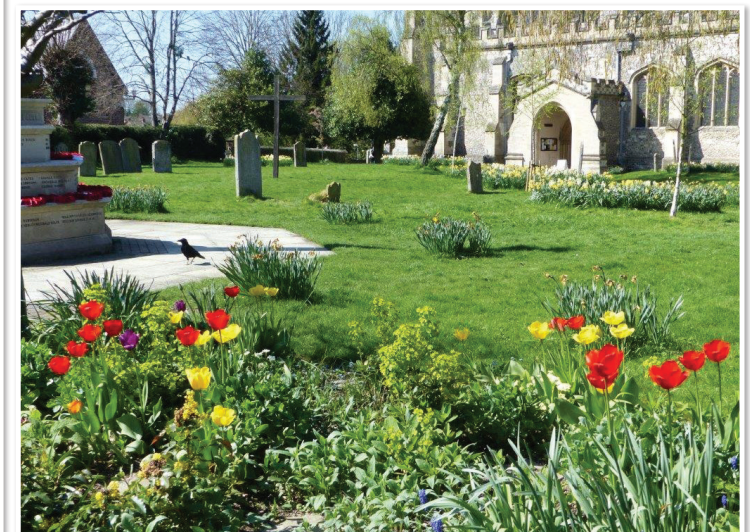
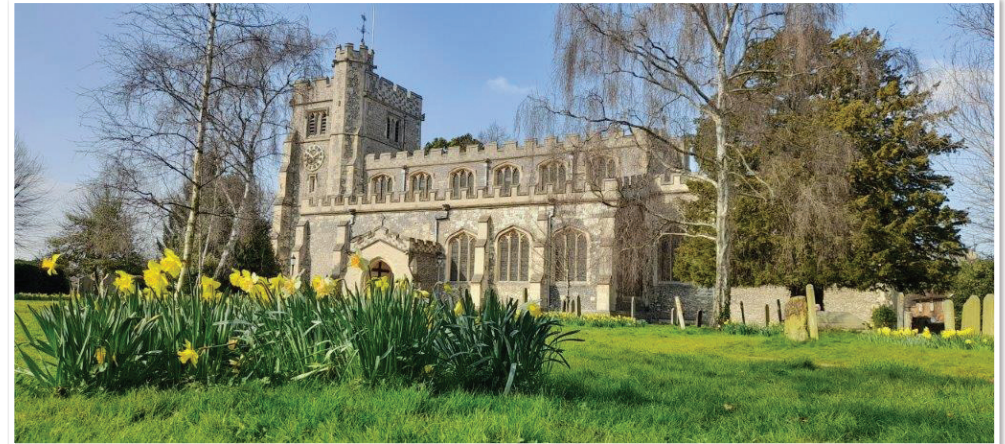
the flower beds were very 'Tring'. I interpret this to mean very natural and friendly. Many plants are divisions from my own garden, which is open this year on the afternoon of Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July as part of the group opening for Rennie Grove Peace Hospice Care.

I have roped in my husband, Peter, to help prune the apple tree over the years. This spring, Peter removed the dead hebes and helped plant two new shrubs. John Bly once joked that I might be digging up his ancestors in the flower bed! People volunteer for various roles in the Church. More recently, I caught John with his brushes and wax, off to perform routine maintenance on carved figures in the Church. Busy bee with his wax. So many unsung heroes...

The star volunteers are those who mow the lawns so beautifully and edge the graves. This haircut makes the greatest difference to the appearance of the green and beautiful setting of the Church. Then there are the yew hedge cutters, whose task is once more possible now the hedge is no longer so high and wide. Ad hoc work parties are also run.

If you would like to volunteer to help maintain this green heart of Tring then please contact Barry Anscombe who co-ordinates the gardening tasks: [bandb33@talktalk.net](mailto:bandb33@talktalk.net). Enjoy.

*Helena Holliday*



# Folk traditions at the Church

The Tring Market Merrymakers play folk music at each farmers' market to entertain the marketgoers and stallholders, usually sitting just inside the Churchyard near the war memorial.

The Market Merrymakers began their musical market entertainments almost by accident. In 2020, as soon as six people were allowed to meet outdoors, six Morris dancer friends decided to meet to play the music they had been missing so much during lockdown. This tradition at Tring Farmers' Market is still going strong in 2024, and others have since joined this informal folk group.

This winter, the Church kindly allowed them to play inside due to the cold, where they played Christmas

carols. Many of these actually have tunes derived from ancient folk tunes. Before Victorian times, carols were mainly folk songs sung by 'common folk' in places like pubs.

Morris dancers are also seen from time to time dancing in Church Square. One such time is on Apple Market day in October, after they have paraded down the High Street. This year there were about six 'sides' (groups of Morris dancers) sharing the space for a Day of Dance, displaying a variety of dance styles and kits.

Styles of Morris dancing include: Cotswold (wear white clothes and have hankies and sticks); Border style (usually wear black outfits with 'tatters' and face paint); Northwest (often dancing in wooden clogs, adorned by flowers and sometimes accompanied by a brass band); as well as Molly dancing and sword dancing styles.



Although its exact origins are lost in the mists of time, Morris dancing is first recorded as a 15<sup>th</sup> century court entertainment around Europe with dancers wearing colourful costumes and bells. By the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, Morris dancing had become associated



with church festivals (with the churches often brewing ales to raise money) and, a little later that century, became popular with the 'common folk' at various seasonal celebrations, village fetes and so on. Over time it declined in many places, but there was a big revival in the early 1900s and a more recent one in the 1970s.

This January, New Moon Morris ([newmoonmorris.co.uk](http://newmoonmorris.co.uk)) and friends began their annual wassailing tour by wassailing the apple tree at the front of the Churchyard. Wassailing is an ancient Twelfth Night tradition of singing and wishing good health (in

Old Norse "ves heill") to neighbours in return for food or drink – a likely precursor to carol singing.

Wassailing also includes the practice of blessing fruit trees and orchards to ensure a good harvest for the year, which comprises a ritual pouring of cider onto tree roots (and sharing the cider with other wassailers by passing round the wassail bowl), singing wassail songs and making lots of noise to scare away evil spirits.

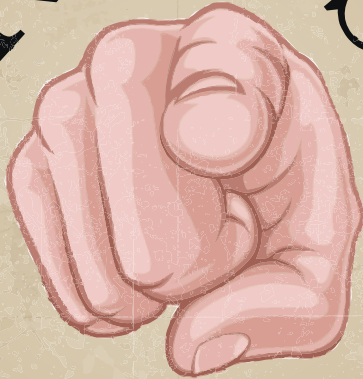
Folk traditions are still going strong in Tring!

*Helen Waterhouse*



# The Friends of Tring Church Heritage

# NEEDS



# YOU

For almost 35 years the Friends of Tring Church Heritage have focused on fundraising and fun events to secure the heart of Tring for all future generations.

It's a long game and we need new friends, new ideas and energy to keep that focus fresh. If you haven't joined the Friends yet – or are new to Tring's unique environment – please consider joining us. We are a very friendly bunch that likes to have fun as well as doing some effective fundraising and providing some serious grants to keep our heart in good condition.

Please use the form opposite to join us, or call Chair Richard Abel, President Grahame Senior or any of our trustees for a chat about how you can get involved.

Richard Abel - 07823 535267 or email at richard.abel@greeninvestmentgroup.com  
Grahame Senior - 01442 822770 or email at gsenior@seniorpartners.co.uk



## APPLICATION FORM

Please complete this form in **BLOCK CAPITALS**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish your membership to include other family members, please include the name(s) of all other adults, and the number of children (under 18 as at 1st April, 2024).

Names of other adults in your family group

Number of children (under 18) in your family group:

**Please tick the box for the membership category of your choice.**

Annual Memberships – I enclose my membership renewal for 2024 - 2025

Individual: £12       Family Group: £20       Junior: £5 (under 16s)

Corporate: £100       Voluntary donation \_\_\_\_\_

**Life Memberships** - I should like to change my/our membership to Life

Individual Life: £100       Joint Life: £150 for couples

To set up a standing order or pay by bank transfer the Friends of Tring Church Heritage bank account details (now Metro Bank, previously Nat West) are as follows:

Account Name: "The Friends of Tring Church Heritage" Sort Code: 23-05-80, Account number: 40555293.  
Please add your name in the 'Reference' field. Cheques can be made payable to: The Friends of Tring Church Heritage

### Gift Aid

I want to Gift Aid my subscription (and any voluntary donations) I make this year, or have made in the past four years or make in the future to Friends of Tring Church Heritage.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax (other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not apply) than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM WITH YOUR REMITTANCE TO:

Trish Dowden, 6 The Barns, West Leith, Tring, Herts HP23 6JJ or leave in the "C" pigeon hole at the back of the Church.

I understand that the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every pound I give. If you pay Income Tax at more than the standard rate, you can claim extra tax relief through your HMRC tax return. I will notify FOTCH if I wish to cancel this declaration; OR change my name or home address; OR no longer pay sufficient tax for Gift Aid to apply.

Friends of Tring Church Heritage is a Charity registered in England & Wales, number 1005442



# St Peter & St Paul

A fresh look at familiar objects from Steve Kitchener.



Time ticks away through the centuries.



If these stones could talk, what stories they would tell!



## Do the pews still serve their purpose?

Earlier this year Canterbury Cathedral created a scandal by hosting a silent disco. Some 1,700 people joined a petition describing the event as profane and arguing that it belittled the sanctity of the building. Whilst the Dean might have hoped to gain some new worshipping members in the Cathedral, what was probably more important was the injection of some £12,000 into the Cathedral's coffers. Medieval buildings cost an eye-watering amount to run! However, the money is in some ways a distraction. There is a fundamental question around the use of our ancient buildings and who gets a say in how we use them.

It occurs to me that Canterbury Cathedral is able to host a silent disco because it, like every cathedral I can think of, removed pews a long time ago to create a more flexible space so that the building can be used for a wide range of community activities. Tring Choral society have long campaigned for us to remove pews at the front of Church to be able to seat an orchestra. The Church really could be an amazing venue for classical music. Few people complain about classical music in a church setting. We have also been grateful to John Stack in recent years



for bringing the Blues Bar to the Church. Often there is a crossover between blues and gospel, and it has been wonderful bringing a different kind of music to the Church. However, pews definitely limit the dancing and mute the atmosphere. Some might think that is good (but King David famously danced before the Lord). However, more importantly, if there is a building which costs hundreds of thousands to be maintained, surely it has to serve the needs of all in the community. All must be welcomed for a variety of events. However, nothing will change the fact that the Church was built to the glory of God and for people to be able to worship. As you come into the building you will see a notice 'worship is what we do'. We should not do anything which detracts from our worshipping life.

For some, in their minds, pews are an intrinsic part of Anglican worship. Those people who very rarely, or never, worship can be the most passionate advocates that churches must have pews. They fit into their image of what a church is. However, do they still serve their purpose? It is hard to build a community sitting in rows!

In our current pews, there is seating for 350 in the pews and room for another 50 chairs. However, we have to be realistic, most Sundays we do not have 350 people in Church. The permanent arrangement of pews has the effect of spreading people far apart in a massive building. They actually distract from our worship by creating separation between worshippers. There

is no flexibility. More importantly we no longer worship in the same way that our Victorian forebears did. As a parish, we have for many years sought to be innovative in our worship especially at our 'Worship for All' services. It would be normal practice to have prayer stations and or craft activities within the worship. Currently we are able to set up a station in the lady chapel, high altar, nave altar and coffee area but we have found we are unable to worship in this way when we have Tring Park school in attend as we do not have the space to circulate. Tim Lomax who is responsible for mission in the Diocese writes: "In a static society, traditional patterns of 'one size fits all' worship might be fine. But how can we take account of the diversity in the Church – let alone those who never darken its doors – in our worshipping life?". He advocates that worship should be turned into a missional opportunity through exactly these kinds of activities.

Pews can definitely be good for a family to squeeze up together in (and for small children to hide in) but look a little deeper and we see that the



Church is unwelcoming to those with prams, mobility aids and wheelchairs (either self-driven or pushed). There are few places they can sit and the high step into the pews makes a significant trip hazard (an elderly gentlemen had a nasty fall over this step rehearsing with Tring Choral Society). We have long since moved away from exiling children to a leper's corner in the back of the Church (however progressive this might once have been). We believe that we should all worship together as one community, with families being able to stay together and children's worship running alongside the standard liturgy. As Bishop Jane, Bishop of Hertford, commented on her visit to St Peter and St Paul: "It was also so good to

see how the children are included and how the gentle hubbub created by them doesn't seem to bother the congregation at all. Hooray for multi-generational church!" Greater flexibility in our liturgical space will only enhance this.

We have had to abandon midweek toddler worship. We relaunched it after lockdown but folk didn't stay with us. Talking to those who come and try us out, the building is the limiting factor. They told us that the layout made it too cold, too impersonal, there were too many sharp edges of pew corners and too many trip hazards. Fortunately, our friends at High Street Baptist Church have a much better building for toddler worship and they had somewhere else to go, but it does feel a shame that our pews limit our options.

Whilst we cannot necessarily imagine how our worship will grow and develop, it is hard to imagine that any developments in liturgical practice are likely to go back to sitting in rows in pews.

It strikes me that if pews aren't the most helpful thing for our core purpose – to worship to God – then there is a very strong case for moving in the direction of our cathedrals and returning the Church to its medieval design. A flexible building for all the community – whether they want to come and worship, to sit in silent contemplation, to drink coffee, to share a meal, to listen to beautiful classical music or a blues band, or, dare I



say it, even come to a silent disco. I think maybe the Dean of Canterbury Cathedral is a touch optimistic thinking that disco goers might become worshippers. However, I am sure that if the whole community can use their Church for a wide variety of reasons, then they will love the building, become avid supporters of FOTCH and our glorious Church can be secure in its dual purpose as a place of worship and service to the community.

**Huw Bellis**  
Rector, Tring Team

*Editor: This article reflects the personal view of the Rector, not necessarily the views of all members of the Society.*

## Tring's passion for fashion!

Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019 saw Tring's Parish Church buzzing with women (and men and children) all eagerly anticipating the 'Passion for Fashion Show' organised by Tring Together.



From behind the glitzy pink curtains, with a beautiful back drop of the Sanctuary's stained glass window, came an array of models showcasing local boutiques of fashion and jewellery, culminating in bridal wear. Our MC, Jane Banister, entertained the audience with a bridal quiz, adding to the ambience of the evening. During the interval, local beauticians and hair stylists offered advice and make-over demonstrations.

It really was a wonderful evening and a wonderful memory in the Tring Together archive. Behind the glitz we had a prosecco drama, as we ran out! An emergency trip to Tesco saved the day! We made a 'note to self' that we should always buy twice as much prosecco as we thought we would need.

My memories are about the planning for the show. I remember we were concerned that we'd never put on a fashion show before and yet everyone looked to us (Trish, Steffi and me) to have all the answers. We had a great backstage crew looking after music, sound, lights – and decorations, canapes, drinks, serving, seating

and welcoming... all the things that happen in Church every week. But my overwhelming delight was that the retailers involved all pulled together. You could imagine that they might see themselves as competitors, but no, on that night they were all the 'retailers of Tring', pulling together to make Tring a fantastic place to live and shop.

"We set out to encourage everyone to 'shop local' by creating a fashion show which showcased all the wonderful local enterprises and to keep our High Street vibrant and full of successful shops, as well as give everyone a great evening", said Trish Dowden from Tring Together. Thanks were also given to Tring's 2019 Mayor, Councillor Penny Hearn, who made Tring Together her charity for her Mayoral year.

Tring Together is a charity whose aim is making life better and more enjoyable for the residents, businesses, community groups and charities of Tring and the surrounding villages.

For further information please look at [www.tringtogether.org.uk](http://www.tringtogether.org.uk)



**Vivienne Child**  
FOTCH Member, Parish Co-ordinator  
and CEO of Tring Together

# Celebrating Doctor Barry: man of music, man of action, family man

## The man who made things work!

There was only one 'Dr Barry' and everybody I know who knew him (which is just about everyone I know) would offer heartfelt thanks for his unique skills. Barry could make anything and everything work. Even things that had never worked before would respond to his deft touch and splutter into life. When I first got to know Barry, he was Head of Facilities at that massive BP Building just by the M1 junction in Hemel and I am certain that there wasn't a single person in the place, from business whizz kids to techno boffins, who didn't turn to Barry when something needed sorting.

Our relationship wasn't really work-based but centred around church and community. Barry and Vivianne are both 'Old Tringers' and when we first came to Tring in the 1970s, they were hugely helpful in getting us connected; if you wanted something doing then they always knew the people who could do it.

## Making FOTCH work

When we founded Friends of Tring Church Heritage as part of the strategic plan for rebooting the finances of the Tring Parish Church, Barry and Vivianne were closely involved and they just



knew everyone who could help. They were an essential part of the team that got FOTCH known and supported and recognised as a good thing for Tring.

Barry and Vivianne and family then moved out of central Tring to live in a roomier family-sized house in North Lee Lane near Marsh (nowadays part of the building site that is HS2's footprint). But they kept up their enthusiasm for Tring and FOTCH, and were an integral part of the activist team that built up the membership and supporter base. They made everything fun. In those days our watchword was 'fun and fundraising' and Barry could make anything and everything fun with a capital 'F'. He was a pitiless debunker of pomposity and loved practical jokes of every kind; at the same time, he was tirelessly energetic in making things actually happen, especially difficult and challenging things.



## The saga of the parmentier potatoes.

Some of you may remember the 'Quatre Cuisiniers', which was a little group of four middle-aged chaps (Eric Hollingsworth, Marc Clift, Claude Honey and me) who liked good food and wine, and fancied themselves up to putting on a jolly. We ran quite a few fundraising events (all of which involved plenty of food and wine!) and one of our most ambitious was a full-scale multi-course dinner of haute cuisine in Victoria Hall. We had 126 guests booked for the promised fine feast and getting that lot ready on time and to the right standard was a tall order.

Because we wanted to push it up a bit, everything on the menu was in our finest French and had to be authentic. We decided that the main course (coq au vin) had to be matched by the perfect accompaniment of *pommes parmentier*. This meant cooking 126 portions from fresh. Naturally we recruited a specialist and Barry's culinary career was launched. Every single cube of potato was prepared, perfected and presented from the massive stove in the bowels of Victoria Hall, and served up to the admiring guests in prime condition. It took all day (and most of the night to clean



up the stove afterwards) and Barry swore he would never again take on such a madcap task! But to no avail, he was well and truly hooked and his resultant enthusiasm for heroic culinary endeavours has resulted in a parade of memorable lunches, dinners and festive delights.

In particular, his pies and pates have achieved legendary status. His skill and hard work have been a huge component in the success of countless fundraising events – all laced with lots of fun. Seemingly with Barry the more difficult the challenge, the more it delighted him! Perhaps his finest culinary triumph was the giant cake he made for the teddies to land on from the Tower of Terror on Family Fun Day, followed the next year by the 'Pit of Peril'. If you could imagine it, Barry could make it! He was not a bodger, it was always the "appliance of science"!

## Enter Doctor Barry

As time progressed, the lure of the corporate world lost its lustre for both Barry and Vivianne, and they each developed their portfolio careers through the vehicle of Child Associates. Vivianne developed her strategic skills and among other ventures took on the very successful enterprise of Tring Together of which she is now the greatly respected Chief Executive. Barry, meanwhile, embraced the burgeoning demand for technical support for computer and electronic systems which are now essential bits of kit in every household. 'Doctor Barry' was born and became the go-to resource for everyone baffled by technology hardware and software i.e. most of us!

Barry has brought a rare human touch to such matters. I don't believe I know anyone of my generation in Tring who has not given heartfelt thanks for Barry's ability to save the day when deadlines loomed and all seemed lost. He could even, at times, make it all seem fun, as he would conjure triumph from the jaws of disaster with a twiddle



here and a re-connection there, often following a gloomy prediction that it probably wouldn't work. Usually, miraculously, it did!

People who can do really difficult stuff and don't make a song and dance about it – or charge the earth – are rare as hen's teeth. But that combination of real capability and kindness towards the needs of others was the hallmark of Dr Barry.

## The Bigger Picture

One thing I learned early on about 'Bazza' was that neither he – nor indeed Vivianne – ever took themselves too seriously. He deplored pomposity and he 'didn't live for his work' as some seem to do. He didn't talk about himself much at all – but there are two things I know he cared very seriously about. One was music and the other was his family.

Music was a lifelong passion with Barry. I believe that it is a passion that binds Vivianne and Barry together; indeed I think their relationship blossomed through their musical activities and I think that their annual pilgrimage to North Devon was one of the most important and refreshing fixtures in each busy year. However, as both Barry and Vivianne would agree, I am not remotely qualified to comment on musical matters as I must confess to being a musical ignoramus. It is always the words and the thoughts they express that matter

to me rather than the melody.

I do think, however, that I am reasonably qualified to comment on the other deep commitment in Barry's life which was the importance of family.

"What you sow, that shall ye reap" is something of a truism yet despite the nature v nurture debate that continues to plague our finest minds, I think there is a general consensus that the investment of loving kindness in family relationships does nothing but good. I have known Barry and Vivianne and their children more or less since the kids were born and what a fine legacy they have created together.

I have seen them grow through all kinds of changes and challenges, and I have seen the kindness that informs difficult decisions and is present in every episode of their lives together. I have also seen how it radiates outwards into their relationships with others outside the family and makes them warm, welcoming and hospitable to all.

I think the character of Barry Child shows through in the confidence with which Zoey and Peter face the world and the resilience with which Vivianne faces the future without Barry. Life is for living and kindness is what makes it worthwhile and sometimes even fun.

There was a man called Adam Lindsay Gordon, born of Cotswold stock and finely educated who turned



out to be a bit of a scamp. He was sent off to Australia to sort himself out where he turned into a formidable horseman, a debunker of the pompous and a first-rate poet. He died at a sadly early age but left us these words to remember him by:

*"Question not, but live and labour  
Till Yon goal be won,  
Helping every feeble neighbour,  
Seeking help from none;  
Life is mostly froth and bubble,  
Two things stand like stone;  
Kindness in another's trouble,  
Courage in your own."*

"Life is mostly froth & bubble" – that's pure Barry Child. So is the commitment to kindness and courage. "Get on with it and don't make a fuss" would always be his approach.

Like so many who love living in Tring, I think Dr Barry was part of what makes it so special. I feel very proud of knowing him as my friend.

**Grahame Senior**  
*Tring Team Parish and FOTCH Honorary President*

# Treasurer's report



Forecasting is a risky business, but I'll give it a go. The table below shows the forecast for FOTCH's current financial year (that ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024), along with actuals for last Financial Year and some comments. The current Financial Year is almost 11/12ths complete, so I'm only taking a risk on the last one-twelfth (March), so this is about the least risky it could be.

Once all the financial information is available for FY 23/24, I will prepare the formal final accounts for that year, invite the Trustees to review and comment and then send to our Independent Examiner (Dickinson's of Chesham) who will conduct their examination (a light touch audit). See table on right.

## Update on major repairs

For the past three years, FOTCH has spent considerable sums on a pair of closely linked projects – the vestry and the medieval drainage. To date, amounts paid for these projects total £44,115. There is a further £13,600 for FOTCH to complete payment on these two projects. The works undertaken identified some cracking in the walls which will need repairs before too long.

The recent level of grant expenditure on vestry and drainage is substantially higher than the historic trend. This stemmed originally from a need to underwrite the project in the uncertain and difficult COVID lockdown period.

Some years ago, FOTCH created a policy for how it would provide grants to the PCC (Parochial Church Council) for repairs and improvements, and we will continue to apply this policy. FOTCH will continue to balance new short-term funding opportunities for suitable repair and improvement projects, with prudent preservation and growth of the charity's funds for major funding needs that will no doubt arise in the medium and longer-term.

*Malcolm Rogers  
FOTCH Treasurer*



Description	ACTUALS for Fin Yr 22/23	FORECAST for Fin Yr 23/24	Comments
<b>TOTAL OPENING BALANCE</b>	<b>657,801.18</b>	<b>635,038.67</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>			
Bequests	0.00	10,000.00	Gratefully Received, but clearly not predictable
Donations	637.50	0.00	
Events Income	7,707.01	7,079.60	Mainly Family Fun Day plus 100 Club, etc.
Gift-Aid	0.00	1,000.00	Last claimed Nov 2021
Interest Received	336.73	335.19	
Membership	1,162.00	942.00	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>9,843.24</b>	<b>19,356.79</b>	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Administration	(3,869.03)	(2,170.61)	Printing, Insurance, IE Fee, Sumup Machines, etc.
Events Expense	(1,271.23)	(1,371.17)	Mostly FFF BBQ and 100 Club Prizes
Grants	(23,354.25)	(25,010.00)	Mostly Tring PCC re Drainage, etc., plus Rodwell
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>(28,494.51)</b>	<b>(28,551.78)</b>	
Surplus/(Deficit) (R&P)	(18,651.27)	(9,194.99)	
<b>EST YIELD ON INVESTMENTS</b>			
Unrealised Gains	0.00	46,542.58	
Unrealised Losses	(4,111.24)	0.00	
Overall Surplus/(Deficit)	(22,762.51)	37,347.59	Investment Returns very volatile
<b>CLOSING BALANCES</b>			
Bank Accounts	3,734.02	1,277.70	
Savings Accounts	55,091.68	48,353.01	
Investments	576,212.97	622,755.55	
<b>GRAND TOTAL CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>635,038.67</b>	<b>672,386.26</b>	

# Fabric Committee Update



There is always something to do when you are looking after a Grade 1 listed building!

Having addressed many of the findings of the last quinquennial report in 2020, the Fabric Committee turned its attention to the use of the Church and how it might be improved.

Based on feedback from the Church reordering survey conducted last year, we have been working with the appointed church architect to develop some concept plans for further discussion and review.

We've also been reviewing and updating the Eco Church questionnaire we completed in 2022. This is an online questionnaire to review environmental performance and engagement in five distinct categories, including:

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Management of church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle aspects

We previously achieved a bronze award, and, with further information and updates, we hope this can be improved to a silver or even a gold rating under this scheme.

During the recent very wet winter weather, a number of cracks have become quite noticeable inside the Church, especially above the altar and

near the plaque by the main south door.

Further investigation of the latter revealed it was in an unsafe condition and some of it was temporarily removed as shown in the photos, to prevent it falling and injuring someone. It may have fallen previously and due to the wall being very damp, a previous repair had failed. A specialist stonemason was engaged to repair the monument and check the surrounding area for further safety concerns.

Observations using tell-tale monitors have been ongoing since about 2010 and have shown some structural movement of the vestry. To try and alleviate this, in 2022 and 2023, with the support of FOTCH, soakaways were installed to enhance and improve the drainage and ground conditions around the Church in this area. However, unfortunately movement of the vestry is still ongoing.

The ground has been subject to two very hot, dry summers and the recent very wet winter weather may well have exacerbated the situation. A proposal to underpin locally has been recommended by the Structural Engineer, Robert Tucker.

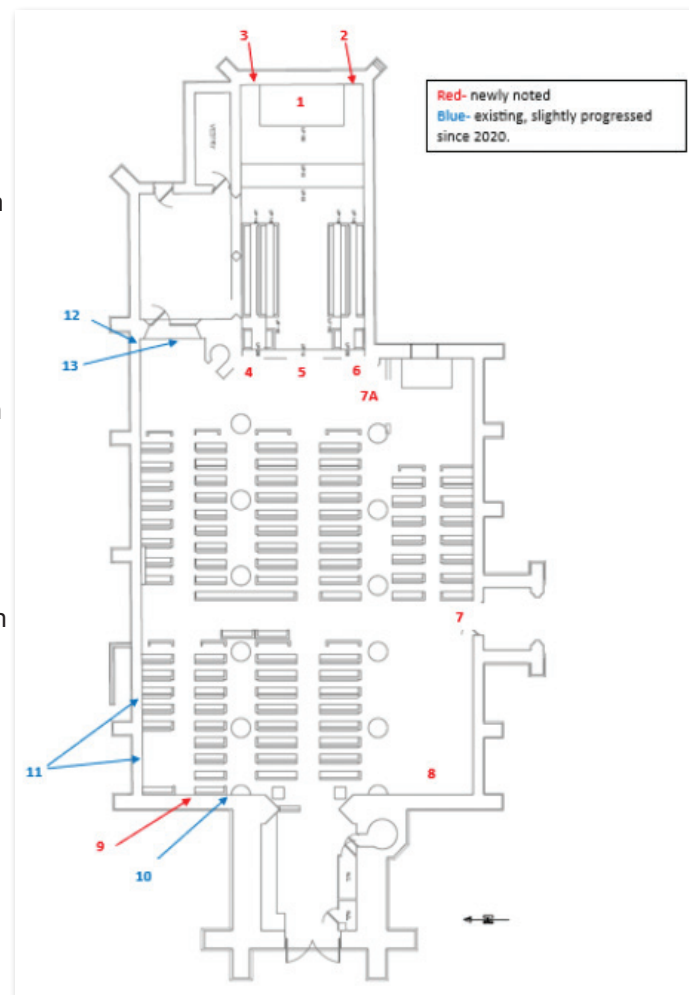


To review associated concerns with the cracks to external walls and some internal partitions, a condition report has recently been completed, to identify new cracks that have been observed, as well as the progression of previously noted cracks since the last inspection in 2020. These are shown on the plan below.

The report makes several recommendations which will be considered and taken forward by the Fabric Committee. These include ongoing annual monitoring with photographic records commencing with the next quinquennial due to be carried out in summer 2025 and general making good of plasterwork and redecoration.

Specific priority recommendations requiring action in 2024 were also noted, including:

- Consulting a structural engineer to obtain a specification for inserting helical bars with resin bonding to secure the structure, making good of plasterwork, and obtaining a faculty agreement for this with the Diocesan Advisory Committee before work is undertaken



- Removal of failed plasters and replacement with lime plasters
- Lime pointing of void areas and resetting loose flints, exposing the flat faces of the stones to improve water shedding and reduce susceptibility to frost thaw action

**Andrew Kinsey**  
Fabric Committee

## Can you mow or garden and keep the Churchyard looking good?

It will soon be that time of year when the grass around St. Peter & St. Paul's Church will need cutting. In the past, there have been a number of people willing to cut the grass on a rota basis. There are two main areas – at the front, on either side of the path. One area is cut each week. Behind the Church, the area is deliberately left unmowed as a reserve for nature.

Last year, we lost three of our mowing rota members after many loyal years. We therefore need more support in order to keep the Churchyard looking tidy. The more people we have on the rota, the more flexibility we have. I am on the rota, as are some other Friends of Tring Church Heritage members and trustees. This includes Barry Anscombe, who does a great job coordinating it all as well. It's a practical way for any of us to support our charitable aims of preserving and enhancing the Church building and its surrounding grounds, improving their attractiveness



and usability for the wider community. The mower (which is powered, so you don't have to all the pushing unaided) is stored at the Church and you will be shown how to operate it, not that it is very complicated. Timing of when to mow in any particular week is flexible so you can fit it around work and other activities.

If anyone feels that they can help, please contact Barry Anscombe on 01442 828325 or on email bandb33@talktalk.net. In addition to mowing, there are other gardening jobs that need done from time to time – if that is of interest, Barry would be keen to hear from you, too.

**Richard Abel**  
Chair



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Tring Family Fun Day

Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2024

St Peter & St Paul's Church  
and Churchyard

### Putting the Fun back into Fundraising!

As has already been mentioned in earlier articles, one thing that the Friends were originally really good at was organising events which were appealing, welcoming and enjoyable for all sectors of the community.

Like so many organisations, we were heavily affected by Covid and the lockdown years – and our normal calendar of fun-filled events was one of the casualties.

A very important part of our strategic planning for the re-launch of the society is to organise a programme of events that have broad appeal, to be more universally relevant and appreciated by the whole community.

Ideas range from concerts and dances to lunches, dinners and theatrical events. We could also consider fashion shows, heritage events and tours, and even a re-staging of some of hugely successful pageants we held in earlier years.

What we need now is engagement, enthusiasm, energy and ideas – in other words we need YOU.

We need YOUR help in putting on events that help us celebrate life in Tring today and also help us generate funds for the preservation of our precious asset, in order to protect quality of life in Tring for all the years to come.

Please give us the benefit of your thinking and get in touch with Richard Abel (Chair) or Grahame Senior (President) with your idea about what event we should offer to add some fun into our future plans.



### FOTCH CONTACTS

We would be pleased to hear from you!

#### Trustees

Richard Abel, Chair  
richard.hayley@btinternet.com

Stephen Hearn  
sjhearn31@gmail.com

Paul Elley  
paul.elley@tring.gov.uk

Tony MacKinder  
tony.mackinder@virginmedia.com

Stewart Ivory  
stewartivory@yahoo.co.uk

#### Secretary

Trish Dowden  
info@fotch.co.uk  
0772 083 6930

#### Treasurer

Malcolm Rogers  
malcrogers@aol.com

#### Membership Secretary

Trish Dowden  
info@fotch.co.uk

#### Head of Social Media

Lottie Lashley  
lottie.a.lashley@gmail.com

#### Editor

Phil Dowden  
p4edit@btinternet.com

#### Honorary President

Grahame Senior  
gsenior@seniorpartners.co.uk

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Ginger Promo

The Friends of Tring Church Heritage  
Registered Charity 1005442



The Friends of Tring Church Heritage proudly present

# 2024 Tring Family Fun Day

THE TEDDIES FLY AGAIN!



**SATURDAY 11TH MAY**  
**11AM - 3PM**

**ST PETER & ST PAUL CHURCH  
AND CHURCHYARD**

- Teddy 'Wings' Zip Wire
- Tower Tours
- Bouncy Castle
- Tring Brewery Bar
- Beat the Goalie
- Childrens tombola
- Choirs & Musical Entertainment Programme
- Lunchtime Barbeque
- Big Prize Raffle
- All Day Refreshments

**OPEN TO EVERYONE - ALL WELCOME**

Preserving the heart of Tring for future generations to enjoy

**ADMISSION FREE**



For further information telephone  
Grahame Senior on 01442 822770 or Maria Lashley on 07765 420700