WILTSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

Registered Charity 1075598

July 2026

Dear Church Organiser,

I hope that you are ready once again to involve your church in this year's Wiltshire **Ride+Stride** event, taking place on Saturday **September 12th.**



We are delighted this year that the **Venerable Christopher Bryan, Archdeacon of Malmesbury**, will launch our event at St Sampson's Cricklade, SN6 6AT. This will be taking place at the earlier time of 9.15 am.
Christopher says: 'Joining in with Ride and Stride is a great way to enjoy being outdoors and visiting amazing churches, while supporting the work of Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust. I look forward to starting the event on September 12th and hope you will be able to join me'.

It's a great opportunity to encourage families to enjoy a day out together. Participants taking part may cycle, walk, ride a horse or a mobility scooter. They choose their own route and visit as many (or as few) churches as they wish. They can make their own trails using the ***Lists of Churches***, or suggested trails can also be found at: https://www.wiltshirehistoricchurchestrust.org.uk/churches

The North Wiltshire Deanery in the Diocese of Bristol have developed the ***Athelstan Pilgrim Way***, which connects 36 parish churches in the north of the county, including Malmesbury Abbey, using public rights of way and some minor roads. The guides can be downloaded free from their website: https://athelstanpilgrimway.org/routes /

SPONSORSHIP

Each participant should be given a sponsorship form with the sheet of Instructions for Riders and Striders. Please ask them to read these instructions carefully. Please write your own name and address as Church Organiser on the forms before handing them to participants.

- Sponsors may offer an amount per church visited or a total sum.
- Sponsors can also use JustGiving, which enables sponsorship to be donated online, saving participants the hassle of collecting money. Participants can set up their own JustGiving page via the link from WHCT Rider & Strider Information page or using this link address: http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising-page/creation/?cid=126645&eid=9620710 or use QR code at end of this letter.
  Please forward individuals' JustGiving links to me, so that I can track the funds so raised.
- Half the money raised will be given to a church selected by the participant and the other half goes to the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust, to be distributed in grants for the repair and maintenance of churches or chapels in the county.
- Please encourage participants to indicate whether they are a UK taxpayer and to ask sponsors who pay tax to mark the Gift Aid box and write their name and address legibly. This enables the Trust to claim an extra 25 pence for every pound raised.
- Parents of under 18-year-olds must sign the parental consent box on the form. Children under 13 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

- We are again distributing material by email, or these can be downloaded from the web-site (www.wiltshirehistoricchurchestrust.org.uk). If, exceptionally, you need material mailed to you, please do get in touch with me.

PUBLICITY

- Please display the posters prominently, if possible around your local area as well as in your church.
- Try and get a paragraph about Ride+Stride into your Church magazine and/or web-site during the summer. Emphasise that it is an enjoyable day out, as well as a fund-raising activity. Some copy is provided. I enclose an image that could be used to accompany the article.
- Encourage your Incumbent to promote the event from the pulpit and in the PCC.

PREPARATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS

- Churches themselves can get involved before September by sending us photographs of any preparations and announcement of fundraising activities.
- We will also once again be running a photograph competition. Please send you photos to whct.rs@btinternet.com.
- All pictures received will be entered into a competition for the most ***inspirational picture*** Note: Please ensure that photos have a good resolution; and note that photos submitted may also be used to publicise WHCT and Ride and Stride events.

PRIZES

Wiltshire is one of the few counties to offer prizes for successful Riders and Striders. Thanks to the generosity of the late Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville, there are two trophies:

- The **Brooke Cup,** and **£500,** is awarded to the best all-round Church (note – the score used for this is calculated by multiplying the amount a Church raises times the number of participants they field).
  The **Junior Group Cup**, and **£100,** is awarded - on the same basis - to the Church with the most successful group of under-18-year-olds.
- These are valuable bonuses and emphasise the potential benefit of encouraging larger numbers of people of all ages to take part in Ride+Stride.
- In addition there are **cash prizes** given to the best achieving cyclists and walkers from three different age-groups: 16 and under, between 17 and 65, and over 65.
- This year there will again be prizes for the photos judged by the organisers to be the most inspirational: 1st prize £20, 2nd prize £15, 3rd prize £10.

CHURCH OPENING

I hope that you can arrange for your church to be open and, if possible, manned between 10.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. on the day of the Ride and Stride, Saturday 12th **September 2024.** If you are unable to find stewards for the whole day, please ensure that there is a welcome notice with space for visitors to sign (copy enclosed), and perhaps a rubber stamp to certificate sponsorship forms.
Light refreshments are appreciated by energetic cyclists and walkers.

Maybe you could suggest to your PCC, as some churches do, that the day could be a ***special Church event***, tied in with Heritage Open Days? Heritage Open Days are a great way to get more visitors into your church. HODs is taking place on the same weekend as Ride+Stride, so if you're already open on the 12th, why not invite HODs visitors to pop in too?
If you're interested, but you're not sure what it would involve, Anglican Heritage Salisbury can help you! This year, as part of the Anglican Heritage Salisbury project, they can support you with event ideas, logistics, or by completing the registration forms for you. You can contact the Anglican Heritage Salisbury team by emailing the Project Manager: Sarah.Hollingdale@salisbury.anglican.org

CHURCH LISTS

The list of open churches included in this package is as accurate as I have been able to make it and can be given to participants with their sponsorship forms. Updates may be sent out by email. Neighbouring counties have churches listed on their Historic Churches Trust websites.

AFTER THE EVENT

- Collect the sponsorship forms and money, which participants are asked to give you by **Sunday 11th October.** Cheques should be made payable to **WHCT Ride and Stride** and recorded on the Control Sheet. It is also useful if you could pass on to me any photos or anecdotes that could be used for future publicity.
- Anything you can do to ensure that sponsors who mark the Gift Aid box have written their name, initials, address and post-code legibly is greatly appreciated.
- Fill in all the required details on the **Control Sheet** and return it with the sponsorship forms and the money raised by **Saturday 24th October.** Please do not send cash.
  Forms received after 24th October will not qualify for prizes.
- Please ensure that the sections recording whether Participants walked, cycled or rode are completed; and that they are entered in the appropriate age groups, otherwise Participants will not be eligible for the individual prizes.
- Two versions of the Control Sheet are provided:
  - A PDF form that can be printed for filling out;
  - For those that enjoy spreadsheets, an Excel version that can be used to capture each participant's information, then either can be emailed or printed out and posted.
- Your Church's half share of the amount raised will be returned to you from November. The tax reclaimed through Gift Aid is retained by the Trust, to cover administration costs and to add to the fund available for grants.

Very many thanks for your help. Should you not now be able to act as the Church organiser for Ride and Stride, please pass this pack to your Incumbent or churchwarden, who I hope will be able to find someone else.

REMINDER

Under the Data Protection Regulations I do need your consent to hold your contact details. If you have not yet returned a consent form to me, please contact me (whct.rs@btinternet.com or 01380 831199) and I will send you one.

Keith C. Rayward

WHCT Ride & Stride Administrator

2, Flowers Mead, Bratton, Westbury BA13 4SR. Tel. 01380 831199 email: whct.rs@btinternet.com

Enclosures:

Posters and flyers
Sponsorship forms, with instructions for Riders and Striders
Control sheet to list participants and amounts collected
Lists of churches that can be visited
Sample copy for Church Newsletters
Welcome Sheet for your Church

QR Code for WHCT R&S 2026 Justgiving page