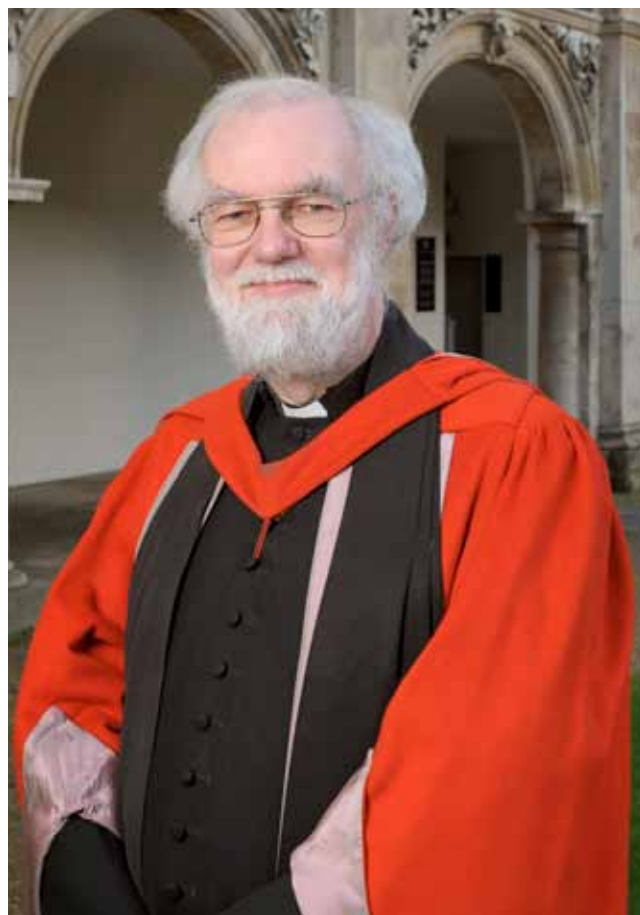


News & Annual Report 2015



Caring for Christian churches and chapels in Essex and East London



Picture by Stephen Bond

Don't miss the Gepp lecture 'How buildings tell a story' by Dr Rowan Williams (Lord Williams of Oystermouth) on 13 May 2015. *Turn to page 12.*

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The Friends of Essex Churches Trust 2014-15

Message from our Chairman

This year sees a big change in our grant-making policy. From January 2015, we are offering grants for improvements as well as repairs, and in this first year have set aside £100,000 for the purpose, in addition to £170,000 for repairs. Nearly half of the money for improvement grants is coming from the Radford Bequest, and a similar amount will be available in 2016, plus whatever else we are able to afford from other sources. This is one of the greatest changes to the operation of the Trust since the Friends of Essex Churches was set up in 1951.

Repairs remain our priority, and nothing is more important than keeping our church buildings in good shape, wind- and water-tight. This is why we worked with the Diocese of Chelmsford to launch the Gutter Clearance Scheme (see opposite), and why we still have grants available to encourage parishes to join up to this very worthwhile initiative. But we recognise that churches are more than just buildings, and if they are to flourish they must offer at least a basic level of comfort for those who use them. People are less inclined to come to churches that do not provide the minimum by way of creature comforts, and fewer people means less income to spend on maintaining the building.

Previous generations tackled this problem according to the standards of their day. In the 17th and 18th centuries, box pews (sometimes with fireplaces) offered some protection from the elements for those who were lucky enough to be able to



afford them. In the 19th century, most churches were fitted with some sort of heating system, usually a coal-fired stove or boiler, but the idea of a lavatory in a church was generally considered to be profane. New churches built in the 20th century usually included lavatories, central heating, and electric lighting.

The improvements that we will be funding are those which help to meet 21st-century expectations, and they include the provision of lavatories and modest kitchen facilities, heating systems, and disabled access. We will also fund improvements that make it easier to maintain church buildings and help reduce the need for future repairs, such as safer access to towers, security systems (including roof alarms), and better gutters and drainage. These grants will be a real investment in the future of our churches.

**James Bettley DL,
Chairman - FECT**

Gutter Clearance Scheme

Clearing gutters and keeping downpipes clear is the single most important thing that parishes can do to help keep their building in good condition and prevent expensive repair bills. To encourage regular maintenance of rainwater goods, the Diocese of Chelmsford Gutter Clearance Scheme was launched in 2013 with the support of the Friends of Essex Churches Trust.

We are offering grants of £50 for parishes who sign up to the scheme, to go towards the cost of paying an accredited contractor to carry out a maintenance visit.

How the Gutter Clearance Scheme works:

The Diocese has accredited a number of experienced contractors who will clear your gutters and downpipes as often as you wish, for a fixed charge, to a standard specification and terms and conditions.

To use the system:

- You simply contact any of the contractors and ask for a quotation.
- You select the contractor you want.
- The contractor then visits your church. You pay the bill.

What the contractor will do is:

- Clear out and test all your above-ground gutters and downpipes.
- Take before and after digital photos.
- Complete a checklist and report anything obviously wrong (such as a fallen lump of masonry) for you to deal with.
- Take away the debris.



For further information, please go to www.foect.org.uk/gutter_clearance.php or www.chelmsford.anglican.org/gutters.

Events

Left to right Sonia Coode-Adams, Emma Brice, Leonie Marks, Rachel Grainger and Catharine Hutley pictured in Feeringbury garden



To kick start the year we were invited by the Centenary Committee at Chelmsford Cathedral to incorporate an event as part of their celebration. Resident organ scholar, Joshua Xerri gave a short introduction detailing his selection of pieces spanning the centuries featuring different European composers, such as Ireland, Couperin, Boellmann and Cavazzoni. He then delighted us with his musicality, talent and versatility. The recital was followed by drinks and canapés in a most convivial atmosphere.

Former Chairman, Mrs Sonia Coode-Adams, opened her beautiful garden at Feeringbury with its backdrop to the River Blackwater, in June. We were blessed with a wonderful, if slightly breezy, summer's day. The garden looked spectacular and all those attending were able to wander at leisure and then enjoy a marvellous tea provided by the Committee.

Our annual Gift Fair at Hylands House, Chelmsford was very well attended. Rachel Grainger had again worked extremely hard to select many different and varied stalls. It has become quite a feature in the pre-Christmas shopping calendar, and many of

those present remarked on the originality and wide selection of gifts. The High Sheriff of Essex, Mr Nicholas Charrington, officially opened the event. The Events Committee worked hard to ensure the day ran smoothly and successfully.

Our Christmas card for 2014 proved extremely popular. The cards detailed three panels of the Burne-Jones window in St Peter's Church, Ugley. The original images were taken by our Chairman, Dr James Bettley.

We rounded off the year with a successful guided walk of the Cambridge colleges, organised by Sally Hearne. Our guide, Georgiana Balfour, gave a most informative and interesting tour.

Access to some of the private areas of St John's and King's College was assisted by former and current students, Fiona Nelmes and Alexander Hearne. The tour finished with lunch at Carluccio's Restaurant.

Catharine Hutley,
Chairman – Events Committee

E-mail events@foect.org.uk,
tel 01371 820344

Southend Branch

On a sunny April morning we set off on our first trip, stopping for coffee at Hylands House before visiting Margaretting Church, with the organ playing softly in the background as we looked around. We then headed to Fyfield for a delicious WI lunch and our AGM before visiting the twin Willingale churches, where we were kindly treated to tea/coffee and cake.

Our May trip saw us in Kent, stopping for morning coffee at Lullingstone Country Park before heading to Tudeley and the only church in the world to have all its windows decorated by the great Russian artist, Marc Chagall. Then, after a tasty WI lunch at Chiddingstone Causeway, we visited St Mary's at Leigh – and enjoyed tea/coffee and homemade cake after an interesting talk by their vicar.

Our third trip, in June, took us to Little Leighs Church, where Julia Abel Smith told us about the role of a High Sheriff as well as about the church. We then enjoyed the refreshments kindly provided for us. Afterwards we headed to Cressing Temple for lunch, followed by a visit to Fairstead Church where another former High Sheriff, David Boyle, gave us a short talk. We were then treated to more refreshments, this time outside in the sunshine.

On our last trip, in September, we stopped at Perrywood Garden Centre for morning coffee before visiting Layer Marney Church. After her talk, the speaker kindly took us up to the Terrace to see the Tower and the view across to the Blackwater.



Window by Marc Chagall at Tudeley Church
© Pamela Ive

Then it was off to Mile End, Colchester, WI for a lovely lunch, followed by Little Braxted Church with its late nineteenth century murals, renovated with financial assistance from FECT.

So another memorable year, with a donation of £2,000 given to County.

Sandra Markham,
Chair – Southend Branch

E-mail sandra.markham@hotmail.co.uk
tel 01702 477537

Grants

Each of my previous reports has recorded fewer applications for grants and a reduction in the total annual offer. I am pleased to report that seventeen applications were successful this year and a total of £108,500 has been offered.

This figure is £17,500 higher than 2013 and was helped by a late flurry of enquiries at our November meeting following only two at the September meeting. Various reasons have been suggested for the lack of applications; for example, it has been suggested that most churches are now in good order. Whilst it may be true that much work has been carried out, it is a fact that any historic building needs constant maintenance. The recession and, therefore, lack of funding is still believed to be the dominant reason for a reduced programme of work and this is shown by the reduced numbers of Faculty applications for repairs. The Trust is still concerned that churches are not always aware of the grants available and is continually trying to reach out to all who are proposing to carry out repairs. We would urge all who read this annual report to make parishes fully aware of the Trust.

The budget for the year was set at £167,000. Surprisingly, it was again not possible to use all of the funding. The balance that remained was £58,500. This sum has been placed in the new scheme set up for 2015 which will be for improvements. The Chairman's report refers to this new scheme which was approved at the 2014 AGM. There has been a concern that this new proposal might affect the amounts available for repair grants. Repairs will



Monument to Sir Anthony Everard (died 1614) and his wife Anne (died 1609), in St Mary and St Lawrence, Great Waltham. It was erected by Sir Anthony in 1611 and shows the two figures lying on shelves, Sir Anthony above and slightly behind his wife. We awarded a grant of £6,000 for timber and plaster repairs.

always be our priority and in advance the 2015 budget has been announced at £170,000. Should this budget be insufficient as in some previous years, the Grants Committee can request further funding. In addition there are the Partner Grants available from the National Churches Trust amounting to £10,000, which have again not been used this year.

The committee met four times as usual. Each parish applying for a grant is visited by a committee member prior to the meeting to gain an insight into the life of the parish. The proposed repairs are discussed and final information with regards to fund raising is sought. Advice is often given on where to seek further funding. These visits are very important and each committee member

deserves sincere thanks for this voluntary work without which the meetings would be pointless.

Each grant application is taken on its own merit and is not influenced by the age of the building, the value of the work or where it is situated in the county. This is borne out by the diversity of this year's applications.

All Saints Leaden Roding had been visited by some friendly woodpeckers who had created some very nice round holes in the spire; a grant offer of £1,000 has been made to help with repair.

From one extreme roofing problem to another is the rethatching required at St Francis Silver End; here an offer of £8,500 was approved.

As in previous years roofing dominates the budget and it was pleasing that All Saints Rettendon and St Margaret Stanford Rivers were both awarded £15,000 for major retiling schemes.

The most unusual application that arose in the year was from the church of St Martin of Tours at Basildon. This church is relatively modern and much of the construction is concrete. Here the reinforcing in the concrete is corroding and damaging the fabric; a grant of £15,000 has been made to help with the enormous task ahead.

It is hoped that the coming year will continue to present the committee with an interesting variety of applications. As in previous years all denominations are encouraged to reply.



The Congregational Church, Tollesbury, was designed by Charles Pertwee of Chelmsford in 1864. The new building was estimated to cost £1,165. We awarded a grant of £3,000 for roof repairs.



St Michael and All Angels, Leaden Roding, of Norman origin, with a 16th-century timber belfry. The east window, seen here, dates from the restoration of the church in 1907-8 by Chancellor & Son. We awarded a grant of £1,000 for repairs to the spire shingles.

**David Lodge MBE,
Chairman – Grants Committee**

Application forms for grants are available from John Bloomfield,
E-mail john.bloomfield@btinternet.com
tel 01708 745273.

2014 grant offers in full

Beneficiary	Repairs	Amount
Basildon St Martin of Tours	Concrete repairs	£15,000
Collier Row The Good Shepherd	Vestry roof repairs	£3,000
Great Bromley St George	Stonework consolidation	£5,000
Great Waltham St Mary and St Lawrence	Timber and plaster repairs	£6,000
Harold Wood St Peter	Additional tower repairs	£1,500
Leaden Roding St Michael and All Angels	Repairs to spire shingles	£1,000
Little Clacton St James	Roof repairs	£10,000
Rettendon All Saints	Retiling of roofs	£15,000
Silver End St Francis	Thatching	£8,500
South Benfleet St Mary the Virgin	Floor and plaster repairs	£10,000
Stanford Rivers St Margaret	Retiling roofs	£15,000
Stratford St John	Repointing parapets	£2,000
Tollesbury Congregational Church	Roof repairs	£3,000
Wennington St Mary and St Peter	Roof beam end repairs	£4,000
West Hanningfield St Mary and St Edward	Nave roof repairs	£2,000
Willingale St Christopher	Masonry repairs	£5,500
Wrabness All Saints	Various repairs	£2,000
TOTAL		£108,500

2014 Ride & Stride

The weather was pretty much ideal for the event, mostly sunny, warm and dry but there was a feeling this year that the number of cyclists taking part had reduced even further. This is such a shame “as it’s so enjoyable to take part and raise money for such a needy cause”. At the time of the FECT News going to press we had raised nearly £76,000 (including Gift Aid) which, although an impressive sum, is one of the lowest amounts raised in recent years.

Notwithstanding, there were some notable individual achievements and some enterprising twists on the usual Ride & Stride formula. Thank you to the Colchester Chamber Choir who performed a choral-steeplechase around Colchester and North Essex and gave 33 performances from their repertoire in 28 different churches; and well done to the team from Willingale who did a “Ride & Ring” around local churches, ringing the bells in each of the churches they visited. To mark the centenary of the Chelmsford diocese in 2014 two Gestingthorpe parishioners walked to each of the 42 Anglican churches in the Hinckford Deanery over 14 separate days; all told, they reckoned

they walked about 120 miles – about a third was on tarmac roads and the rest on paths or tracks. And the Song Cycle were in the Harlow area where they “brought tears to the eyes of all hearers”.

It is sad when so few people take part in this very worthwhile event. We would ask all FECT members to encourage better participation in 2015. Think about contacting local organisations such as youth clubs, guides, scouts and cycle clubs; and how about combining opening your churches with tasks like flower arranging, brass cleaning and churchyard maintenance, or perhaps use the day for coffee mornings, exhibitions and flower festivals.

Thank you to all who took part in the 2014 Ride & Stride.

The 2015 Ride & Stride will be on Saturday, 12 September 2015.

Fiona Nelmes,
Organiser – Ride & Stride
E-mail fionanelmes@lineone.net
tel 01245 380365



Runners in the Choral Steeplechase, Colchester Chamber Choir with conductor Roderick Earle (centre). Find out more about the choir at www.colchesterchamberchoir.org

Study Days *by our Vice-Chairman, Christopher Starr*

Our Spring Study Day took place in the north of the county in a cluster of five unusual and attractive churches. We met at the beautifully-restored church of St Augustine of Canterbury, Ashen, where we were lucky enough to hear the sound of two of the oldest bells in Essex. These were cast as long ago as 1330, and it is extraordinary to think that they may have been rung for funerals held during the Black Death in 1348. After refreshments we moved on to the fascinating but little-visited church of St Mary the Virgin, Ovington, where the exterior of the building is decorated with numerous architectural fragments randomly inserted in the walls by the wife of a former rector. Our third church of the morning was St Andrew, Belchamp St Paul, the village so-named as a result of the gift in about 930 of the patronage of the church by King Athelstan to St Paul's Cathedral in whose hands it remains today.

After lunch we visited St Ethelbert and All Saints, Belchamp Otten, a church where in 1965 an unusually well-preserved thirteenth-century stone coffin, enclosing a wooden coffin and skeleton was discovered deep below the chancel floor. Our final church was St Mary, Belchamp Walter, next to Belchamp Walter Hall, home of the Raymond family for more than 400 years.

October's Study Day saw us visit Mersea Island, where our first church was St Edmund, East Mersea, a building hauntingly evocative of the former rector Sabine Baring-Gould who was not only

a clergyman but also a novelist, folklore collector, antiquary and hymn writer. Perhaps because of its remoteness the church escaped the thorough restoration visited on so many churches in the nineteenth century. From here we drove to West Mersea and the church of St Peter and St Paul. The most extraordinary aspect of this church is that it is built on the site of a very large Roman villa. After a hurried lunch (not wanting to be marooned by the unusually high tide) we moved on to St Mary the Virgin, Peldon, a church that was severely damaged by the 1884 Essex earthquake. The fine sixteenth-century hammer-beam roof survived the earthquake, which is just as well as such roofs are a rarity in Essex. Our final destination was St Andrew, Fingringhoe a church blessed not only with a collection of medieval wall paintings found under layers of whitewash but also medieval sculptures which had been hidden in the church walls during the Reformation.

As ever our thanks go to the kind clergy, churchwardens and parishioners who made our Study Days possible. Grateful thanks also to Sarah White who has tirelessly administered the Study Days for more than five years; we now welcome her successor Susan Clark-Starr. Our next Study Day is on 6th May 2015 when we visit Navestock, Stapleford Abbots, Stapleford Tawney and Stanford Rivers.

(Christopher Starr's forthcoming book Medieval Lawyer: Clement Spice of Essex mentions a number of Essex churches.)



Our Spring Study Day visited Ovington Church.

FECT Events

All Friends of Essex Churches events for 2015 can be found at www.foect.org.uk/events.php

Wednesday 6 May – Spring Study Day

To include visits to Navestock, Stapleford Abbots, Stapleford Tawney, and Stanford Rivers. Details from: Susan Clark-Starr, E-mail stelladora@hotmail.co.uk, tel 01787 242121.

Wednesday 13 May – Gepp Lecture: How Buildings Tell a Story

Evening lecture by Dr Rowan Williams (Lord Williams of Oystermouth), Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. Chelmsford Cathedral, 8.15 pm, following the Annual General Meeting at 7.15 pm and refreshments from 7.45 pm. Open to members and non-members; admission free. Details from: James Bettley, E-mail jamesbettley@btinternet.com; it would help us to know if you are planning to attend.

Friday 5 June – Watercolours by Winston Oh

Selling exhibition of watercolours by Winston Oh at Hellen's, Birch, near Colchester CO2 0NY. Continues until Sunday 7 June. Details from: Catharine Hutley, E-mail events@foect.org.uk, tel 01371 820344.

Tuesday 9 June – Visit to Kelvedon Hall, Kelvedon Hatch

By kind permission of Mr and Mrs Henry Channon, we have been able to arrange an afternoon visit with tea to this important private house and garden. Admission will be strictly by advance purchase of tickets only. Details from: Catharine Hutley, E-mail events@foect.org.uk, tel 01371 820344.

Saturday 12 September – Ride & Stride

To raise funds for the Trust and participating churches. 10.00 am to 6.00 pm. Everyone can ride, stride, steward or sponsor! For further information. Please contact Fiona Nelmes, E-mail fionanelmes@lineone.net, tel 01245 380365,

Saturday 10 October – Autumn Study Day

To include visits to Fryerning, Blackmore, Doddinghurst, and Stondon Massey. Details from: Susan Clark-Starr, E-mail stelladora@hotmail.co.uk, tel 01787 242121.

'Members matter and membership matters' says our Membership Secretary

Members matter

One of my main tasks as Membership Secretary is to care for our members without spending their contributions on paper, printing and postage.

A little annoyance in life is the way other charities beg for money monthly or even more frequently while lavishing their funds on glossy magazines and unwanted gifts. We don't do any of these. We limit ourselves to this annual NEWS and

acknowledge subscriptions only in the very few cases it is requested. We make a point of keeping in touch with congregations thanking them for contributions received by post and, in all cases, sending 'Thank You' posters for display in their churches.

We are most grateful to the solid core of individual members and church congregations who support The Friends year in year out.

Member matters

I try to be upbeat about member numbers but regrettably we are becoming fewer. In the 7 years 2008 to 2014 we gained 128 new Friends but 202 lapsed for one reason or another; a net loss of 74.

Currently there are 510 of us counting the many couples as one. BUT, of these, 109 are one or more years in arrears. I estimate that around 70 are unlikely to renew thus reducing our total to 440. This is unhealthy. To these, 70 + Southend Branch members must be added.

Members' subscriptions

Many of you will have committed your contribution to us by Standing Order. Others will have already sent me a cheque. For everyone else, now is the best time to renew. A renewal sheet is enclosed to make the task easy. If you would like to set up a Standing Order or have not already Gift Aided your subscription, there are sections for this on the renewal sheet. Please remember that any new Standing Order will cancel an existing one.

Despite reduced numbers, receipts in 2013 were a record and income from members, congregations and donations in 2014 has held up well. The figure for 2014 is almost spot on the average over the last ten years of nearly £37,000 if large, one off donations are discounted. Taking each separately, subscriptions, contributions from congregations and Gift Aid in 2014 are much the same as in 2013.

You are very generous but we need more of you.

To keep our overheads to a minimum, we do not acknowledge subscriptions as a matter of course. Please accept our thanks now. If you would like a receipt, please indicate accordingly when you complete the renewal form and I will be happy to send one.

Keith Gardner,
Honorary Membership Secretary

E-mail keith@thegreenwood.me.uk
tel 01708 688576

Summarised accounts for the year ended 31 December 2014

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 December 2014

Total 2013 £'000		Total 2014 £'000
51.6	Subscriptions and donations	36.9
11.4	Legacies	0.0
82.6	Fundraising - ride & stride	75.9
21.9	Fundraising - other events	14.4
13.7	Interest and dividends	11.4
181.2	Total Income	138.6
(0.6)	Support costs	(0.6)
(2.3)	Governance costs	(2.2)
(3.8)	Fundraising/publicity costs	(4.5)
(3.5)	Fundraising expenses - ride & stride	(2.9)
(35.4)	Fundraising expenses - 50% returned to churches	(31.8)
(8.5)	Other events – fundraising expenses	(5.1)
(89.0)	Grants for repairs payable	(97.8)
(6.3)	Grants and publicity - Gutter Clearance	(0.0)
(149.4)	Total Expenditure	(144.9)
31.8	Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	(6.3)
28.6	Gains on investments & unrealised loss	10.9
60.4	Net movement in Funds	4.6

Summary balance sheet as at 31 December 2014

2013 £'000		2014 £'000
271.9	Investments - market value	282.8
346.6	Cash and deposits	358.0
6.6	Sundry debtors	2.3
625.1	Total assets	643.1
(90.0)	Undrawn grants	(102.5)
(6.3)	Creditors - Gutter Clearance	(5.7)
(2.3)	Accruals	(3.9)
526.5	Net assets	531.0
	Represented by	
526.5	General Fund (unrestricted)	531.0
526.5		531.0

Auditor's Statement to the Members of The Friends of Essex Churches Trust

We have examined the above summarised financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2014.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Auditor

The trustees are responsible for preparing the summary financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and the recommendations of the Charities SORP.

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full financial statements and the Report of the Trustees.

We also read other information contained in the summarised annual report and consider the implications for our report

if we became aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements and the Report of the Trustees of The Friends of Essex Churches Trust for the year ended 31st December 2014.

Edmund Carr LLP
Statutory Auditor
146 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0AW

9 March 2015

Treasurer's Report

The summarised accounts on page 14 show a modest increase in our reserves of only £4,500, but this was in the absence of any legacy income this year. We are grateful to all subscribers, donors and those supporting fund-raising events, which is how we are enabled to offer grants to local churches.

Once again the amount on offer was not taken up, by some £51,000 – due to the low number of applications, not to any

policy of restraint. In this coming year we shall be offering an additional £100,000 for work on improvements – a new sphere of operation as explained in our Chairman's message. This will indeed reduce our reserves to a more traditional level.

**Harry Marsh,
Treasurer**

E-mail harry.marsh@talktalk.net
tel 01245 478038

Legacies

Legacies enable us to do things that we might otherwise feel are beyond our resources. A large legacy from Mrs Norma Radford is providing half the funds in 2015 for our new grants for improvements. We urge all our members to consider remembering us in their

wills; and bequests to charity can reduce liability to Inheritance Tax. Please contact the Treasurer if you would like advice on suitable wording, Canon Harry Marsh, 5 Vicarage Lane, Great Baddow, Chelmsford CM2 8HY, E-mail harry.marsh@talktalk.net tel 01245 478038.

The Friends of Essex Churches Trust 2014 – 15

Patrons:

The Bishop of Brentwood, the Bishop of Chelmsford, HM Lord Lieutenant of Essex.

President:

Peter Martin MBE DL.

Executive Council and Trustees:

James Bettley DL (Chairman), Christopher Starr (Vice-Chairman), Canon Harry Marsh (Treasurer), David Morton (Secretary, to 14

October 2014), Keith Gardner (Membership Secretary), Jill Cole, Catharine Hutley DL, David Lodge MBE, Sandra Markham, Ralph Meloy, Fiona Nelmes.

Advisory Council:

John Bloomfield, Ray Clements, Ann Hilder, David Hoppit, Simon Mynott, Sir Alastair Stewart, Sarah White.

We are grateful to all our supporters and members.



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