

St Benet's Fundraising UP-DATE for April & May 2026



MANY THANKS TO MARTYN & ANGELA MARSHALL for all their hard work in arranging the Fauré concert. The final total raised was a marvellous **£1088.00**. And thank you to all those who donated the refreshments at no cost and all those who gave their time and effort to making the evening a success. On the night Fr Simon said 'Every little helps...but with over a grand raised, a heck of a lot helps even more' Thanks also to the St. Nicholas Orchestra and the Gold and Silver singers for their hard work and musical prowess. They have all said how much they enjoyed singing and playing in another 'Minster' which was warmer than theirs!

This our first major event has shown us that we need additional support to ensure future events run smoothly. We are therefore building a list of volunteers who are willing to assist in a variety of roles, including the following:

Event Setup & Close-down

- Setting up chairs and tables before the event - Clearing away furniture afterwards

Welcoming & Entrances

- Greeting attendees on arrival - Checking or selling tickets - Manning entrances and manage the flow

Audience Support

- Assisting with general enquiries during the event - Helping attendees find seating or facilities

Refreshments Team

- Setting up and clearing away crockery and refreshments - Serving drinks and refreshments

Additional Skills Needed

- Person(s) with First Aid certification - Person(s) Technical expertise (e.g. operating sound systems etc)

If you are willing to help in any of these areas, please let us know by completing the Event Volunteer Form and pass to: Pamela St Mart, Mike Ellwood or email / text Linda Last linda.michael.last@icloud.com text 07468692180. Your support makes a real difference in creating a welcoming and well-organised event.

An Afternoon with the Bohemian University Choir

St Benet's Minster Church Beccles Saturday 2nd May 4:00 PM Enjoy a delightful afternoon of choral music and engaging story telling performed by talented young Czech singers. A rich and memorable experience.

Free entry – donations are warmly welcomed. Proceeds will be shared between the St Benet's Church Restoration Fund and the Bohemian University Choir.

Refreshments will be available after the concert, along with an opportunity to meet and chat with the choir.

Talk by Robert Tilney – Antiques Roadshow Expert

Robert Tilney, a familiar face on the *Antiques Roadshow*, will share behind-the-scenes stories and anecdotes from the programme. Robert is a Master Gunsmith and a Law Society Expert Witness in Firearms and Ballistics. He runs a traditional gunsmith business in Beccles, established by his great-grandfather in 1860. He is also a former pupil of St Benet's School. Friday 15th May at 7pm in St Benet's Church Hall. Tickets are £7.00 and include refreshments. All tickets sales will go towards the restoration fund.

Italian Parish Lunch at St Benet's: date change due to a Wedding in the church on the 18th July. New date yet to be decided

English Heritage Open Days runs from 11th to 20th September with various places opening their door for special events, entry is free to all events.

St Benet's Minster Exhibition – 12th September 10am–4pm

Join us for a special day at St Benet's Minster featuring a unique exhibition of historic documents, photographs, and parishioners' wedding dresses, beautifully complemented by floral arrangements.

- 11am Talk: Mike Ellwood will give a talk on the architecture and restoration of the Minster.
- Display of wedding dresses with floral arrangements
- Guided tours available on request - Information leaflets for self-guided tours
- Refreshments served in the hall - Cake stall

The Minster will remain open as usual but wedding dresses will only be displayed on the 12th/13th

Volunteers Needed: We're looking for help with: Event setup - Welcoming visitors - Serving refreshments - Clear-up (Sunday afternoon)

Still Needed: Dressmaker's dummies and One additional wedding dress

Contact: Linda Last – 07468 692180 (items can be collected and stored) or Helen Hemming

ALSO opening their doors:

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Gillingham - 12th September 2pm to 4pm

A wonderful opportunity to see inside this most beautiful Chapel of Ease. Designed by Frederick Banham—a local architect and former Mayor of Beccles—the church is inspired by the Santissima Trinità dei Monti in Rome, which stands at the top of the Spanish Steps. This connection is especially meaningful, as John George Kenyon 1843- 1914 of Gillingham Hall would have seen this Roman church from his prison cell during his incarceration. The building is recognised as a Grade II Listed Building, highlighting its historical and architectural significance.

Ride and Stride 2026 will take place on Saturday 12th September

In the pass a number of parishioners have taken part in Ride and Stride raising money to be share between the Parish and Historic Churches Trust (who provide grants for restoration work)

Ride & Stride is an annual event where participants are sponsored to travel between churches. You can walk, cycle, ride on horseback or use public transport. The money you raise is shared between the Historic Churches Trust and a church of your choice, supporting the churches at the heart of our community.

A day of visiting a few churches; for others, it's a challenge to visit as many as possible. Many churches will be open on the day, so it's a fantastic opportunity to explore the beautiful, historic and contemporary buildings in our local area. All funds raised help to preserve and maintain our local churches for future generations. So, you'll be making a real difference while having a great time! Entry forms will be available in June but if you are interested please let Fr Simon know.

Fr Simon is seeking one or two volunteers to take over as St Benet's Ride & Stride coordinator. **Paddy Hardiman** has carried out this role for many years and has done a fantastic job.

Event Volunteer -----please tick your preferred role		
Roadies	Tick	Your Name and Contact Details
<i>Chair & Equipment Setup and Clearing</i>		
Welcoming & Entrances		Your Name and Contact Details
<i>Greeter</i>		
<i>Ticket Check / Sales</i>		
<i>Entrance Support</i>		
Audience Support		Your Name and Contact Details
<i>First Aid (if needed)</i>		
<i>Technical Support</i>		
Refreshments Team		Your Name and Contact Details
<i>Setting-up / clearing</i>		
<i>Serving Refreshments</i>		

Please return this form to Pamela St Mart, Mike Ellwood or email / text to Linda Last on 07468692180, or by email at linda.michael.last@icloud.com