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**The Historic Religious Buildings Alliance Annual Open Day**

**Wednesday 11th December 2019**

***The Big Update***

St Albans Conference Centre, Leigh Place, Baldwins Gardens, Holborn
EC1N 7AB ( [www.stalbanscentre.org/](http://www.stalbanscentre.org/) )

**Programme**

**09.30 Arrival and tea and coffee**

10.00 *Welcome* - Trevor Cooper, Chair, the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance

10.10 *What are the current issues in the Sector?* – Peter Aiers, Chief Executive, The Churches Conservation Trust

10.40 *Mission and Mortar and Virtuous Circles* – Wendy Coombey, Community Partnership and Funding Officer, Diocese of Hereford

11.10 *Problems and possibilities for the isolated rural church or What should I have been able to say to Mrs Warden?* - Trevor Cooper, Chair, the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance

**11.40 Tea and Coffee**

11.55 *A PCC’s experience of installing a toilet in a grade I church* – Jon Lane in conversation with Trevor Cooper

12.25 *The Beautiful Burial Ground* – Harriet Carty, Director, Caring for God’s Acre

**12.55 Lunch**

14.00 *Your Big Update – an opportunity for you to tell us about your news – no more than 3 mins!*

14:30 *Key Questions from the Taylor Review Pilot* – Diana Evans, Head of Places of Worship Strategy and Lucy More, Project Manager: Taylor Review Pilot, Historic England

15.00 *Places of Worship and Public Value* – Diana Evans, Head of Places of Worship Strategy, Historic England

**15.30 Grab cup of tea and bring back to chair**

15.40 *Building community leadership and engagement in design: Four stories from historic places of worship* - Theodore Zamenopoulos and Vera Hale, Empowering Design Practices

16.10 Discussion and concluding remarks followed by tea and latest finish at 16.30

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**Speakers Biographies**

**Peter Aiers, Chief Executive of the Churches Conservation Trust. Peter j**oined CCT in 2007, Peter had a specific role to find sustainable solutions to complex urban churches within our collection and to enable more community involvement in the care of our churches. Peter became Director for the South East in 2012 and Director of the North region in 2016.After a career start at English Heritage, Peter worked as a local authority conservation officer and sat on the Peterborough Diocesan Advisory Committee. He became the first Conservation Officer employed in the Church of England, for the Diocese of London, before becoming a Project Development Manager supporting parishes in the maintenance of the buildings in their care and finding sustainable solutions for historic churches through grant aid and commercial development. He became Chief Executive in 2017. <https://www.visitchurches.org.uk/>

**Harriet Carty, Director of Caring for God’s Acre** is a professional ecologist and has worked in nature conservation for many years, specialising in land management f,or biodiversity. Drawn by an obsession with islands she has worked on nature reserves in the Seychelles and the Orkney islands then settled in landlocked Shropshire. Harriet has worked as a consultant for the National Lottery Heritage Fund for many years, supporting work involving landscape-scale habitat restoration, volunteering and training. She has been working for Caring for God’s Acre for seven years, initially as a project manager helping to steer the expansion from a Shropshire and Herefordshire based charity onto a national stage. She has been director of the charity since January 2017. [**www.caringforgodsacre.co.uk**](http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/)

**Wendy Coombey**, **MBE, Community Partnership and Funding Officer, Diocese of Hereford**. Wendy has worked for the Diocese of Hereford for 17 years. Coming from a Community Development and Regeneration background, she supports parishes in project development particularly those which encourage the closer working between church and community and to develop projects based on community needs. She supports an asset-based approach, where church congregations can use the skills and knowledge of the whole community, particularly on projects to improve facilities within church buildings to encourage new activities and services. She researches and promotes funding opportunities to help support these projects. Wendy is an elected member of the Church Buildings Council and represents the Diocese at a strategic level within local partnerships. <https://www.hereford.anglican.org/about-us/>

**Trevor Cooper, Chair of the HRBA,** has had a long-standing interest in church buildings and their future. Some years ago, he wrote How do we keep our parish churches? and he jointly edited Pews, benches and chairs, looking at the history of church seating, and discussing its future development. He has recently edited *For public benefit: churches cared for by Trusts,* an Ecclesiological Society publication*.* He has been an external member since 2002 of the HE Places of Worship Forum and its predecessor and sat on Southwark DAC between 2003 and 2013. He was Chairman of Council of the Ecclesiological Society from 2000 to 2018.

**Diana Evans is Head of Places of Worship Strategy at Historic England**. She joined English Heritage in 2008 after several years as a Diocesan Advisory Committee Secretary. She convenes the Historic England Places of Worship Forum and is the main link with faith groups and denominations in England. She also maintains contact with colleagues dealing across the UK. A member of the DCMS Taylor Pilot Advisory Group, she has been involved in the project since the Taylor Review Panel was appointed. She chairs the NLHF-funded project *Bats in Churches* Steering Group and has been involved in the Open University EDP project, since helping to develop the grant application to AHRC. <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/places-of-worship/>

**Vera Hale is research associate at the Open University** working on the AHRC funded Empowering Design Practices, a six-year research project on how community-led design can be a catalyst for historic places of worship to open-up to a wider community use. Alongside her work at the OU, Vera is writing a PhD on the role of the architect as a design enabler in community led design processes. Before entering the academic realm, Vera was a practicing architect at several award-winning practices in the Netherlands, before founding her own sustainable architecture practice the Cave Cooperative in Kingston upon Thames. She still on occasion supports the practice, sharing her knowledge on community participation practices and affordable housing strategies. <https://www.empoweringdesign.net/>

**Jon Lane is a Chartered Civil Engineer** who has spent most of his working career in water supply and sanitation in developing countries. He is now based in the UK. He and his wife Carrie Osborne live next door to a large beautiful Grade 1 listed parish church in the small village of Alstonefield, Lichfield Diocese. Carrie is the PCC member responsible for the church fabric. At her request, Jon has been the volunteer project manager for the planning, approval, design and construction of a much-needed toilet in the church.

<http://www.alstonefield.org/community/st-peters-church/>

**Lucy More, Project Manager: Taylor Review Pilot.** Lucy is responsible for oversight of the Taylor Review Pilot; working closely with other Historic England colleagues such as the Head of Places of Worship Strategy and Pilot Team to ensure the successful testing of some of the 2017 *Taylor Review* recommendations. Before joining Historic England Lucy worked at the British Museum as a Project Manager for the temporary exhibitions programme. She also has experience of working for the British Museum on international museum projects with partners from different faith groups. Previously Lucy worked for the National Trust as House and Collections Manager for The Vyne and Sandham Properties, and House Steward for Dunham Massey Hall. She has a strong projects background with a commitment to the historic environment and cultural heritage management, as well as a keen interest in theology.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/places-of-worship/churches-sustainability-review/>

**Theodore Zamenopoulos is a Senior Lecturer in design at The Open University**. He is a professional architect with an expertise on approaches for helping communities to develop leadership in design. He has been involved in over 15 externally funded research projects including a 5 year long project called Empowering Design Practices. The project which was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, aimed to develop and evaluate approaches to support groups that look after historic places of worship to lead and engage their communities in the design and adaptation of their faith buildings. <https://www.empoweringdesign.net/>

**How to find the venue:**

**St Albans Conference Centre is at Leigh Place, Baldwins Gardens, Holborn, London EC1N 7AB**

**Underground**: it is a very short walk from Chancery Lane tube station and can be reached on foot from Holborn, Farringdon and Kings Cross stations.

**Buses**: The following buses all pass within a short distance 8, 22B, 25, 45, 46, 17, 171A and 243. For more information call 020 72221234

**By Car**: There is no car parking available at the venue (except for those requiring disabled by access, by prior arrangement). NCP sites are at Shoe Lane, Saffron Hill and Snow Hill

**More information about the venue** at [www.stalbanscentre.org](http://www.stalbanscentre.org) ; <http://stalbanscentre.org/location/>

Any queries please email Becky on hrb@theheritagealliance.org.uk or ring her on 0207 2330 900; or **on the day** 07903 135 893