

Annual Report

**Bridge
Builders**
Christian Trust

connecting children with faith, hope & love



Launchpad children explore the story of Daniel

Resilience - Don Dowling - Reflecting on 2016

Onwards & Upwards - Peter Gordon - Looking to 2017

The Gift of Friendship - Sheila Smith

“ The **Christmas Journey** is literally the highlight of our school year. It is beautifully well organised and brings the experience to life for all our ninety Year 2 pupils. All the teachers who attend say it's the best event of the year.

John Forster comes in each week to our school and delivers very high-quality Protective Behaviour sessions to our most vulnerable pupils. He's worked with a wide range of pupils in our school and the impact of his support is significant.

Thank you to Bridge Builders for contributing so much to our school community. **”**

Rouane Mendel

Headteacher Giles Infant School

Our vision is that every child within our community will have opportunities to explore the values of the Christian faith, so that they may look forward with hope and confidence, as they experience this love in action.

Don Dowling, Chair of Trustees

Dear friends and supporters,

One of the key things for a relatively small charity such as ours is resilience. Despite the considerable number of changes in staffing and projects it has been a good year for Bridge Builders and we are coping well with the challenges. This has been helped by the fact that our financial position has much improved since last year thanks to the excellent work of Peter Gordon, our honorary director, and the admin team. This has been supplemented by the fundraising initiatives of the Friends of Bridge Builders under the leadership of Sheila Smith and the continuing support of our partnership churches. We have been fortunate too in securing a number of grants and significant donations that have enabled us to secure our core activities in the short term, although we continue to look for funding for expansion in the future.

This year we have said goodbye to Revd Richard Byass, as trustee and former chairman, although he has continued with us as a much-valued chaplain. We welcome Revd Stephen Cooper as a new trustee whose contributions to our discussions have been invaluable. However, we still need to strengthen our team of Trustees by at least 2 in order to make better decision-making, and to ensure that we are quorate for meetings. Sadly, Albert Binns, who has done invaluable service as clerk to the trustees has had to resign, but I wish to put on record our deep gratitude for his service and wisdom.

In the summer the Rt. Revd Michael Beasley, Bishop of Hertford kindly agreed to become a patron and we are delighted with this as he has given us so much encouragement. We are actively looking for further patrons who will help us raise the profile of Bridge Builders which I believe is doing a remarkable job and punching well above its weight- if that's the right expression for a Christian organisation!

One of my particular joys in being involved with Bridge Builders is to be able to join in with its various activities and projects. When I see the effect of enthusiastic and imaginative work by our staff and volunteers it fills me with hope. It has its lighter moments too- as when one of the children declared that the wise men brought gold, frankincense and the Smurfs to Jesus. I was delighted too to learn that one of the characters in the temple who welcomed Jesus was called 'Cinnamon'! My prayer is that Bridge Builders may continue to be a sweet smell in the lives of the children whom we serve out of love for Christ.

Thank you for your continued support, prayers and interest in the work of Bridge Builders.

Don





The Bridge Builders Team 2017

Patrons:

Right Revd. Paul Bayes, *Bishop of Liverpool*
Right Revd. Dr Michael Beasley, *Bishop of Hertford*
Revd. Teddy Faure-Walker, *Deputy Lieutenant of Hertfordshire*
Cllr. Sharon Taylor, O.B.E.

Trustees:

Revd. Don Dowling (*Chair*), Canon Duncan Campbell,
Mrs Jo Simson, Revd. Steven Cooper

Chaplain:

Revd. Richard Byass

Honorary Director:

Mr Peter Gordon

Project Managers & Assistants:

Alexandra Horlock: *ExpLORE (assemblies, Christmas and Easter Journeys)*
John Forster, Mandy Branders and Katherine Harris (*Storyteller*):
MAPS (Mentoring and Pastoral Support), Whale Tales (exploring Protective Behaviours)
Tracy Plumpton: *Launchpad (midweek clubs for children aged 7 – 14)*

Administration:

Stephanie Knell: *Administration manager*
Janice Hawketts: *Finance & IT manager*
Amanda Bryant: *General administrator*

Our dedicated **Volunteers** work tirelessly behind the scenes
to ensure the smooth running of every project.

Bridge Builders Christian Trust is an Associate Member
of **Churches Together in Stevenage.**

Spring 2016 ...



7 host churches

29 schools

1170 pupils

took part in

The Easter Journey



What did you enjoy?

"Peter's Story - Jesus could see Peter's heart"

"Judas' Story - It showed his emotions"

"When Jesus came back to life"



What did you enjoy?

"Finding out how some people wanted to condemn Jesus and some free him"

"Learning how it all happened in different perspectives"



Have you learnt something new?

"The centurion's story was new to me"

"I didn't know Judas betrayed Jesus"

"There's a lot more to Easter than we realised"



Teachers:

"As usual it's been an amazing experience."

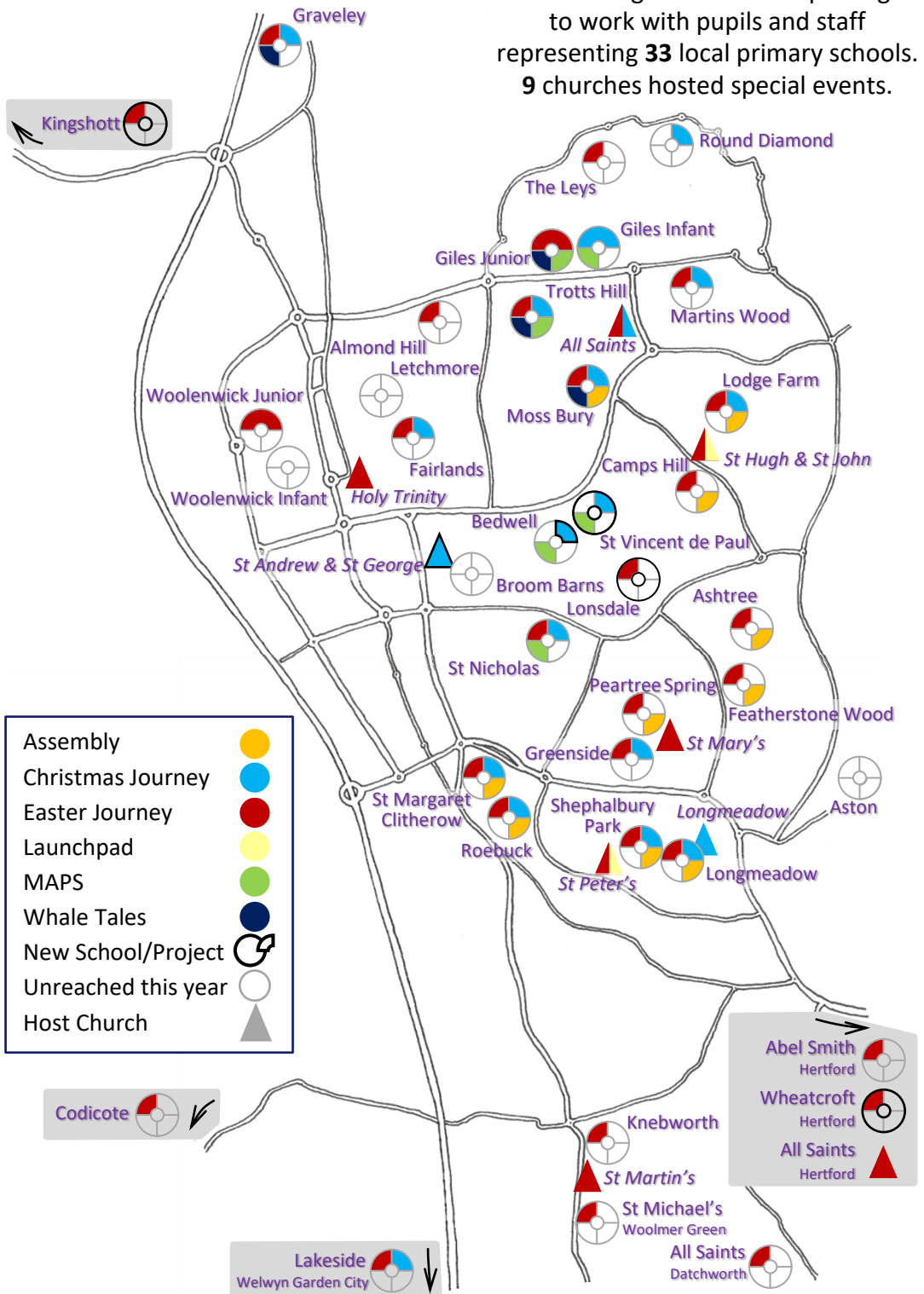
"I'd never gather all the resources used here today."



Volunteer:

"The questions the children asked and answers they were able to give gave me great hope for the future."

In **2016** Bridge Builders was privileged to work with pupils and staff representing **33** local primary schools. **9** churches hosted special events.



Other news in brief...



Assembly teams were warmly welcomed into 10 schools across the town.

Mandy Branders delivered our first projects in St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary school.



The **MAPS** teams continued their highly-valued work in Bedwell Primary School, Giles Infant and Junior Schools, Trotts Hill and St Nicholas School.



Launchpad Clubs offered an exciting programme of after school activities in Chells and Broadwater.



This project was delivered to classes in 4 schools.



St Andrew and St George hosted their first **Christmas Journey**.

Three churches hosted a total of 18 infant schools, 900 children attended.

Peter Gordon, Honorary Director

Onwards and Upwards

This has been a very interesting and rewarding year.

Working with the Bridge Builders teams this past twelve months has again been wonderful. Every individual employee and volunteer is a great example of Christian commitment and a joy to work alongside.

As I announced last year we have been able to recruit some new members. Mandy Branders has joined us as Assistant Project Manager of MAPS. She came to us with a wealth of experience and will be taking over when John Forster retires in the late spring of 2017.

When Justine Hobbs, Finance & Administration Manager, decided to leave us at the end of September 2016 we rearranged some of her jobs. We are delighted that Steph Knell has joined us as Administration Manager and Amanda Bryant has re-joined us as Administrator. Amanda now lives in Lincolnshire so works remotely, joining us by phone and on SKYPE. Janice Hawketts has taken on additional duties and is now Finance and IT Manager.

The Trustees and I are currently engaged in recruiting two people to join us early in 2017 as deputies to Alex Horlock who, as ExpLORE Manager is responsible for organising and running both the Christmas and Easter Journeys and all the assemblies Bridge Builders fulfils alongside local ministers. Alex will be leaving us after the May 2017 half term.

It is regrettable that Tracy Plumpton will be leaving Bridge Builders after Easter 2017. She has been working too many hours trying to fulfil the demands of two employers while at the same time taking care of family issues. The Trustees and I have had to decide that after Easter 2017 there will be no more Launchpad, at least for the time being.

Much effort has been spent to improve incoming donations in support of the work of Bridge Builders. We have had one significant grant so far, plus a substantial personal donation which will benefit from gift aid. Currently we have a fairly strong financial base and can move forward confidently to recruit the new people we need as deputies and replacements.

So, lots to do, and lots of children and schools to serve. Thank you all for your continued support as volunteers, donors and above all for your prayers.

Peter



The Trust is hugely indebted to Justine for the way in which she led the admin team and administered the finances over the past 10 years. In September she took up a new role at Peartree Spring School. As a sign of our gratitude we were able to contribute accessories for her new cycling hobby.

Accounts

Income	2016	2015
Donations	32,289	27,966
Gift Aid	3,174	3,116
Activities	32,468	26,287
Total Income	67,931	57,370

Expenditure	2016	2015
Staffing Costs	37,814	50,469
Property Costs	4,930	4,910
Office Expenses	3,093	3,212
Legal & Professional	5,800	3,442
Cost of Goods Sold	4,638	5,209
Write off Bad Debts	24	
Total Expenditure	56,300	67,242

Surplus / (Deficit)	11,631	(9,873)
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Income and Expenditure (£) for the Year Ended 31 August 2016



Assets	2016	2015
Cash	42,312	29,739
Prepayments	547	138
Sundry Debtors	1,271	1,868
	44,130	31,745

Current Liabilities	2016	2015
Creditors	74	60
Receipts in Advance	870	131

Net Assets	43,185	31,554
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Represented by General Fund

Balance Brought Forward	31,554	41,427
Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year	11,631	(9,873)
Balance Carried Forward	43,185	31,554

Sincere thanks to:

Bunyan Baptist Church, Chipperfield Woodturners Spellbrook, Great Ashby Community Church, High Street Methodist Church, Holy Trinity, Herts SACRE, Knebworth Family of Churches, Longmeadow Senior Moments, Longmeadow Evangelical Church, Oak Church, Radlett Cork Lodge, Souter Charitable Trust, Sirius Digital Solutions, St Hugh & St John, St Martin's Knebworth, St Mary's Graveley, St Mary's Shephall, St Nicholas, St Peter's, Trinity Church Knebworth, Trussell's Butchers & individual donors for your generous support.

Gifts of Friendship

If you have been inspired by what you have seen or heard about Bridge Builders' work in local primary schools, then can we invite you to join the growing band of *Friends of Bridge Builders*?



£1 per week would enable **13 children** to take part in *The Christmas Journey*



£5 per month represents the cost of **20 children** on *The Easter Journey*

**Friends of
Bridge Builders**

£10 per month would pay for the potentially life changing **6 week MAPS programme** for one child



These are examples of how your donation might be used but no gift is too small. Every donation helps to ensure the future sustainability of all the projects.

Or perhaps you have a great fundraising idea...

As Friends of Bridge Builders celebrates its 1st anniversary we want to say a huge

THANK YOU

to everyone who has taken part in this year's special events.

Thank you St Martin's Church, Knebworth for organising a *concert by the Hertfordshire police choir*. Hopefully there will be another in **Spring 2017**.

Thank you St Paul's Methodist Church and Longmeadow Evangelical Church for hosting *Quiz Nights*. Our next one will be at St Paul's on **Saturday 24th June**.

Thank you Delia Watson for hosting a wonderful *garden party*. Would anyone else like to open their garden or host a coffee morning?

Thank you Richard Gordon for donating proceeds from his adventure in the *Etape du Tour* in the French Alps. If you are taking part in a sponsored event please do remember Bridge Builders.

Thank you St Nicholas Church for donating part of the proceeds from the *concert by Jubilate*.

Thank you Penny Paton, for editing the *Bridge Builders Recipe Book*. Copies are still available from the Bridge Builders' office.

Thank you Twinklers Mums for your contribution from the *Next to New Toys and Games* stall. Look out for the next stall on **Stevenage Day**.

Thank you Bunyan Baptist Church for the generous amount raised by your *Fair Trade Coffee Morning, Christmas Fayre and Brass Band Concert*. Don't forget to save the date of the next concert by the Welwyn Garden City Brass Band on **Saturday 2nd December 2017!**



**Father of Lights,
By your Spirit shine out through us to
the children of our communities.
Kindle in them a spark of faith, a ray
of hope and the fire of your love.
In Jesus' name, Amen.**



*Why not join our prayer meeting on 1st Thursday in every month.
2pm at St Paul's Methodist Church.*

Bridge Builders Christian Trust

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@bridgebuildertrust

Registered Charity number: 1088885