

VISITING CHURCHES

Churches and churchyards are literally 'treasure houses' of history, full of ancient carvings both in stone and timber, traces of wall paintings, green men, weird and wonderful roof bosses, gargoyles and dripstone heads, Royal coats of arms, funerary hatchments, tombs and monuments, stained glass windows, fonts, parish records, regimental flags, and so on.

The architecture of churches is fascinating. Very few ancient churches are built in the style of one architectural period, and their history can be traced through the jigsaw of architectural styles that can be 'read' to interpret the age of each part.

There are around 10,000 churches of medieval origin in the UK. They were all built for the same purpose, but no two are the same. Each church is new experience, and is often different at every visit.

Rotherham is home to a wonderful variety of churches, from all architectural periods. This guide offers a selection of those in the central heart land of the borough, and a taster of what each has to offer.

You will find further information at each church in the form of leaflets, exhibitions and guidebooks.

Enjoy your visit!



EXPLORE heart Land heritage ...

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Rotherham's heart Land HERITAGE



Rotherham Churches Tourism Initiative is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. We work with partner buildings to promote their social, architectural and cultural heritage.



rotherham churches tourism initiative

Discover the spiritual heart land of Rotherham

ROTHERHAM'S CHURCHES

This is one of a series of leaflets exploring the history and heritage of Rotherham's fine ecclesiastical buildings.

For more information about the churches included in this leaflet please ring RCTI on 01709 720589 or visit www.rcti.org.uk

For more information about opening times, or to book a guided tour or school trip please ring the church you would like to visit on the number shown.

For more information about visiting other heritage sites in Rotherham please ring Rotherham Visitor Centre on 01709 835905 or visit www.visitrotherham.org

Please bear in mind that although this leaflet lists opening times for each church, they are all working buildings and may be closed on some days for special occasions. If you are really keen to visit a particular church please telephone in advance to make sure that it will be open.

key to symbols

features

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| amazing architecture | pre-Domesday church (pre 1066) |
| glorious green men & gargoyles | magnificent memorials |
| spectacular stained glass | interesting churchyard |
| link with famous people | interpretation of site available |

opening times

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| open dawn-dusk every day | open at specified times / days |
| keyholder notice | will open/give tours for groups and schools |

accessibility

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| generally accessible to wheelchair users | not accessible to wheelchair users |
|--|------------------------------------|

Steps are a key feature of many churches. Where there are unavoidable steps to enter a church, it is listed as not accessible, although it may be accessible to someone with assistance.

facilities

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| parking at church or nearby | accessible by public transport |
| refreshments at church or nearby | toilets at church or nearby |

GLOSSARY

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Aisle | A sideways extension of a <i>nave</i> , divided by an arcade of arches and columns. |
| Boss | A carving at the junctions in a vaulted roof. |
| Chancel | Area containing the sanctuary and altar. |
| Clerestories | Windows in the upper level of the <i>nave</i> wall. |
| Decorated | Architectural style of c1290-1350. |
| Early English | Architectural style of c1200-1290. |
| Font | Vessel used in baptism. |
| Gargoyle | A projecting gutterstone, often carved to depict a grotesque face, beast or figure. |
| Green Man | A head, wreathed in foliage, found in stonework and woodwork. |
| Lectern | A reading desk on which the bible rests. |
| Lych-Gate | Roofed gate at the churchyard entrance. |
| Norman | Architectural style of 1066-1200. |
| Misericord | A hinged seat used to rest on when standing. |
| Nave | The main body of the church. |
| Perpendicular | Architectural style of c1350-1530. |
| Piscina | A shallow stone basin near the altar. |
| Poppy Heads | Ornaments carved on end of pews or benches. |
| Pulpit | A platform where the sermon is preached. |
| Reredos | A carved or painted screen behind an altar. |
| Rood Screen | Separates the <i>nave</i> from the <i>chancel</i> . Holds the Great Rood - an image of Christ crucified. |
| Wall Painting | Used in the middle ages to educate the illiterate congregation. |



kimberworth st thomas



St Thomas' is a grand church built during the Victorian gothic revival in the Early English architectural style. The tower, was added in 1860 when the nave was extended, and the chancel was added in 1865. The sanctuary has a beautiful mosaic floor.

The church contains a rare original Jacob's Ladder, used to climb the tower. There is a 14th century service bell and a peal of early 20th century tubular bells.

There are many interesting memorials and monuments inside the church and in the churchyard.



open / access:



address / contact:

Church Street, Kimberworth
01709 563811

rotherham chapel on the BRIDGE



Built in 1483 the Chapel on the Bridge is one of only four remaining medieval bridge chapels in the country. It has led a chequered past, being at times an almshouse, shop and even the town jail. Evidence of all these can be seen in the building, including the cell doors with graffiti in the chapel crypt.

It was the site of a large Civil war battle, and has welcomed both Mary Queen of Scots and Charles I.

The chapel was restored in 1926. It has limed oak furniture, and a wonderful stained glass east window charting the history of the building.

open / access:



address / contact:

Chantry Bridge, Rotherham
01709 364737



rotherham minster



Described as the 'best Perpendicular church in the county' Rotherham Minster dominates the town centre with its 180ft spire.

Built of local 'Rotherham Red' sandstone there are visible remains of the original Saxon and later Norman churches, including roof lines, but most of the building is late 15th century.

The chancel contains the original medieval woodwork, including finely carved poppyheads and misericords. The nave has soaring pillars and graceful pointed arches, reaching to an oak beamed roof with gilded roof bosses.

The church has over 30 wonderful carved stone green men and other faces, both inside and out. Also some fine memorials, including one by John Flaxman RA. In sunlight the Victorian stained glass is spectacular, and bathes the Minster in a rainbow of light.



open / access:



address / contact:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat
9am - 1pm & 2pm - 4pm
All Saints Square, Rotherham
01709 364737



rotherham talbot lane methodist church



This gem of Methodist architecture was built in the neo-gothic style in 1903, after fire destroyed the previous early 19th century chapel built on the site where John Wesley preached. The church is the largest meeting place in Rotherham, with seating for around 850 people thanks to large galleries.

Talbot Lane contains some wonderful carved woodwork, including an oak pulpit and font and a vaulted roof. The lovely Art Nouveau style Chandeliers and 1900's stained glass windows create beautiful light.

open / access:



address / contact:

Moorgate Road, Rotherham
01709 835037

rotherham moorgate street mosque



Originally a Unitarian Chapel, built in 1879 in Early English style

The Mosque opened in 1987 after the church fell into disuse and is used by Muslims for 5 daily prayers. It underwent refurbishment in 2003 to increase capacity to 500 people and has areas for men and women.

The Mosque retains architectural features from the chapel including lancet windows and stained glass.

address / contact:

Moorgate Road, Rotherham

open / access:



whiston st mary



St Mary's is a very grand village church, built of local 'Rotherham Red' sandstone. Much of the present building is Victorian with the earlier 15th century church forming the south aisle. The tower has a Norman base with a 13th century lancet window.

The church has a wonderful carved and painted reredos behind the high altar, and two ancient tombstones. There is also lovely stained glass.

The churchyard contains many monuments and gravestones.

There is a magnificent Victorian lychgate and the original three-seater parish stocks - dated 1786. The churchyard wall now contains several of the medieval gargoyles.



open / access:



address / contact:

School Hill, Whiston
01709 634430



The tower, dating from 1470, was once a local landmark - with a light burning bright to guide travellers. The rest of the building has been replaced and extended over the past 300 years.

Features remain from the medieval church, including some of the original brasses and a tombstone written in Middle English. The tenor bell dates from 1435.

St Alban's is famed for its lovely stained glass, featuring the twelve apostles, which line both sides of the nave.

open / access:



address / contact:

Morthen Road, Wickersley

treeton st helen



St Helen's is a gem of unspoiled medieval architecture and decoration, and one of Rotherham's few Grade 1 listed buildings. It can be seen for miles around with its distinctive two-tone tower of 'Rotherham Red' sandstone and limestone.



The nave, with its round Norman arches, and tower date from around 1175.

The chancel is 14th century.

St Helen's has many interesting features, including a fascinating early medieval carved effigy of a knight, up against the west wall of the nave.

There is also some fine medieval stonework and carved woodwork, including green men and ceiling bosses.

The windows contain lovely 19th century stained glass.

open / access:



address / contact:

Church Lane, Treeton
0114 2696542

ulley holy trinity



This lovely village church was built by Viscount Halifax in 1851 as a focal point of the 'high church revival'.

It has fine stonework, with some interesting carved faces, both modern and surviving from an earlier medieval chapel.

address / contact:

Main Street, Ulley
0114 2875448

open / access:



aston all saints



All Saints is a lovely 'Rotherham Red' village church. It has been extended a number of times but some of the original early 12th century stonework remains. On either side of the porch, are effigies of King Edward III and Queen Phillipa dating the porch to no later than 1369. The nave contains pillars of both Norman and early Gothic styles.

It is thought that the altar may be Saxon. The font dates from about 1400. It has a wonderful carved figure at the base, thought to represent King Herod holding a dagger. The church also contains some fine memorials, including effigies of the Good Sir John Darcy and his three wives, and fine stained glass.



open / access:



address / contact:

Church Lane, Aston
0114 2872272



clifton park museum



Whilst in Rotherham's heart land you can also visit Clifton Park Museum, which charts the history of Rotherham and its communities.

The museum also displays and cares for many items related to the heritage of many of the sites listed here and offers a hand-on experience with regular Victorian cookery sessions, family activities and interactive displays.

For more information please ring Clifton Park Museum on 01709 336633 or visit www.visitrotherham.org