

# 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.

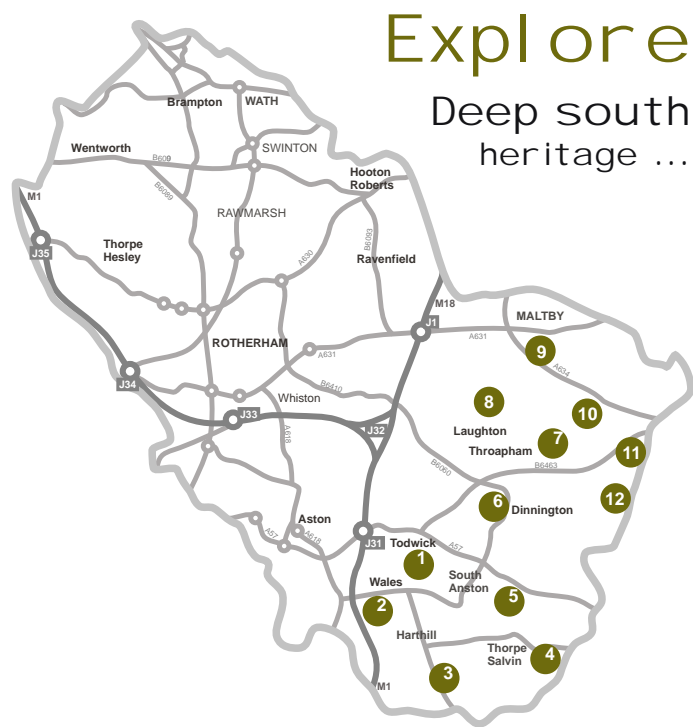
The architecture of churches is fascinating. Very few ancient churches are built in the style of one architectural period, and their history can be traced through the jigsaw of architectural styles that can be 'read' to interpret the age of each part.

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 rural deep south 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!



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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 hidden treasures in beautiful rural 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](http://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](http://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

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



## Todwick St peter & st paul



This lovely tiny village church is an architectural gem.

The original church was built in Anglo-Saxon times, probably during the early 11<sup>th</sup> century. This early church forms the nave of the present building. The south doorway, chancel arch and blocked north door are Norman, whilst the chancel and porch date from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The tower was added in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Inside are wonderful ancient roof timbers displaying a carved name, dates and even a face. There are the original Jacobean high box pews, with servants benches and lovely stained glass windows in the Decorated style.



Open / access:



Address / Contact:

Lindleys Croft, Todwick  
01909 770283  
www.todwick.org.uk

## Harthill all hallows



Open / access:



Address / Contact:

Union Street, Harthill  
01909 771369

Harthill's first church was built in 1085 of local Rotherham Red sandstone, by the William the Conqueror's son-in-law. It was enlarged in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, and restored in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Inside the church is splendid, with its wide aisles and finely carved Italian woodwork. The nave roof has some interesting bosses, including green men.

Of particular note are the arcades carrying original battle-axe carvings, the east window by Kempe, painted hatchments, memorials of the Osborne family and the tomb of the first Duke of Leeds.



## Thorpe salvin st peter



St Peter's is a treasure house of medieval architecture!

The main part of the church with its twin arched arcade and chancel arch, dates from 1130, with additions and alterations made over the next 400 years.

St Peter's great gem is the 12<sup>th</sup> century stone font, combining religious symbolism with scenes from life.

Another fine feature is the intricately carved Norman doorway, the finest in the area. It is protected by a Tudor half-timbered porch and can still be seen if the church is closed.



Open / access:



Address / Contact:

01909 770318  
Worksop Road, Thorpe Salvin

## Anston st james

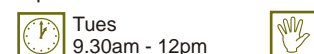


This splendid limestone church probably dates back to the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. One aisle was added during the late 13<sup>th</sup> century and the second aisle, nave, tower and graceful spire were built in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This is shown by the different styles of nave pillars.

The church is light and airy, thanks to large windows and light stonework. At the rear of the church is a rare 14<sup>th</sup> century tomb cover, bearing a figures (thought to be a father and daughter).



Open / access:



Address / Contact:

Sheffield Road, Anston  
01909 567500  
www.anstonstjames.org.uk

## Wales st john the baptist



The church at Wales was originally one of several chapels under the mother church of Laughton.

The original Norman church consisted of nave and chancel, probably constructed during the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. The tower was added in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. In 1897 a new nave and south aisle were added.

The Norman church now forms the north aisle has a carved chancel arch with chevrons and a peculiar face at the east end, and a large tub font (possibly Saxon) at the west end. The Norman south doorway has fascinating human and bird head carvings.

Address / Contact:

Church Street, Wales  
01909 771111

www.stjohnschurchwales-kivetonpark.org

Open / access:



## Dinnington st leonard



St Leonard's is an 18th century church, built on the site of a much earlier building. The church was originally quite small. It has been enlarged several times.

The church contains the wonderful glass and wood Miners' Memorial Screen. It is a Tree of Life, with mosaic panels made by local people depicting the lives and memories of the community. The church also contains stained glass thought to be by Kempe, and interesting memorials.



Open / access:



Address / Contact:

Church Lane, Dinnington  
01909 562335  
www.stleonardsdinnington.org.uk

## Throapham st john the baptist



Probably of Saxon origin St John the Baptist is a medieval church built mainly in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with tower, font and clerestory added in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is built on the site of an ancient well, which was celebrated as a place of pilgrimage well into the Middle Ages. It is now in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust.



Open / access:



Address / Contact:

St John's Road, Throapham  
01904 620749  
www.visitchurches.org.uk

## Mal tby st bar tholomew



Maltby is thought to be one of the oldest sites of Christian worship in Rotherham.

The tower is 11<sup>th</sup> century, and has fine 'herringbone' stonework. The rest of the church has been rebuilt several times, and most of the building dates from 1859.



The church porch contains a unique altar tomb which originally stood in the lychgate.

The church contains some finely carved woodwork and interesting monuments.

Open / access:



Address / Contact:

Church Lane, Maltby

## Firbeck st martin



Open / access:



Address / Contact:

New Road, Firbeck

Although not the first church on this site, St Martin's is a grand village church, with its Italianesque architecture and stately churchyard.

Built in 1820 to replace a medieval chapel.

The church contains some interesting memorials and funeral hatchments, and an intricate wrought iron chancel-screen.

The churchyard is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.



## Laughton all saints



All Saints is a stunning limestone church, whose magnificent spire soars to 187ft and can be seen for miles around. It has a fine Saxon porticus doorway, which is best viewed from the north side of the churchyard. The chancel is Norman, separated from the 14<sup>th</sup> century nave by the stone base of a rood screen.



The church contains many stone carvings, green men and interesting monuments, as well as a medieval carved font.

A motte and bailey castle (on private land) can be seen from the churchyard behind the church.

Open / access:



Address / Contact:

Church Corner, Laughton  
01909 562335

## Mal tby roche abbey

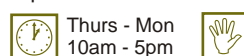


Founded in 1147, the fine early Gothic transepts of this Cistercian monastery in South Yorkshire still survive to their original height.

After the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a mob of locals descended on the abbey to pillage many of its treasures. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown transformed an already beautiful valley into a truly enchanting landscape, incorporating the ruins.

Excavation has since revealed the complete layout of the original abbey.

Open / access:



Address / Contact:

Blyth Road, Maltby  
01709 812739  
www.english-heritage.org.uk



## Letwell st peter

St Peters is a small but beautiful country church. Although there has been a church on this site for over 600 years, the building has been altered several times.

St Peters is essentially a 14<sup>th</sup> century tower, built of magnesian limestone, with a Victorian nave and apse opened in 1869.

The church contains simple carved pews, pulpit and rectors desk and a stone font with carved hedgerow flowers.

The churchyard is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, particularly noted for its spring wild flowers.



Open / access:



Address / Contact:

Church Lane, Letwell  
01909 730217

