

St Andrew's Church, Timworth



Introduction

St Andrew's Church has stood since the Middle Ages as a place of worship for the people of Timworth, then as now a small village with few other amenities.

The livings of Timworth and Ingham were united in 1733, during the incumbency of Rev'd John Battley, who had held both since 1727. In 2005 Rev'd Don Battley, on holiday from New Zealand, officiated in the church of which his ancestor had been the incumbent. Following John Battley's death in 1741 the Rector of Culford also became Rector of Ingham and Timworth. A 'multi-parish benefice' is thus nothing new! In 1957 the pattern changed again when Timworth was united with the Fornhams. It is now part of the Lark Valley Benefice, whose other parishes are not only the two Fornhams, All Saints and St Martin, but also Culford, West Stow, Wordwell, Lackford, and Flempton with Hengrave.

Timworth remains distinct from the other parishes in the Benefice in that it has its own service pattern. Worship is conducted according to the Book of Common Prayer; we belong to the Prayer Book Society. For some years there was a happy association with St Mary's Church in Bury St Edmunds through their Lay Reader, Sam Cowell, who used to take Morning Prayer, and the Rev'd Norman Norgate, who celebrated Holy Communion. In recent years the church has had invaluable help from Rev'd Doug Neupert of the neighbouring Blackbourne Team. Currently ministry is provided by a retired priest, the Rev'd Mary Elliott, with assistance from other clergy in the North Bury Team when required.

The congregation at St Andrew's is eclectic, with addresses in many cases outside the parish. We aim to be faithful to the 'old services' which have nourished so many in the Church of England, while offering a warm welcome (and excellent refreshments!) to everyone who makes the journey up the lane. Andrew, our patron saint, was one of the most appealing of the Twelve Apostles; he is recorded in the Gospels as someone who brought others to Jesus, including his own brother, Simon Peter. In his spirit we offer our hope that you will enjoy your visit to this much-loved church and feel God's presence here.

Rev'd Mary Elliott

2016

St. Andrew's Church, Timworth

Setting

There has been a church on this site since the 9th century; it is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

From the time of Abbot Samson (b.1135, d.1211) until the dissolution of the Benedictine Abbey at Bury St. Edmunds in 1539, the rector of the parish was the Abbot of the Bury Abbey, who took all tithes and fees from the surrounding lands.

The relatively small church of St. Andrew's is located to the east of the A134 Bury St Edmunds to Thetford road, five miles north of Bury and a mile south of Ingham. Although physically slightly secluded from the main community, parts of the church are visible from Timworth Green, the public footpath across the Ampton Race-course and the Timworth to Ampton road. It is accessed from the latter road, left down Church Lane, along a winding gravel track.

The public footpath runs adjacent to the lane and turns off at the Church Car Park. Map reference: TL861696.

It is in a beautiful, peaceful setting. The church has significant landscape value even though it is surrounded by a full circle of lime trees which, together with hawthorn and elder and other species of trees and hedges, form a natural boundary around the church.

A cottage and a former Rectory were once situated to the south of the church. There was also a house halfway between the church lane crossroads and the church on the south side where the lane bends. Most dwellings can be seen on a sketch map of the mid-1760s by the Revd Dr Nicholas Wakeham. There were also houses to the north of the church, towards the river. The Rectory and houses were demolished between 1823 and 1883 apart from the cottage nearest the church which was demolished sometime after 1904, leaving St Andrew's standing alone. It was the desire for a pleasing view, rather than the Plague, which left the church in isolation.

The boundary gates and fence were donated in memory of Kathleen Cutting, secretary of the Parochial Church Council from 1982-1995 and Angela Adams, mother and mother-in-law of Drs Peter and Isa Adams, who are long-standing members of the congregation.

The **churchyard** is well maintained by churchwarden Roland Nice, his son James, Mandy Balaam the sidesperson and, for many years, by Angela and Richard Cutting. Seasonal flowers are allowed to bloom in the churchyard with many snowdrops and cowslips in the spring.

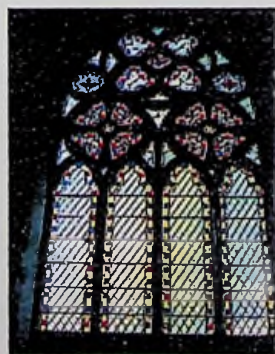
There is a chance to stop and reflect while sitting on the **memorial bench** donated in March 2008 by the family of the late Bill Henshall, who was churchwarden, and his wife Kate who lived at 'Beightons' in Timworth.

The Building

St. Andrew's is in Thingoe Deanery, part of the Archdeaconry of Sudbury and within the Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

It is a Grade II* listed building and was one of the churches within the Culford Estate. There are two 12th century windows on the north side of the chancel with the main body of the current church being of the later medieval period. A memorial plaque in the east window above the altar states: 'This church's chancel was restored by the Reverend E R Benyon and completed in 1868'.

The architect who undertook the restoration is not recorded. However, the 'Kentish tracery' of the Decorated Style west window is similar in style to work carried out at Wordwell Church by Samuel Teulon, in 1866.



Externally there is little difference between Isaac Johnson's drawing of 1818 and the church today. The only additions are the elaborate priest's

door on the south side, a replacement vestry (from one built in 1855) on the north side made of rubble flint-work and angled buttresses on the chancel.

The **chancel, nave and vestry roofs** were replaced in the 1990s with Keymer hand-made clay tiles.

There are traces of Romanesque flint-work in the north and south chancel walls.

The pigeon-proof gates, although detracting the eye from the lovely oak gates are, sadly, a necessity.

The **church entry** is via the **tower** to the south west, which is one of only twelve in Suffolk to have this layout. The base of the tower thus serves as the porch and is also the bell-ringing chamber. The tower itself is possibly 14th century and stone steps lead up to the turret. The tower was added on the south side as the west end of the nave was too near the boundary of the churchyard to fit it there.

The very large **tower key** is the original.



Originally there was a peal of five bells. One was taken to West Stow Church by the Rev. Benyon in 1850. Today there are four bells which, at the time of writing, can only be chimed and not rung. The oldest bell, weighing 14cwt, was made by John Draper in 1626. Two more were made in 1675 by John Darbie, one weighing 7cwt, the other 8 ½ cwt. The fourth bell was made by Charles Newman in 1698 and weighs 10cwt. The bell frame, which is supported by an oak beam, was made by Bullocks of Ixworth.

Both the inner and outer **porch tower doorways** are Victorian and made of oak. On the surrounding arch of the doorway which forms part of the north wall of the tower there are a number of 18th century graffiti. The

tower itself is of rubble flint. The porch floor is ceramic with some encaustic tiles in the pattern. The doorway is 14th century.

The new **threshold slab** of Portland stone was laid by Saxon Monumental in 2013.

There is what could be a **mass dial** on the corner of the south-east buttress of the porchway, situated about twelve feet above ground. The dial may have been relocated to this place at the same time as the 19th century re-organisation. It is divided into nine sections (not hours) to allow for knowing when to toll the bell.

Interior

Both the nave and chancel had ceilings but these were replaced in 1868 by exposed Victorian wooden trussed **roofs** with plaster in between. The rood screen was also removed at this time.

The **floor** in the nave and the chancel is ceramic with some encaustic tiles in the pattern and stone treads.

There is a complete Victorian **glazing** scheme, in Cathedral clear moulded glass, with a decorative border in red and blue flash glass.

The plain octagonal **font**, which is medieval in origin, has an oak cover and lead lining. It was moved in the restoration by the Revd E R Benyon from in front of the west window to its present location in the south-west corner of the nave.

Behind the font are 18th century **memorial stones** for members of the Worledge family who lived at Green Farm. This building, although somewhat altered, still exists in Timworth today.

There is a 13th century simple pointed arch to the doorway on the north side of the nave, thought to be a **priest's door**. This is now blocked up and plastered over on the inside, but it can be clearly seen from the outside.

Again on the north wall there is a **map** showing details of graves in the churchyard. A written record accompanies this.

The **drawing** of the church (by Tom Taylor) hanging on the north wall was given by Marjorie Fraser in memory of her son Michael Margetts who died 28th April 1979 aged 40 years and is buried in the churchyard.

Also on the north wall is the **First World War (1914-1918) Memorial** made of ceramic marble with a two-toned true marble surround and an oak shelf underneath. This memorial is similar to the one in Ingham Church and is deemed to be rare. The eight names show that a comparatively large proportion of this small village lost their lives.

The two **churchwardens' wands** (staves), on pew-ends half-way down the nave, are in memory of the late Revd. Maurice Pirani, Rector of Timworth from 1962 until his death in 1980. The wands are brass-headed and bear an image of a mitre for the bishop's warden and a crown for the people's warden.

There are two **memorial plaques** in the pews to past members of the congregation: on the north side is one to Peter Rodwell (1920-1997) and on the south to Amy ('Jo') Grayson (1903-2006), whose donation of a knitted nativity set is still used each year.

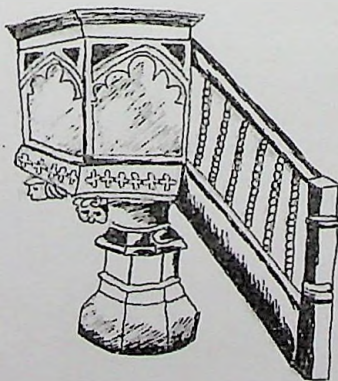
In 1834 a **Loyal Arms** of Charles II dated 1661 was recorded as being over the west window but this was replaced in 1868 by the one now on the south wall of the nave. This is for William III (1689-1702) with the crest of William IV (1830-1837).



Both the mid 18th century **pulpit** and the 17th century **altar rails** with barley-twist balusters, were purchased allegedly from St. James' Church in Bury St Edmunds (now St James' Cathedral) possibly in 1865. If this is the case, this alteration pre-dates the alterations to the chancel of St James' Church by George Gilbert Scott in the early 1870s. Alternatively, they may have been purchased by the Revd Benyon at the time of the modernisation of St James'. Indeed, The Revd. James Mahomed, Rector of Timworth (1902-26) had heard that the pulpit and altar rails both came from St. James' when the Revd. W. Chapman 'spoiled the church.'



The pulpit is hexagonal with panels in the façade, thought to be 16th century. Winged cherub heads support the base and acanthus leaf decoration surrounds the top. All this rests on a stone base.



The altar rails are not quite long enough and may, formerly, have been part of the three-sided rails at St James'.

The **altar** and the two Glastonbury-style president's chairs are Victorian and made of oak. The altar fall was repaired by Pearl Palmer in August 1994.

The **reredos** consists of a blind arcade of six arch openings, with the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments painted on tin sheets, and was installed as part of the 1868 restoration.

There are two Victorian marble **wall tablets** on the north side of chancel, one in memory of Sarah Frances Thompson who died in the parish on February 21st 1856 and the other in memory of Thomas Turner who also died there on May 27th 1859.

The **lectern** is oak and double-faced, with an unusual design. The lectern fall was given in memory of the late Neil Staddon by his wife Jill in 2002. The lectern Bible was given in memory of Lacey Neve Gooding who died 28th September 1958, having been a churchwarden for 30 years.

There is a full set of Victorian **pews** with benches. The two oak choir stalls do not match anything else in the church.

There is a **piscina** in the windowsill to the right of the altar.

The **wooden cross** which is suspended from the chancel roof was given by Rod and Carol Allard in memory of their son, Simon Paul Edward Allard, aged 5, and is dated 10th May 1981.

The **warden's chair**, now in the vestry, was donated by Kathleen Elliott, of Thurston, in memory of her late husband Robert (Bob).

The **harmonium** in the vestry is made by W.Hattersdey and Co., Sheffield but is no longer used. The harmonium in the chancel is of Canadian manufacture. The **electric organ** currently in use is a Yamaha Electone.

The tapestry hassocks were made by Carol Allard, Eileen Allard, Mandy Balaam, Sally Nice, and Hugh and Margaret Steavenson.

The vestry is small but has an open fireplace, not currently used.

Past baptism, wedding and burial registers are stored in the Bury Record Office.

The valuable communion vessels are stored at St James' Cathedral and are sometimes displayed in the Treasury there. They tend to be used at Timworth on special occasions such as Easter and Christmas.

They consist of:

- An Elizabethan silver chalice (1567), with an engraved band of foliage round the inverted rim and a maker's mark, with a cover
- A Victorian electro-plated flagon (1862); the scroll handle has fleur-de-lys finials with a matching thumb piece. A band round the body is engraved 'Glory be to God on high'. It is inscribed on its base 'The thank offering of R and CEW 8th October 1862'.
- Elizabethan paten with feet

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In producing this booklet we would like to thank the following people:

- **Clive Paine**, for giving his permission for us to quote from his book, 'The Culford Estate'.
- **Tony Redman**, of Whitworth Co-Partnership LLP, for the factual information taken from his Quinquennial Inspection Report 2011
- The late **Revd. Maurice Pirani**, Rector here from 1962-1980 for the original notes, and to the late **Cyril Cutting**, churchwarden from 1960 - 2001 for compiling those notes into the first information sheet.
- **English Heritage** website
- **Simon Knott** website

- **Kathy Sadler**, for producing the sketches
- **Tom Taylor**, for the drawing of Timworth Church on the cover of the guide (drawn in 1979).
- **Carol Allard**, Lay Elder, for a more recent update of the initial information sheet and also for proof reading, and making the necessary changes to, the preliminary draft initially produced by **Alison Pettitt**, churchwarden, on behalf of the PCC in 2016.

02.16