



BRACKNELL FOREST SANDHURST - ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS PARISH CHURCH

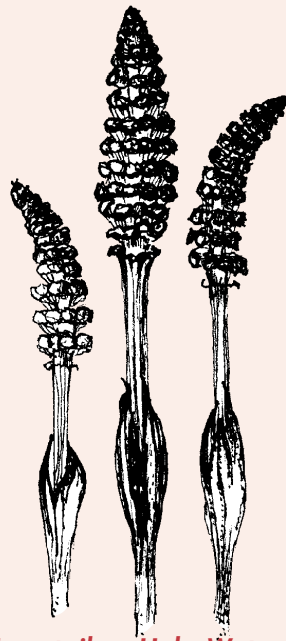


COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE

YOUR LOCAL HERITAGE

The churchyard is a remnant of flowery meadow, once found everywhere. Nearly seventy plant species have been found, including Bird's-foot trefoil (God's thumb and finger), Germander speedwell (Angel's eyes) and Lady's bedstraw (Our Lady's bedstraw), encouraged by a sympathetic mowing regime. Even Field horsetail (Holy water sprinkle), persecuted elsewhere, finds refuge here.

Bird life is also very prolific. Twenty six species of bird have been recorded. Look out for the Great Spotted Woodpeckers, on the wooden shingles of the spire, hunting for insects!



Field Horsetail or Holy Water Sprinkle

Visiting St Michael's Church

You are very welcome to visit St Michael's Church. If you would like to go inside, please call at the Parish Office in the Pastoral Centre (next door), **tel: 01252 873030**.



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved.
Licence Number LAF00/41J

If you would like to worship here, the main services are as follows:

Every Sunday	
8.00am	Holy Communion
9.30am	Parish Communion
6.30pm	Evensong
2nd Sunday	
7.30pm	Freedom Service for the young

Leaflets are also available for St Michael and St Mary Magdalene Parish Church, Easthampstead, All Saints Parish Church, Binfield, St John Baptist Parish Church, Crowthorne, St Michael Parish Church, Warfield and St Mary's Parish Church, Winkfield.

Leisure Services
Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Time Square Market Street
Bracknell Berkshire RG12 1LR
Tel: 01344 354124

Printed by Bracknell Forest Borough Council's in-house Design and Print Services
First printed 2000 Printed on Recycled Paper
www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk
text and illustration by Linda Carter

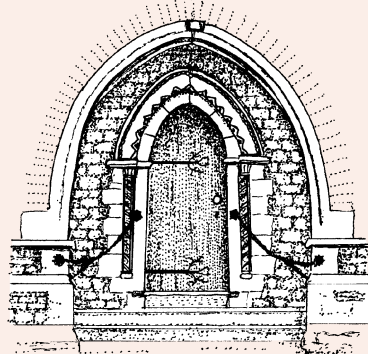
This leaflet is available in large print, braille, or on audio tape on request, please contact 01344 354124 for further details

SANDHURST

Sandhurst Church is situated high above the River Blackwater with wide views over the valley. During Saxon times it was part of the Parish of Sonning. After the Norman Conquest Sandhurst became part of the Royal Forest, and eventually passed to the Dean of Sarum (Salisbury). Although Christianity came to Berkshire in the seventh century, there are no written records of the Church before 1200 when William de Wanda, Dean of Salisbury, visited "a chapel at Sandhurst, new and beautiful". It was not until Victorian Times, when the land was sold off, that the population united to build the Church we see today.

THE CHURCH OUTSIDE

Sandhurst became part of the Diocese of Oxford in 1846 and plans were drawn up, by the renowned architect G E Street, to replace the crumbling old Church. The money was raised by public subscription with the cost of the new chancel being met by the Lord of the Manor. The old church had been built using a very limited supply of local building materials, but the new church of 1853 was built in squared brownish rubble of Mansfield stone, perhaps intended to be similar to the ironstone conglomerate collected from the heathland to face local Churches.

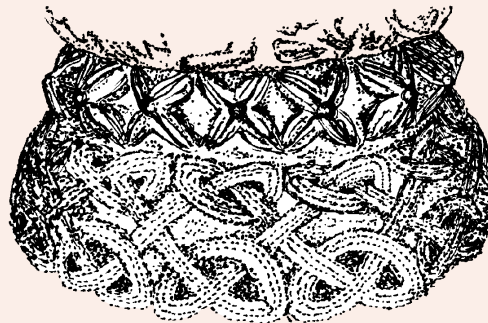


South Porch

Approaching the Church from the south side you see the porch and tower, with its timber and wood shingled spire. It houses a peal of six bells from around 1880. The elaborate Norman style carving round the door imitates features from the old Church. Following the building round to the right, walk past the south aisle with its simple Early English style pointed windows, the vestry built in 1887, and then turn to go past the great chancel window, the organ housing and along the north aisle to the north porch. This was built in 1887 to separate the bell-ringers from the congregation entering the church.

THE CHURCH INSIDE

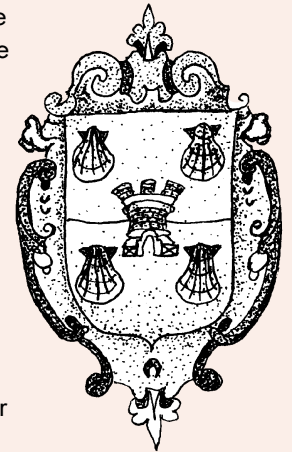
Walk through the north porch into the north aisle of the Church and see the great white pillars, with their carved leaf capitals, supporting the high timbered roof. The short pillars give the Church an intimate feel whilst the high pointed arches emphasise the spirit of reaching for higher things. To the right is the old oak chest where the parish records were once stored. Ahead of you is the ornate stone font for christenings, carved in 1854 by Jane Parsons, the Rector's youngest daughter.



Font stand

Turn left and look upwards to the wooden roof supports. There is an old beam inscribed to Charles I dating from 1647. Walk towards the altar or chancel end of the church. The whole chancel was once covered in wall paintings, highlighted in gold, designed to make it the focus of worship. Many of the wall paintings were whitewashed in 1962 to give the Church more light and to emphasise the fine stained glass east window.

Remnants of earlier times are to be found to the right, in the vestry. These include a small brass to the Geale family dating from 1608, retrieved from the churchyard during rebuilding, and a monument to Anna Farrer from 1892, modelled in Greece. In the floor near the vestry door is the slab to William Chislett from 1671, who served at the Court of the Exchequer under Charles II.



Armorial bearings of William Chislett

THE CHURCHYARD AND WILDLIFE

St Michael's churchyard is a place for quiet reflection with its many monuments set amongst flowery grassland.



Great Spotted Woodpecker

The most ancient feature is the sarsen stone lying beneath the yew tree, west of the Church. The yew, itself, is the remains of a much larger veteran tree, still vigorous enough to produce great drifts of pollen in late winter. St Michael is often the Christian dedication where there was a conversion from Paganism to Christianity so perhaps the churchyard has a very long history indeed.

Notable monuments include one to the Bishop of Oxford, died 1889, and another, with a finely carved angel, to Barones Ystwyth and Lady Macnaghten, residents at Sandhurst Lodge.