



About St Mary's

The church recorded at 'Torentune' in Domesday Book is believed to have stood on the same site as the present church. The remains of an Anglo-Viking cross discovered in the foundations of the chancel would probably have been standing in the village when the Domesday commissioners came to make their assessment. Although the church is now dedicated to St Mary, there is a historical reference to it as St Helen's.

The building that survives today is a mostly 14th-century structure and is built predominantly from red Cheshire sandstone. There is a piscina of 14th-century date in the wall of the eastern end of the south aisle, indicating the former location of a medieval altar. The piscina would have been used by a medieval priest to wash his hands along with the sacred vessels during Mass.

The church was enlarged in the 16th century, including the addition of the tower to the western end of the south aisle and the Elton chapel at its eastern end (now housing an impressive organ). A period of dereliction followed (see the Chambre memorial), with graffiti of the 17th and 18th centuries indicating renovation work of that date. The 19th-century restoration was spearheaded by Canon Barker, who did not live to see its completion. Following a disastrous fire in 1909 the tower was largely rebuilt.

St Mary's Church was placed in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust in 2009 and since then the Trust has invested more than £350,000 in repairs.

A thousand years of English history awaits you

The Churches Conservation Trust is the national charity protecting historic churches at risk.

We've saved over 340 beautiful buildings which attract more than a million visitors a year. With our help and with your support they are kept open and in use – living once again at the heart of their communities.



Access

Due to their age, historic church floors can be uneven and worn and lighting can be low level. Please take care, especially in wet weather when floors can be slippery.

Help us do more

To protect these churches, and others like them, we need your help. If you enjoy your visit please give generously or if you would like to become a CCT supporter and join in our exclusive 'behind-the-scenes' visits please go to our website.



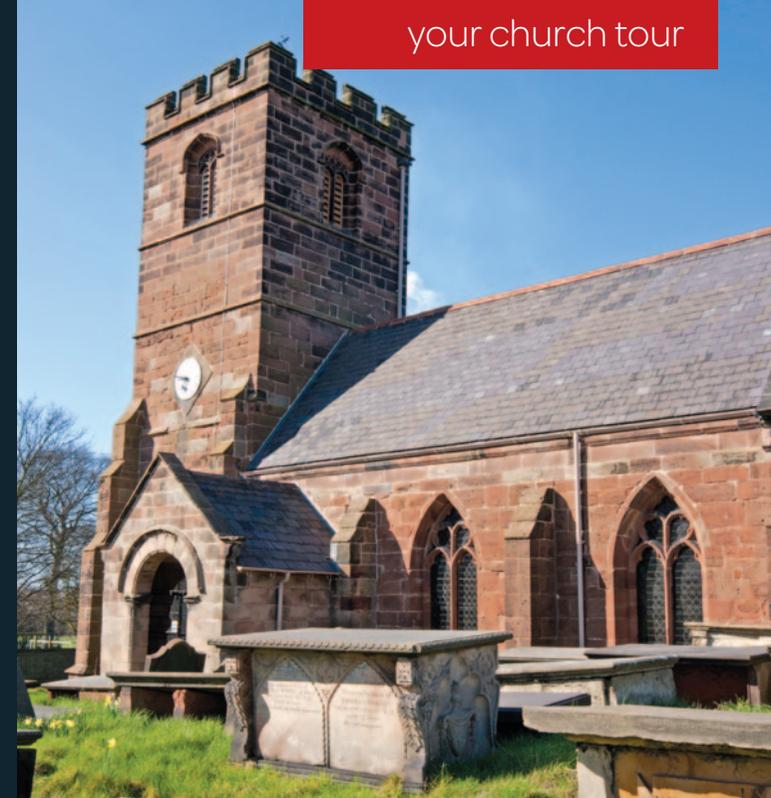
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Church of St Mary

Thornton-le-Moors



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The historic church of St Mary

10 things to see before you leave...

- 1 The **font** is of an unusual design, dating from the late 17th century.
- 2 The complex heraldry on the **commemorative boards and brasses** promotes the importance of lineage and familial relationships. Two brasses also commemorating members of the Bunbury family are set into the chancel floor, near the choral pews, showing the variety of commemorative practices popular in the 17th century.
- 3 The **cross shaft**, dated to the late 9th or early 10th century, displays the inscription 'God Help'. The three figures on the main cross shaft may depict the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. To its right stands a decorative piece dated either 1573 or 1673, probably part of an architectural column.
- 4 The octagonal **pulpit** is dedicated to the memory of Canon Barker.
- 5 The **choir stalls** are constructed from earlier pews, as is the panelling in this section of the chancel. This reused woodwork came from box pews, which were rented or owned by members of the congregation. Some names and dates of tenure survive on the new pews.
- 6 The **chest** in the Elton Chapel, dated 1732, would have been used to hold parish records and objects of value. It has three locks, the keys being held by the minister and the two churchwardens. Their initials are visible on the chest.
- 7 The **altar rails and communion table**, decorated in a barley-twist style, date from 1694. The names of the churchwardens who may have authorised payment are recorded on the table.
- 8 The **stained glass** in the east window, installed around 1878, seems to have been paid for by Joseph Pover, a Justice of the Peace at Elton Hall as well as a churchwarden of St Mary's.
- 9 **Memorial to Rowland Chambré**, an incumbent of St Mary's in the 17th century. It states that prior to his appointment there had been no minister within living memory.
- 10 There are various **masons' marks** in the late 14th-century tower, most easily seen on the inside of the north-eastern column, when standing inside the tower.



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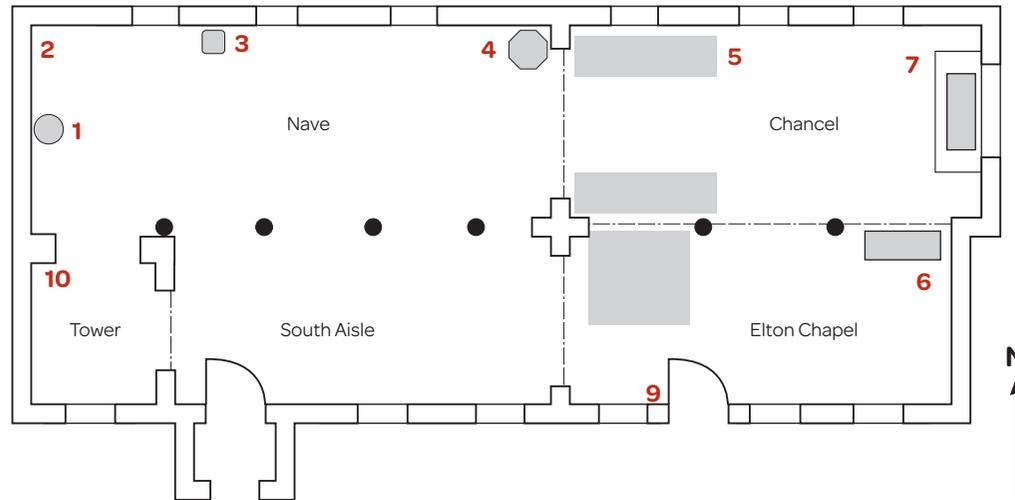
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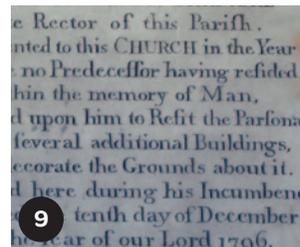
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