



About St Werburgh's Old Church

The church is dedicated to Werburgh, an Anglo-Saxon saint, daughter of Wulfhere, first Christian king of Mercia. She died around AD 700 in Lincolnshire after having been abbess of Ely and in charge of several nunneries. Her bones were enshrined in Chester Cathedral.

In 1999, a detailed survey and dendrochronology assessment was commissioned of the timbers in the nave and chancel. This showed that the church had at least 6 phases of development. The first, dated to the late 12th Century, revealed an aisled building related to the construction of the nearby Priory in 1187-90. The building was restored or enlarged in the 13th century and an Early English doorway built in the north wall.

In the 16th century a further truss was added to the chancel, along with a timber roof when the chancel was rebuilt and the first tower was probably built in 1575. The south and west walls of the nave, the northeast and south chapels were constructed of stone, the latter areas appeared to have originally been timber framed, and are associated with the date stone of 1645. The tower was built in brick in 1711 and the final 6th phase saw a new vestry and the southern chapel rebuilt in brick around 1811-24.

By 1880 the church was in grave need of repair. A new church was built to provide more comfortable accommodation for worshippers, so the old church was now an expensive bygone. In 1971, as it was no longer required for worship, the church passed into the care of The Churches Conservation Trust.

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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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Old Church of
St Werburgh's

Warburton

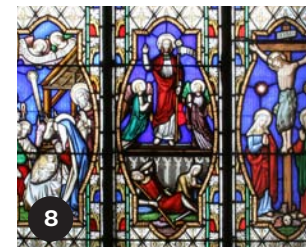
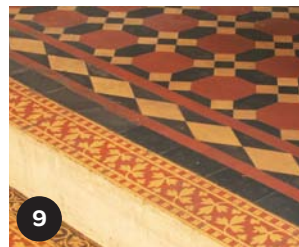
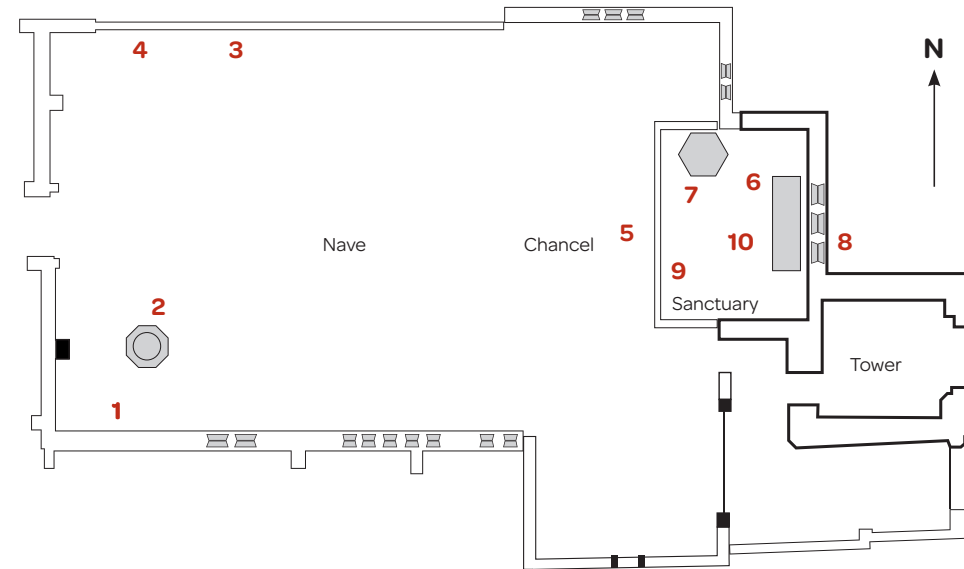
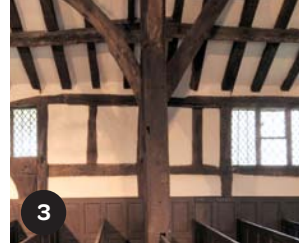


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The historic St Werburgh's Old Church

10 things to see before you leave...

- 1 The site occupied by St Werburgh's dates back to the Saxon period. In 1187–90 Adam de Dutton founded a short-lived priory. It appears that the priory stood on the site of the present church, indicated by the **stone coffins** unearthed in 1816, and the late medieval ditch and bank that enclose the churchyard.
- 2 By the west door is the **font**. It has an inscription, reading 'William Drinkwater, the keeper'. The Drinkwater family were the hereditary bailiffs of Warburton from the 16th-18th centuries and many family members are buried in the graveyard.
- 3 The **north wall** of the church is timber-framed, infilled with wattle and daub (thin laths of wood plastered with mud or clay). The remaining sections of the north wall, the south and west walls are built from sandstone.
- 4 By the early 18th Century, the chancel was again rebuilt and the brick tower was added. A gallery was constructed over the main door- the **blocked door** was the original entrance to the stairs leading to the additional seating.
- 5 By the end of the 16th Century, the chancel was remodeled and the **altar rails** were added.
- 6 **Communion table**, also of the 16th century.
- 7 The hexagonal **pulpit** dating from c.1600 is the most ornamental piece of furniture in the church.
- 8 The **east window** was inserted in 1857. The images feature the life of Christ; the Nativity, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, though not in the traditional order. The surrounding glass contains floral decoration and pattern.
- 9 Below your feet, in the sanctuary are **encaustic tiles**, probably made by Minton, which were also added in the 19th century remodeling.
- 10 In the floor of the chancel are a number of **ledger stones**, commemorating people who were considered worthy enough to be buried near to the altar. They were either prominent local figures, or those with the financial means to acquire the right to be buried in the most auspicious place within the church. Many people are buried below the flagstones of the church, including five rectors, and members of the Drinkwater family; however most inscriptions have been worn away.



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