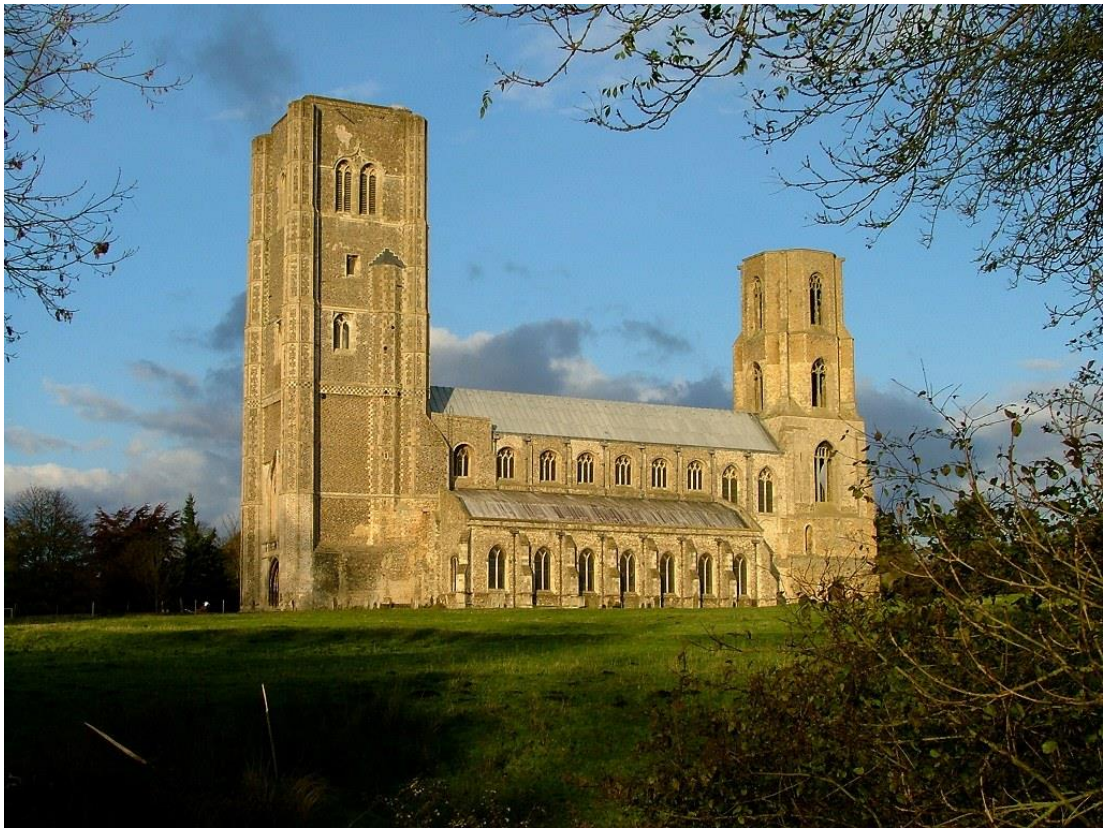
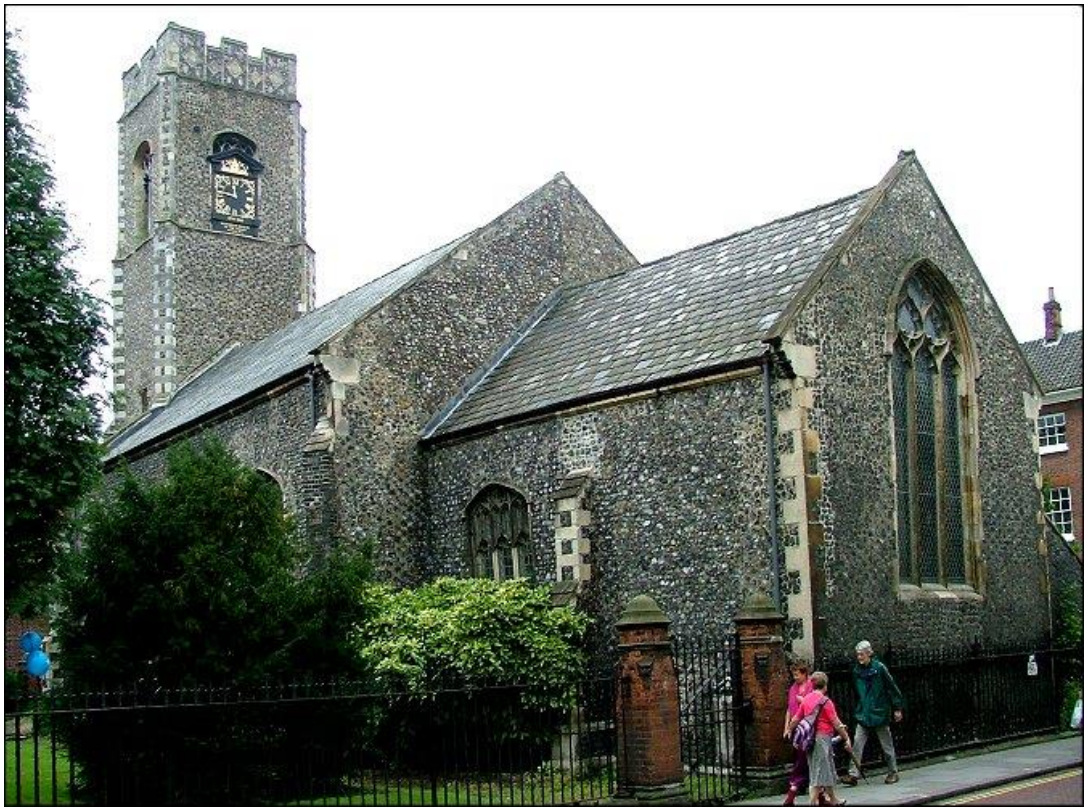
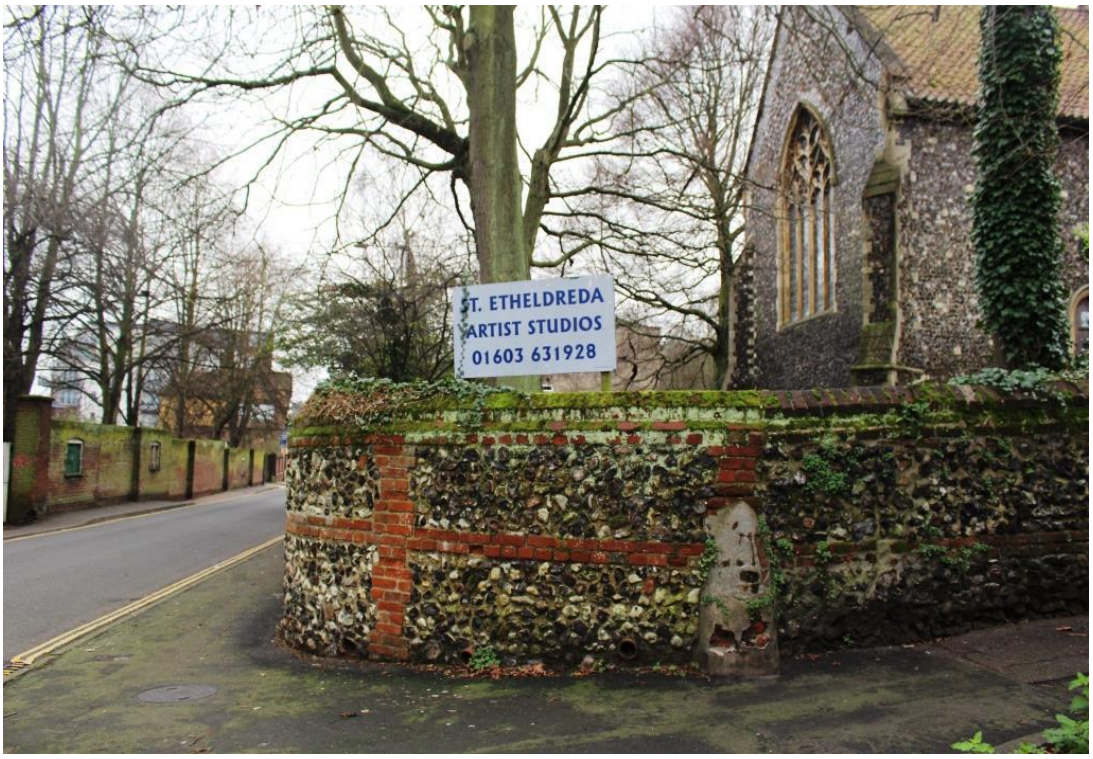
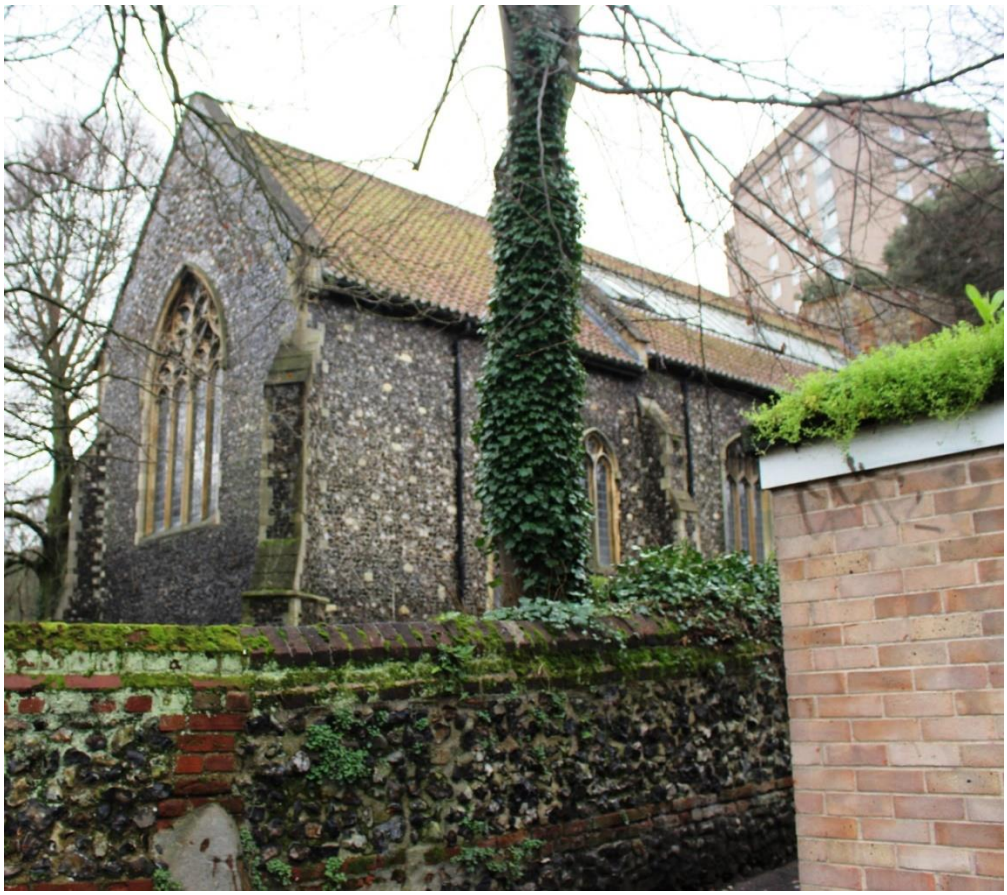


CHURCHES VISITED AND REVISITED (17/12/16 TO DATE) – BOOK 31



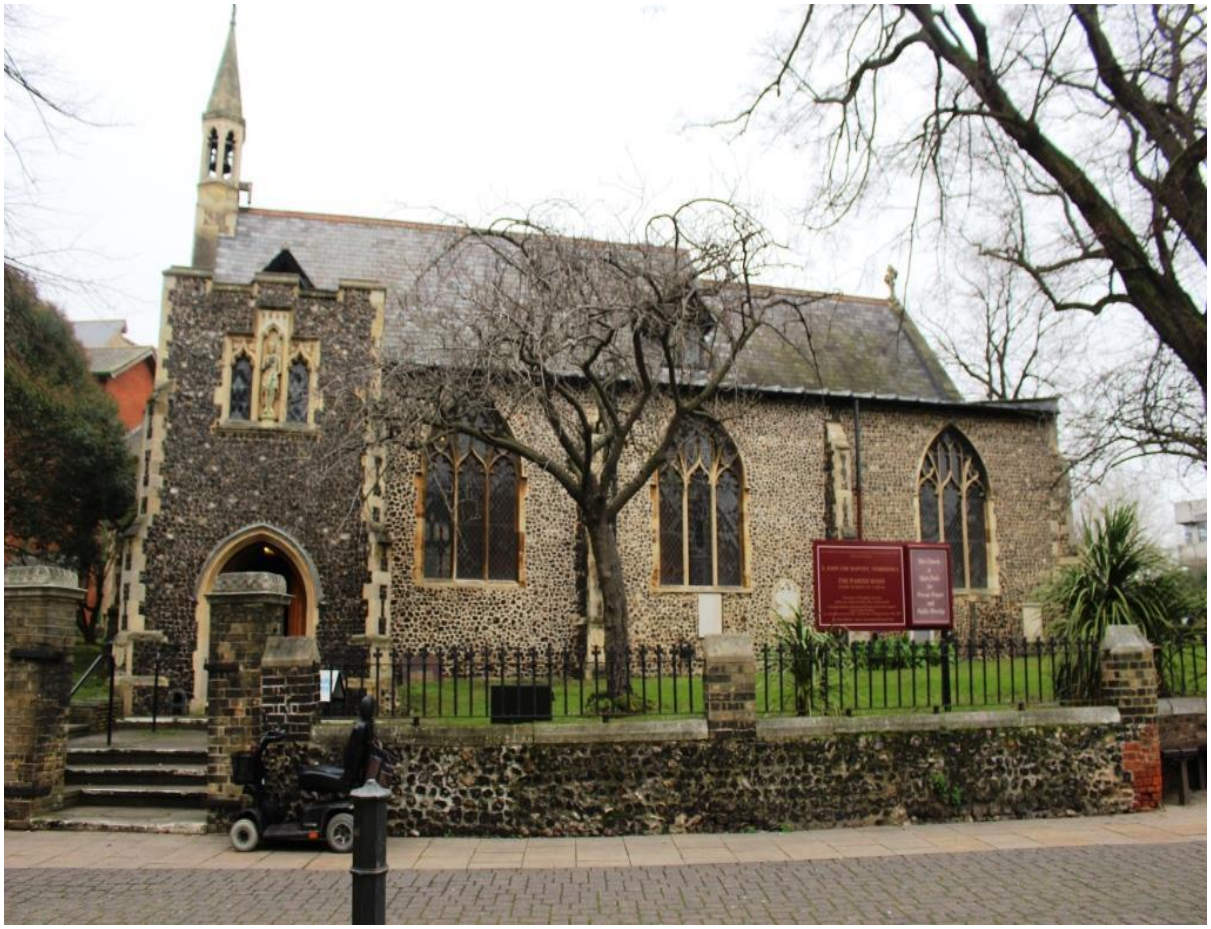
SUNDAY 30th DECEMBER 2018





St Etheldreda, King Street, Norwich

The death of the last Rector in 1961 led to the closure of this church, which was eventually declared redundant in 1975. It then stood abandoned and unused until 1980, when a group of artists took it on with the idea of providing affordable studio space, a use that still continues. It currently houses thirteen artists in varying media – paint, print, sculpting, etc. Repairs were first done in 1975, as its condition was so poor. A mezzanine floor was installed later, with access at both east and west ends, thus doubling the space available. This was complemented by a sky-light along the North nave roof. The church was lime-washed in 2014 – possibly the first time since it had a make-over since the 1950's.



St John the Baptist (Catholic), Timberhill, Norwich

St John the Baptist in Timberhill, near to the shopping area is the main Anglican church of the Catholic tradition in Norwich city centre. The church is open daily for private prayer and worship - it usually closes after the High Mass on a Sunday. The parish also includes St Julian's church, which houses the cell of Julian of Norwich. Mass is said daily (apart from the Rector's day off, which is Thursday) either at St John's or at St Julian's church.

Services at St John's are held according to the modern rites of the Western Church, celebrated with traditional ceremonial. At St Julian's the services are diverse and based on Common Worship. Their congregation is gathered from a wide area of Norfolk and Suffolk, and is made up of people of all ages and backgrounds.

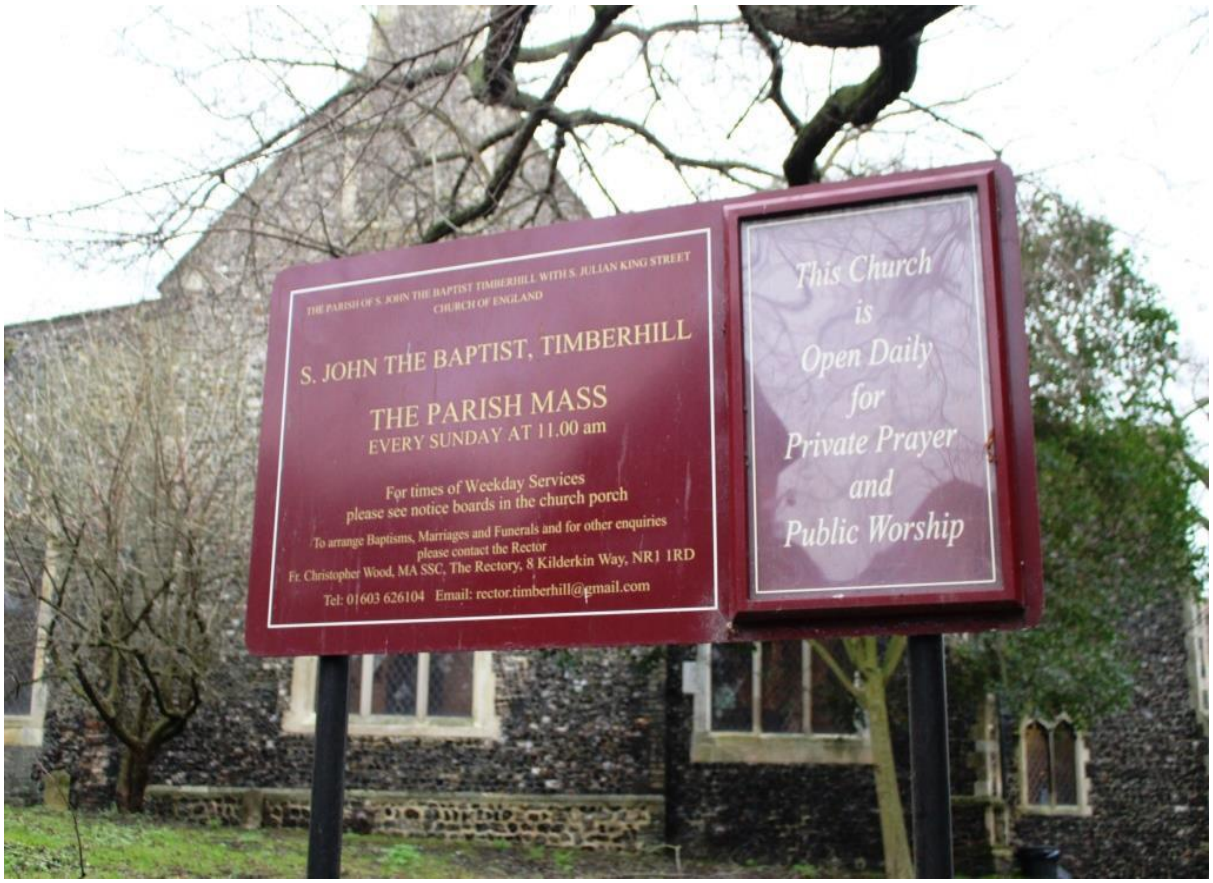
Their parish mass is enlivened by strong congregational singing and clouds of incense, symbolising our prayers rising to heaven. They welcome people of all ages, and from all sorts of backgrounds - those who wish to discover Jesus Christ for the first time, and those who want to grow further in their knowledge and service of him. Refreshments are always available after Sunday mass and visitors are warmly invited to join us.

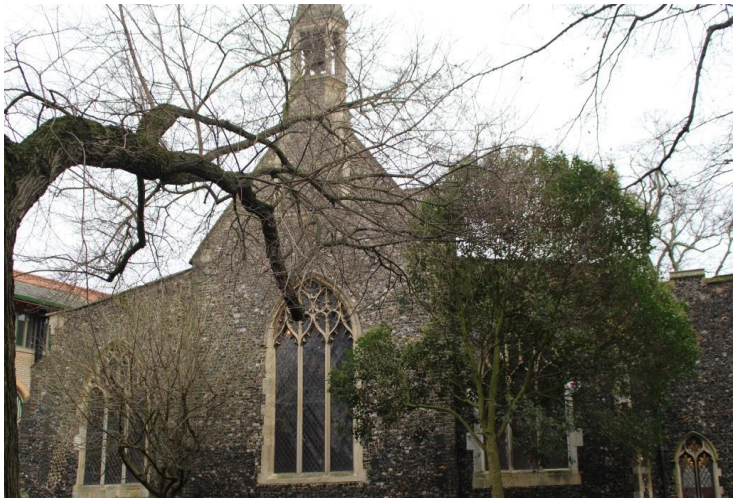
The parish takes pride in offering the masses and services appropriate to the great feasts of the year, including Holy Week and Easter. Details of any special services can be found in the Parish Newsletter. There are also one of the few parishes which celebrates the service of Benediction with traditional solemnity each month at St Julian's.

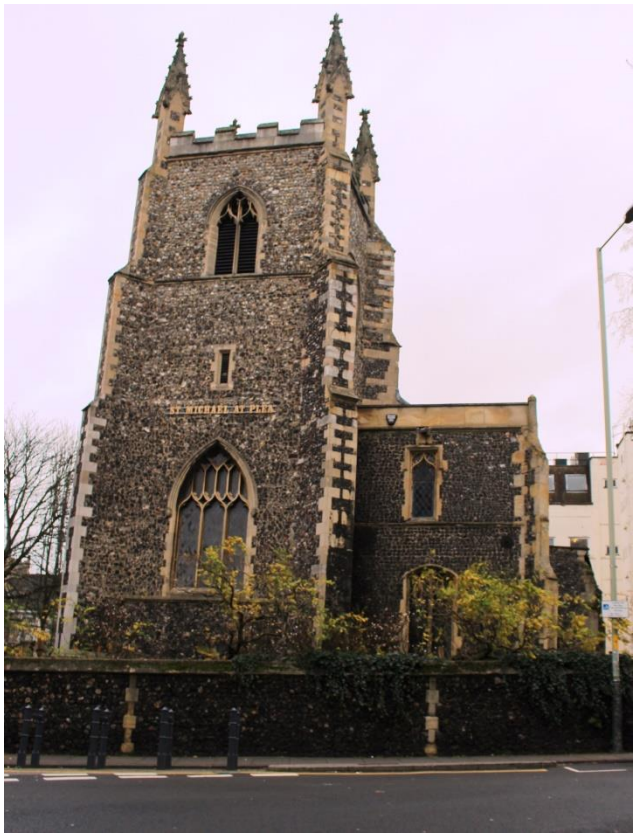
They enjoy the opportunity to celebrate Baptisms and Weddings. For further enquiries please contact the Rector

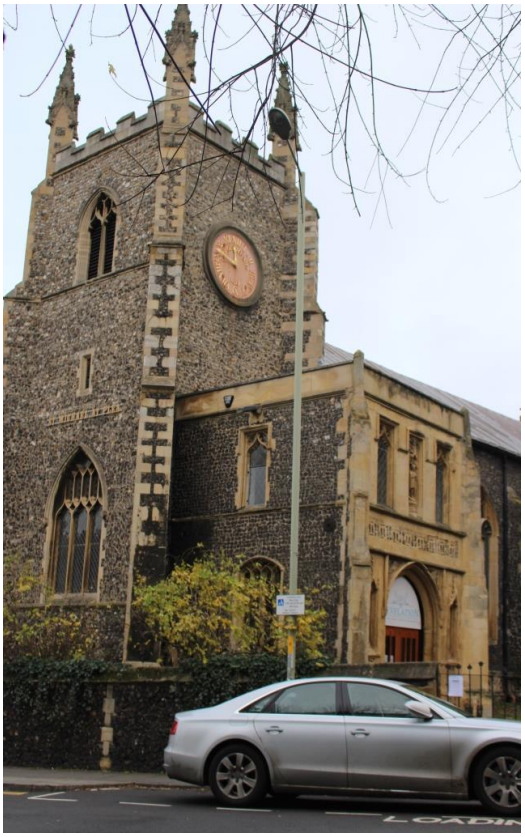
St John the Baptist on Timberhill in Norwich is one of the smaller medieval churches in the city. Although the 'long and short' work in the east wall indicates a date very soon after the Norman Conquest, that the present church which was largely built around 1420. Once you step inside St John's, the modern, open interior is a reflection of an active and lively parish.

St Julian's church suffered severe bomb damage during the second world war, but largely due to the care of the Community of All Hallows Dirchingham, it has been restored and preserved. It functions both as a parish church and a shrine of international importance because of its association with Julian of Norwich.









St Michael at Plea, Redwell Street, Norwich

St Michael's is a 14th century church with an oddly truncated tower with strikingly tall pinnacles. The pinnacles were added when the top storey of the tower was removed for safety reasons in the late 19th century. The church itself stands on one of the oldest Saxon foundations in Norwich, possibly a cremation-cemetery of the 5th or 6th century. The tower is a familiar local landmark, in part because of the clock face, which dates to 1827 and is inscribed "Forget me Not".

Why Plea ? The earliest name we know of was St Michael at Motstow; that is, at the market, or meeting place. The name changed after the Archdeacon's court was held here, so the name essentially means "at the court".

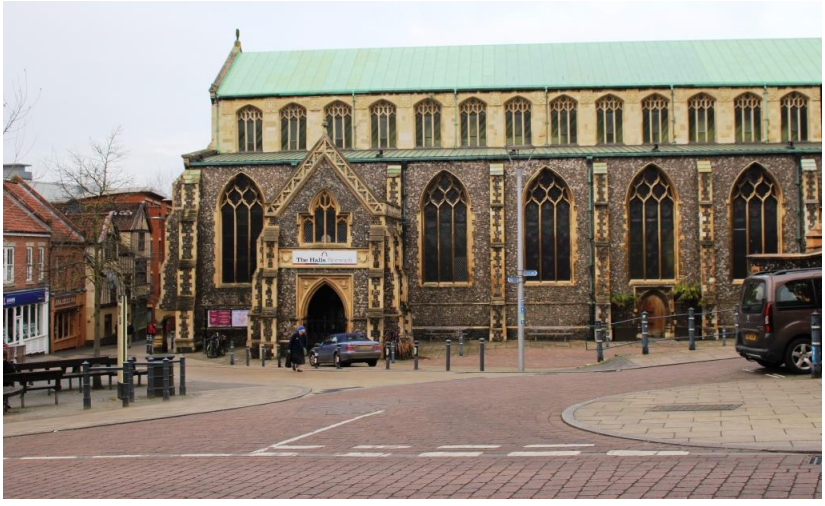
One of the first things you notice walking along the road is how high the churchyard is. This is the result of centuries of burials crammed into the small churchyard. The South porch stands out from the main body of the church. The porch is two storeys high and the façade is made entirely of dressed stone, unusual in Norwich, where almost all construction is in knapped flint or rubble. There is a frieze over the porch doorway, with a row of “M’s” for Michael and carvings of St Michael and a dragon. It is very odd (especially in Norwich) that the porch gives entry directly into the tower rather than into the nave. The 15th century timber roof of the nave is impressive, with carved figures of angels. The angels stand out against the dark timbers due to a repainting in the 19th century.

There is a late medieval font in fairly typical East Anglian style, but it is not the font that draws your eye; it is elaborately carved 17th century cover, with an open canopy topped by the figure of a dove. The dove sits atop a classical obelisk, while another obelisk is on the front lid. Nearby, flanking the tower arch, are paintings of Moses and Aaron. These once formed part of an altar piece.

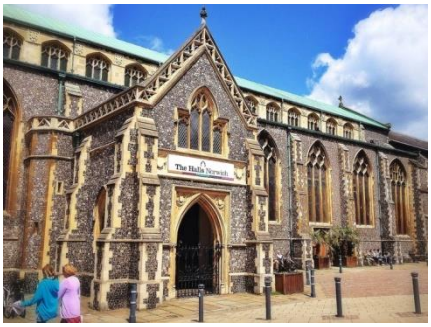
Behind the font is a very simple mural monument to Jacques de Hem (1603), crammed into a corner, with figures of Hem and his wife beneath a pediment decorated with symbols of mortality. We do not know who Hem was, but the name suggests that he was one of those “Strangers” (Religious Refugees from Flanders) who swelled the population of Norwich to revitalise the local cloth industry. The chancel appears earlier than the nave, probably 13th century, with a large Perpendicular East window. Here is gathered fragments of medieval glass. There used to be a medieval screen but this has been moved to the Cathedral.

St Michael’s was declared redundant in the 1960’s and is now a bookshop and café. This does rather obscure some of the historic furnishings, but on the other hand it makes a nice, relaxing place to browse or have a hot drink in beautiful surroundings. At least it is good to see historic buildings be used rather than left to decay.

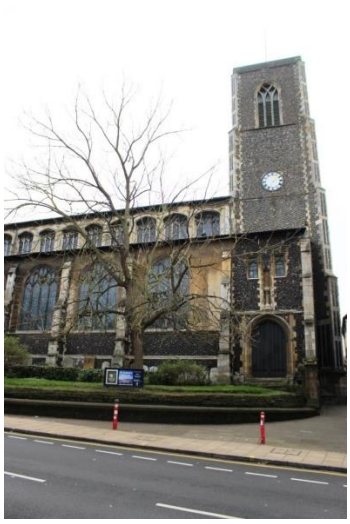
Though the angel roof is lovely, what really caught the eye was the carved font cover. The delicacy of the carving is quite appealing and something out of the ordinary.

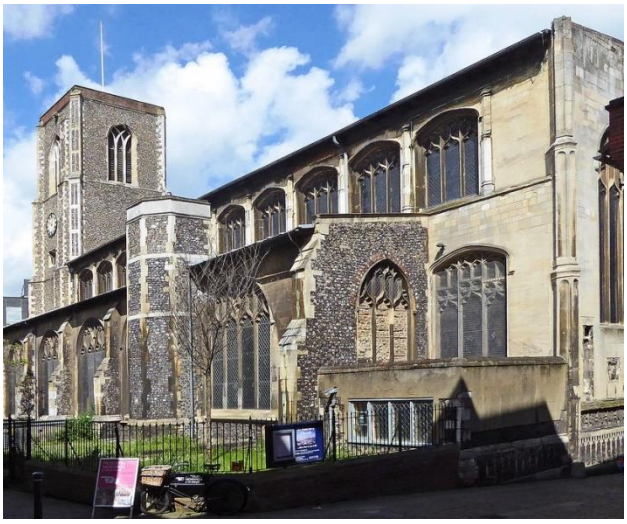


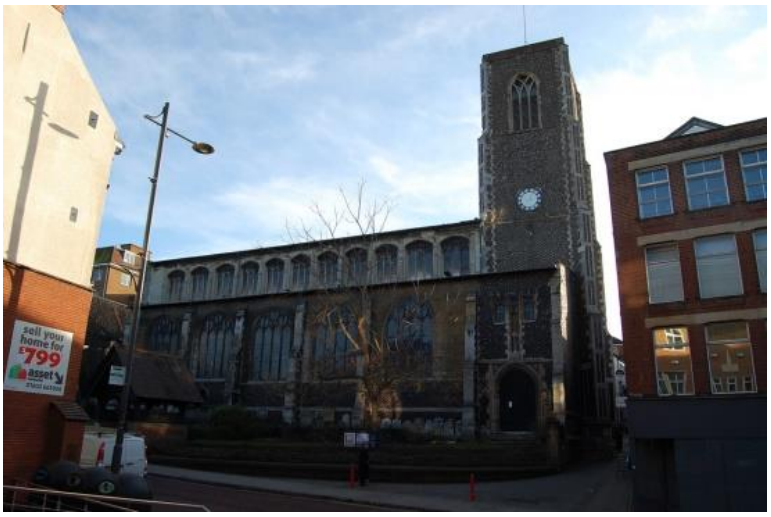
The Halls, St Andrews Street, Norwich



The Halls is now used for various functions of entertainment. This is the most complete medieval friary complex surviving in this country and has been welcoming visitors since passing into civic hands in 1538. Today these magnificent buildings are available for hire for private and public events.

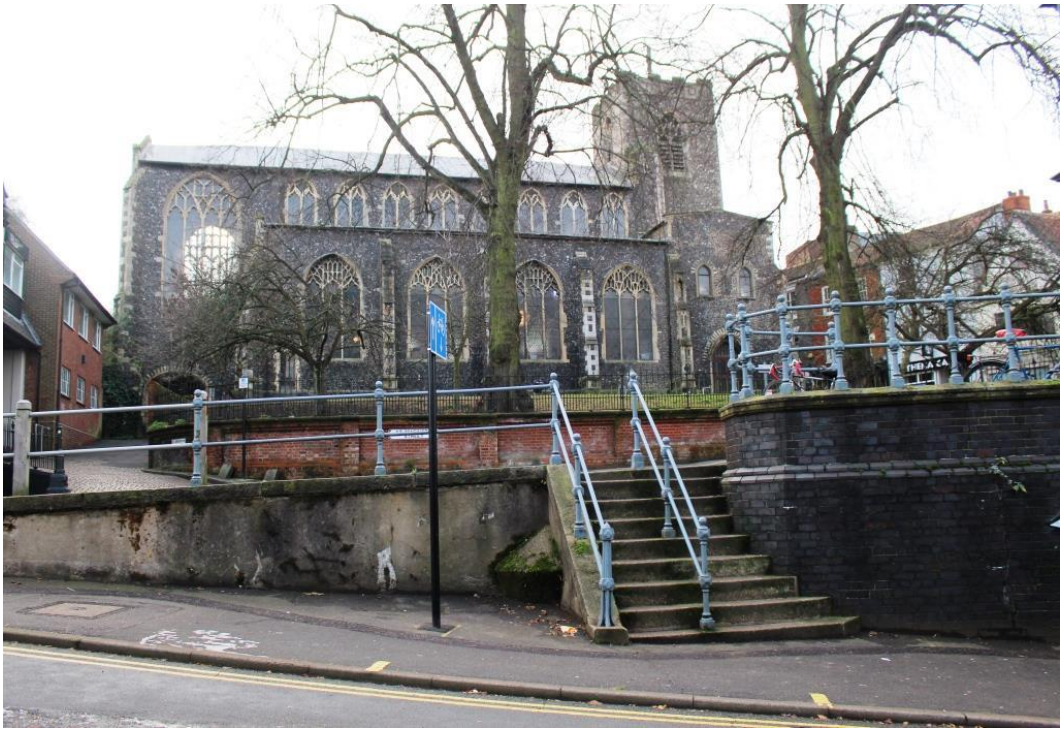




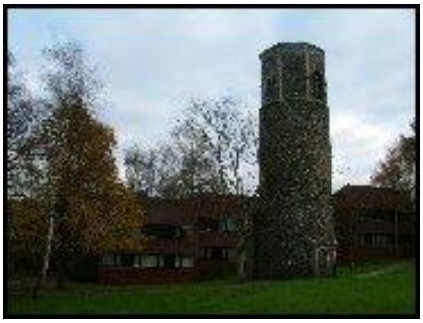


St Andrew's, St Andrew's Street, Norwich

Opposite the Halls is St Andrew's church which is in late Perpendicular Gothic style with a timber roof of tie beam construction, it is the second largest church in Norwich, and one of the last medieval churches to be built in the city. The main body of the church dates from 1499 to 1518. The tower dates from 1498, the south porch from c.1469 and the north porch from c. 1474.



St Benedict’s, **St Benedict’s Street, Norwich**



George Plunkett's photograph, shows this church on the eve of the Second World War, set in the maze of narrow lanes that interspersed the courts between St Benedict's Street and Pottergate. These days, this area is the heart of alternative Norwich. St Benedict's Street itself is a part of the old city that has mostly survived; fine Victorian and Edwardian two and three storey buildings front the street, with much older ones huddling in courtyards behind. They came very close to not existing, as we shall see. Today, St Benedict's Street's old fashioned pubs, gay bars, second-hand record stores and comic shops are refreshing after the stultefying glossy commercialism of the new Chapelfield shopping centre.

But it had a different feel five hundred years ago, as you can tell from the fact that in its 500-odd metres there are five medieval churches. All of them are redundant now, of course; St Laurence is one of Norwich's biggest, St Gregory probably its most interesting, St Margaret is used for exhibitions and St Swithin is the excellent Norwich Arts Centre. But it is the most westerly, St Benedict, which proudly gives

the street its name.

It once gave its name to a gate in the city walls, as well, and if you stand at the end of St Benedict's street you can see remains of the walls. But you won't see much else, because one night in January 1942 this area beyond the street to the west was carpet-bombed by German planes, and the parish was almost entirely destroyed. All that remained of St Benedict was the shell of the aisle and the ancient round tower, standing tall and defiant. Robert Tuck was passing the ruin on January 15th 1952, and sketched the image you see to the right; the south wall has gone completely, and you see the north arcade, clerestory and aisle from the inside.

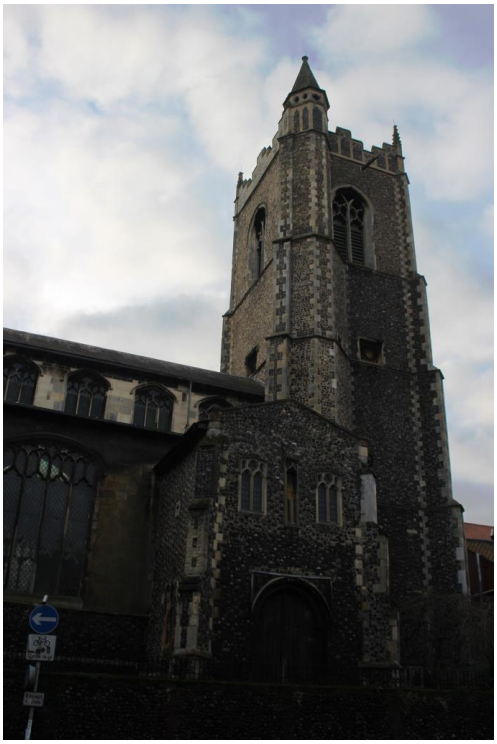
It isn't clear how much medieval had survived to be bombed anyway. There *was* a fine font, which you can see in some more of George Plunkett's photographs below, and I assume that this was smashed by the bombers. But other than this, Spencer and Kent recall that St Benedict underwent two major 19th century restorations; in 1869 it was repaired and reroofed, but by 1896 it had become 'delapidated and dangerous', the arcade to the single north aisle being replaced with cast iron columns, which you can see in George's photographs and Robert's drawing, unnaturally exposed. This essential yet ultimately futile repair was probably a symptom of the neglect that was inevitable when Norwich's many churches had such tiny congregations. The parish was also tiny - surviving Ten Bell Lane to the west was actually in St Swithin parish - and like St Gregory at the other end of the street, St Benedict was accessible from both Pottergate and St Benedict's Street, its graveyard stretching between the two.

In the years after the War, the rubble was cleared, and the remains of St Benedict were removed, apart from the round tower. The City Council's award-winning 1980s Pottergate housing scheme used the tower as a focal point, creating around it a courtyard of two-storey red-brick housing, with an entrance to the courtyard through the former churchyard trees. It is an excellent assemblage, a little like a university campus. You need to look again at the first of George Plunkett's photographs, however, to see how utterly this setting has changed from what was there before.

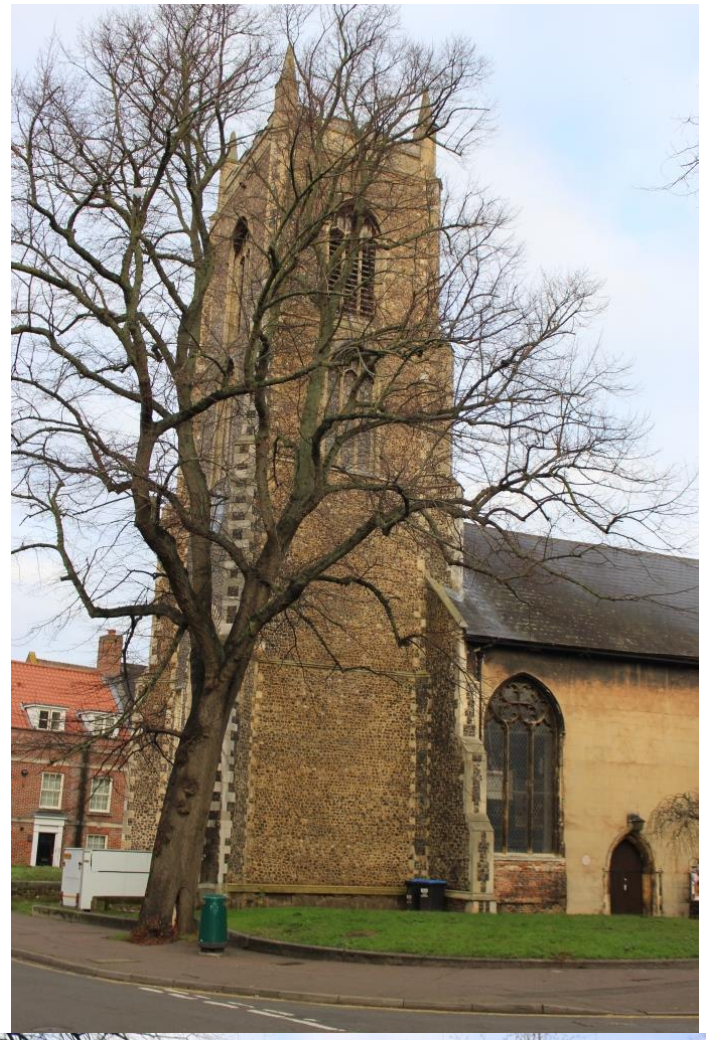
In an odd kind of way, St Benedict was actually rebuilt. The system of compensation after the war meant that the Diocese of Norwich was paid war reparation money for this church, as long as it was spent on reconstruction. However, it did not have to be on the same spot, and so the new St Benedict opened in 1956 where the need was greater, in the middle of Lowestoft on the Gunton estate. The bell from the Norwich church tower was rehung in the new church. It is actually in Suffolk, and you can see what it looks like on the Suffolk site.

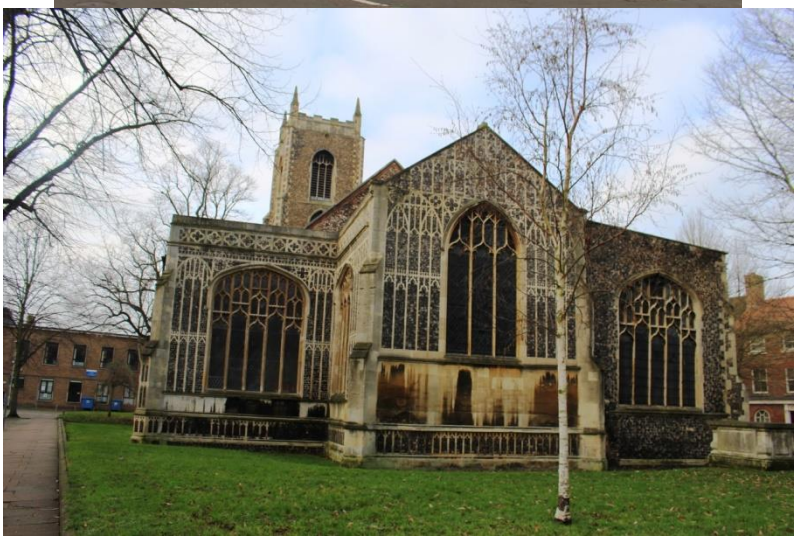
A fine new church in Suffolk, and an excellent housing scheme around the ruin here, are not matched by the other side of St Benedict's Street, I am afraid. Here, the cleared rubble gave way to a car park, and in recent years this has been replaced by vast Toys R Us and TK Maxx hypermarkets, those churches of the modern age, and a rude awakening after a pleasant stroll along St Benedict's

Street. Perhaps our planning policies today are not as demanding as they were in the 1950s and 1980s.

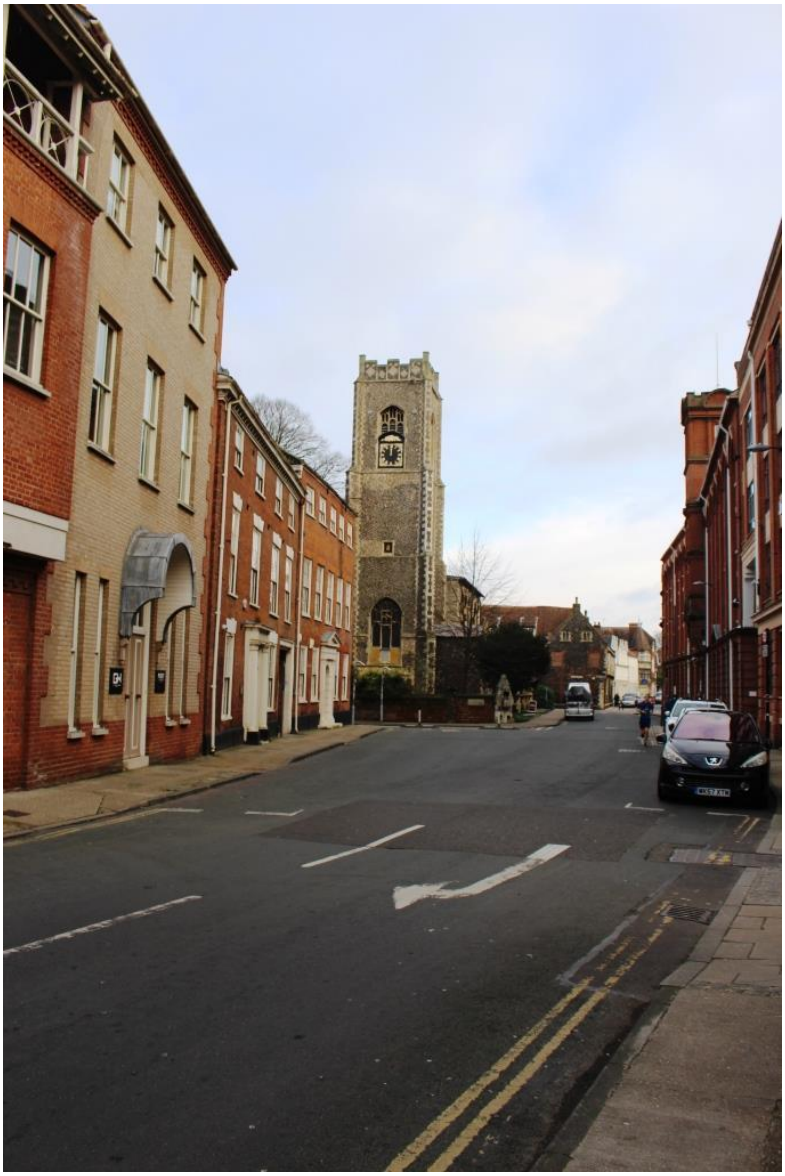


St Lawrence, St Benedict's Street, Norwich

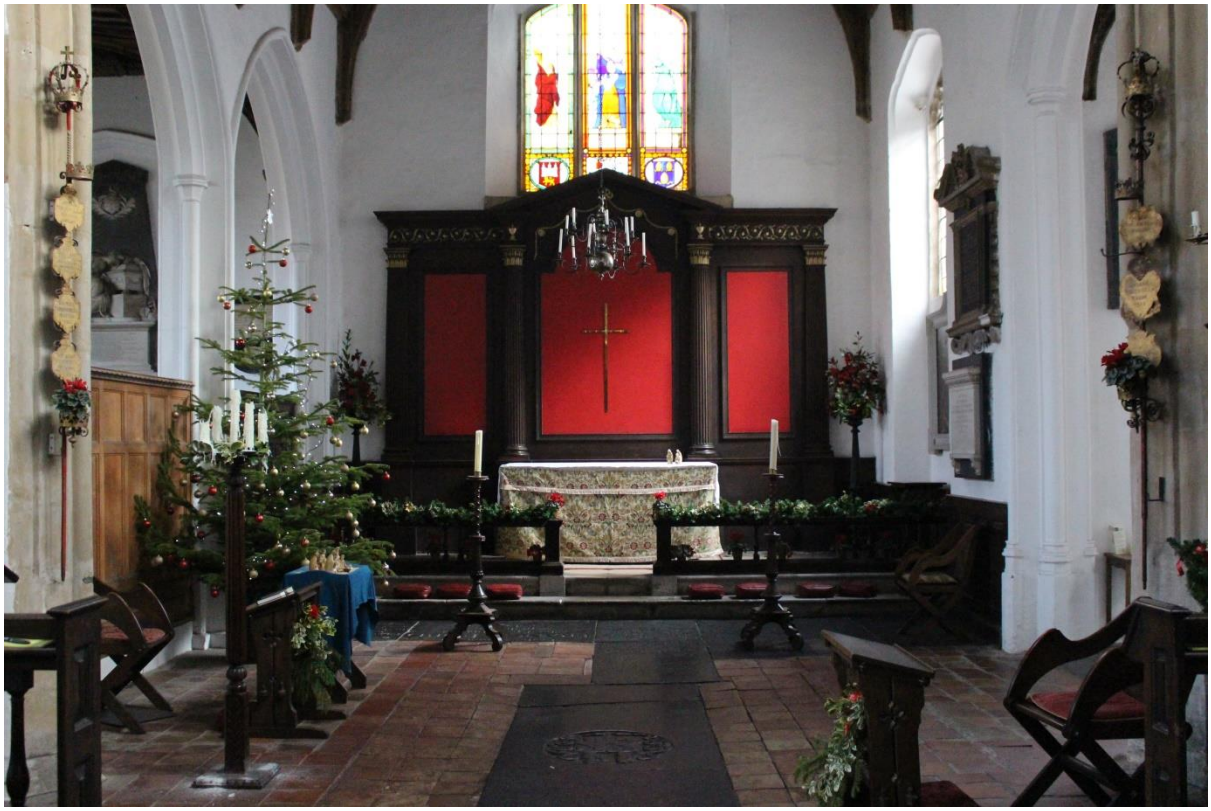


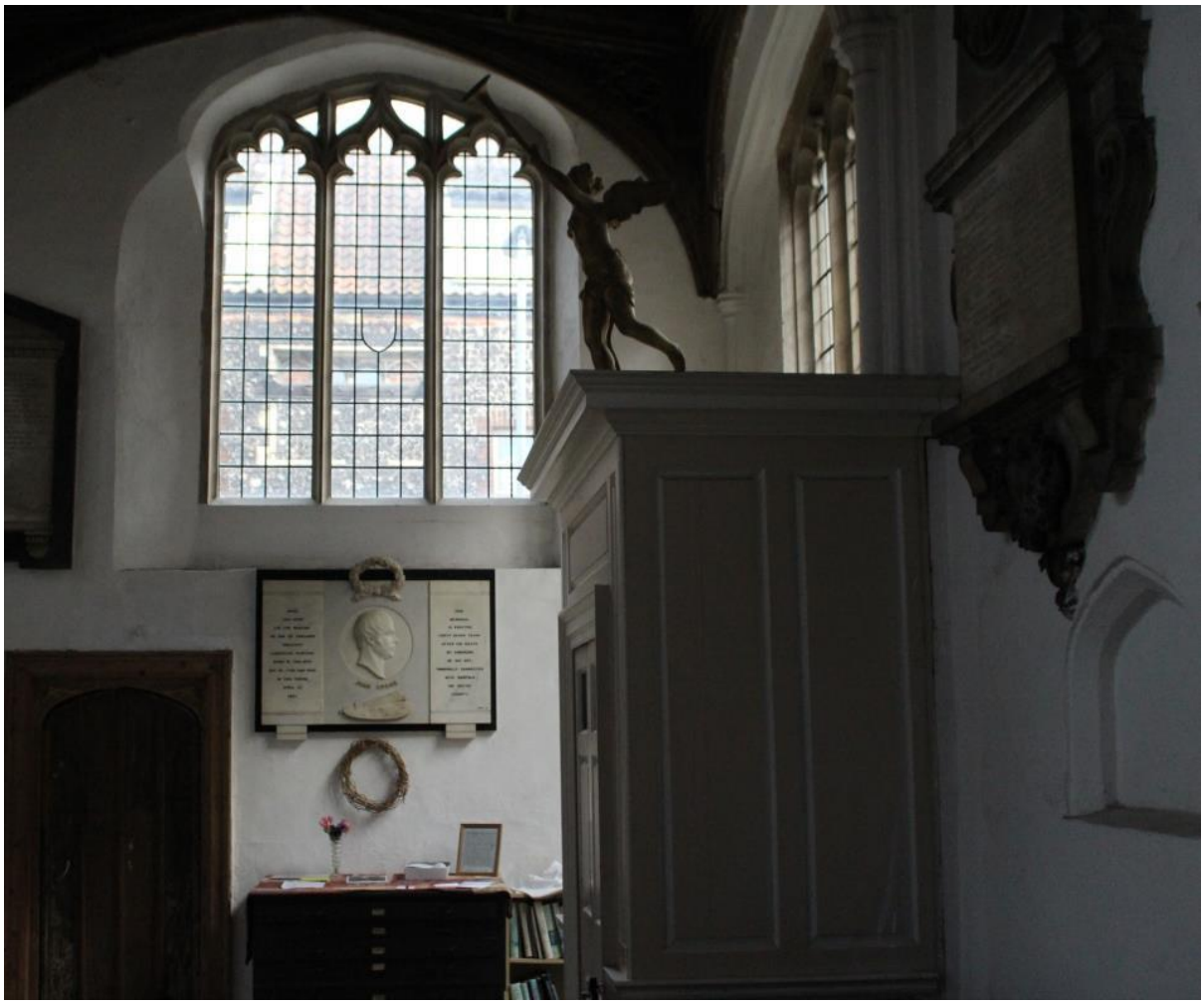


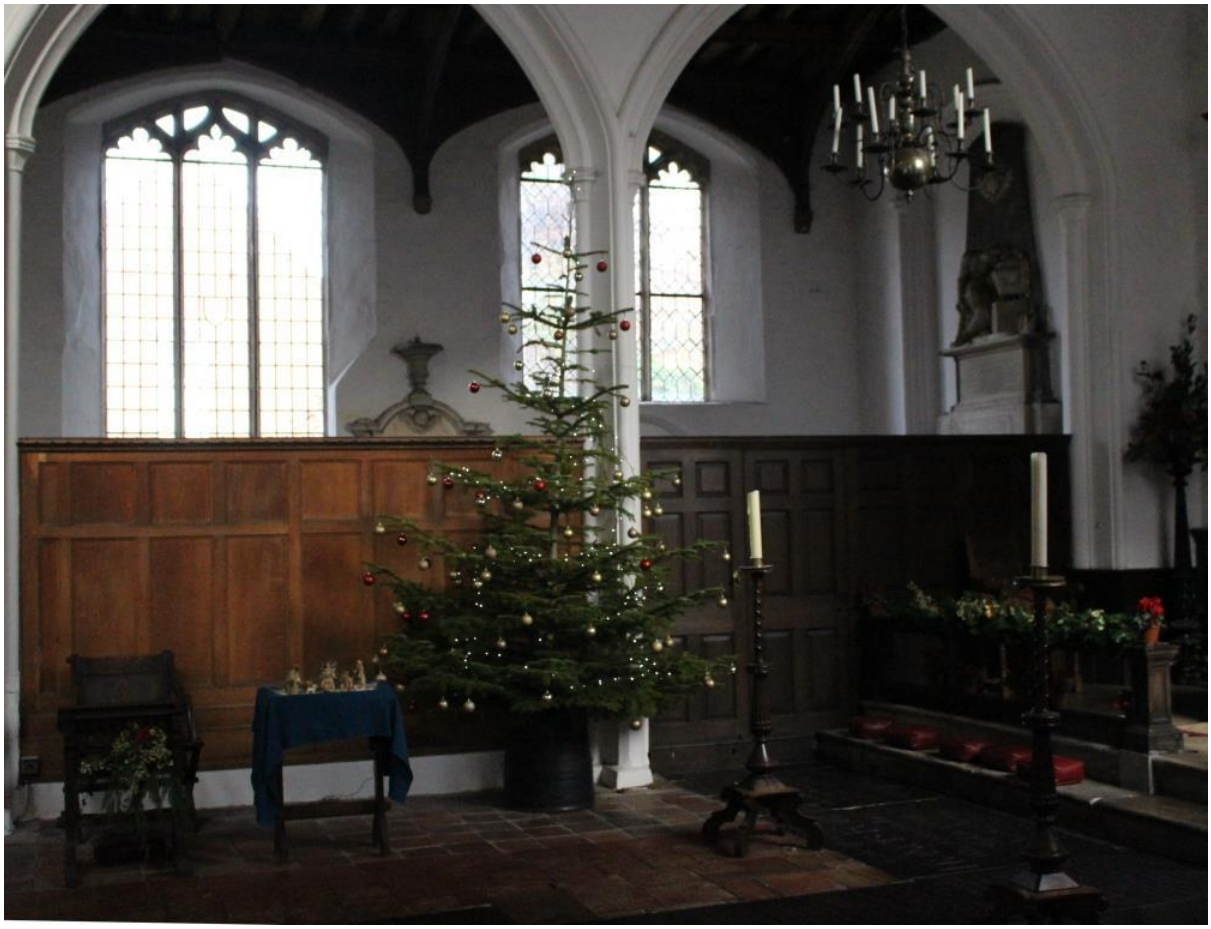
St Miles (Michael), Colasny Street, Norwich



St George's, Colegate, Norwich







St George's, Colegate, Norwich

This area of the city centre, Coslany or 'Norwich over the water', is home to about half a dozen medieval parish churches, of which St George is the sole working survivor. This was one of the most intensely industrialised areas of Norwich in the Nineteenth Century, and the blackened flint of the walls still bears testimony to this. Now, the inner ring road is not far off, and the area is redeveloped with wine bars, law firms and loft conversions. Norwich has consciously tried to develop residential areas in the heart of the city, with considerable success, and this has contributed to the feeling of St George being a living church in the heart of a community.

Although not as big as the likes of St Andrew and St Peter Mancroft, this is a large, determinedly Perpendicular church from the years when the Fifteenth Century was becoming the Sixteenth. The tall, stone-faced clerestory marches determinedly eastwards, its windows as big as those in the aisles, but without the delicate 'wall of glass' effect typical of the time. This clerestory was meant to express grandeur and permanence as much as to admit rational light.

Easily missed, but notable and worth seeking out, is the grand west doorway beneath the tower, obviously designed for processions. In the spandrels, you can see a paired scene from the story of the church's patron Saint. On the left, the princess and her family watch from the tower of their castle as St George neatly dispatches the dragon on the other side. Above, the eroded shields would once have borne sacred monograms, instruments of the passion, or even the crests of local worthy families.

A surprise, then, to go inside and find that the vast, clear windows fill with light what is still largely furnished as an early Eighteenth Century urban interior, as if we were in the City of London. In truth, of course, just as central London was prosperous at this time, so was central Norwich, and what you see here must have been what many other churches in the city were like. Quite literally in fact, because St George is now home to many Eighteenth Century furnishings stripped out of other churches that fell to redundancy. Anyone familiar with the City of London's St Margaret Lothbury will recognise the same result here of a treasure house of the survivals of other churches. St George was almost derelict after the war, thanks to bomb damage and neglect, and so their fates really saved its life.

Because of the size of the windows and the lack of coloured glass, the heavy dark wood is not hard to bear, the west gallery is not oppressive. The tiling of the floor is harmonious, the sheer white of the Fourteenth Century font a striking central feature. The font appears as if it has been cobbled together. The bowl and shaft may be from different fonts, and the connection between is probably Victorian. It came from St Saviour, just to the north. The original Purbeck marble font went to St Peter Hungate when it was a museum of church furnishings, and is probably in storage somewhere.

The white walls and opulent furnishings make St George a pleasant place to wander and explore the city's best collection of wall memorials of the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries. These include one to Edmund Manning, Gentleman, who, in 1838, *desirous of imparting such useful instruction to the poor when young, as may enable them to respectably maintain themselves in their riper years, bequeathed the interest and dividends of Four Thousand Pounds in three percent consols to be held in trust forever by the trustees of the charity schools in this city, for annually binding as apprentices to some manufacturing trades twelve poor children to be selected from six parishes specified in his will, of which number this parish is one.*

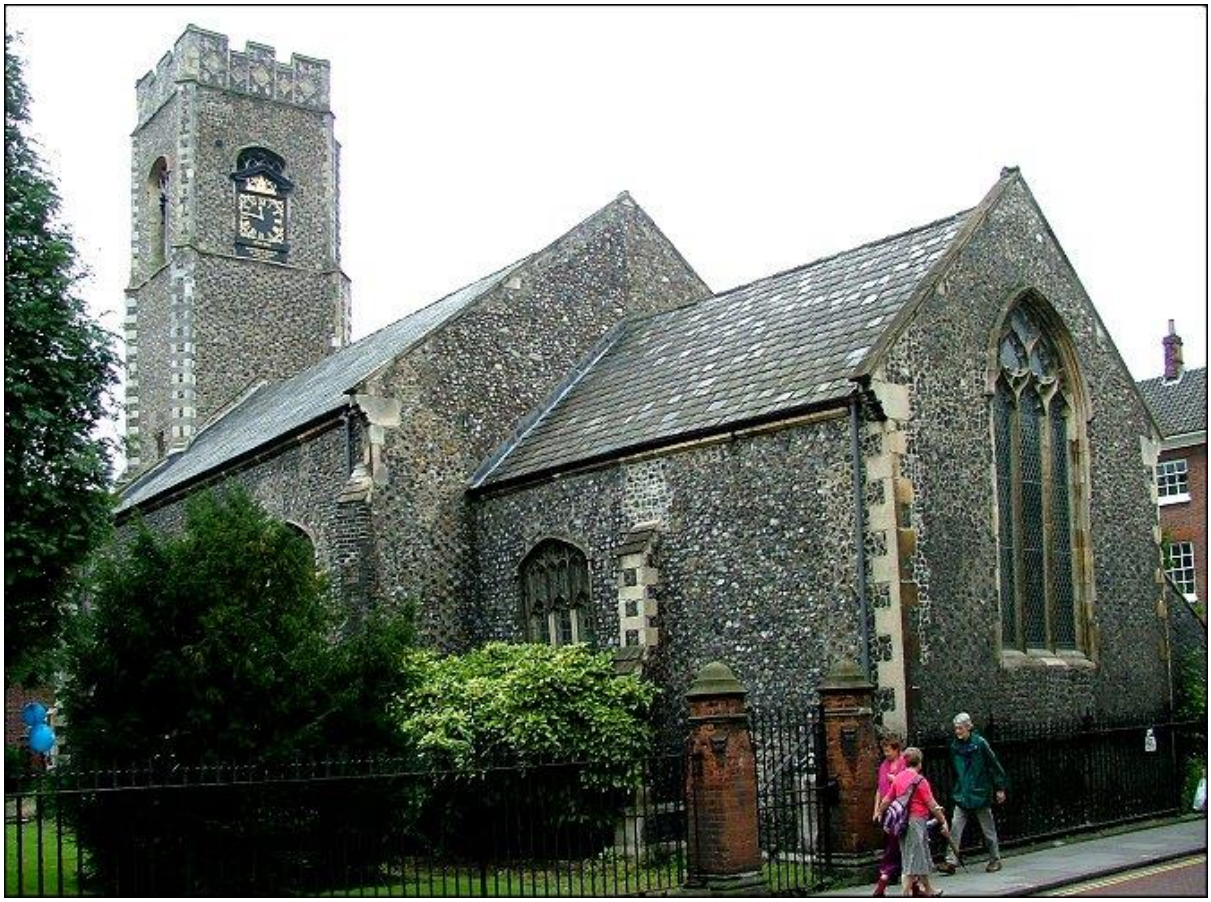
This is interesting for several reasons. Manning's bequest was immediately after the 1834 Poor Law Act which had turned workhouses from houses of industry into places of degradation, hardship and shame. Manning obviously saw a good reason for helping the poor stay out of them. Consols, or Consolidated Stock, were a way of financing government borrowing in return for interest, and 3% consols were created by Sir Henry Pelham's Whig administration in 1757 to consolidate existing government borrowing. They continued to pay out 3% until the 1880s, and existed in a slightly different form until as late as 2015, when the Coalition Government of David Cameron paid them all back.

At the east end of the south aisle is the 1821 memorial to John Crome who, as the inscription reminds us, was *one of England's greatest landscape painters*. The memorial bears a relief portrait of Crome, a wreath above his head, his palette and brushes at rest below.

As you wander, you will eventually find the north chancel chapel, now home to a large terracotta tomb chest and a triple figure brass. The tomb is to Robert Jannys, a Mayor of Norwich who died in 1530. Tombs of this type are interesting, because they were produced right on the eve of the Reformation, and give us an inkling of what the English Renaissance might have been like.

Though smaller, this recalls the Bedingfield tombs at Oxborough. Pevsner wondered if it might have been the same craftsman. The brass depicts a Mayor from half a century earlier, the aptly named William Norwiche and his wife, with the figure of their son between them.

Octagon Chapel Street, Norwich



St Clement's, Colegate, Norwich

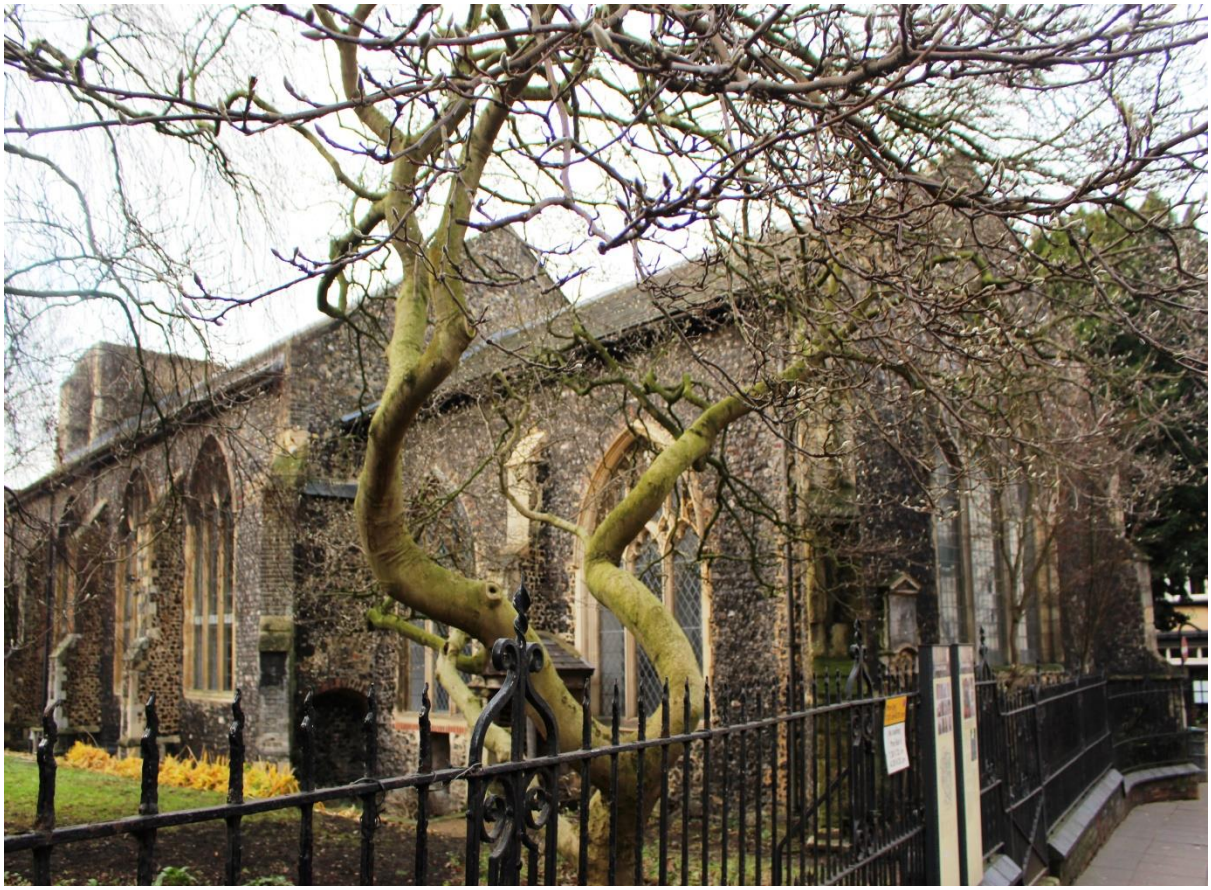
The Church of St Clement dates largely to the 15th and 16th centuries, although the current nave replaces an earlier and narrower one, the corner stones of which are still visible in the west wall.

This small church has no porch or aisles, but is very similar in appearance to many of the Norfolk parish churches, with a nave, tower and chancel of flint with stone dressings. However, it is said to have been one of the first to be built north of the river, perhaps in the last decades before the Conquest, although no material from this period has been noted.

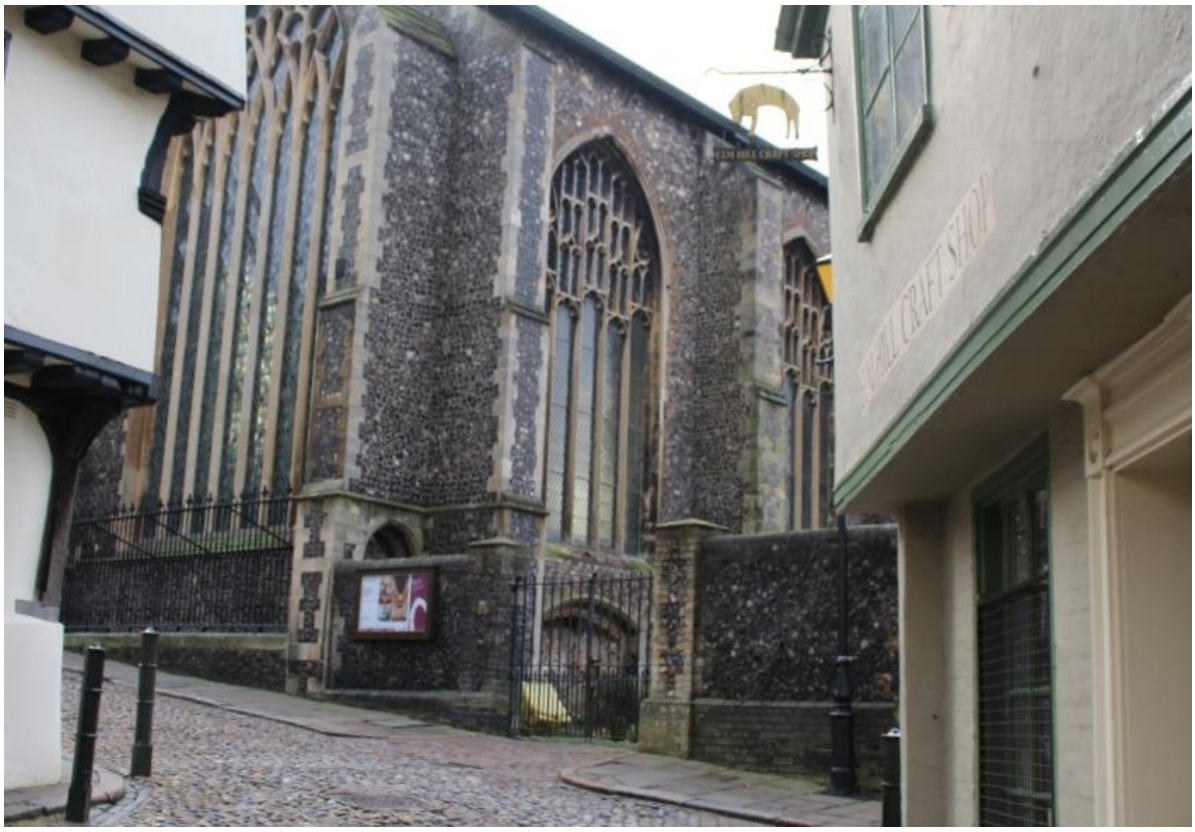
Inside, a good sized brass memorial can be seen on the floor of the nave, dedicated to Margaret Petwoode and dated 1514. There is even a legend that says the lady has been seen attending weddings held in this church. There are also a number of memorials to the Wood family, Mayor in the 16th century and probably responsible for the original construction of the King of Hearts building, just across the road.

The 19th century saw this part of Norwich, which had been occupied since the Late Saxon period, overtaken by industry and poor quality housing. As a result the church became abandoned, until it was declared redundant in the 1960s.

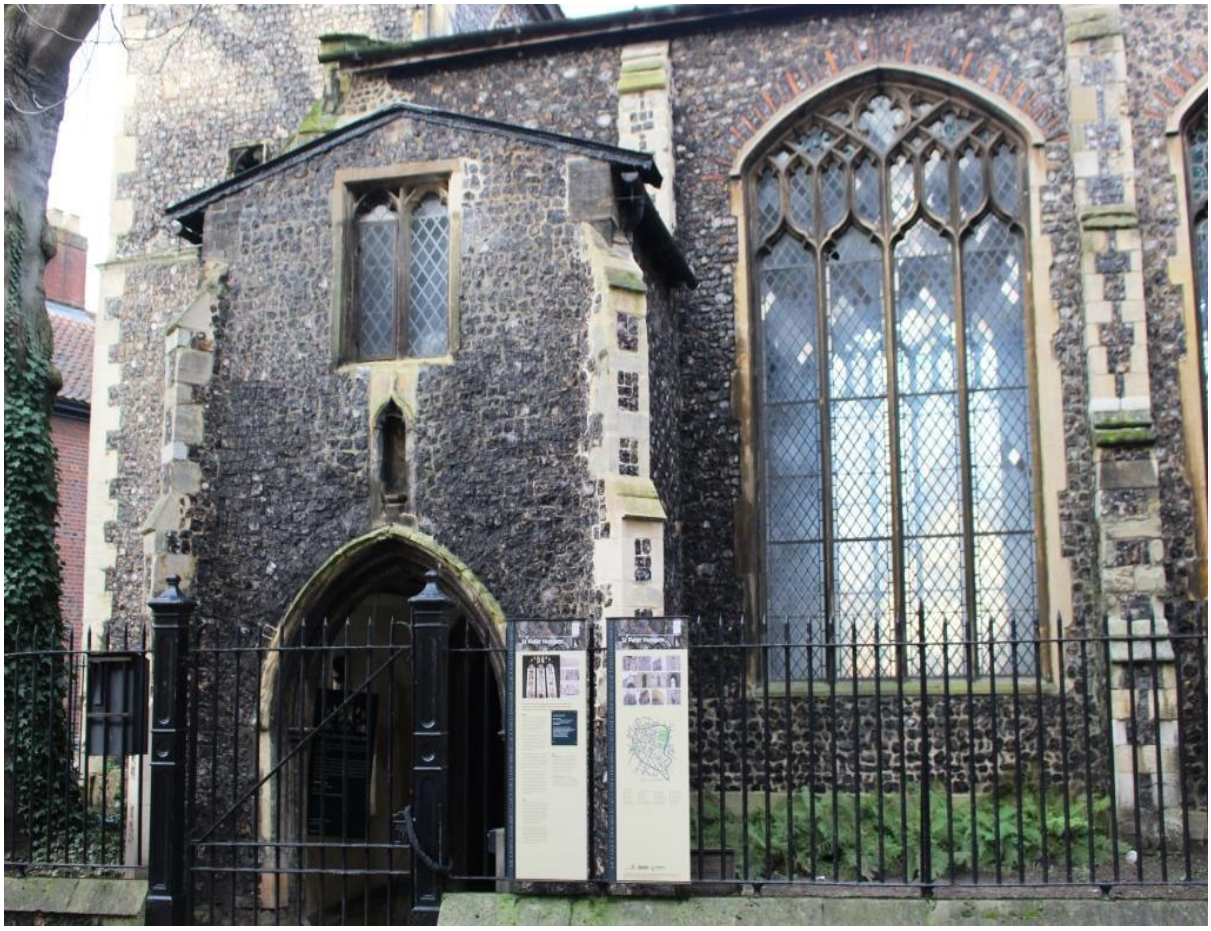
The church was taken in hand by the Norwich Historic Churches Trust, and leased to a local Methodist minister who has made it his life's work to keep this little church open and available for private prayer every day.

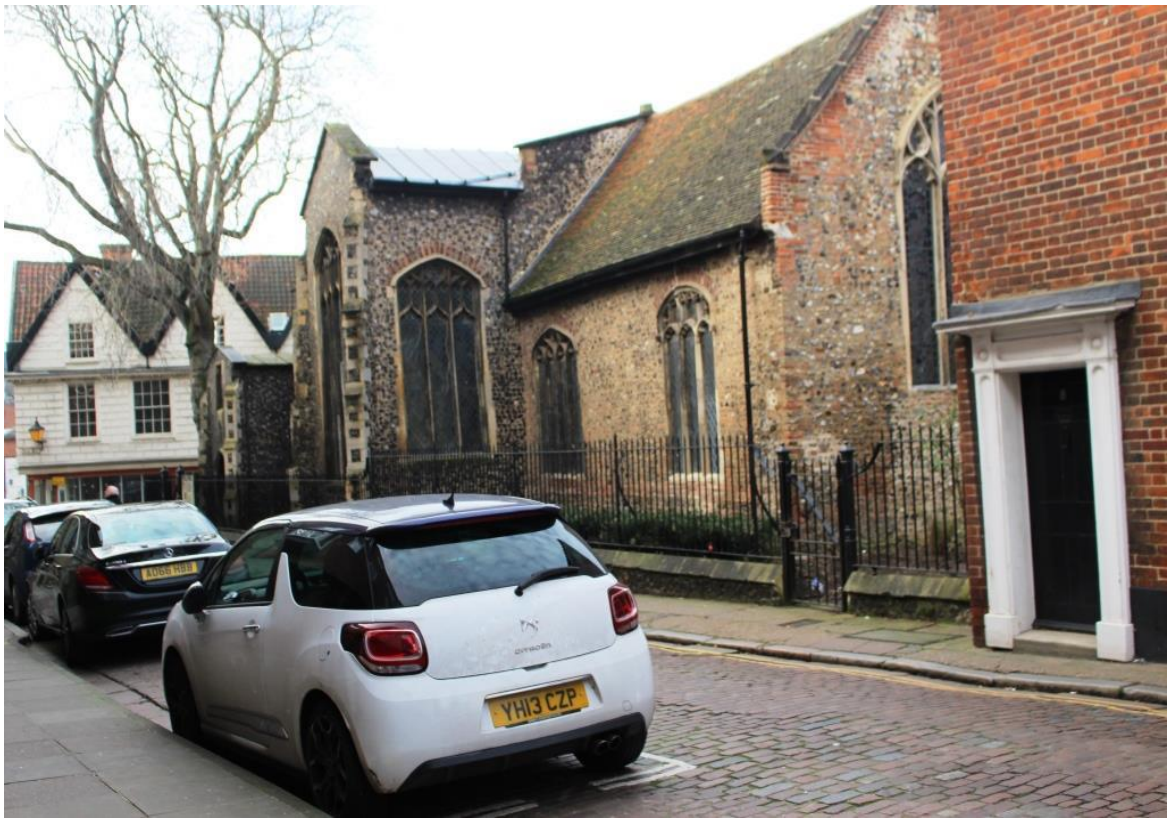


St Simon and Jude, Colegate, Norwich



The Halls, St Andrew's Street, Norwich





St Peter Hungate, Princes Street, Norwich

Hungate is a centre for medieval art located in Britain's most complete medieval city – Norwich. We are based in the medieval church of St Peter Hungate, on historic Elm Hill in the city center.

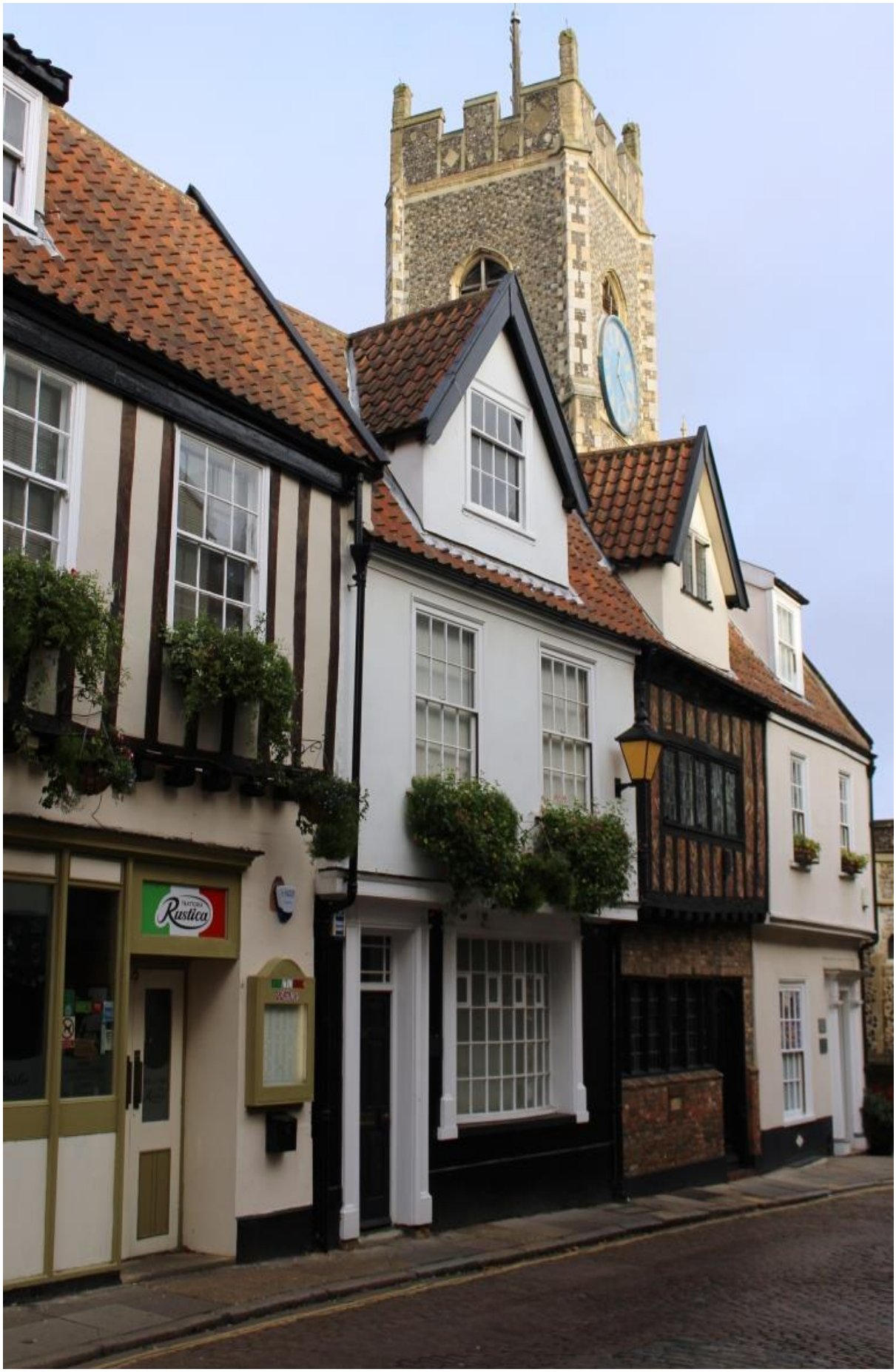
We exist to promote both the medieval art visible in the County of Norfolk (through exhibitions, research and an events and learning programme) and contemporary use of medieval art, approaches and buildings. To find out what you can see at Hungate right now please visit the What's On page of this website. Hungate is run by a dedicated charity, Hungate Medieval Art.

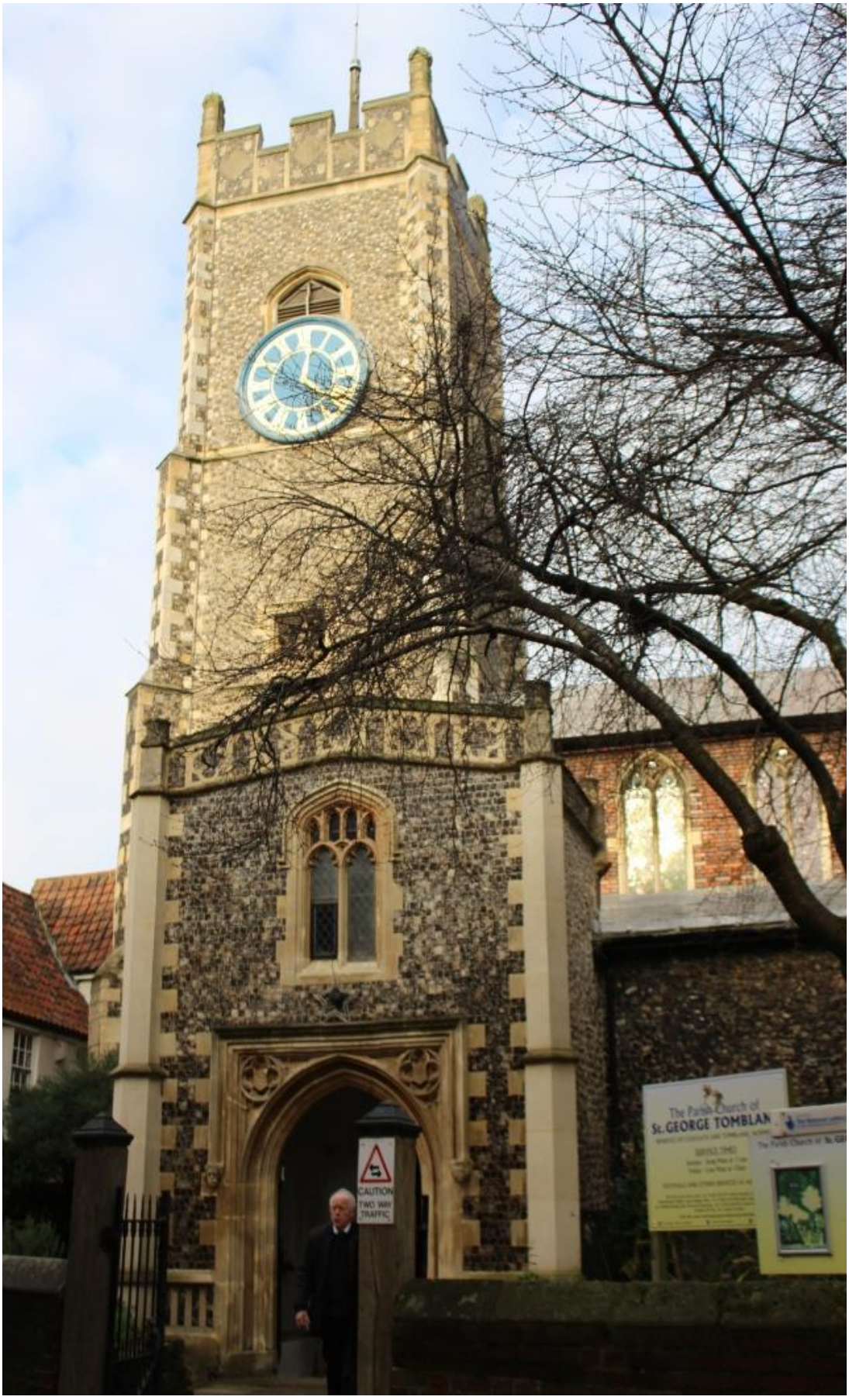
What we do

Hungate presents at least two free public exhibitions a year, each accompanied by a full program of learning and family activities. We are able to develop these exhibitions for free because of our unique relationship with students from UEA and NUA, who curate, design and deliver the exhibitions through internships supervised by our expert trustees. Hungates specialism is the medieval, but we also want to highlight the way in which the past inspires artists today. To this end alternate exhibitions showcase recent work, all of which develops on themes from the medieval world. This fusion of the medieval and contemporary is one of our unique strengths. If you are a contemporary artist who responds to the medieval world, in any medium, and you are interested in exploring work at Hungate.

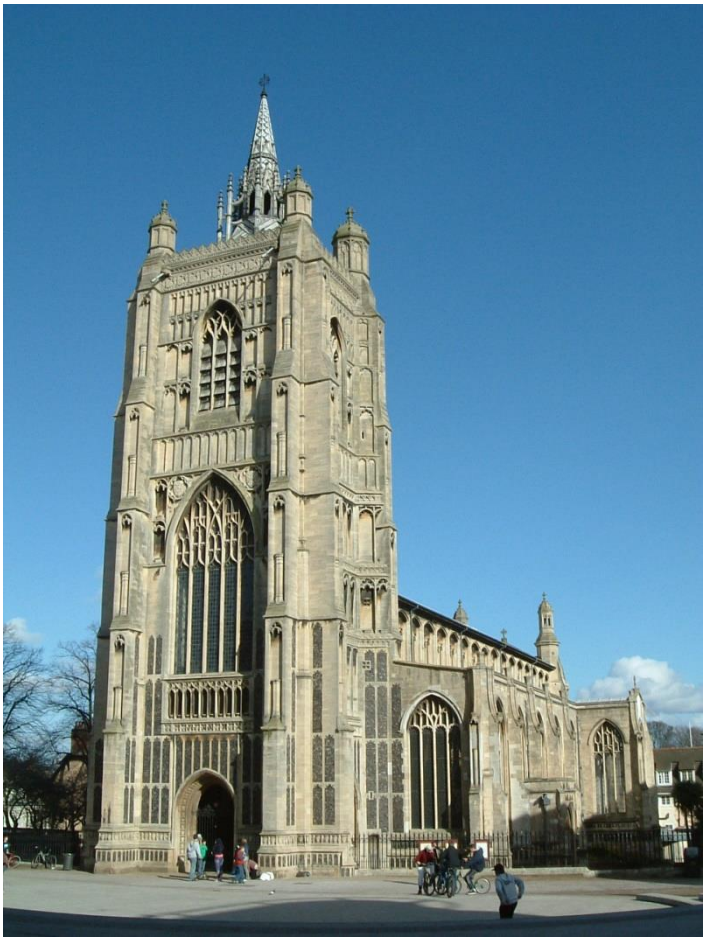
Their Aims – Hungate Medievil Art aims to promote Norfolk's medieval heritage. In particular, the charity is concerned with the medieval art hidden in the county's parish churches. Operating from the redundant church of St Peter Hungate, Hungate Medieval Art is also committed to raising awareness of this church, allowing public access to the building and forging links with the local community.

URC, Princes Street, Norwich


Rustica



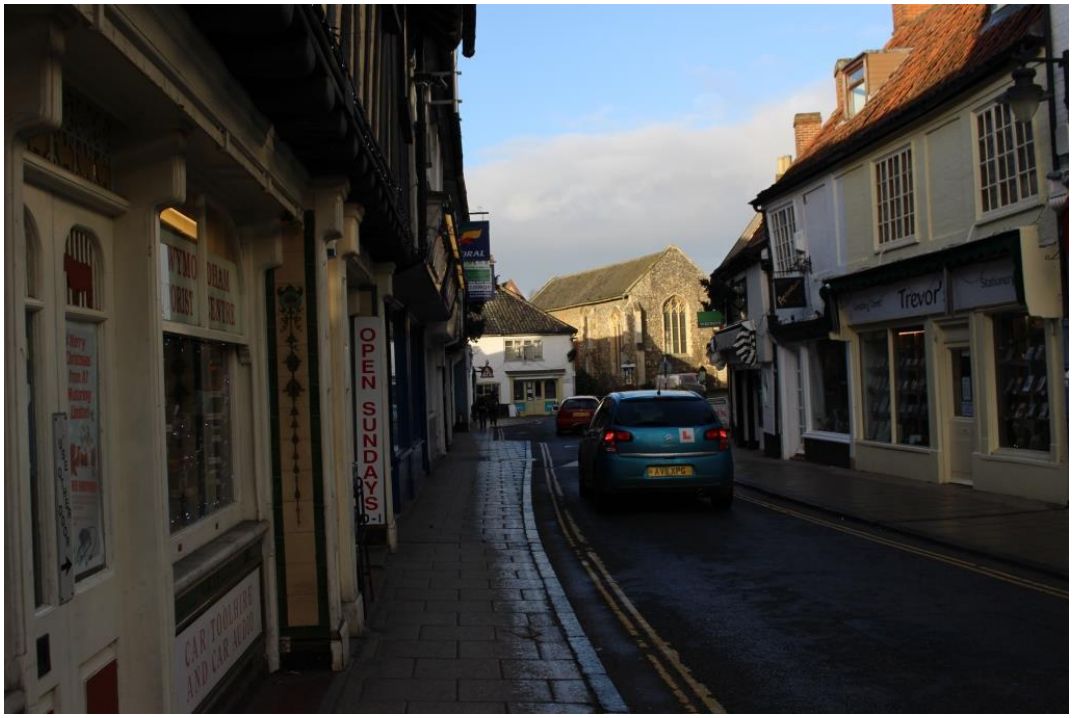
St George's, Tombland, Norwich

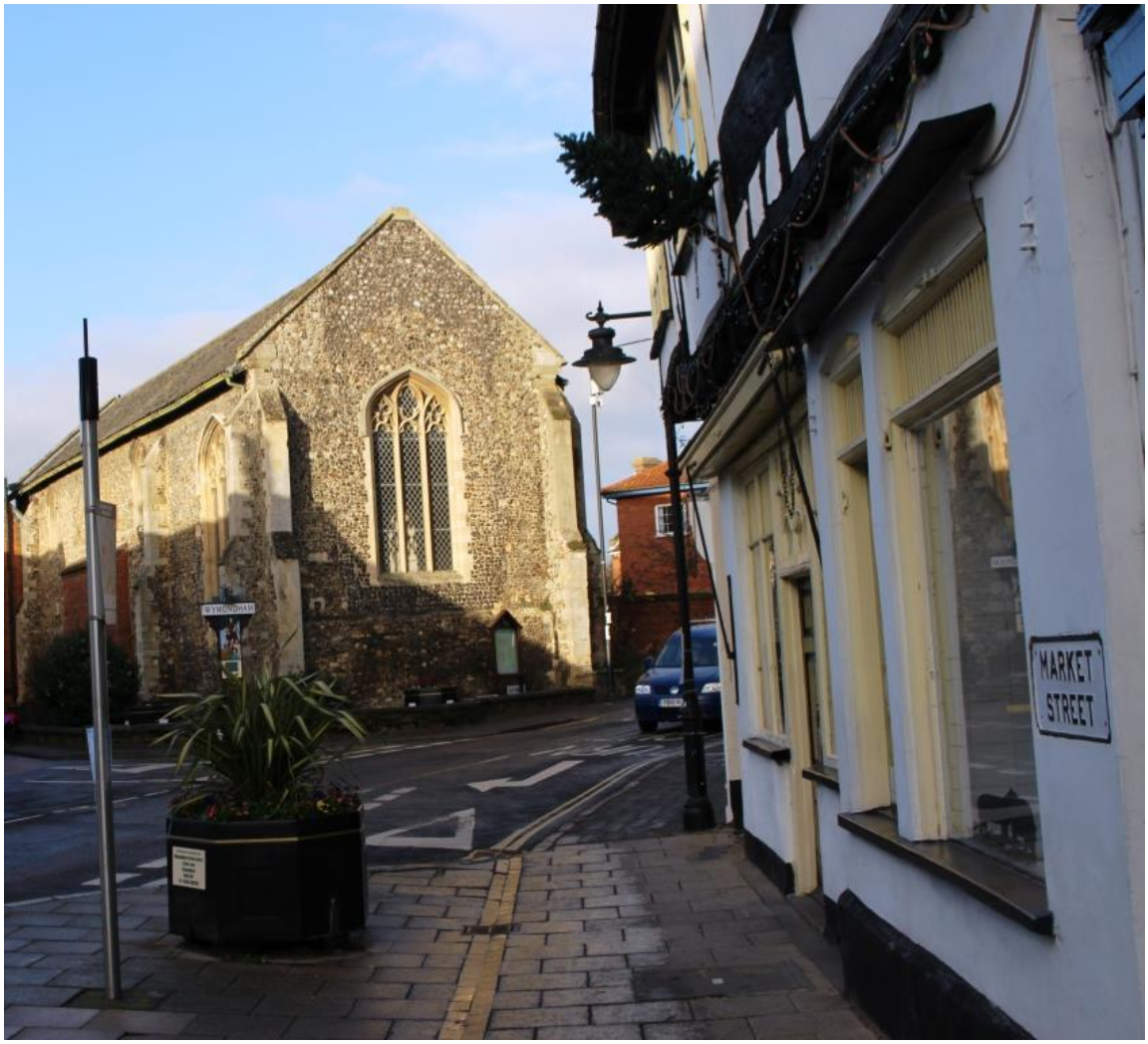


St Peter Mancroft, The Chantry, Hay Hill, Norwich

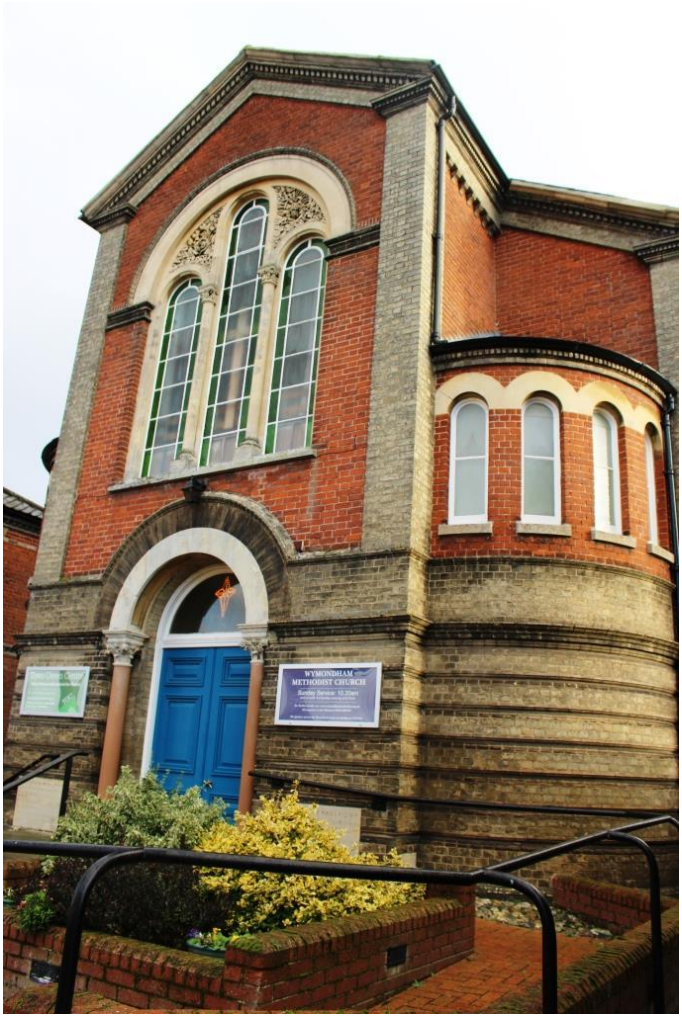
TUESDAY 2nd JANUARY 2019

URC, Fairhill, Wymondham

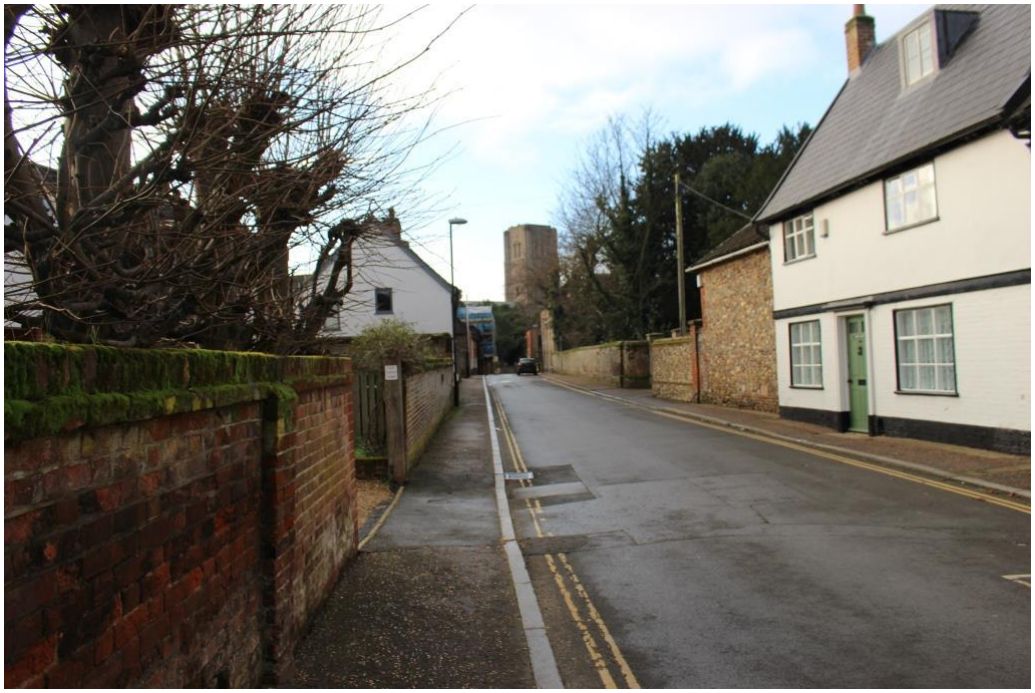




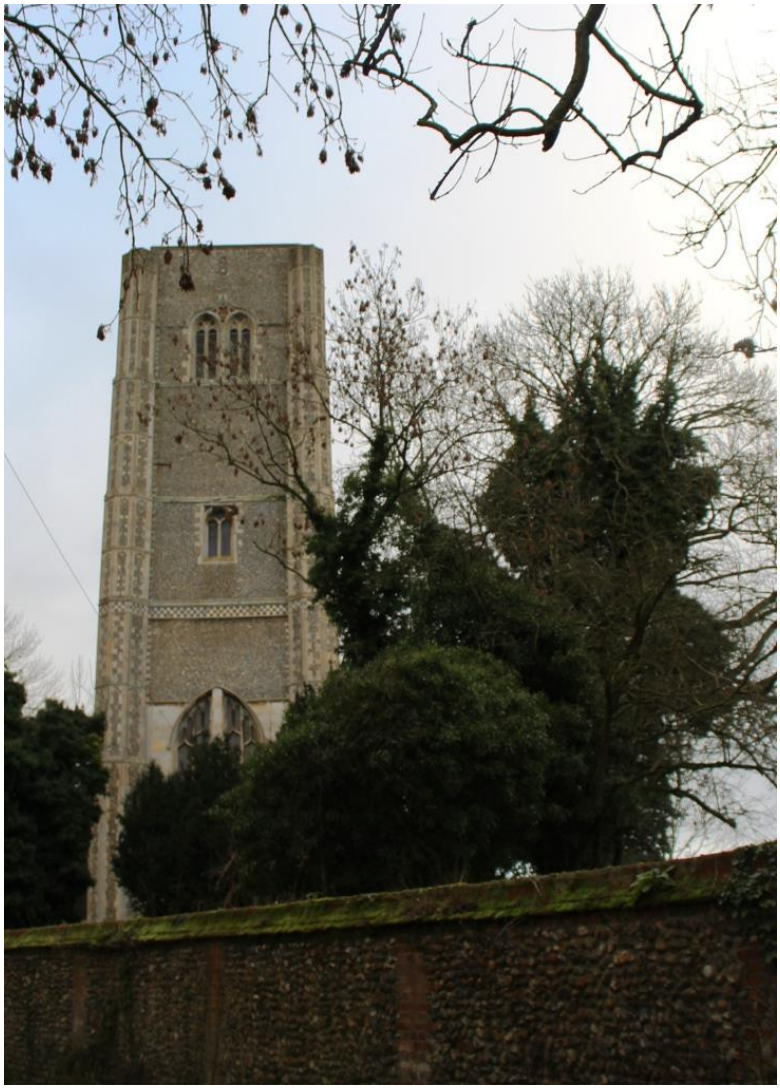
Chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury, Church Street, Wymondham

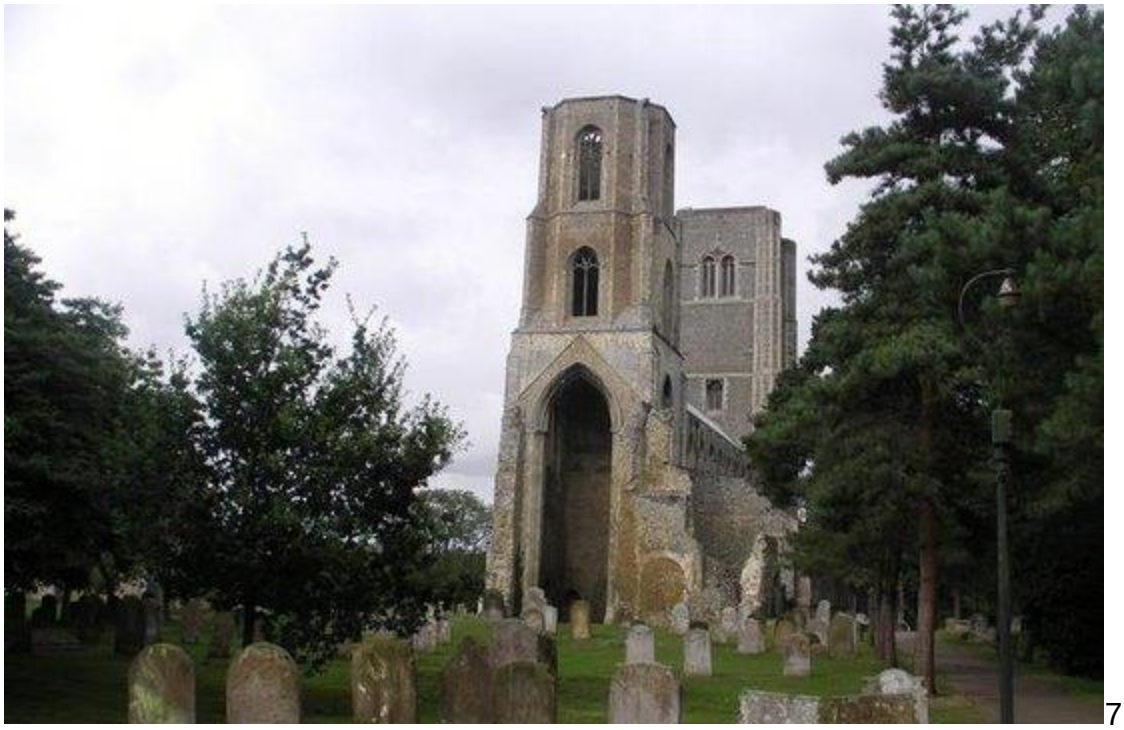


Methodist, Town Green, Wymondham



Abbey, Church Street, Wymondham





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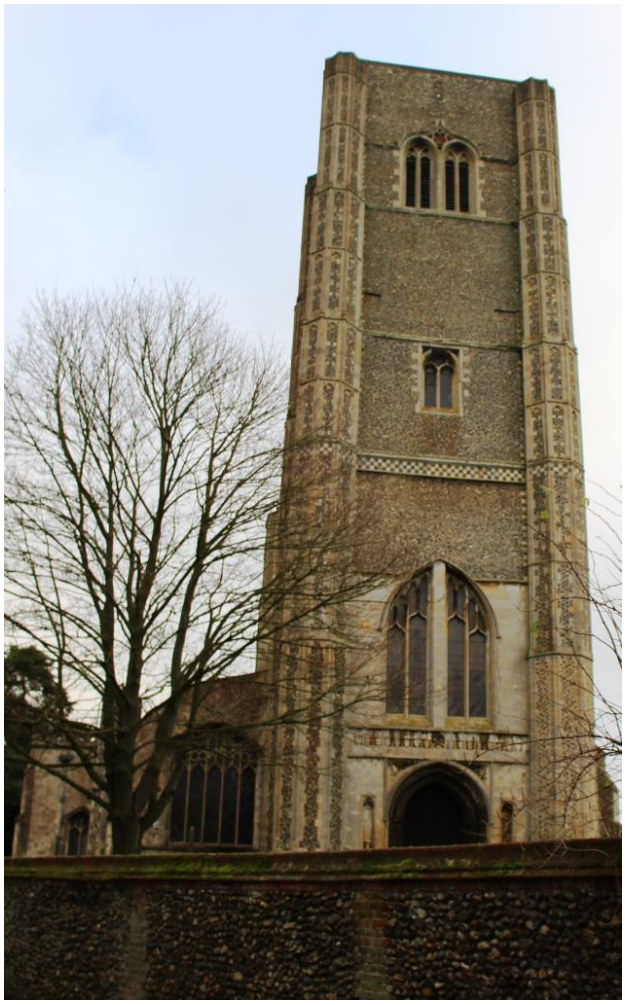
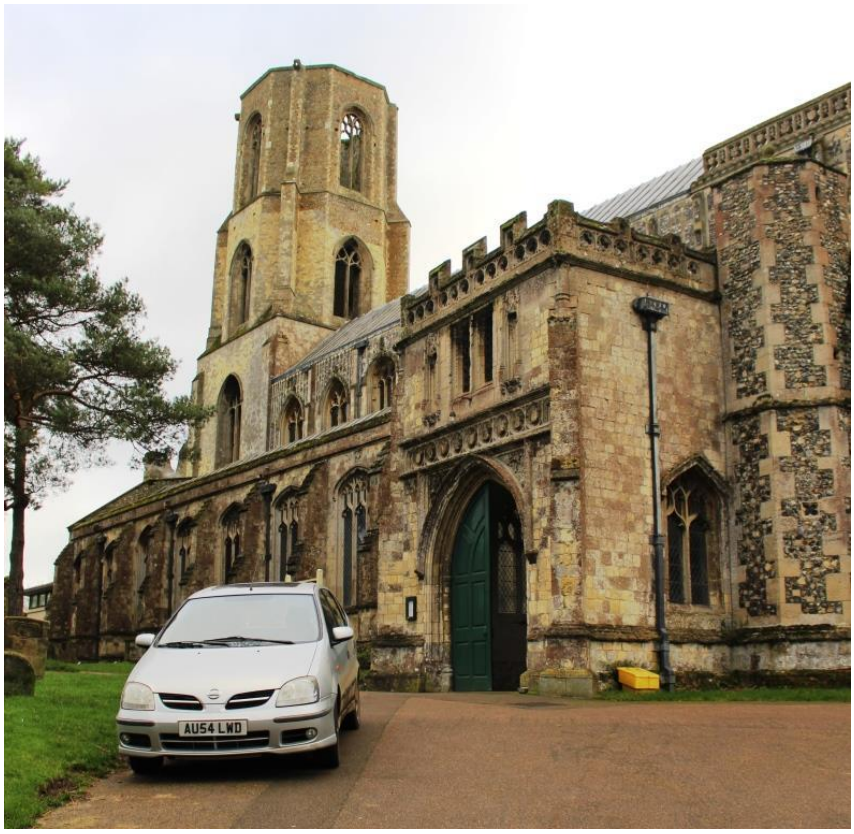
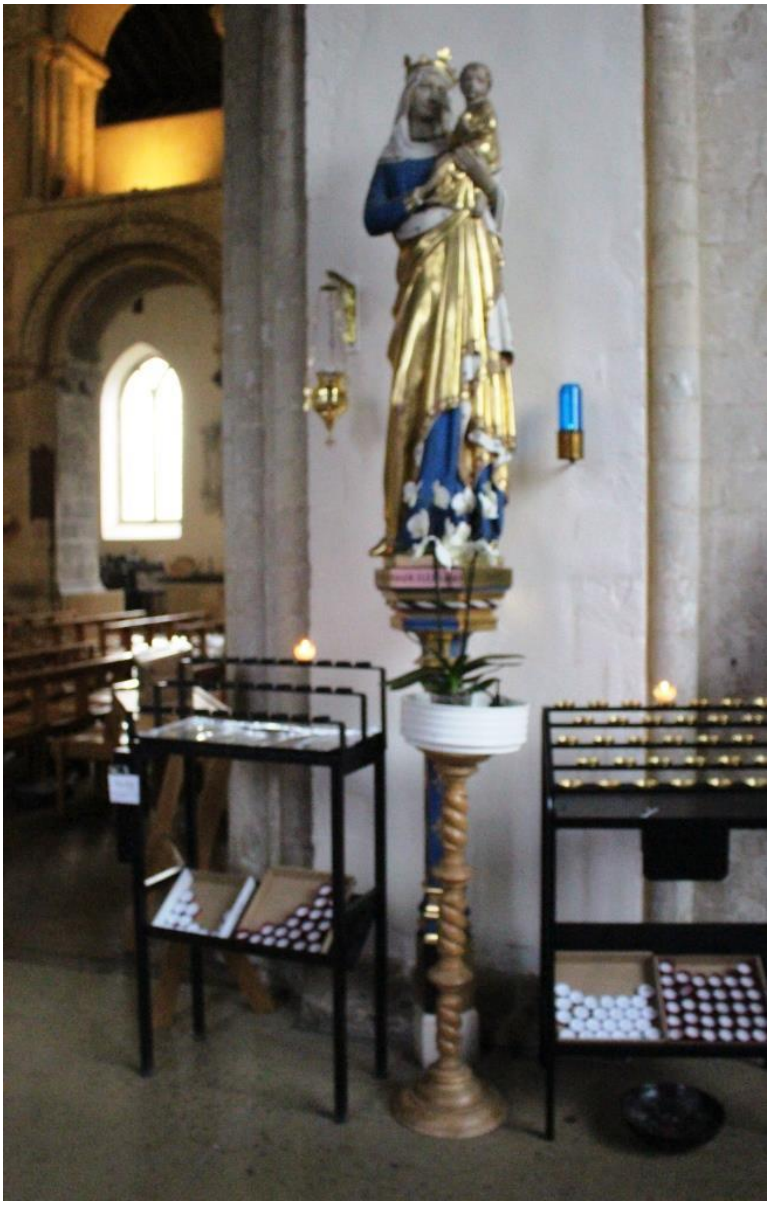
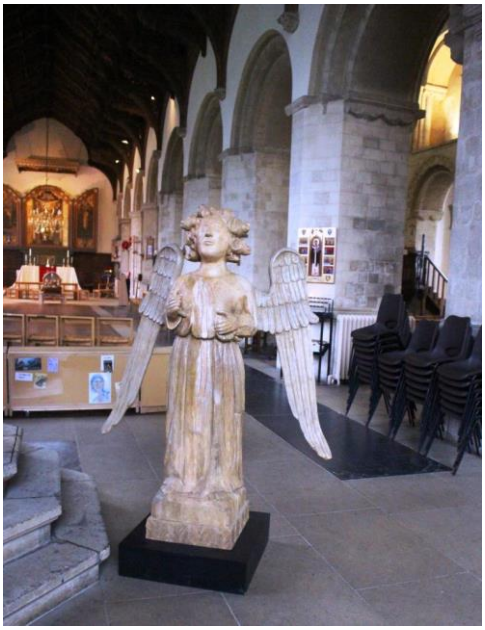
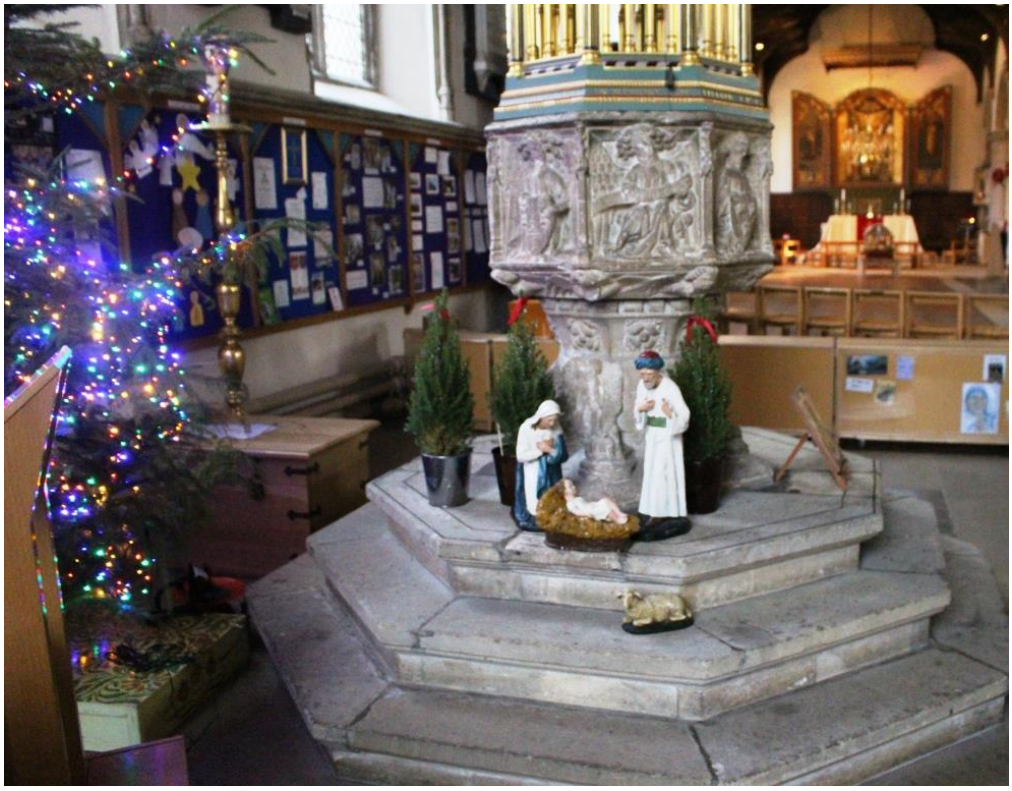
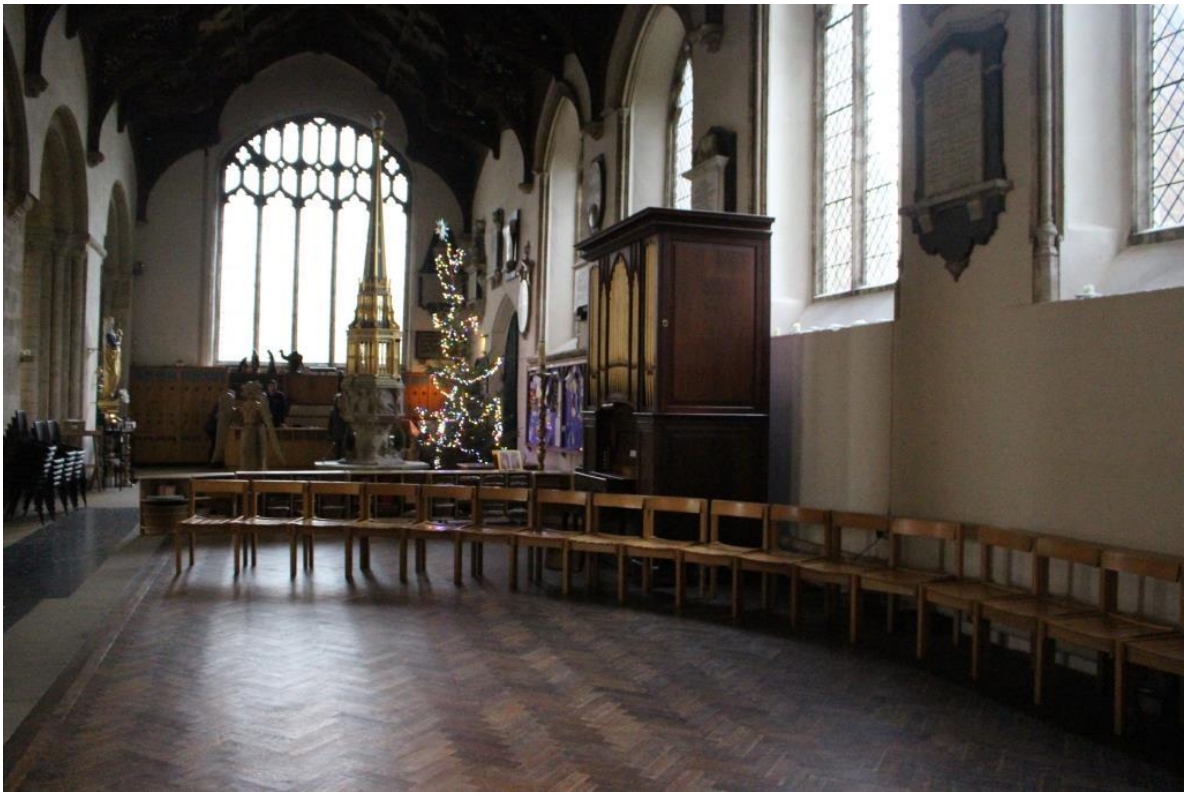


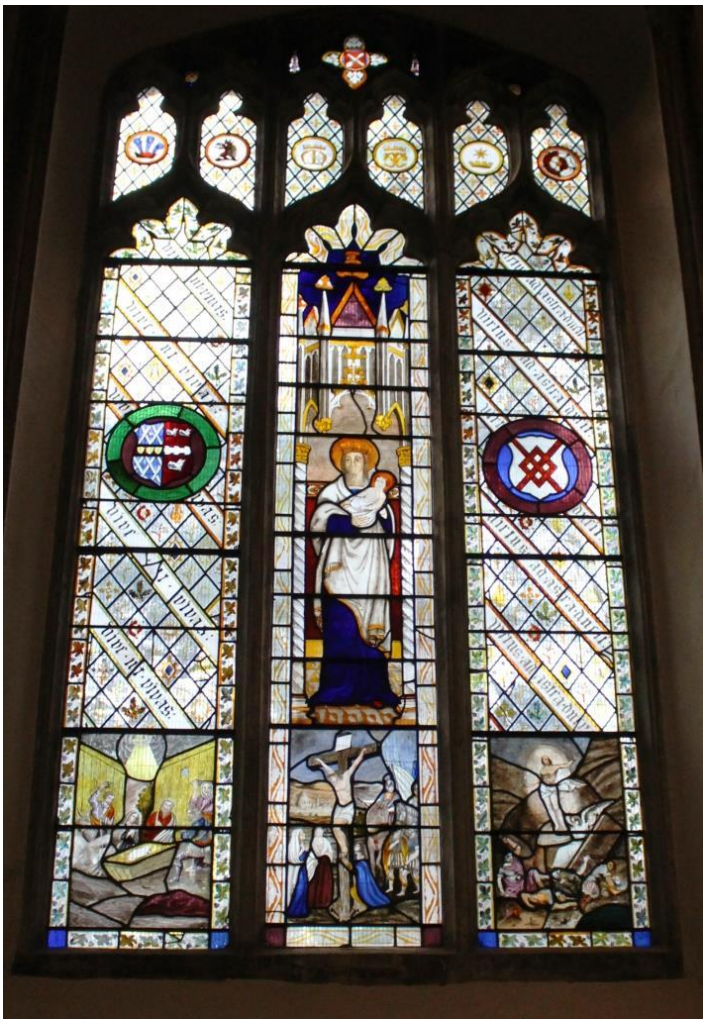

AU54 LWD

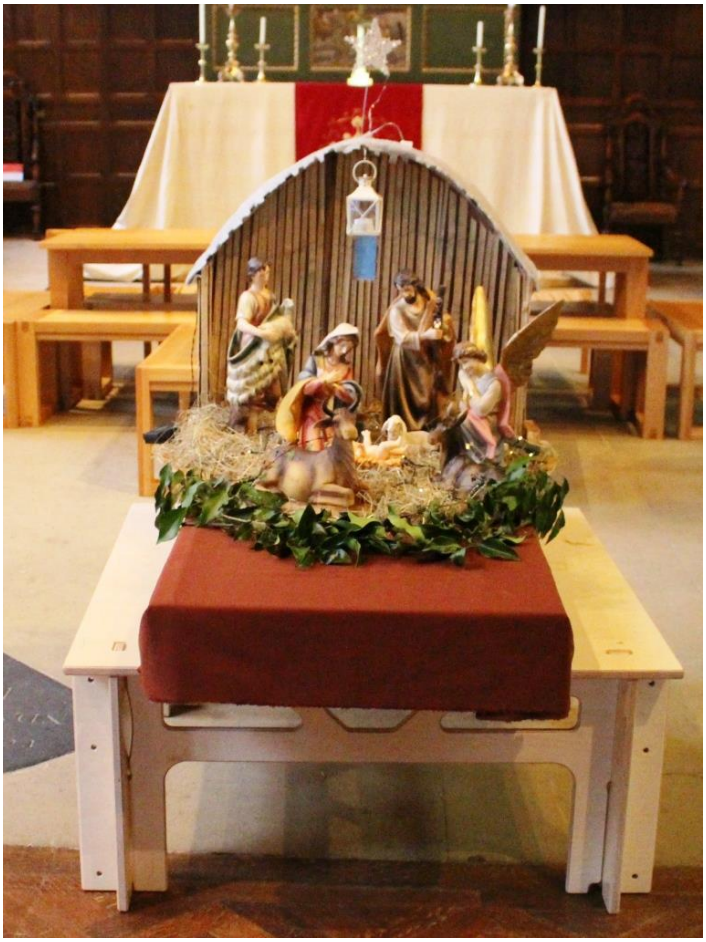


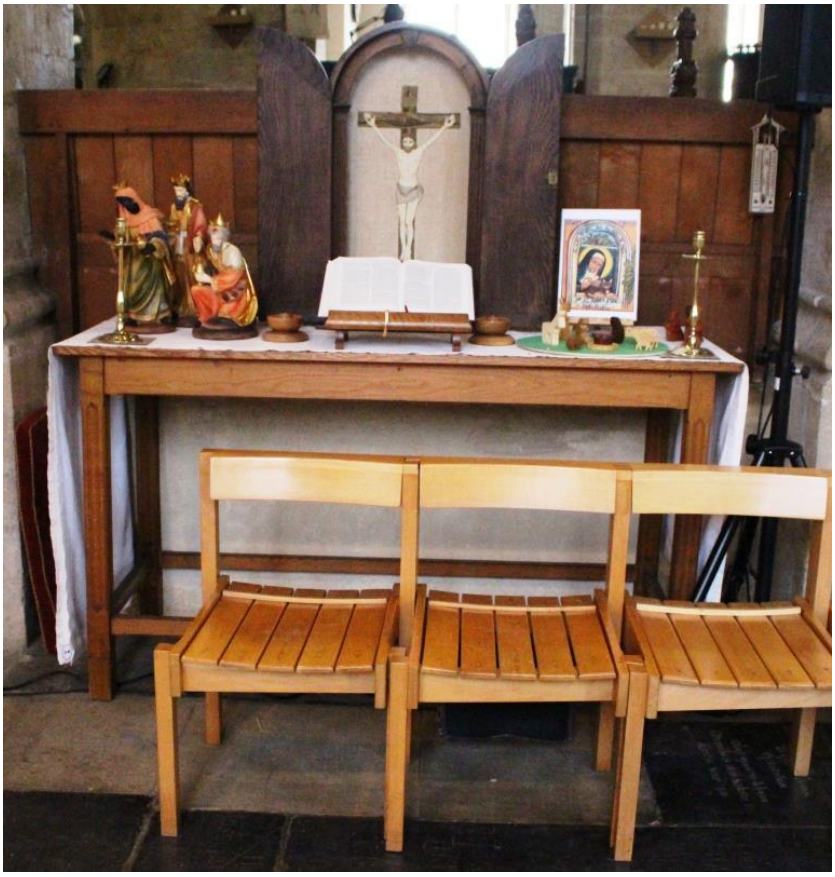


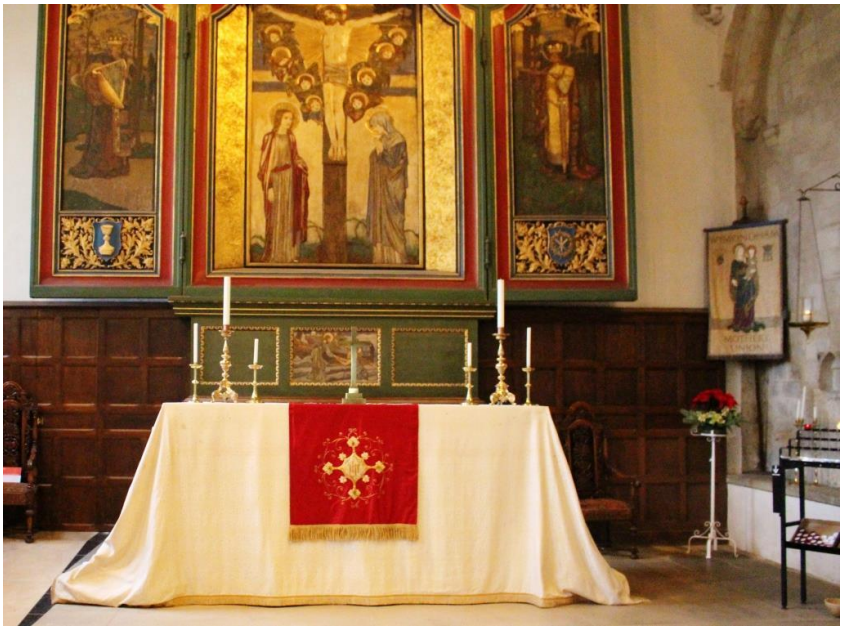




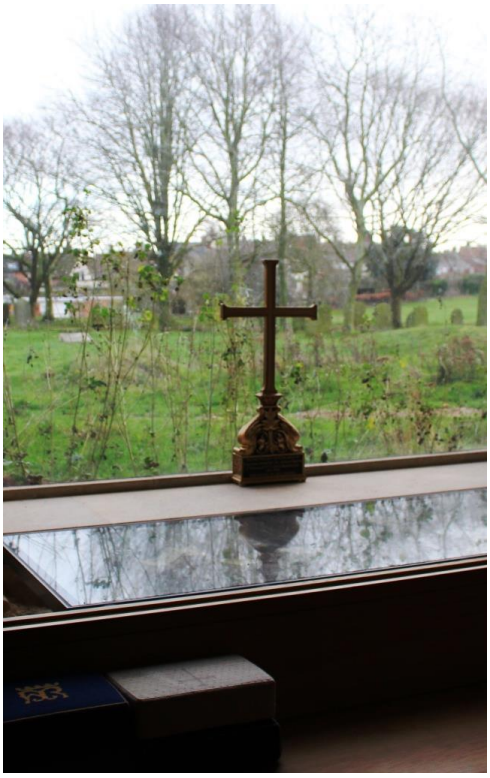


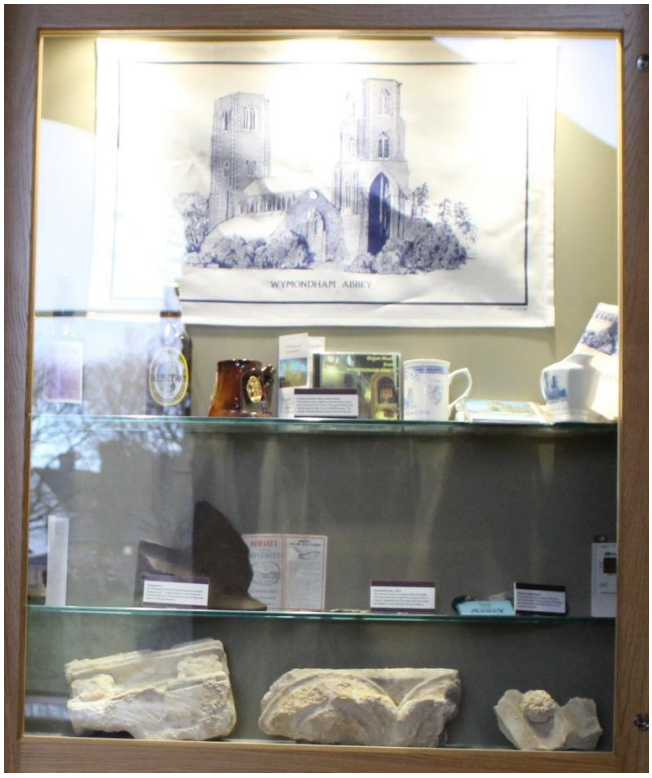


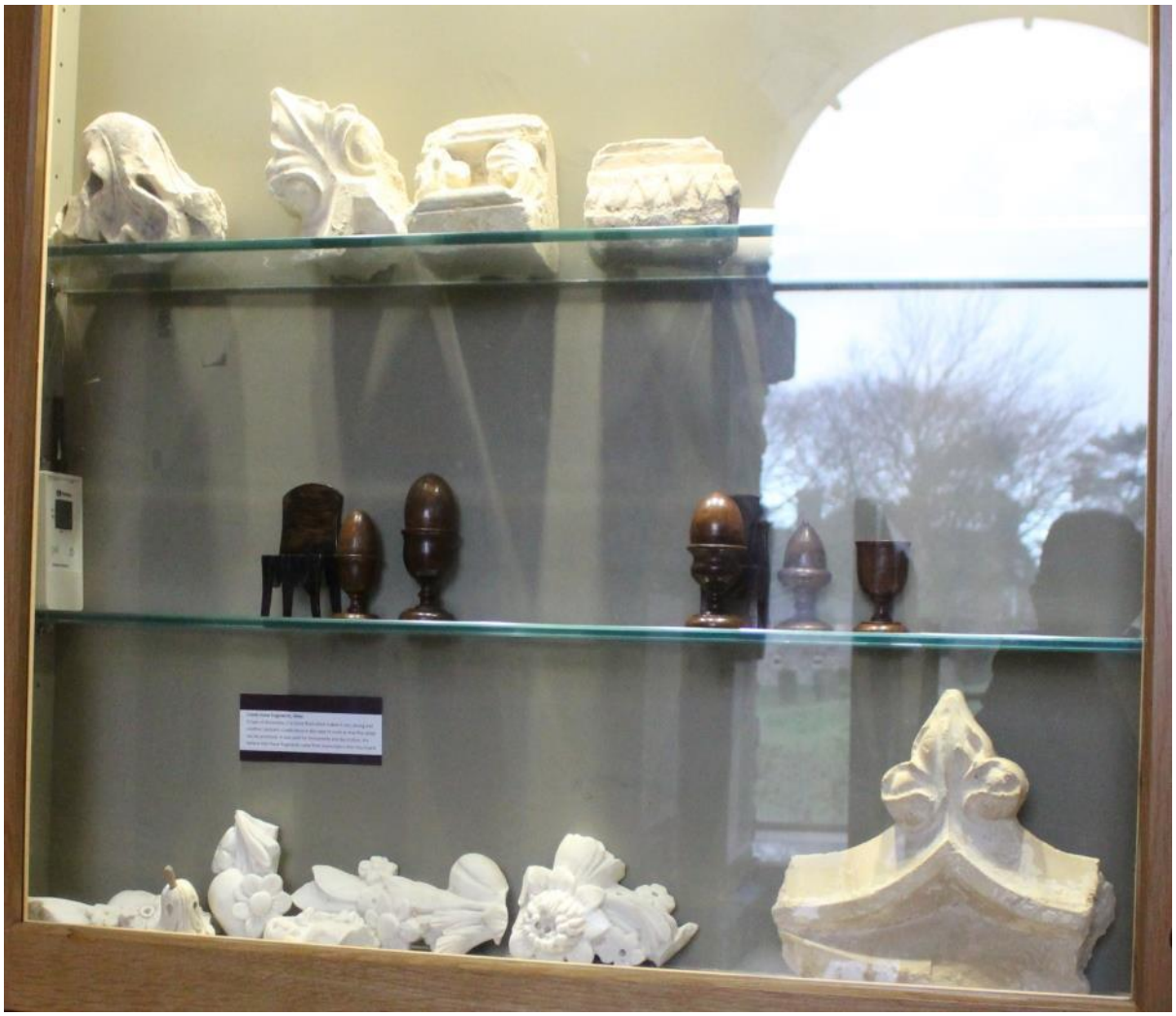


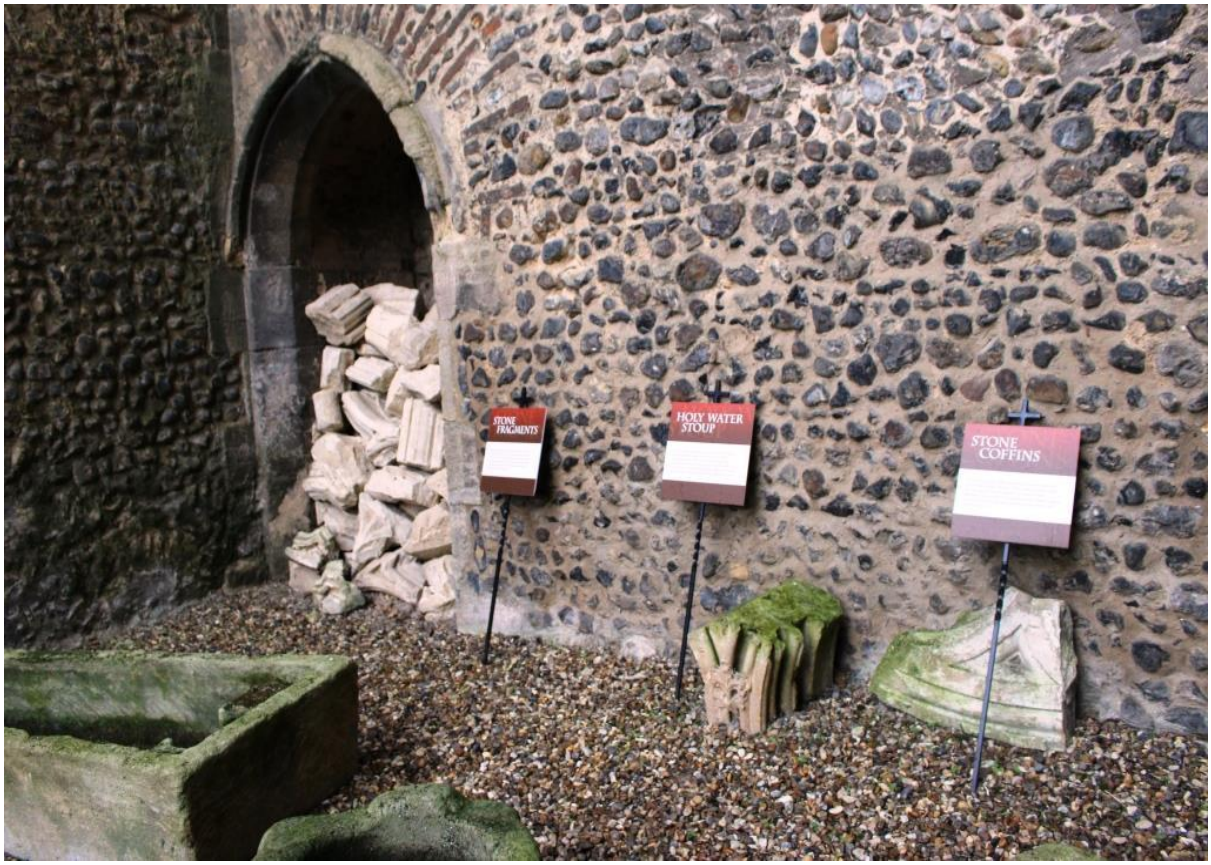


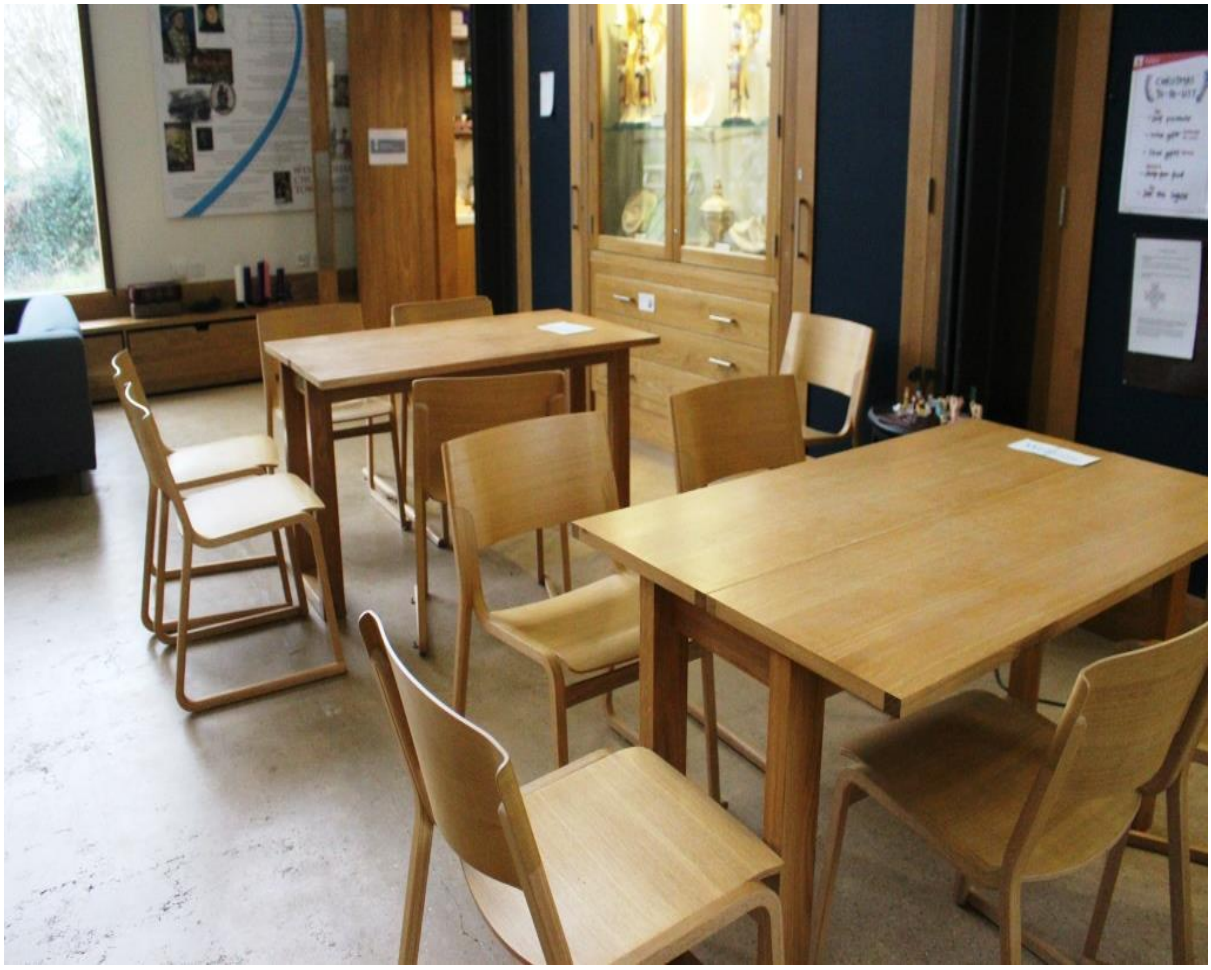

STONE FRAGMENTS
HOLY WATER STOUP
STONE COFFINS

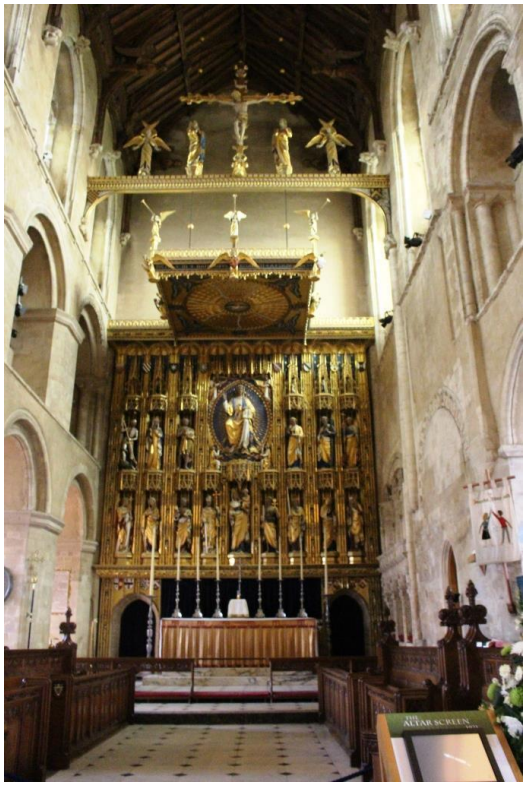


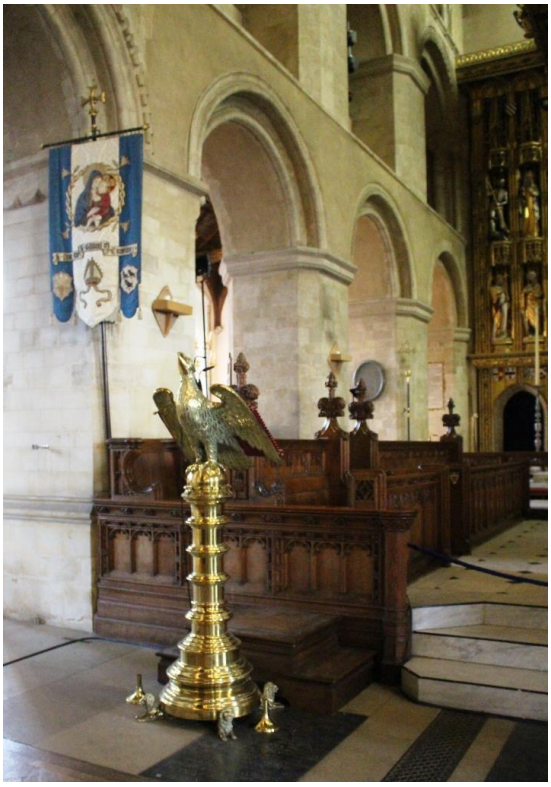

WYMONDHAM ABBEY

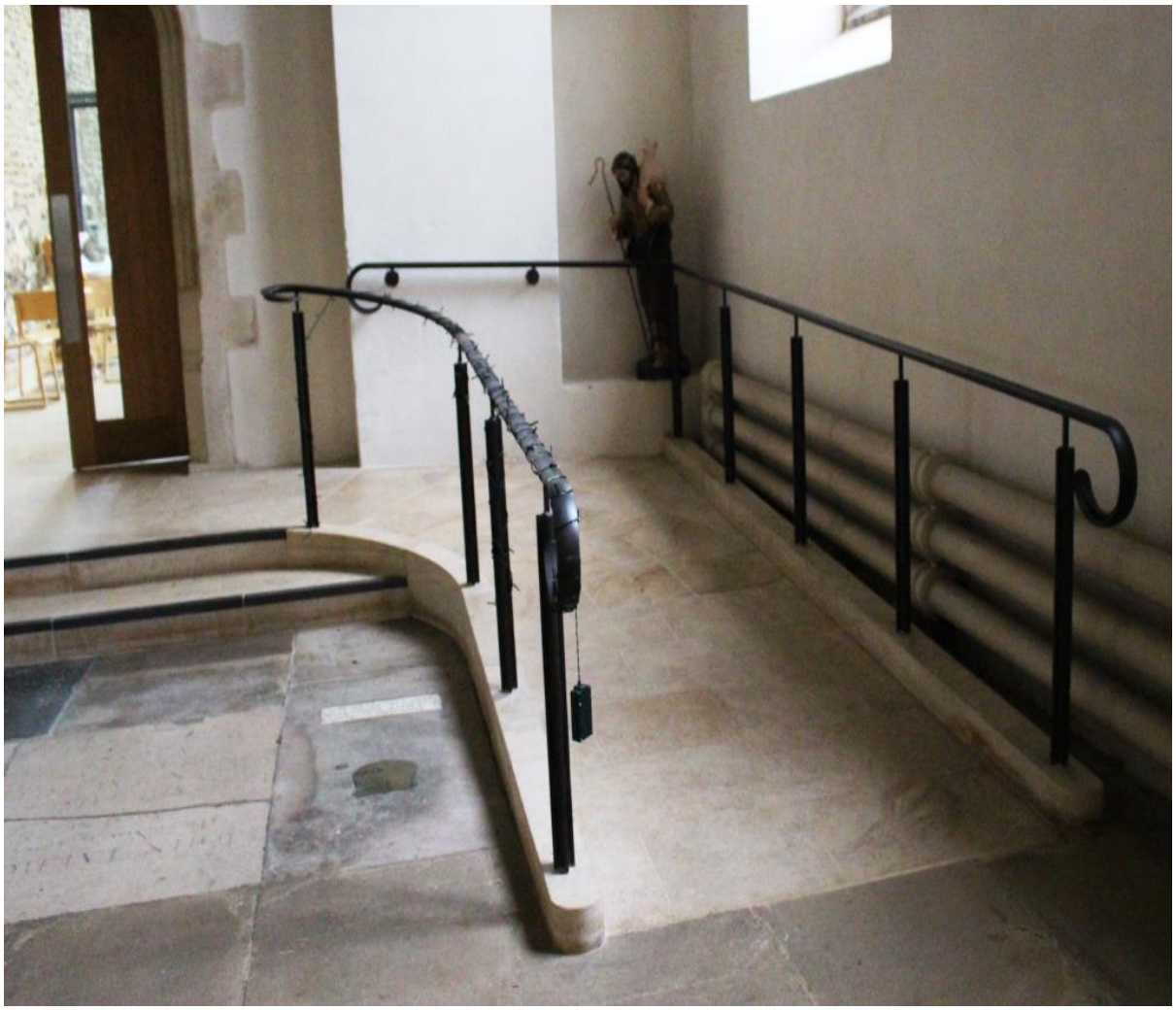


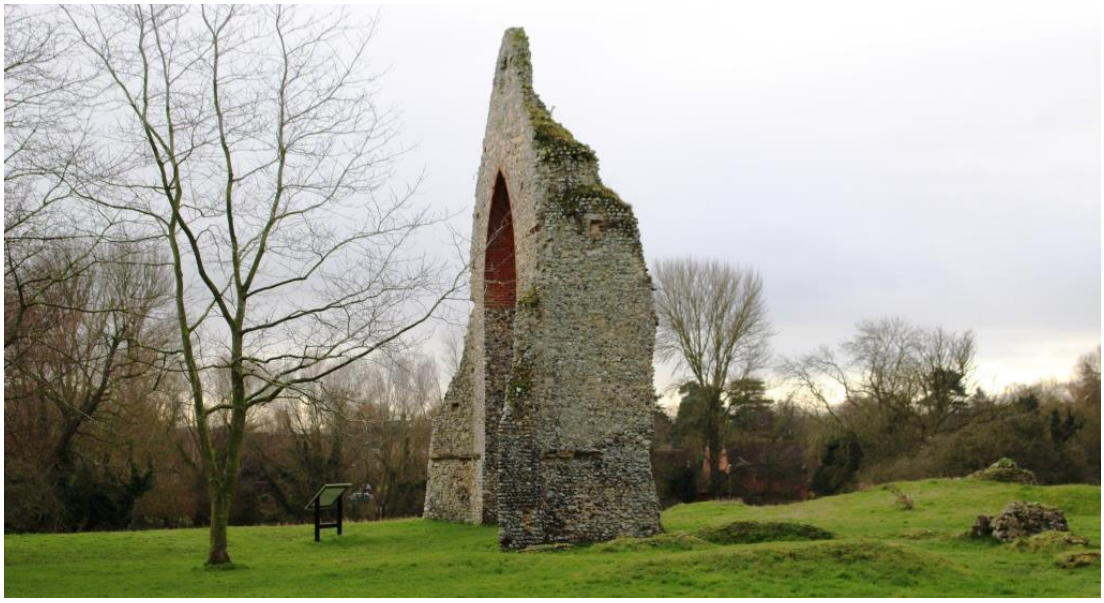

STONE FRAGMENTS
HOLY WATER STOUP
STONE COFFINS

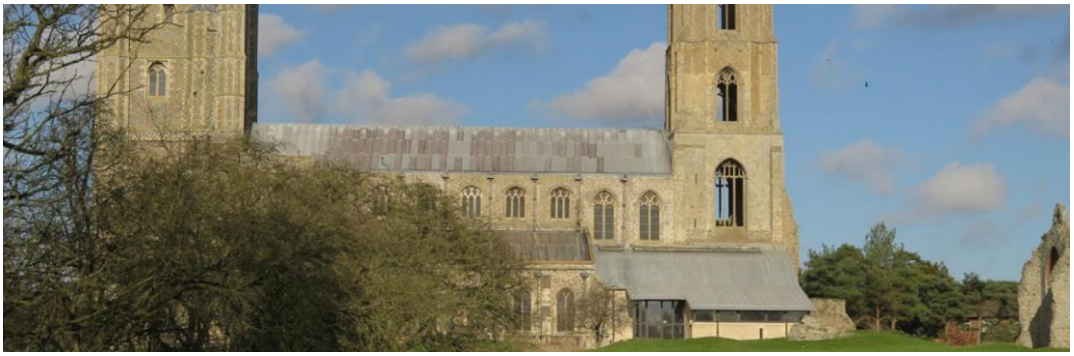



ALTAR SCREEN









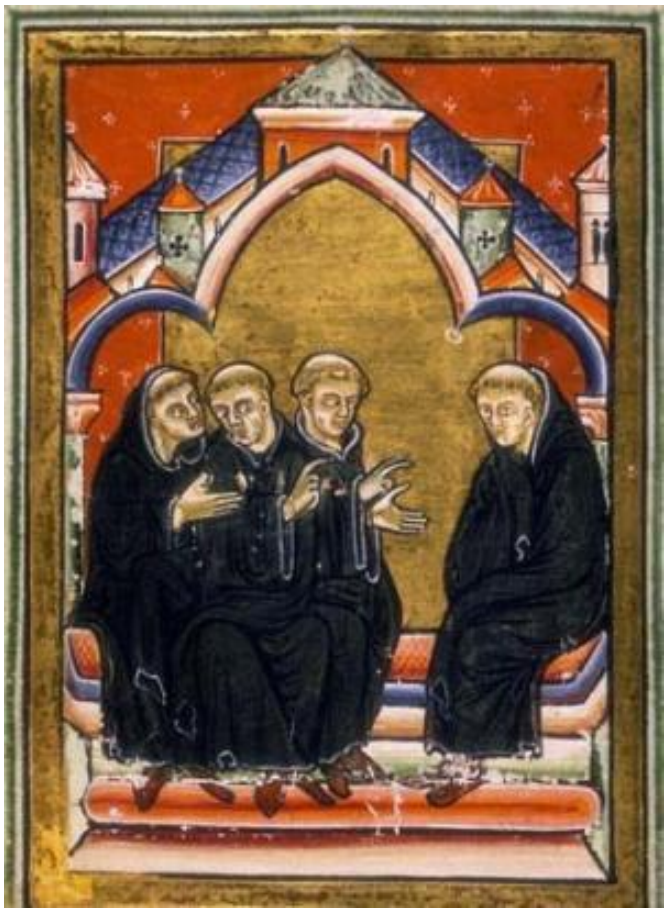
There has been a church on this site for well over 1,000 years. In Saxon times, Wymondham probably had a Minster church serving the town and surrounding communities. After the 1066 Norman Conquest, the land passed to the d'Aubigny family from Normandy. In 1107, William d'Aubigny founded a Benedictine monastery here as a 'daughter house' of the great St Alban's Abbey.

The church was a grand stone structure used by the small community of monks and also by the parishioners of the town. This arrangement caused frequent disputes, and in 1249 the Pope ruled that the church should be clearly divided. The eastern half was to be used by the monks, the western half became the town's parish church.

Over the centuries, the church saw many changes. New towers were built, the nave was raised with a magnificent angel roof, and the parish church was enlarged with a wide north aisle in Gothic style. In 1448, the priory became an independent abbey, one of the richest in Norfolk. But when King Henry VIII became head of the English church, he closed all monasteries in the land. In 1538, the Wymondham monks surrendered to the king.

Their part of the church was taken down, and today only the parish church survives. Significant changes since then include the enlarging of the south aisle in the 1540s, the installation of the great organ in 1793 and the addition of Sir Ninian Comper's gilded altar screen as a First World War memorial. In 2015, splendid new rooms were added at the east end to house new displays and facilities.

What was Wymondham Abbey?



Wymondham Abbey was a Benedictine monastery. William d'Aubigny founded it in 1107 as a Priory (daughter house) of St.Alban's Abbey where a close relative was Abbot. There were frequent disputes between the monks of Wymondham and St Alban's, and in 1447 the King and Pope agreed that Wymondham should become independent, known as Wymondham Abbey.

The monastery was never large and usually held just 12 to 16 monks, plus lay brothers (who did manual work), novices (monks in training) and servants who worked in the kitchens and on the land. The monks followed the Rule of St Benedict, which said that they must live a simple life of worship, work and prayer.

Why was it built?

Medieval people believed that when they died their souls were punished for their sins in Purgatory before being allowed into heaven. But if they did good works, and people prayed for them, they could get to heaven more quickly. William d'Aubigny was a rich and powerful landowner who worked for the king. Eventually he became Pincerna (butler) to King Henry I, which was like being a minister in the royal government.

Founding a monastery was a 'good work' for God, and William hoped that he, his family and descendants would benefit for ever from the prayers and masses of the monks. So he granted his new monastery lands and estates which provided a generous income to support them.

He also built a splendid church where the monks spent up to eight hours a day in prayer and worship, known as Opus Dei (the work of God). Their main work at other times was copying manuscripts, managing the monastery's estates, and looking after guests and the poor.

William d'Aubigny also wished to provide for the people of Wymondham. He decided that his new church should also serve as a Parish Church for the towns people. So, once the east end of the church was finished for the monks, a long nave was built for the parishioners and their old Saxon church was knocked down.

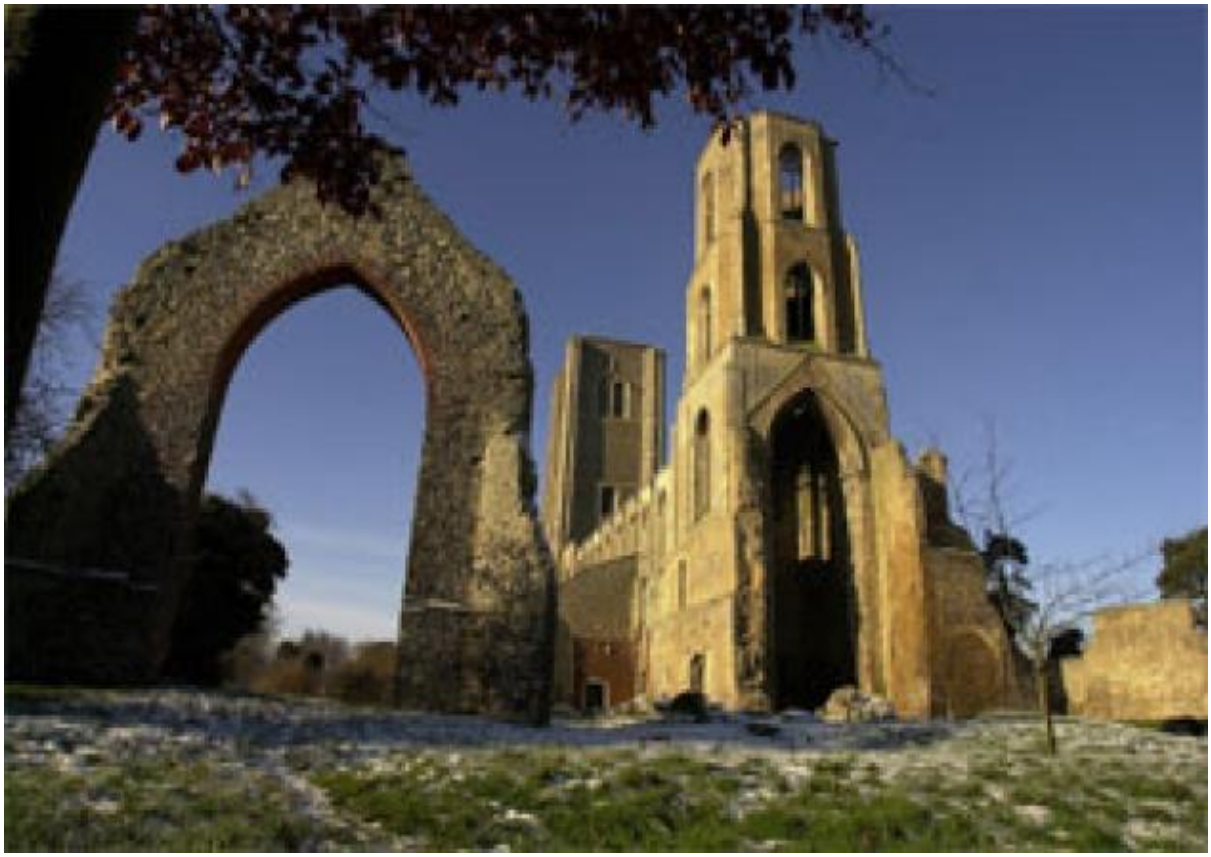
Why is it partly in ruins?
During the 1530s, the marital problems of King Henry VIII caused a dispute between the King and the Pope (the head of the Roman Catholic Church). Henry's first wife, Catherine of Aragon, failed to produce a male heir, so he asked the Pope for a divorce. The Pope refused. Henry retaliated in 1534 by declaring himself 'Supreme Head of the Church of England'. Most churchmen supported the king, and they readily granted the divorce.

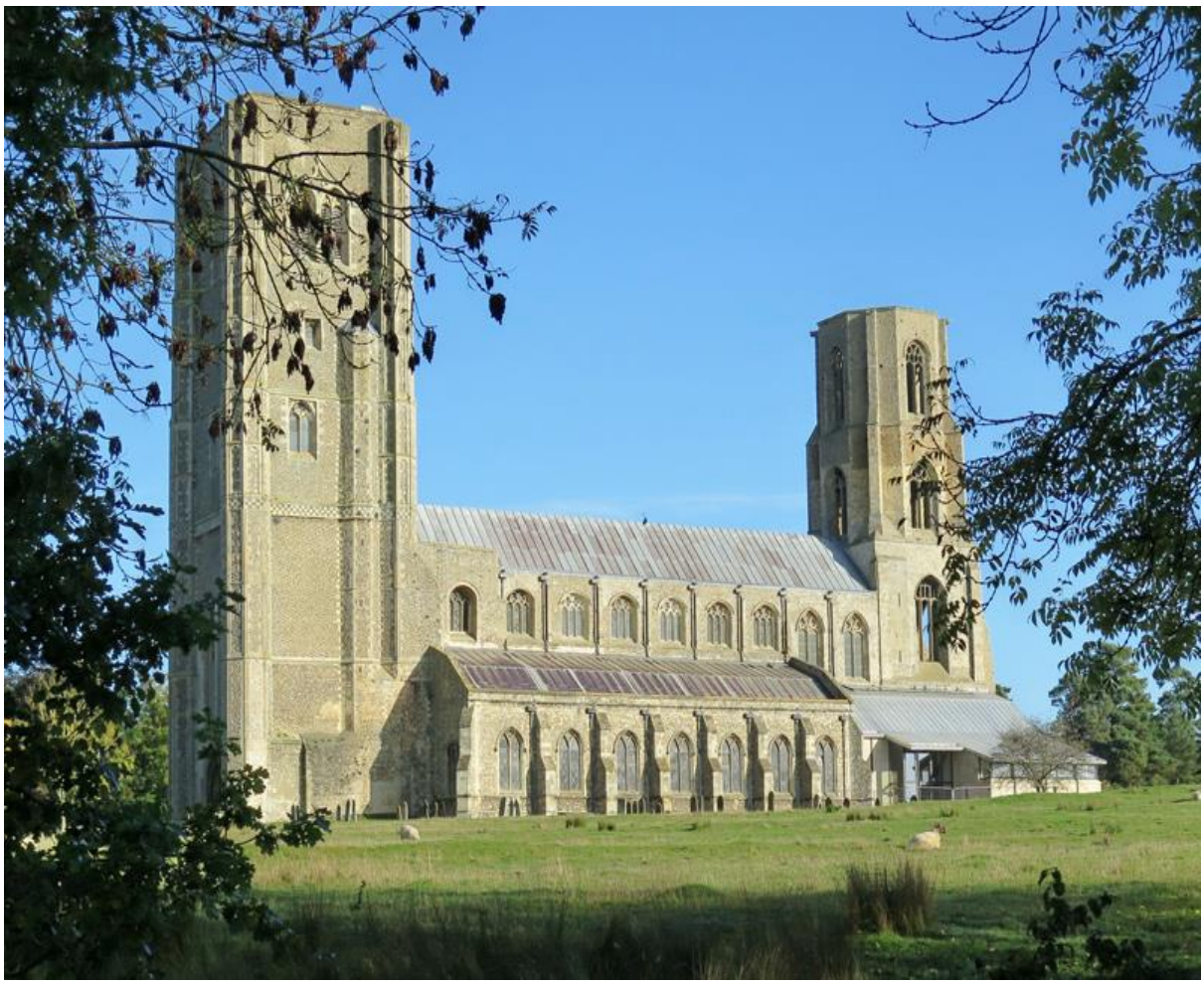
In 1536, King Henry realised that, as head of the church, he could also control the monasteries. There were about 800 monasteries in England at that time and they owned about a third of all the land in the country. Henry saw that he could make himself rich by closing monasteries and seizing their wealth. He sent round Commissioners to visit the monasteries. They claimed that they found many monasteries (including Wymondham) were badly run and that the monks were living easy and sometimes immoral lives.

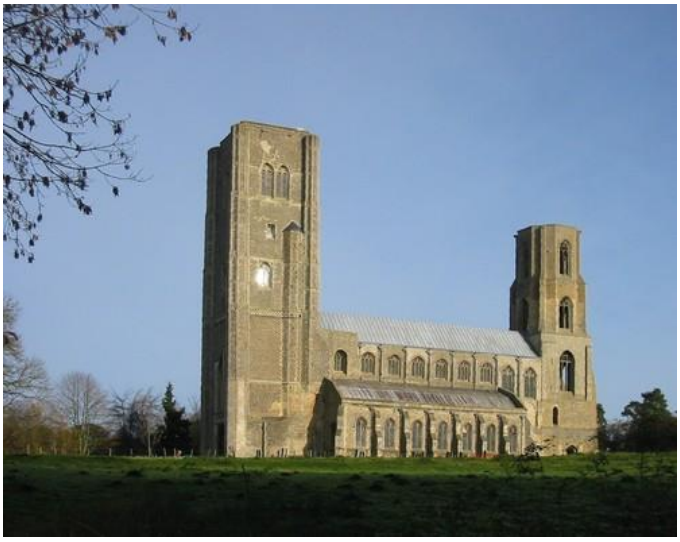
In 1536, King Henry VIII ordered the closure of all the smaller monasteries with annual incomes of less than £200 (about £200,000 in today's terms). Wymondham escaped, as its income was just above this level. But Henry later continued the process to include the richer monasteries, and in 1538 the Abbot and monks of Wymondham 'freely' surrendered their buildings and estates to the King. The roofs were quickly removed from the monks' part of the church, which was gradually demolished so that its stone could be re-used elsewhere. But the Parish Church – i.e. the western half of the building – survived. This is the building you see today.

Why visit Wymondham Abbey?
Wymondham Abbey is one of Norfolk's oldest and greatest historic architectural treasures. Its tall twin towers are a landmark for miles around. The setting of the church is incomparable with its spacious churchyard separated from the adjacent grazing meadow by an ingenious ha-ha. Inside, the great Norman pillars of the parish nave date from the 1150s. In the mid-1400s, the roof height was raised and crowned by a magnificent roof supported by life-size angel carvings, one of the finest examples in the country. The wide north aisle, with the Lady Chapel at its east end, is in Gothic style with hammerbeam roof and intriguingly carved corbels of angels, musicians and local characters of the day.

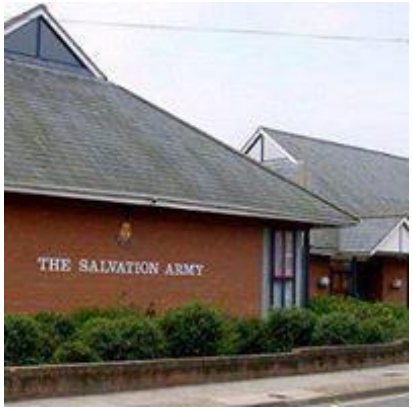
Important features of the church include the 14th century font with tall pierced cover, the fine 1793 Georgian organ in Chippendale-style case, the gilded altar screen (reredos) designed by Sir Ninian Comper, and the Arts and Crafts triptych in the Lady Chapel. The beautiful new rooms at the east end contain displays of artefacts and documents from the parish archives dating back to medieval times.







MONDAY 7th JANUARY 2019



Salvation Army, Woodbridge Road, Ipswich

Seen from the bus – Called to be disciples of Jesus Christ, The Salvation Army United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland exists to save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity.

Baptist, Colchester Road, Ipswich

Seen from the car - Founded in 1940 - Their aim is to be a church that: is trusting God through His Word and by the leading and renewing of His Holy Spirit; has a passion for leading people into a relationship and they are a growing Evangelical Baptist church, situated in the north east part of Ipswich.