

# SAINT PETER'S CHURCH GOODWORTH CLATFORD

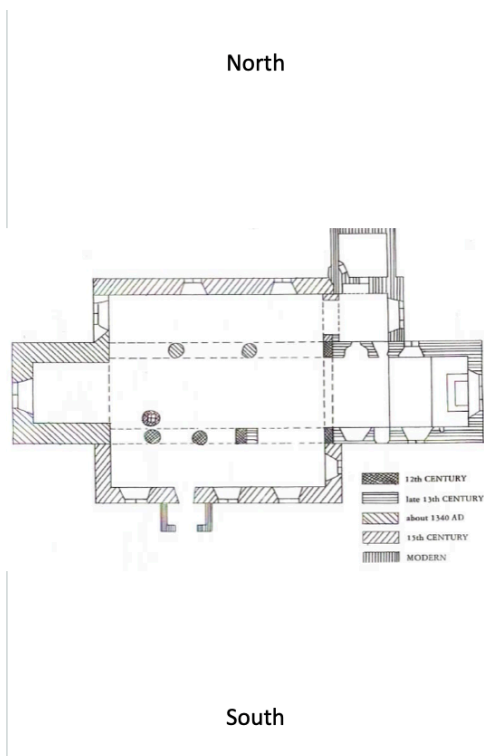


## A BRIEF HISTORY

The name Goodworth Clatford comes from the original Saxon settlement by the River Anton known as 'Goda's enclosure' and it was to this settlement that nuns from nearby Wherwell Abbey were sent. Eventually a small Christian community was formed, probably using a wattle and daub building the size of the nave and chancel. In the Domesday Survey of 1086, the first great statistical document of modern Europe, the area is known as 'Godrode' is recorded as held by Wherwell Priory. 'Warwelle the same abbey holds Godrode and always held it' - which implies a settlement of some longevity. At the same time Godorde became Goodworth and the first church register indicates this final change- 'This is the register Book of Goodworth Clatford of all Christens Weddings, and Burials from the year of our Lord God 1538'. All registers except those in current use are held in the County records office in Winchester.

As Wherwell Priory had a central relationship to this church up until 1959, its history is relevant. Founded by Queen Elfrida wife of Edgar, around 986, it was one of the largest medieval religious houses for women in England, and held the patronage of St Peter's until the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. Thereafter the avowdson (the right to offer the position of a priest to a parish) was held by the Lords of the Manor of Wherwell and was only surrendered to the Bishop of Winchester by William Iremonger in 1959 when a benefice with Upper Clatford was formed.

The church began as a small nave and chancel to which was added a south aisle towards the end of the 12th century. Around 1190 the chancel space was absorbed into the nave, with transepts being added on either side and a new chancel built.



The 14th century saw the addition of the north aisle plus the rebuilding of the tower replacing an earlier structure. Many stones with 12th century ornaments can be found embedded in it. In the 15th century both aisles were rebuilt and the south made equal in width to the transept. In 1860 the shape of the spire was changed from square to octagonal and it was clad in shingles. The shingles were replaced in 1950 and again in 2009 with Canadian oak tiles at a cost of £60k. 1979 saw renovation of the chancel when a tradesman doodle in the form of a miniature practice carving was found. This is now set into the window reveal on the south side behind the choir stall.

Although the church possesses no ancient monuments or gravestones, various details remind us of the past centuries: the south arcade has early Norman rounded pillars on square plinths with leaf spurs at the angles, and trumpet scalloped capitals. The font also Norman in origin is in Purbeck marble and stands on 5 columns with six flat arches on one side and motifs on the other sides. This also has been restored. The pointed arches in the west bays of the south aisle date from c1190 where the dog-toothed carving on the third arch is notable. The chancel arch is late 12th century and matches the transept arches (or vice versa).

In the north aisle the rounded pillars have octagonal bases and decorated capitals with carvings of a man and woman on one, both set in foliage at the angles. Note that on the west wall there is a similar carving of a bearded man. The north aisle opens into the organ chamber by the rear arch of a 15th century east

window. On each side of it are two mounded brackets of 15th century origin. The pair probably carried the timbers of an extension of a rood screen across the aisle.

In the south aisle is the Brother Douglas chapel dedicated in 1963 in memory of Brother Douglas Downes, founder of the Anglican Franciscans who in 1934 bought the vicarage opposite the church and used it as a home for wayfarers and destitute men which filled a much needed purpose at the time. This need disappeared with the demand for workers after the second world war and the buildings were demolished in early 1960's. However St Peter's is still connected to the Franciscans, and an oak tree has been planted to commemorate Brother Douglas.

Framed details of the bells can be seen to the left of the main door. Major work in the 1980's brought about the addition of two bells bringing the total to eight. The treble bell inscribed 'Holiness Unto the Lord' was paid for by funds raised in the parish, which added to the fund started in memory of Ernest Dowling, a past churchwarden whose name is inscribed on bell number four, thus perpetuating the Dowling family who have lived in the village for over 300 years.

As you walk round the church you will also notice the windows commemorating many members of the Iremonger family whose forebears served as parish priests here for over 150 years.

In the sanctuary to the left and right are two windows representing writers of the gospels. Since ancient times they have been represented by a winged man (St Matthew), a lion (St Mark), a bull (St Luke) and an eagle (St John) in order to suggest something of their characters. You might notice that two windows have the incorrect names!

A list of priests who have served this church can be found near the entrance. It begins in 1321 with Fr William Bulluke. He would have been now what we call a Roman Catholic and this church too would have been Roman Catholic as no other denominations existed in Europe at that time. The Church of England only came into existence when Henry VIII created the Church of England after the split with Rome. This list along with the thousands of worshippers over the ages reminds us of the remarkable faith and support this village has shown for over 1100 years.

We hope you enjoy your visit and find peace within these hallowed walls.