

## Early history...

Originally called Brampton, the Abbots was added when the manor was granted to St Peter's Abbey, (now Gloucester Cathedral) by William I and the church was a chapelry of Ross until a separate parish was created in 1671.

The building (Grade II\*) is a good example of a small Norman village church with a nave and chancel. The fine south doorway dates from this period and the chancel arch includes Norman masonry – but was given a more fashionable pointed arch in the 14th century.

## 14th century onwards...

The timber porch was added in the 14th century, and most of the windows enlarged to their present form. A cross was also erected in the churchyard and the steps with a niche are 14th century – though the monument itself was given a new shaft and head in about 1900 (Grade II and a scheduled ancient monument).

Inside the church, the font is a fine 15th century octagonal piece carved with quatrefoils enclosing fleurons and the trumpet shaped stem is unusual. In the chancel a Norman pillar piscina – a shallow basin placed near the altar – remains, restored in 1857 – a rare survival!

Other surviving pieces include memorials to Joan and John Rudhall (died 1506) of nearby Rudhall Manor.

## About St Michaels...

St Michael and All Angels Church sits at the centre of the Herefordshire village of Brampton Abbots, close to the market town of Ross on Wye and on the edge of the Forest of Dean.

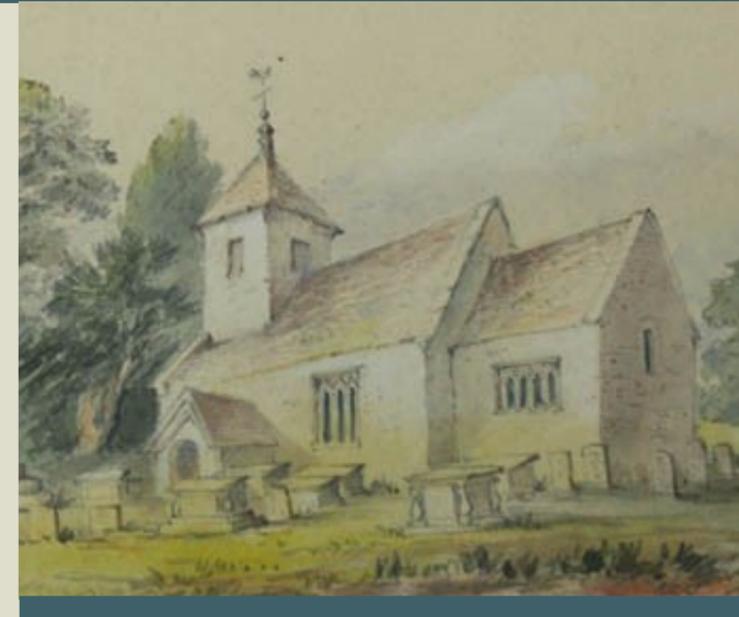
Having been a focal point for village life from early medieval times the church closed in 2008 after the roof was found to be unsafe.

In 2012, the Churches Conservation Trust was asked by the Church Commissioners to work with local people to explore alternatives to redundancy.

Following considerable work by Brampton Abbots Church Regeneration Group (BAcRG) funding was secured for repair works to bring this important historical building back into community use.

This leaflet explores the history of the building, from its early origins, through its many alterations and adaptations, up to the recent repair and restoration works - uncovering some previously forgotten phases of the building's history.

We hope you enjoy your visit. You can find out more and see a film of the recent repairs at: [www.thedailybread.org.uk](http://www.thedailybread.org.uk)



# The History of St Michael and All Angels Brampton Abbots Herefordshire



## 18th Century...

The timber bell tower probably dates from 1686 (stone on west wall) and is built into the west end of the nave and the three bells, by Evans of Chepstow, date from 1764.

## Victorian times...

In Victorian times, the church underwent further changes and was restored by George Frederick Bodley (1827-1907) in 1857. Bodley was an eminent Victorian architect trained by Sir George Gilbert Scott. Bodley's wife came from Kinnersley, Herefordshire, where he is buried.

Bodley's earliest complete church is at Llangrove (1854-56), so his restoration of Brampton Abbots was early in his career, whilst his last great work, started in 1906, is the National Cathedral, Washington D.C., USA. The western section of the Old School to the north of the church is also of 1857 by Bodley.

The north chapel was added for the rector's family in 1863.

## 20th Century

In 1907-8 the church underwent considerable interior restoration by the noted Arts and Crafts Architect William Douglas Caroe (1857- 1938), funded by a bequest in memory of Rev H.S. Evans.



Caroe was the son of a Danish consul and a pupil of John Loughborough Pearson (architect of Truro Cathedral).

Caroe's work comprised of fine oak furnishings including pews, pulpit, font cover, screen, stalls, communion rail, altar and the elaborately carved reredos - with statues of the four archangels by Hereford sculptor Robert Clarke.

These furnishings were complemented by attractive features such as a variety of stained glass and memorial tablets

Caroe's restoration returned the church to its pre-Victorian appearance with the recreation of features such as the large window on the south side of the chancel. There is a quarry tiled floor throughout, with some ledger stones in the chancel.

The east window – showing the Ascension and symbols of the Evangelists – is by Powell of Whitefriars, London of 1908, designed by Charles Hardgrave.

The nave south-east window showing six scenes from the life of Christ from Nativity to Ascension is by Thomas Baillie of London of 1861. It is in memory of James Barrett, commemorated on a nearby plaque.

The other windows are all by Hardman of Birmingham dating from between 1859 and 1879. Those in the vestry show Christ's Charge to Peter, the Wedding at Cana and the Ascension. Hardmans were one of the leading church furnishings and glass manufacturers of the Victorian period, executing many designs by Pugin.

## The Churchyard

In addition to the cross the churchyard also has several good 18th and early 19th century chest tombs – listed grade II – including an elaborate one to Thomas Dew who died in 1755 and the earliest being to the Rideout family of 1717.

The earliest grave memorial in the churchyard commemorates Rowland Hunt, Lord of the Manor, who died in 1608.

The lychgate, which was added in 1931, is also by Caroe.