



Shotesham St Martin: Past Present and Future

NS-22-00085

Project Evaluation



Made possible with

**Heritage
Fund**

Project approved purpose:

- High visibility acknowledgement of the National Lottery Heritage Fund on site, online and in all activities as well as using your project to acknowledge and thank National Lottery Players.
- Take proactive measures to be inclusive, remove barriers to access and reach new and diverse audiences through the delivery of this project.
- Deliver the project in partnership with Shotesham Village Association and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Building Norfolk. Collaborate with Norwich Historic Churches Trust and volunteers from The Matthew Project.
- Carry out repairs to St Martins church ruins, enabling the site to remain accessible to the public.
- Engage children and young people with the project and deliver events and demonstrations with students and local residents.
- Provide two student placements on the project, enabling young people to learn traditional building skills.
- Restore and update the existing interpretation board, launching this at an open garden event, showcasing the repair works. Make project resources available via the village website.
- Ensure environmental sustainability is considered throughout project delivery, using local materials and contractors



The project purpose has been delivered thorough these project activities, which include:

- Summer working party (July 2022) including 5 free placements for students;
- Contractor's conservation works (August-September 2022) including one heritage skills placement;
- Engagement activities with the Brownies group, discovering the heritage site and traditional materials;
- Collaboration with Norwich Historic Churches Trust and volunteers from the Matthew Project
- Autumn working party (October 2022) and completion of conservation works.
- Interpretation plan including investigations to prepare a restored and updated interpretation board
- New resources on village website



We believe that the best way to appreciate traditional building skills and protect heritage is through hands-on experience.
A two-days working party was completed in July; more than 15 delegates took place including 5 students (free placements).





Learning about local materials: Boulder Chalky Clay

A local material from the village, only needed crushing and mixing energetically with water and fibers. The volunteers decided to make an impromptu model of the church (as part of the discussions around interpretation) as well as a clay lump block



Learning about the lime cycle: The lime kiln

Volunteers finalised the design and built this work of art. It was loaded with charcoal and coke to burn chalk, cockles and oyster shells + one brick! Delegates and visitors gathered around the kiln during the day and in the evening for celebrations. The star of the show!



Learning how to use lime mortar and repair flintwork

- The lime freshly made from the kiln was slaked and used to prepare mortar to be used for repairs.
- Following lectures, demonstrations and discussions, the volunteers applied the newly learnt techniques to complete very good work



During the two days a total of around 70 people from all over visited the site to learn about the project.

In September we enjoyed engagement activities with the Brownies group, discovering local heritage and traditional materials.

A group of ten Brownies (Shipdam 1st) visited the site to learn about the project and traditional materials; the workshop include talks about St Mary and St Martins covering history and materials and a practical laboratory working with clay to create a natural oven.





The contractor continued conservation works throughout August and September.

- One heritage skills placement was filled by a young and motivated individual
- A delegation from Norwich Historic Churches Trust and The Matthew Project visited the site to learn about conservation of roofless structures and heritage skills training.





Also, during the summer,
the local art group enjoyed
drawing St Martins



A two-days working party was completed in October; more than 15 delegates took place including 5 students (free placements).

Delegates joined from as far as Switzerland to look after St Martin whilst learning heritage skills including traditional lime mortar, soft capping, clay lump and flint knapping.





Learning about local materials: Boulder Chalky Clay

A representative from Eartha (East Anglia Regional Telluric House Association) lectured about use of local clay and how to make clay lump; newly learnt techniques were applied to protect low level remains with adobe.



Learning conservation techniques: soft capping

Delegates learnt the theory as well as the practice from sourcing local turf to installing it.



And also...

...handmade greeting cards, pizzas and knapped flints!

During the two days a total of around 70 people from all over visited the site to learn about the project.



Low level walls after the repairs; the ruin is looking well cared for.

The new interpretation board:

Welcome to (the ruins of) the church of Saint Martin

There has probably been a church on this site for over 1,000 years. If so, the first one was built of wood and rebuilt in stone in the 11th century.



FOUR CHURCHES?

Many Norfolk villages have more than one church, but Shotesham is quite unusual in having had four. We do not know why, but it may be to do with the number of manors in the village.

Two of the churches, All Saints and St Mary, are still in use. St Martin is a substantial ruin, and St Botolph has vanished except for a few pieces of stonework.

We do not know when St Martin fell into disuse, but it may well have happened by about 1550. This was probably because four churches were more than was needed for such a small village.

The reason two of the four churches have survived is likely that All Saints served High Shotesham, while St Mary served Low Shotesham. The population of Shotesham in 1086 was about 650, and it is unlikely to have grown much over 500 years.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH'S PLAN

Despite the significant amount of remains, it is not always easy to say what the dates of the various features are. As the east end has been totally rebuilt, we cannot say with certainty what its original form was. The church had a nave, and probably a chancel, but it may have been a single-cell building. We cannot know if the east end was square or apsidal (rounded).



The porch was added later—possibly in the 12th or the early 13th century. At some point in the 14th century, the tower was added; this will have taken 20 to 30 years to complete. In the 16th century, the chancel was rebuilt. It is, unusually, wider than the nave, and it may indicate that a total rebuilding of the whole church was intended, working westward. If so, we cannot say why this was not completed. The abandoning of the project may have coincided with the church being closed.

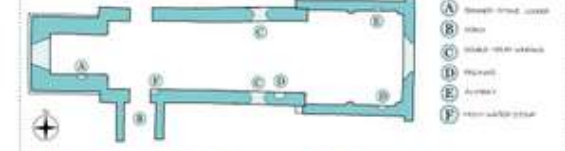
WHO WAS SAINT MARTIN?

The church is dedicated to Saint Martin, the 4th-century Bishop of Tours, France. He had been a soldier before he realised that such a calling was incompatible with a Christian life. He is supposed to have cut his cloak in half to share with a beggar.

Martin was a very popular saint, and a very ancient church at Canterbury is dedicated to him. His name has entered our folklore, as the fine weather we often have around his feast day (11 November) is called 'St Martin's summer', and Martinmas Fairs were the traditional time for hiring servants for the next year.

There are over 170 pre-1800 churches dedicated to Saint Martin in Great Britain.

FEATURES OF THE CHURCH



A Banner-stave locker

This cupboard was used to store the long poles—or staves—on which processional banners were suspended, along with processional crosses. Not all churches have one, and their siting varies from church to church.



Right: An example of processional banner. St Martin banner from Westminster Abbey. © Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

B Porch

Porches were more than just a shelter for the door. All the rites of passage—baptisms, weddings, and funerals—started in the porch before moving into the church. Secular business was also transacted in porches. Many have an upper room, called a parvise (a word related to 'paradise'), though it is doubtful that St Martin's did.

Above: A single storey porch from St Etheldreda church, Norwich, Norfolk.

C Double-splay window

This style of window, where the wall angles towards the window on both the inner and the outer side, is a marker of an early building date—10th or 11th century.

Right: A double-splay window from St Michael church, Fressingfield, Norfolk.

D Piscina

This is a basin in which the priest performed the ritual washing of his hands and the chalice during the mass. Piscinas can be simple or grand and are found by the sites of altars, so it is likely that this one served a side-altar in the nave.



Above: A piscina from St Julian church, Norwich, Norfolk.

E Aumbry

This is a cupboard in which various items used in the service were stored, such as books and linen cloths. Valuable items, such as silver chalices, were kept in the parish chest under lock and key.

Above: An aumbry with medieval door in situ from St Peter Church, Great Wingham, Norfolk. © Simon East.

F Holy-water stoup

On entering a church, people dipped their fingers in a bowl of holy water, called a stoup, and made the sign of the cross as a reminder of their baptism. Such stoups are usually found in porches, so the fact that this one is in the nave indicates that the church did not originally have a porch.

Above Right: A stoup from The Crypt, Blackfriars, Norwich.

For additional information please visit the dedicated web pages on Shotesham.com and visit St Mary church to view a photographic exhibition showing the rescue of St Martin's ruined church.



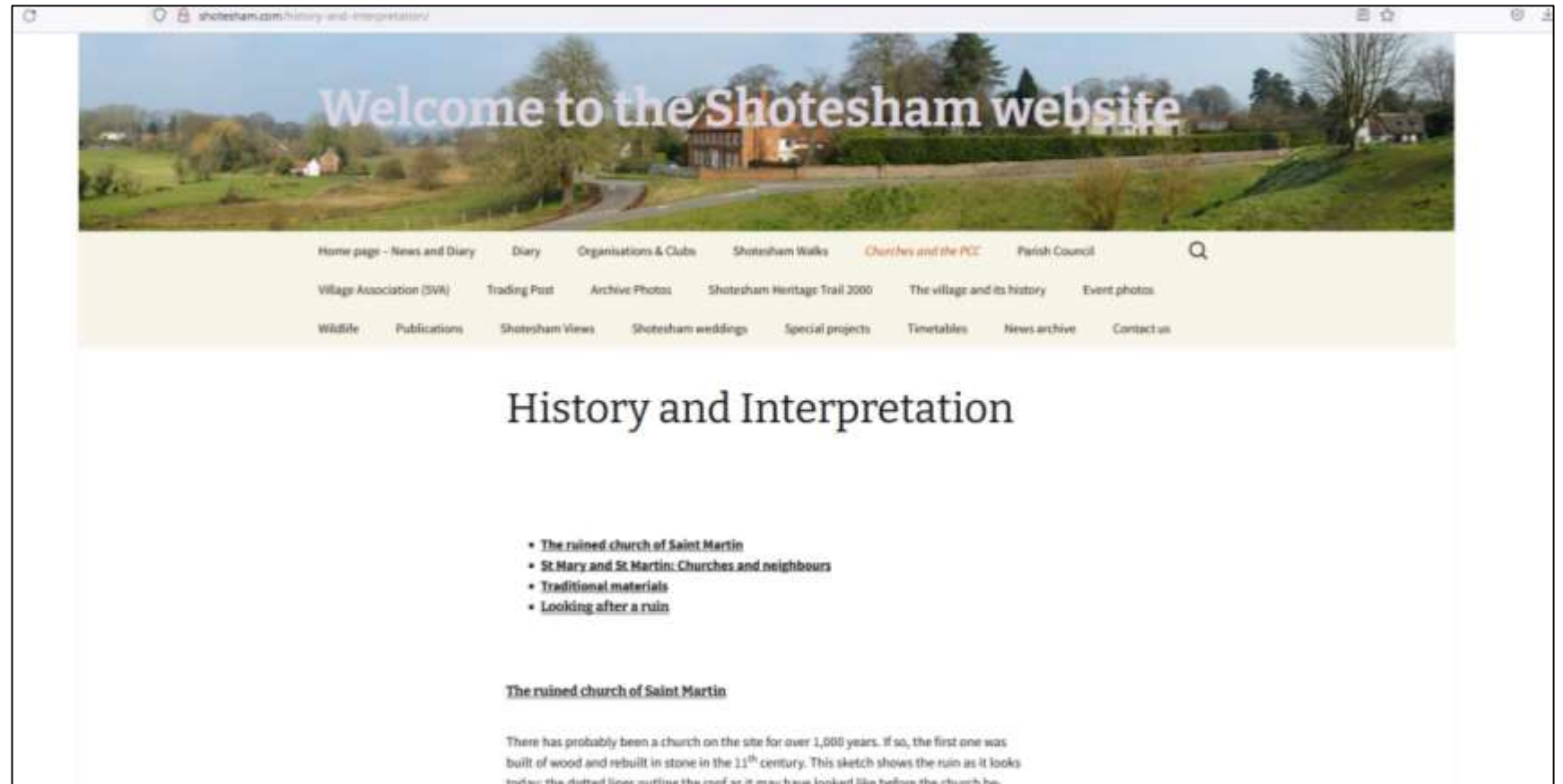
This interpretation board was completed in November 2022 by a multidisciplinary project team including Dominica D'Alessandro, Glenn Gammans, Dr Nicholas Groves, Gail Harvey, Michael Knight, Ailie Robinson, Beatrix Swanson. Illustrations: Holly Rowland.

Client: Shotesham Parochial Church Council, generously supported by:



These walls are ancient and exposed to the weather; areas of masonry might be loose so please pay great attention whilst visiting and do not lean or climb on the walls. Also take care to mind your footing as there are hidden rabbit holes.

information
on the
website:



<http://shotesham.com/history-and-interpretation/>