

GSRW and associated routes
Request for Historic Environment and Heritage Information

We are seeking to gather a wealth of information about the history and heritage of the Greensand Country. In particular we are asking for information on features which can be seen from the Greensand Ridge Walk Ridge walk/ Cycle Ride; or within just a few minutes' walk / ride from those routes. The information provided will inform information boards, leaflets and websites detailing these routes.

Maps showing the route sections of the GSRW can be viewed at:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/walking/greensand-ridge.aspx>

Maps showing the route sections of the GSR Cycle Ride can be viewed at:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/cycling/overview.aspx>

<p>Feature – Name What name is the feature known by – officially and/ or locally?</p>	<p>St Mary Virgin Church, Northill</p>
<p>Feature - Type Is the feature an existing building, the site of a previous building, a visible earthwork, the location of a historic event, etc?</p>	<p>The feature is an existing building dating from 1330AD and it is Grade 1 listed.</p>
<p>Location – Grid reference Grid reference can be found by visiting: http://www.bnhs.co.uk/focuson/grabagridref/html/</p>	<p>TL149464</p>
<p>Location – Brief description Please provide 1-2 sentences describing the location of the feature; indicating how people can see it; i.e. whether it can be seen directly from the route of the GSRW, or whether a short detour along another path / road is required.</p>	<p>By the side of GSRW in Bedford Road, Northill SG18 9AA.</p>

Feature summary

In 100-200 words, please provide information about the feature's history, heritage value, etc.

(This space will expand as you type)

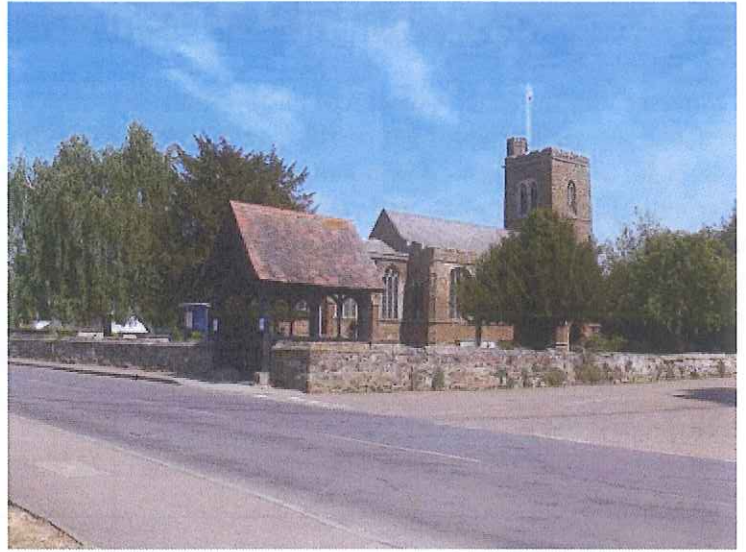
It is almost certain that a Saxon Church, followed by a Norman one stood on the site of the present building, which was built between 1330 and 1370AD. The walls of the church are of ironstone and Totternhoe clunch. Looking closely at the walls of the Nave and the Chancel it is apparent that the Nave is built of dressed stones, whilst the chancel is constructed of pebbles and odd pieces of rubble. This inferior work may well have been due to the Black Death, which interrupted the building, and in which many master masons perished.

In 1404 the church became collegiate and was intended to pray for the souls of Sir John and Sir Reginald de Trailly. The college contained four fellows (all clergymen) who elected a master, who was always the rector. The college was dissolved in 1547 as part of Henry VIII's dissolution of religious bodies in the wake of his break with Rome and his need to raise money.

St Mary Virgin church is noted for some fine stained glass windows some of which were made by John Oliver in 1664. He was also employed in the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire of 1666.

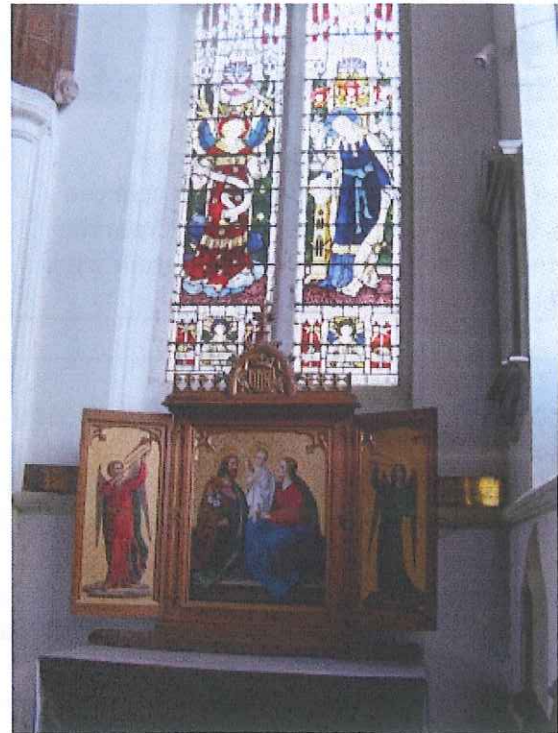
Images

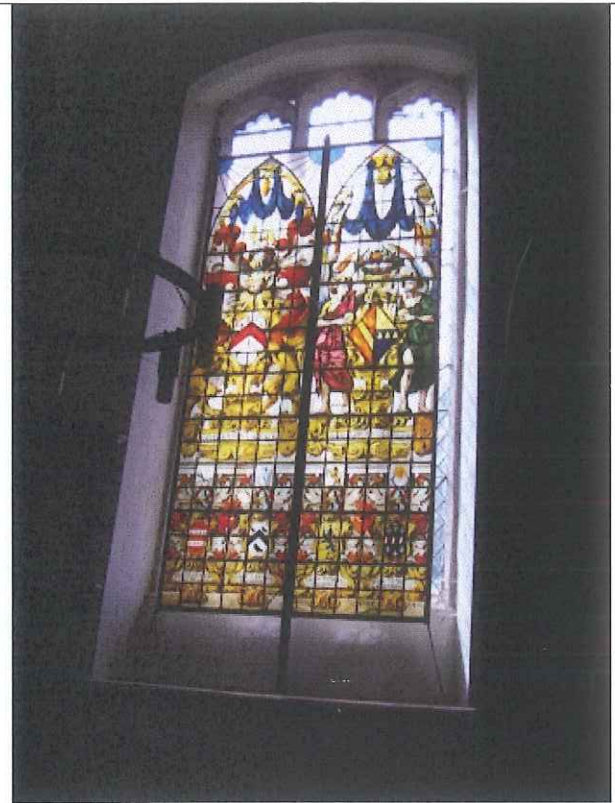
Please provide any photo's / pictures – historic or recent - of the feature that could be used on leaflets, websites etc. Please clearly reference the photos/ images with a tile/ caption. Please provide contact details of the photographer/ artist, or source of the image.



St Mary Virgin Church, Northill.

[Photograph by Chris Deverell]





Interior of St Mary, Virgin Church, Northill
[Photographs by Shirley Mullen]

Sources of more information

If additional information about this feature exists, please indicate where this material can be viewed/obtained; together with any contact details.

A guidebook which gives details of its history and architecture can be purchased in the church.

A more detailed history is available in "Bedfordshire Churches in the Nineteenth Century, Part II Parishes H to R, edited by Chris Pickford". Bedfordshire Historical Record Society Volume 77 1998.