

cyntches, always remember to look up, Finally, a piece of advice: when visiting first enter the building. help you get your bearings when you diagram of a typical Wealden church to included a glossary of terms and a Зайтігіч 10 ээпьчы you will find at the churches we have ui ənodq uoy used in this guide and in the guides супису ме гиввег To help with the church terminology see the interior of a architectural and historical information. ратісціатіу кееп to you will find more detailed occasions. If you are churches have their own guide where some days for special what each church has to offer as most guide is to give you just a taster of ио рәѕоլә әд хеш рив are working buildings tawny-golden colour. The aim of this sandstone they display a characteristic wind that churches countryside. Generally made of local ие аѕк уои to bear in spectacular views across the Wealden тітеѕ ғог еасһ сһигсһ Most are in beautiful rural settings with gninəqo ztzil təffasıl and around Royal Tunbridge Wells. NB. Although this the most interesting churches to visit in This guide offers a selection of some of century onwards. and the cloth industry from the 14th

the churches' beauty and history. you don't you may be missing much of look at what you are walking on - if and by the same token remember to

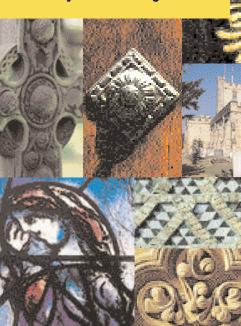
as it became a place of iron foundry linked to the areas industrial heritage the development of these churches is the Wealden area. However, much of AD597, Christianity spread throughout southern England, landing in Kent in convert the pagan inhabitants of Following St Augustine's mission to political and economic change. existence being tied up with religious, decay and reconstruction; their Wealden churches have a history of As with most country churches sites of earlier wooden Saxon churches. stone buildings often being built on to a thousand years ago, with these incorporate remnants of those built up

society. Most churches we see today special place in English historical buildings with a Churches are unique



on the Wealden **CHURCH TRAIL**

churches in and around Royal Tunbridge Well



For help on finding places to eat, details on public transport and assistance booking accommodation please contact:

Royal Tunbridge Wells Tourist Information Centre T: 01892 515675 (24 hour ansaphone)

E: touristinformationcentre@tunbridgewells.gov.uk Alternatively you can visit our website on www.visittunbridgewells.com for further information about the area.

This leaflet can be made available in large print and on audio.

Acknowledgements

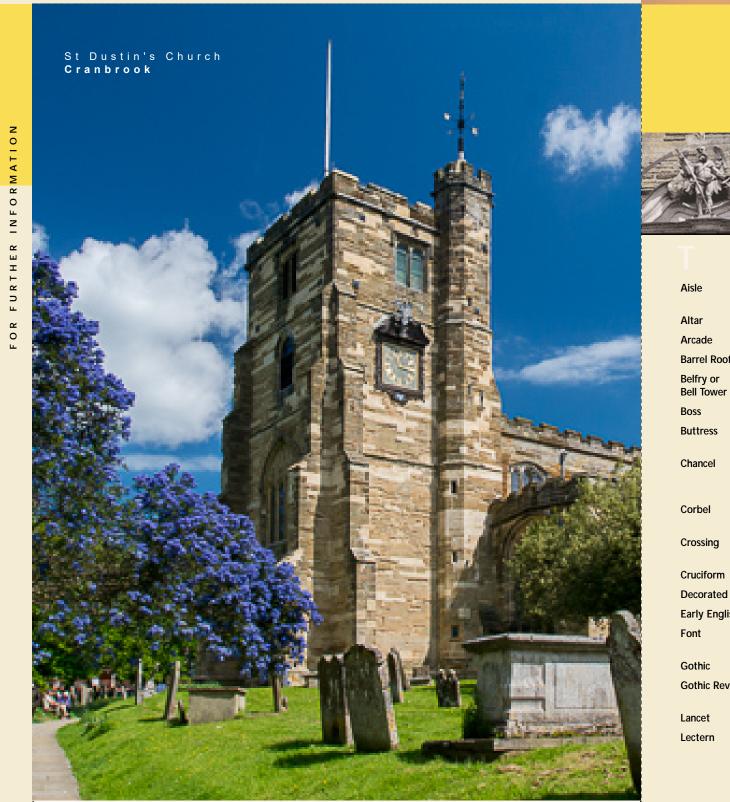
Vith special thanks to the historian John Vigar for his help in ensuring the historical accuracy of this leaflet and to Chris Parker, David Sellman, Paul Burgess, Len Fraser and David Denton for the use of

We would also like to thank Kent Churches Tourism for their guidance in putting together this leaflet. Kent Churches Tourism is an initiative of the Church of England Dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester.

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TERMINOLOGY

GLOSSARY OF CHURCH

Passageway separating seating areas; a division flanking the nave or chancel. The communion table.

> A range of arches supported on piers or columns. Continuous round-arched vault.

The part of a tower or steeple in which bells are hung.

An external vertical construction to support a wall or corner. The part of the church containing the altar, sanctuary and choir, usually separated from the nave

A carving marking the junction of ribs of a vault.

and transepts by a screen, or change in floor level. A moulded or carved stone bracket with angels Corbel

The meeting point of the nave, chancel and transepts. Church structure in the shape of a cross. Cruciform

Architectural style of c.1290 – 1350. **Early English** Architectural style of c.1200 – 1290. A bowl for baptismal water which may be on

a pedestal. Architectural style dating from 12th century to 1540. Gothic Revival Architectural style of 19th century based on the medieval Gothic architectural style.

A narrow arched window with a pointed top. Lectern

A reading desk.

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A structure to commemorate a deceased person. The main space in a church in which the congregation normally sits.

The upper storey of a porch. Perpendicular Architectural style of c.1350 – 1530.

A long seat with a back, used by the congregation and situated in the nave.

> Usually situated near the altar, a stone basin built into the wall where medieval priests washed their fingers before the Catholic mass.

A raised square or octagonal platform at the east end of the *nave* from where the sermon is preached. A screen or wall decoration at the back of an altar. Romanesque Architectural style c.1050-1200 also known as

Norman architecture.

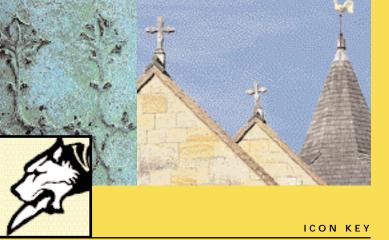
Rood Screen Separating the *chancel* from the *nave* it was an important feature of medieval churches but the majority were destroyed at the Reformation.

Royal Arms Arms of the monarch usually painted in wood or canvas, which became compulsory in churches after the Reformation.

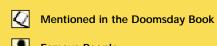
The most holy area around the main altar. Seat for the clergy assisting in services, often on the south side of the sanctuary. A wing of a cruciform church. **Transepts**

Triptych Three pictures or panels often used as the *altar* piece. Vault An arch like stone ceiling.

A room in which vestments and sacred vessels are kept.



To help you recognise a church that may be of particular interest to you we have created a series of quick reference icons. Those churches that have a particular area of interest will have the relevant icon displayed.



Famous People

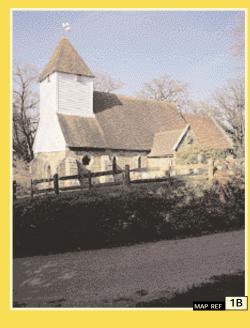
Architecture of note

Ø Gargoyles

Glorious Memorials The Green Man

(ancient pagan figure) **Listed Living Churchyard (Site of Nature Conservation Interest)**

Spectacular Stained Glass



ST MARTIN OF TOURS, ASHURST 'One of the oldest churches in the area

Ashurst Hill, Ashurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent t 01892 861187

www.speldhurst.org/church/ashurst

Predominant period: Medieval

Opening Times: Daily 10am - 5pm

This simple little village church is one of the oldest churches in the area. It was first built between 921 and 927 and used as a monk house. It was partially rebuilt in the thirteenth century with further restoration and additions in the sixteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It contains a late Norman font with its stonework allegedly used by bowmen to sharpen their arrows! A sundial in the south porch was given to the parish of Ashurst in 1634 by the famous mathematical instrument maker of the day, Elias Allen.

Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on A264. Turn right outside Langton Green village following signs for East Grinstead, still on A264. Carry on for approx. 2 miles and St Martin's is on the left-hand side before the railway bridge.

(Partial) Wheelchairs should enter through the South Gate



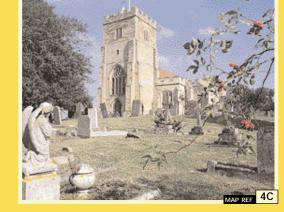
ST GEORGE'S, BENENDEN 'A Doomsday church'

The Green, Benenden, Kent t 01580 240658

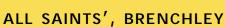
Predominant period: Medieval with remodelling of the interior in the nineteenth century (Victorian)

Opening Times: Daily during daylight hours

Displaying features from every historical period from the twelfth century onwards, there has been a church on this site even longer and St George's is one of only four churches in the whole Weald that is mentioned in the Doomsday Book. Though the interior is definitely Victorian in character with some good quality stained glass there are some interesting exterior features including fifteenth century stone gargoyles on the north porch and unusual stone carvings of lizards within.



Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells towards A21 on the Pembury Road, following signs for A21 Hastings and take a left at the second roundabout and join the A21 Hastings direction. Take the A262 signposted Goudhurst. Continue through Goudhurst and follow signs for Benenden on B2086. The church is in the village on the right, set back behind The Green.



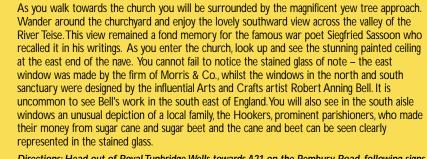
t 01892 722140

(Partial)

'A church with a poetic view'

Predominant period: Medieval

Opening Times: Daily - daylight hours from 9.00am High Street, Brenchley, Kent



Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells towards A21 on the Pembury Road, following signs for A21 Hastings and take a left at the second roundabout and join the A21 Hastings direction. Carry on until the next roundabout and take a left onto B2160 signposted Matfield. Continue along this road for approx. 2 miles and take a right signposted Brenchley onto Brenchley Road. Enter the village and continue through the High Street and the church is next to The Bull Inn.





ST THOMAS-A-BECKET, CAPEL 'The preaching site of St Thomas Becket

Church Lane, Capel, Tonbridge, Kent

t 020 7936 2285 (The Churches Conservation Trust) w www.visitchurches.org.uk

Predominant period: Norman and Medieval Opening Times: KEYHOLDER SYSTEM. By appointment only.

The key is available from a nearby property on Church Lane or the Vicarage on Sychem Lane (see Directions section).



This church is reputed to be built on the spot where the twelfth century Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Becket (who was later martyred under King Henry II) preached whilst on a pilgrimage. The most striking and unusual feature of this church is its interior with extensive medieval wall paintings which cover the north wall of the nave representing stories from the Bible – both the Old and New Testaments. As you leave through the churchyard take a look at the ancient yew tree which is believed to be over a thousand years old. This church is cared for by The Churches Conservation Trust.

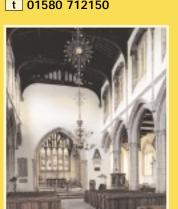
Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on the Pembury Road, following signs for A21. Go straight on at the two roundabouts following signs for Paddock Wood and Maidstone (A228). Continue along A228 until you see a sign for Capel on the left leading you onto Alders Road. After about 1 mile you will pass Sychem Lane on the right (where a key can be collected at The Vicarage which is the house at the end of the lane). Continue on Alders Road and take the next right hand turn, which is Church Lane. The church entrance and car park are on your left. A keyholder can also be found in the white house opposite the church. - × 3

(Partial)

ST DUNSTAN'S, CRANBROOK 'The Cathedral of the Weald'

Predominant period: Medieval and Sixteenth century Opening Times: Daily 9.00am - 4.00pm (sometimes later)

Off the High Street, Cranbrook, Kent t 01580 712150



St Dunstan's stands out as an unusually large church – thus it is nicknamed 'The Cathedral of the Weald'. It owes its size to the wealth of the area from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries generated through the growth of a prosperous cloth industry.

The interior of the church is full of unusual architectural and historical features. The porch has an upper room – called a parvise – said to have been used as a place of imprisonment for local Protestant martyrs in Mary I's reign. On the porch ceiling is a boss of a Green Man – an ancient pagan figure. Installed in the eighteenth century to (unsuccessfully) win back non-conformist Baptists is a total immersion font – probably the finest example in England. The clock mechanism was the prototype for Big Ben and the organ contains parts originally designed for use at The Crystal Palace. Returning to the outside of the church, on the north side of the church there are several gargoyles representing beasts and dragons probably dating back to the fifteenth century Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on the Pembury Road following signs for the A21. Take the A21 signposted Hastings. Carry on the A21, straight over the Kippings Cross roundabout and before Lamberhurst village take a left-hand turn onto A262 signposted Ashford. Continue through Goudhurst village, on A262 for approx. 4 miles until you reach a roundabout. Take the last exit on the right signposted Cranbrook (A229). The church is situated in the centre of Cranbrook, on the junction with Stone Street and the High Street.



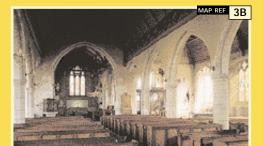
ST MARY'S, GOUDHURST

'A monumental setting' High Street, Goudhurst, Kent t 01580 211332

e canonmack@talk21.com w www.goudhurst.co.uk

summer months.

Predominant period: Medieval Opening Times: Daily 8.00am - 6.00pm. Tower open Saturdays and Sundays in the



Set on a hilltop with amazing views from its seventeenth century tower, St Mary's contains a superb collection of monuments to the great and the good of the past. The most extraordinary are the two sixteenth century wooden effigies of the Culpepers. The Culpepers were a politically powerful family and their local iron foundries made the guns with which Drake's navy defeated the Armada and it was a Culpeper who helped found both Virginia and California in the USA. The monument is one of very few examples of wooden effigies in the country. The churchyard has some interesting history – it was the site of a memorable event, the Battle of Goudhurst, where the notorious smugglers 'the Hawkhurst Gang' were defeated. As you wander in the churchyard, take a look behind the East Window, and see if you can find the gravestone displaying the skull and crossbones – according to local legend it is a pirate's grave! Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on the Pembury Road following signs for the A21. Take the A21 signposted Hastings. Carry on the A21, straight over the Kippings Cross roundabout and before Lamberhurst village take a

reach Goudhurst village where the church is situated at the top of a steep hill with pedestrian entrance from the High Street. For parking take a right before the church at the crossroads just past the pond.

left-hand turn onto A262 signposted Ashford. Carry along this road until you





TIMELINE

Christianity arrives in England during the Roman occupation

Romans withdraw their last egions from England

Angles, Saxons and Jutes conquer England

St Augustine sent to England by Pope Gregory on a mission to convert the pagans of southern England to Christianity

Invasions and settling of the Vikings 793-c.1000

802-1016 Saxon England

850 -15th c. Medieval England

1016-1035 **Danish Rule**

1042

Saxon dynasty restored in the person of **Edward the Confessor**

William the Conqueror of 1066 Normandy defeats Harold in the Battle of Hastings

1066-1154 Norman England

Doomsday Book - the first comprehensive survey of England - is completed 1086

1096-1291 The Crusades

Thomas Becket murdered at the hands of Henry II's men 1170

King John seals the 1215 Magna Carta

1348-9 The Black Death - a third of England's population dies

1415 **Battle of Agincourt**

War of the Roses

Caxton set up first printing press Battle of Bosworth - Henry Tudor defeats Richard III

Tudor England 1485-1603

Henry VIII becomes King 1509 1517 Martin Luther starts

the Protestant Reformation in Germany 1529-1535 The English Reformation

and Henry VIII declares himself the Head of the Church of England

1536-1539 Dissolution of the Monasteries

1553-1558 Mary I restores Roman Catholicism in England

1558 - 1603 Queen Elizabeth I restores Protestantism and establishes the Anglican Church of England

1603-1714 Stuart England

1642-1646 The Civil War

653-1658 Oliver Cromwell rules England

1660-1685 Stuart line reinstated as

Charles II crowned king

The Plague

Fire of London

1685-1702 The Glorious Revolution -William & Mary rule England

1714-1837 Georgian England

John Wesley writes the Methodist tract the Deed of Declaration

House of Windsor

1837-1901 Victorian England

1914-1918 World War I

1901-

1939-1945 World War II

1992 General synod in Britain votes in favour of ordination of women priests.

ST MARGARET'S, HORSMONDEN

'The church of Jane Austen's ancestors'

Brick Kiln Lane, Horsmonden, Kent

t 01892 725770 w www.horsmonden.co.uk

In a beautiful, secluded setting with lovely views from the churchyard, St Margaret's can boast some famous connections – being the family church of Jane Austen's ancestors, with a churchyard containing many of their interesting tombs. Inside the church is a memorial bust of John Read – the little known inventor of the stomach pump and round oast house! A window commemorates Simon Willard, who emigrated to New England in 1635 and helped found Concord, Massachusetts. St Margaret's is often said to be so isolated because it was a plague church, whose villagers moved away. In reality it is typical of early Wealden churches that were built to serve a scattered farming community and whose later villages grew up in a more suitable location.

Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on the Pembury Road following signs for the A21. Take the A21 signposted Hastings. Carry on the A21, straight over the Kippings Cross roundabout and before Lamberhurst village take a left-hand turn onto A262 signposted Ashford. Pass over the Horsmonden-Lamberhurst crossroads and continue for about 1 mile. At a sharp bend before Spelmonden Farm, turn left into Spelmonden Road. Go past another farm and take the first right into Brick Kiln Lane and the Church is first right again.

(Partial)

CHRIST CHURCH, KILNDOWN 'The church that shaped the Gothic Revival'

Predominant history: Nineteenth century (Victorian) Opening Times: Daily dawn Church Road, Kilndown, Cranbrook, Kent t 01892 890244

w www.goudhurst.co.uk (Parish Website) The only real clue from the exterior to what lies inside the church, is the tomb to the right of the

entrance path, which should catch your eye. Believing that all churches should be built and furnished in the Gothic Style of the Middle Ages, Christ Church was transformed from a sandstone box to its present Gothic Revival splendour by Alexander Beresford Hope the stepson of Viscount Beresford, one of Wellington's generals. He made this village church into one of the most important buildings in the country that subsequently influenced the design and decoration of many across the world. You have to see the interior to believe it!

Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on the Pembury Road following signs for the A21. Take the A21 signposted Hastings. Carry on the A21, straight over the Kippings Cross roundabout and carry on through Lamberhurst village. Outside Lamberhurst village, before Flimwell take a left into Church Road, signposted Kilndown. Carry along this road for approx. 1/2 mile. The church and car park are on the right.



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PEMBURY OLD CHURCH (ST PETER'S), PEMBURY 'The church with an entrancing tale to tell'

Old Church Road, Pembury, Kent t 01892 824761

Predominant period: Norman & Medieval Opening Times: Open Sundays 3.00pm - 5.00pm May to September. Groups by special arrangement.

Predominant period: Seventeenth century

Opening Times: Monday - Saturday 11.00am - 3.00pm

Predominant period: Medieval

Opening times: Daily, daytime hours

The church has a strange tale to tell about an eighteenth century member of the congregation. Ann West had a dream she had been buried whilst in a trance. Afraid this would happen for real, she made provision if it did. She instructed her bailiff to bring food and drink to her coffin for twelve months, leave the vault open and her coffin lid left off. From her apparent death in 1803 (from which she did not to our knowledge awake) until 1946 the vault remained open and you were still able to see directly into her coffin as the lid remained left off. The church itself has features that display its Norman origins - for example the round-headed window above the South door and others on the west side of the tower arch. There are interesting monuments to a Victorian civil engineer Sir Morton Peto, responsible for the construction of many major buildings and monuments such as The Houses of Parliament, and one to a member of the Spencer-Churchill family, presumed to be an ancestor of Sir Winston Churchill.

Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on the Pembury Road, following signs for A21. Go straight on at the two roundabouts following signs for Paddock Wood and Maidstone (A228). Go straight on at the traffic lights (do not go into Pembury Village). Just before the overhead pedestrian bridge take a left into Old Church Road (signposted Pembury Old Church). Continue for approx. 1/2 mile and the church is at the end of the road

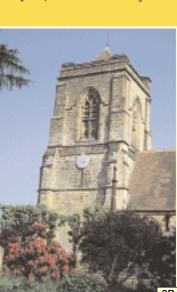


London Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent t 01892 511745

e kingcharlesthemartyr@hotmail.com Do not be fooled by the plain brick exterior – within this church, built to give Anglicans visiting 'the Wells' somewhere to worship, is the most extraordinary interior with a magnificent plaster ceiling; the work of Sir Christopher Wren's chief plasterer, Henry Doogood. Among this amazing plasterwork you will find a humorous figure of a moustached angel. Opened in 1678, the dedication to King Charles the Martyr shows the strong Royalist feeling after the restoration of King Charles II. Jonas Hanway who introduced the umbrella to England, was a member of the parish Vestry in 1775 and you will notice there are umbrella racks at the end of most of the pews. Two lists of subscribers to the building of the church include the diarist Samuel Pepys. Princess (later Queen) Victoria attended services here and a brass plague marks her seat.

Directions: Situated in the centre of the old town area of Royal Tunbridge Wells, the church is across from The Pantiles on the corner between London Road and Nevill Street. The pedestrian entrance is on London Road.





ST MARY THE VIRGIN, SPELDHURST 'The Glory of Speldhurst is the glass windows.' Pevsner

Speldhurst Hill, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent

t 01892 861187 w www.speldhurst.org/church

There has been a church on the site of the present Victorian building since at least 1115, but spectacular stained glass designed by Burne-Jones and William Morris. Look out for the

will also see early glass here by the master Victorian window designer Charles Eamer Kempe. Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on A264. Carry on through Langton Green and take the first right outside the centre of the village signposted Speldhurst. Carry on until you reach a T-junction. St Mary's is located on this junction.



ALL SAINTS, TUDELEY 'An unique exhibition of Chagall windows'

Church Lane, Tudeley, Nr Tonbridge, Kent t 0870 7441456

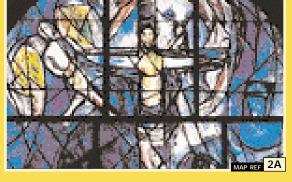
Predominant date: Norman onwards Opening Times: Daily 9.00am - 6.00pm

BAYHAM ABBEY

'The picturesque ruins of religious history'

w www.english-heritage.org.uk

(ENGLISH HERITAGE)



Although All Saints church can trace its existence to the Doomsday book – and maybe as far back as the seventh century – the most remarkable feature of this church is a twentieth century addition. Following the tragic death of their daughter in a sailing accident, Sir Henry and Lady d'Avigdor-Goldsmid commissioned the Russian born artist Marc Chagall to design the striking east window. Following the success of its installation a further 11 windows were designed by Chagall and installed at All Saints between 1974 and 1985. The simplicity of the church provides the perfect backdrop for what comprises the country's largest collection of Chagall's works. Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on the Pembury Road

following signs for the A21. Go straight on at the two roundabouts following signs for Paddock Wood and Maidstone (A228) and go straight on at the traffic lights onto A228. Carry on this road until you reach another roundabout and turn left onto B2017 following signs for Five Oak Green. Continue along the B2017 through Five Oak Green towards Tonbridge. After approx. 21/2 miles take the next right signposted All Saints Church and the church is at the end of this



Opening Times: All year end of March to end of September daily 10.00am - 6.00pm, October 10.00am - 5.00pm, November - March weekends only

Admission charges apply. Bayham Road, Lamberhurst, Kent t 01892 890381

It will take some imagination to see what Premonstratensian monks – nicknamed the 'white canons' due to their white attire - originally built in the thirteenth century. The religious contemplation and Bayham, situated in the valley of the River Teise, was a place of perfect peace and tranquillity – which it remains to this day. Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the sixteenth century this impressive abbey became a ruin, which was later used in the eighteenth century, to provide a stunning backdrop for romantically Directions: Head out of Royal Tunbridge Wells on the B2169 Bayham Road. Stay on this

road through Bells Yew Green and past Frant Rail station. Continue along this road for approx. 3 miles and the entrance for Bayham Abbey is signposted on the left hand side.



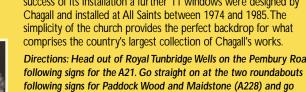


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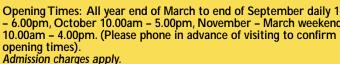


Predominant period: Nineteenth century (Victorian) Opening Times: Daily 9.00am - 5.00pm

only fragments of early walling survive. The original Norman church was rebuilt in the fifteenth century using money paid as a ransom following the Battle of Agincourt, but that church was in turn replaced in 1791 and again in 1871. The main reason for visiting St Mary's has to be the windows representing Ethelbert and Bertha the first Christian King and Queen of Kent. You







monks preferred to settle in secluded places conducive to an uninterrupted life of

