

## St Mary's Church

Our church has a rich history and is one of the last few remaining historic buildings that once formed the historic village of St Mary Cray. Today St Mary Cray is much more developed and populated, drawing a range of residents from all social strata and attracting visitors to the local shopping centre, the Nugent Shopping Park.

This Medieval parish church is designated a Grade II\* listing as it has retained considerable early fabric, especially internally and has high quality masonry and a beautiful flint facing that was applied during the 19th century restoration. The church also has some lovely brasses.

The church has a simple traditional layout. The West Tower and the South and North Nave arches date back to the early 13th century. The aisles were rebuilt in the 14th century with further work done on the chancel in the 15th century. Included in the church is an early 16th century side chapel, the Hodsoll Chapel. This is used for special laying of hands prayers during our 10.00 am Sunday communion services.

Bells have been ringing at St Mary's since 1583. The present ring of six bells was installed in 1913 and is hung for full circle change ringing in the traditional style. The bells continue to be rung regularly for Sunday morning worship, weddings and special services. Bell practice is every Thursday evening new members are welcome






St Mary's is an 'open' tower and welcomes visiting bands on a regular basis. The bells are easy to ring and provide an ideal learning venue for District practices, bell handling lessons and competitions. Typically quarter peals (about 45 minutes ringing) are attempted at least once a month and full peals of around three hours duration about twice each year.

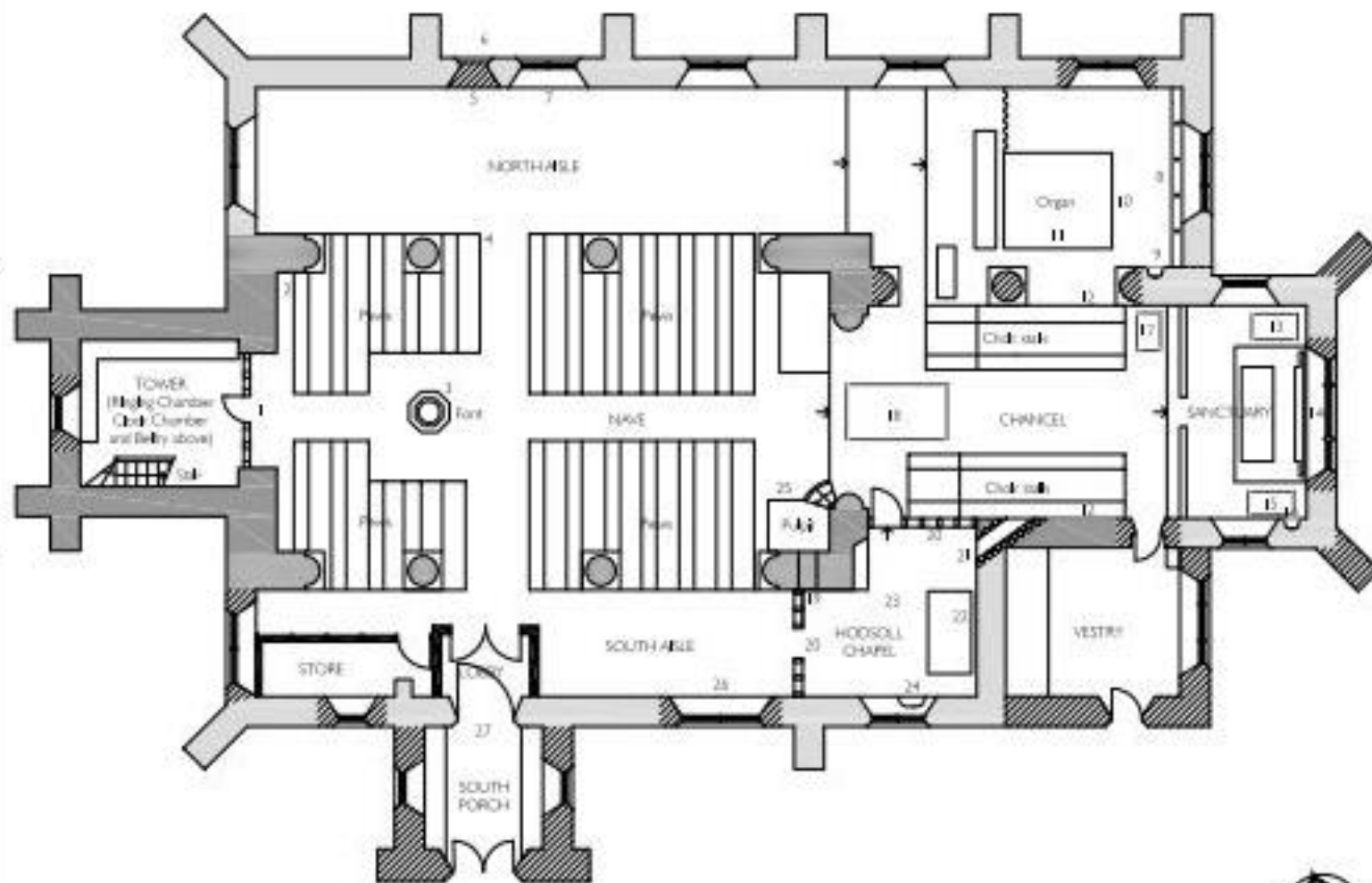
As a Grade II\* listed building, St Mary's needs caring preservation as a place of Christian worship and also as part of our national heritage. Time has taken its toll on the building and restoration work is underway work. The most pressing need was the renovation of our spire. The cedar shingles were deteriorating rapidly so the spire was no longer fully weather-proof which had also led to infestation by pigeons. This had put the bells at risk and would have compromised the rest of the church, if not fixed soon. We received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund which, with our own fund-raising activities enabled us to the effect the necessary restoration.

## FEATURES

- 1. 11<sup>th</sup> C. wall window (replaced)
- 2. 11<sup>th</sup> C. wall window (replaced)
- 3. 11<sup>th</sup> C. wall window (replaced)
- 4. 11<sup>th</sup> C. wall window
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- 100. 11<sup>th</sup> C. wall window

## KEY

-  13<sup>th</sup> C.
-  14<sup>th</sup> C.
-  16<sup>th</sup> C.
-  1861-1895
-  1950s



## DEVELOPMENT (speculated)



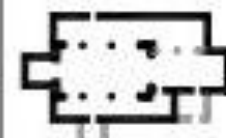
13<sup>th</sup> Century

- Church built c.1250



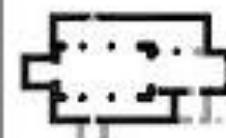
14<sup>th</sup> Century

- Chancel extended
- Aisle rebuilt
- Hooded Chapel and North Aisle Chapel added
- Chancel extended



16<sup>th</sup> Century

- Two Storey South Porch with Paved Room added
- Hoodsoll Chapel added
- Two Storey Vestry added



19<sup>th</sup> Century - current

- New windows added
- South Porch rebuilt
- Vestry rebuilt
- Chancel reconstructed
- Church Interior reordered

THOMAS  
FORD  
& PARTNERS  
CHARTERED  
ARCHITECTS  
SURVEYORS

## ST MARY CRAY PARISH CHURCH

St Mary's Church, High Street, St Mary Cray, Orpington, Kent BR5 3NL



 heritage  
lottery fund  
**LOTTERY FUNDED**