

## The vanished village and the parish

Waterden was a small village which died out in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, possibly because of enclosures. The centre of the village was to the north-east of the church, approximately where Waterden Farm is today.

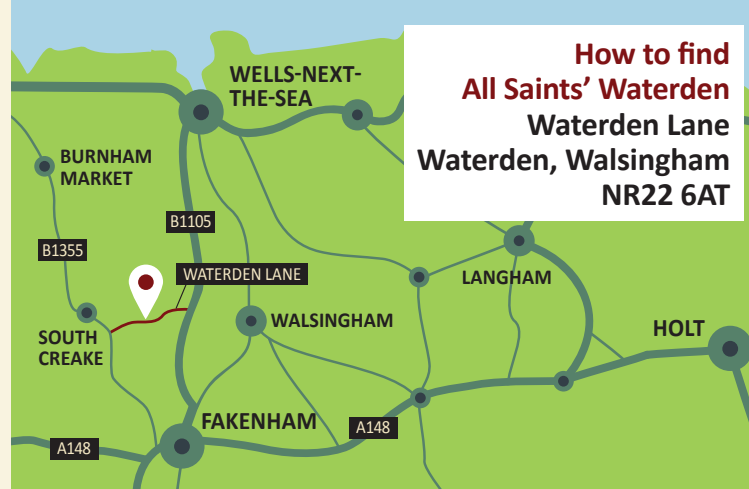
A track, part of which is still a public footpath, linked the church and the village, running along the far side of the small stream which is the western boundary of the churchyard.

There is a footbridge across the stream, accessible in the north-west corner of the churchyard. This was probably where villagers entered the church.

Sir Edward Coke, an ancestor of the Earls of Leicester, whose seat is at nearby Holkham Hall, bought the land in 1604. The land remains part of the estate of the Earls of Leicester.

All Saints' is a Chapel of Ease in the Parish of South Creake with Waterden and part of the Creakes Benefice.

The last rector left or died in the mid-1950s. The rectory, now known as the Old Rectory, was built in 1850. It lies just to the south of the church and is part of the estate of the Earls of Leicester, who are patrons of All Saints'.



**How to find  
All Saints' Waterden**  
Waterden Lane  
Waterden, Walsingham  
NR22 6AT

The church is among trees 100 yards off Waterden Lane down a grass track. It is signposted from the B1105 Fakenham - Wells road and the B1355 Fakenham - Burnham Market road.

### Parking

Parking is in the small car park just inside the entrance from the lane or on the verge of the lane.

### Accessibility

The grassy track from the lane and car park is quite rough and may not be suitable for wheel chair users and people with disabilities.

### Opening times and services

The church is always open. We have regular services in the summer and a Christmas Eve Carol Service.

### More Information

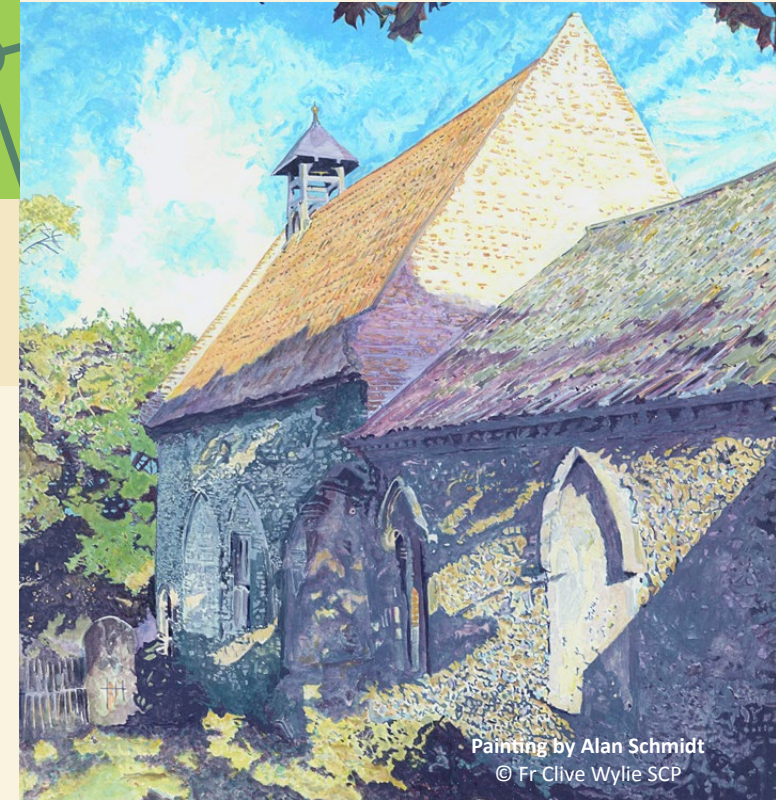
[www.waterden.org](http://www.waterden.org)    @creakesbenefice

### Friends of All Saints' Waterden

[www.waterden.org/foasw](http://www.waterden.org/foasw)  @foasw

# all saints church waterden

## An Ancient Hidden Norfolk Gem



Painting by Alan Schmidt  
© Fr Clive Wylie SCP

Only a few miles from the coast, All Saints' Waterden is ancient, mysterious and spiritual. The church is active, always open to everyone, and loved by the community.

Wander down the grassy lane to the tiny church set amid fields. Explore the rich architectural variety. Amble through the beautiful churchyard.

Gaze across the fields to the site of the vanished village of Waterden mentioned in the Domesday Book.



all saints church  
waterden



Geoffrey Watling  
Charity



This leaflet is made possible by a generous grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Leaflet designed by [www.uglystudios.com](http://www.uglystudios.com)

## A place of mystery and spirituality

**All Saints' Waterden is a mysterious and spiritual place.**

Waterden derives from "Waterdenna", the name of the village in the Domesday Book of 1086, meaning a "watery valley" in Anglo-Saxon.

Domesday does not record that Waterden had a church then. The exact origins of the present building are unknown.

It's clear, though, that the church has undergone many ups and downs. For example, the church was closed for five years after a tree fell on it in the Great Gale of 1895.

The rare and fascinating architectural hodgepodge that we see today is the heritage of perhaps 1,000 years of use, neglect and revival.

All Saints' underwent a thorough restoration with the generous help of the National Heritage Lottery Fund and other donors in 2018-19.

A rural gem of a church © John Fielding



An ancient, mysterious church © Jeremy Whigham

## The building

**All Saints' is Grade II\* listed. From the outside, it has three main elements: the chancel, the nave, and ruins at the west end.**

The ruins were thought to be the remains of a fallen tower. But they were probably part of a nave whose west end collapsed.

Archaeological excavation has revealed the outlines of a side aisle and chapel on the south side of the church. The aisle probably dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the chapel may be older.

Main features such as the doorways, nave and chancel arch are 12<sup>th</sup> century. Much of the rest of the building is Early English (13<sup>th</sup> century). It has been suggested that the five small windows high up (four of them blocked) – the clerestory – are Anglo-Saxon but that is uncertain.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the nave was shortened, the west wall built and the north porch rebuilt. At the east end the medieval window was filled in and replaced by the four-light window.

Two windows on the south side of the nave and one in the south side of the chancel were also replaced, as was the large window on the north side of the nave.

The box pews are 19<sup>th</sup> century and the octagonal font is 14<sup>th</sup> century. There are 10 memorial slabs and a small brass plaque affixed to the lectern.

In the churchyard, recent graves lie alongside much older ones, testifying to the close connection between All Saints' and the community over the centuries.

A boundary stone on the right where the track to the church joins the churchyard marks the point where church (glebe) lands join lay lands.

