

## A Brief History of St Andrew's Parish Church



The copper spire is a landmark seen from all approaches to the village. This was a nineteenth century addition to what was a simple flint faced church built about 1150, which included a stone font. This Norman building probably replaced a wooden Saxon church.

A tower was added a hundred years later and then a chancel.

The Brocas family of Beaurepaire built a chapel next to the chancel in 1420. They included some fine brass memorials to members of their family and a chest tomb. A porch was added to the south door in 1533.

The tower contains six bells; the earliest was probably cast in the 1390s and three bells are inscribed with dates between 1587 and 1602. The tenor bell, weighing in at 11cwt (550Kg) was cast in 1618. The most recent, the treble, was cast in commemoration of World War I.

The pulpit and three-sided lectern, housing Fox's Book of Martyrs are 17th century.

Significant changes were made two hundred years later. Elizabeth Chute of The Vyne restored and raised the tower and added the spire in 1834; William Lyde Wiggett Chute built the north aisle. Chute family hatchments and memorials embellish the nave.

Later in the century major internal changes were made including the removal of a gallery and large box pews, and the installation of a pipe organ. Most of the stained glass is of this period, with the exceptions of a window in the Brocas chapel that is made up of fragments of 16-18th century glass, and a modern window with a floral design in the north aisle.

Restoration work was also undertaken in the twentieth century and the organ was moved from the chancel to the west end of the church.

We are fortunate to have such a fine Grade I listed church in Sherborne St John.