



## St. Andrew's, Ipplepen

### A short guide



# Welcome to St. Andrew's from the Rector

A very warm welcome to all who come to this parish church of St. Andrew. You may be new to the village, a long-established resident or just a visitor – whatever the reason for your visit you are very welcome.

You will immediately see what a beautiful place it is – not just the architecture or the way it has been decorated but also because there is a real sense that this is a “thin space” between earth and heaven where you can feel closer to God. Many people come simply to get away from the busyness of their every day lives and be still and at peace. Some come to pray or remember a loved one. It does not matter why you come; just enjoy the place.

This guide has been put together as a tour around the church, and uses information from a variety of sources of local and public knowledge – we hope it will help you become familiar with the special features of our church... your church.

We are very fortunate that we can keep the church open for visitors during the day so that we can share a place where worship has taken place from at least the fourteenth century and, most likely, Saxon times on this site. We are simply the guardians of this place for the time being – it will be here long after we have gone and we will eventually become part of its history.

In order to keep this legacy for the future we have to raise a huge amount of money for its upkeep and operation. If you would like to contribute then there is a safe box by the door you came in. Gift Aid envelopes are available for tax payers to maximize the effect of their gift. If you would like to consider a legacy then please contact the Rector for more information. And whether or not you leave a gift please do sign the Visitors' Book and check our service times in the porch and in the free Beacon magazine. We hope to see you again soon.

In Christ,

Rev. Peter Ashman

# St Andrew's Church Ipplepen

The building you see is the third church on the site. The first was Saxon, probably wooden, and no trace of it remains. The second Norman building is hidden within the present structure. The earliest recorded date of the perpendicular building you see is May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1318, when Bishop Stapledon dedicated the altar in the chancel.

**Inside the church** you are immediately aware of how large and bright a building it is. The high clear glass windows are placed immediately opposite the arches between the pillars to let in as much light as possible.

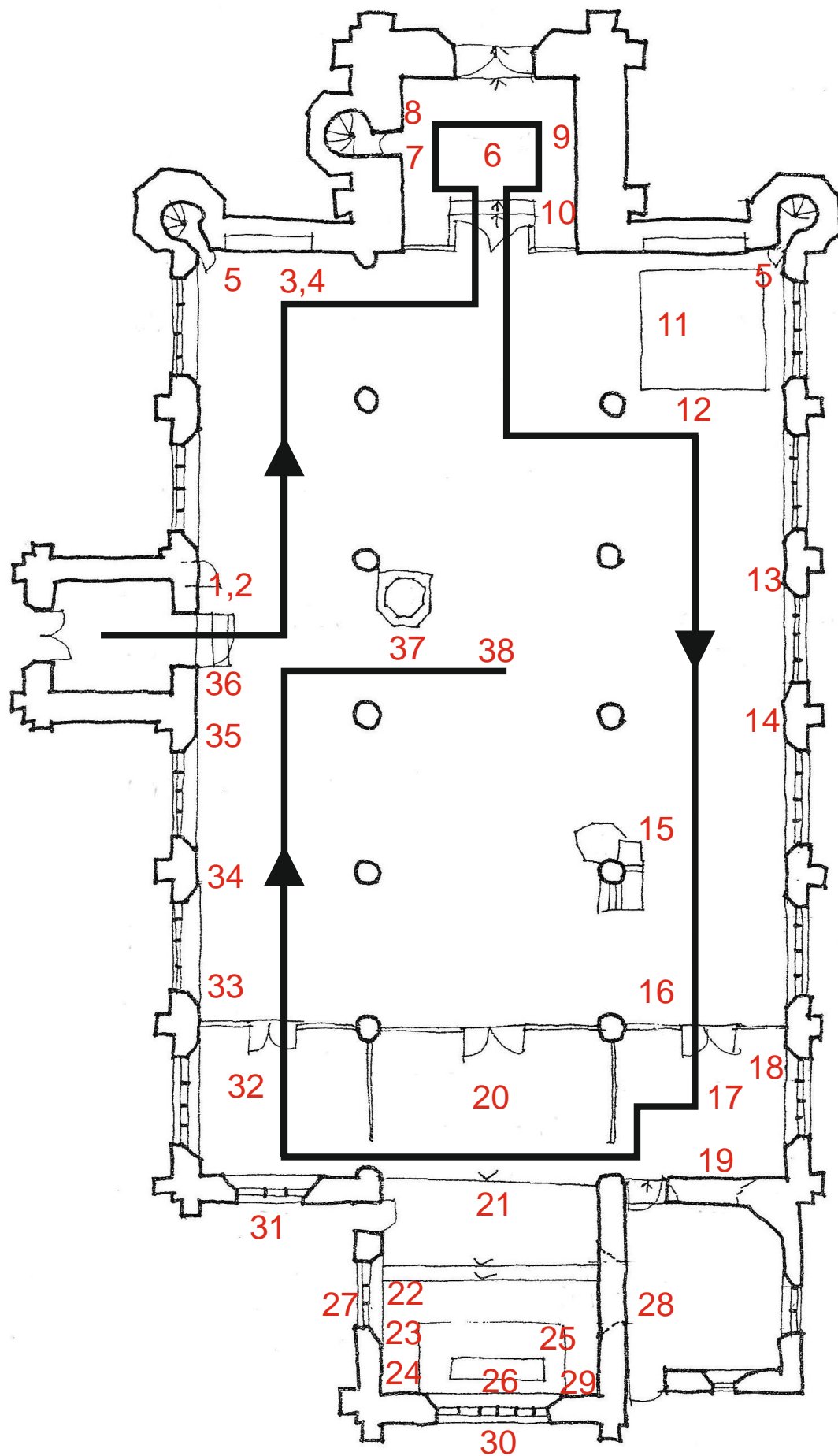
The Victorian pitch pine pews were due to be replaced by carved oak ones, but only the first two rows were completed. The timber for the rest was destroyed in a fire following a bombing raid in the last war.

**The octagonal pillars** themselves are of a hard sandstone from Cockington near Torquay, re-shaped from the original round Norman pillars. At the top of each is a capital made of Beer stone, some with carving, some without. One or two are started and unfinished - probably the mason succumbing to the Black Death.

**The arcades** - the rows of arches - are cleverly supported at one end by the weight of the tower, and at the other end by the thick walls of the chancel. You may be surprised to know that the building doesn't run from east to west - much nearer north-east to south-west - but in fact this is typical of old churches and one explanation is that they were built to face sunrise on the day of their patron saint.

You enter the church from the **south porch**, and you can see where different types of stone from the earlier building have been re-used - environmental friendliness is not just a modern idea. The seats in the porch are made of greenish stone from Hurdwick Quarry at Tavistock - probably brought here when the Abbey there was demolished. In one corner there is a red sandstone stoup, or bowl, to hold holy water, but the rim was cut away at the reformation so that it could no longer be used.

Above the door is a small niche where there would originally have been a figure of our patron saint. The main door into the church is as old as the building and we still have the original key which weighs 1lb 11oz. Above the porch is a small room called a parvise, which a priest could have used.

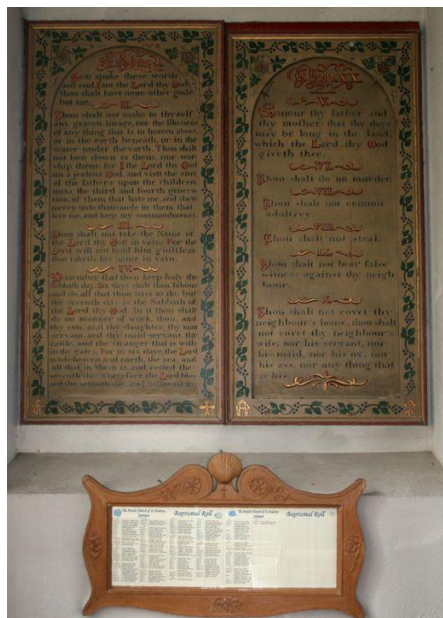


Suggested route around the church



## A journey round the church

We suggest that once you are inside the church you turn immediately left, and on the wall you can see the **lists of Priors, Vicars and Rectors (1)** which date from 1274. Between these is the door leading up to the **parvise (2)**, with a circular staircase cut into the wall.



At the west end of the aisle are the **Ten Commandments (3)** painted on boards, which used to be on either side of the altar in the Chancel. You may see the spelling of “adultery” in number seven, although it is a painter’s error rather than a legal loophole.

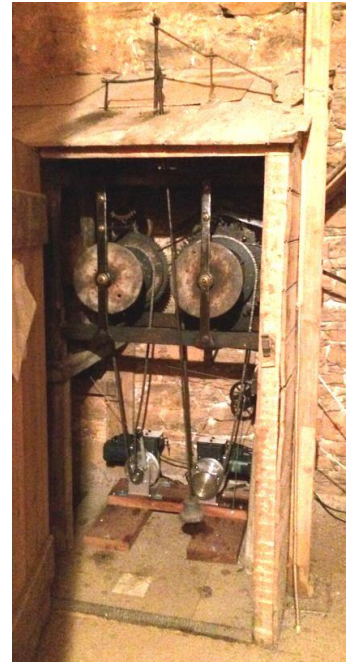
Beneath this is a modern **Baptism Register (4)** made by local craftsmen, including a carved cockle shell - because one is often used to pour water during a baptism.

To the left of this is a locked door which leads to one of a pair of **spiral staircases (5)** giving easy access to the roof for maintenance.

Turning the corner you come to the modern tower screen, made by local craftsmen, which separates the main part of the church from **the tower (6)**. Our tower is floodlit at night, the buttresses giving wonderful patterns of light and shade. Although not immediately obvious from the outside, this is a high point in the landscape, and at night the tower is visible for many miles around. It is about 92 feet to the top, with 107 steps to get there. It contains a fine ring of 8 bells in E, the tenor weighing just under a ton. Six were recast in 1797 from 4 pre-reformation bells, and two lighter bells were added in 1924. They are rung every Sunday morning without fail.



The door to the **tower stairs (7)** is as old as the building. In a room half way up the tower is a **clock**, about 400 years old, probably made by a Totnes bell founder. Listen and you can hear its loud, slow beat. It is unique in that it is in a wooden frame made from parts of bell wheels and it has no face. It chimes the hours and although all the original works still function, a little modern technology keeps it spot on time.



**Inside the tower (8)** you can clearly see rows of small holes, which were used to hold scaffolding timbers as the builders worked upwards from the inside. At the top you can see a large pair of holes where a huge beam was put in place to hold a pulley wheel to hoist building materials as the work progressed, and thoughtfully left for future maintenance.



You will notice a **framework (9)** with two ropes attached, and until recently this was used to wind the clock twice a day - an arduous task which is now done automatically by electric motors. You can still see the weights which power the clock hanging down. Behind this is an arched recess in the wall which is probably from an earlier building, its original function long lost in the mists of time. If you know what it was for, we do have a visitors' book with a comments section.

Next to this is a cupboard which holds a complete set of **Ellacombe Chimes (10)**. This mechanism allows one person to ring all eight bells from here, and even play tunes on them.



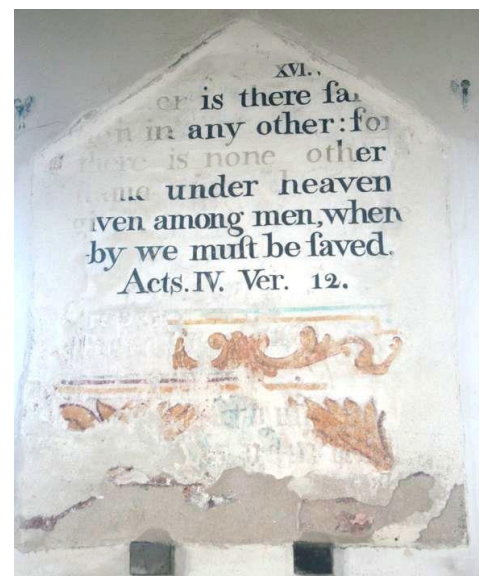


Returning to the nave of the church the **organ (11)** is on the left and on one end we have hung a framed Victorian **altar frontal (12)** designed in a pre-Raphaelite style. You can see where it has been worn by the priest's robes rubbing against it for a century and a half when he celebrated Holy Communion.



Further along in the north wall is a recess built into a buttress and known as the **Devil's Door (13)**. In ancient times it was kept open during Baptism in the belief that the Devil would be able to make a speedy exit as holy water was poured on the child. The Beer stone capitals of the two pillars nearest this door are the only ones carved with figures rather than flowers. There are the faces of a man and a woman as well as a cat a dog and possibly an owl. The sandstone above the outside of the Devil's Door is Norman, probably the oldest thing in Ipplepen. It is much eroded, but it is possible to make out parts of a swan, a Maltese cross and a spoked wheel.

On the wall just past the Devil's Door, where a large memorial had to be removed, you can see part of a **text (14)** in Georgian lettering, with some mediaeval decoration below. Probably there is much more hidden beneath the present plain colourwash.



As you walk further down the north aisle you come to the **pulpit (15)** which was dedicated by Bishop Lacy in 1430. The medieval colouring has been preserved and the original carving is superb. The niches contain figures of saints, painted over in black by the puritans, but their outlines are slowly becoming visible as time passes. The pulpit stands on a huge block of conglomerate stone, probably part of an earlier building, which was found when the Chancel floor was raised.

Above the pulpit you can see where the stonework was chiselled away and an iron hook fixed. This was to hang a sounding board - a way of directing the preacher's voice down to his listeners - an earlier form of a public address system.

A delicate 17<sup>th</sup> century staircase leads up to the pulpit.



You now approach the **Screen (16)**, also dedicated by Bishop Lacy in 1430. The lower part is original, but the darker parts of the canopy were restored in 1897 by Herbert Read of Exeter. All the paintings were obscured from Cromwell's time until 1897, and they were fully restored in 1967-8. Each figure holds its name on a scroll and they are, from left to right:



Jonah, St. Mark, Joel, an unknown apostle, Daniel, St. Simon, Habbakuk, St. Philip, Ezekiel, St. James the Great, Jeremiah, St. John (with a poisoned chalice), two plain panels and then St. John with an eagle, St. Mark, St. Peter, Moses, St. Andrew, Zachariah, St. Matthias, Nathan, St. Thomas and Sibilla.





Inside the north door of the screen, is a small modern **chapel (17)**, used daily for Morning Prayer. There is a locked door to a spiral staircase leading to the **Rood Loft (18)** - the top of the screen. In mediaeval times some parts of the service took place from this loft.

On the east window is a box containing an ornate **Bible (19)** with Arabic text, given by King Hussein of Jordan to an Ipplepen resident, the late Commander Ivor Thorning.

Next to this is the door to the Victorian Vestry. You pass through the Parclose Screen, the same age as the main screen, into the **Chancel (20)**. The front row of what seem to be choir stalls are in fact clergy stalls, designed to face eastwards and backing onto the screen. The **Communion rails (21)** carry the date 1724 and behind them the Victorian floor and steps to the altar are made of polished local limestone known as Ipplepen marble. To the right hand side are three **Sedilia (22)** - seats for priests with wooden “cushions” - and further along the wall is a red sandstone **piscina (23)** (originally used to wash communion vessels) and an **Aumbry (24)** where the sacrament could be kept.

Two **oak chairs (25)** are made from timbers from the tithe barn which once stood in the grounds of Ipplepen Priory.



Behind the altar the Victorian **Reredos (26)** depicts well-known historic churchmen, and beneath each panel are words from the Te Deum.

The **side windows** are by Kempe, each bearing his trademark wheat sheaf. The **south window (27)** is in memory of Joseph Fletcher Robinson of Parkhill House, whose son was a friend of Conan Doyle, and the inspiration for “The Hound of the Baskervilles”. The **north window (28)**, also a Robinson memorial, carries **ancient glass** in the tracery, and the design of the chalice suggests that it probably came from the earlier Norman church here. One of the lights contains an ancient **Trinity Shield**. Below this window, in the corner, is a **recess (29)** which had a flue and



might have been part of an oven for baking sacramental bread.

The **main window (30)** shows Our Lord being enthroned as King, robed as a High Priest, being worshipped and adored by the heavenly host. The figure slaying the dragon is either an Archangel - or St. George.

The tracery of this window again has **mediaeval glass**. In the top left is a female saint bearing a palm branch, next the Royal arms of King Henry VII, then Cardinal Beaufort (who was Chancellor and Henry's father-in-law), and then a silver shield with St. George's cross. The second row depicts a female saint, St. John the Baptist, Bishop Grandisson's Arms (1327-70), Bishop Lacy's Arms (1420-56) and the Arms of Lawrence of Devon.

The likely explanation for this is that Bishop Lacy's Register for 1437 states that an obit (a remembrance) must be kept in Ipplepen Church for King Henry VII, Cardinal Beaufort, John Lawrence and his wife Jane. This was to be once a month, and paid for from the tithes.



Through the south Parclose screen is what is called the "Lady Chapel", but in fact it has no altar and is now set aside as a place to sit and reflect. The **east window (31)** here is the oldest in the church, but it has modern glass by Drake of Exeter. As you continue through towards the screen to the south aisle there are four **mediaeval tiles (32)** in the floor, saved when the Chancel floor was renewed.

Returning up the south aisle you will see on the first window cill a broken **clapper (33)** of one of the bells, with a small warning verse attached.



Further along on the wall is a **tablet (34)** which gives the names of two Ipplepen men who died in the Boer War - the ancient churchyard cross outside the south entrance was restored in their memory - and then there are **memorials** to the men of the parish who died in the two World Wars **(35)**.



Above the south door is the **Royal Coat of Arms of George 1 (36)**, probably re-used from the arms of King Charles. The bottom right hand corner of the shield has had the obligatory white horse of Hanover painted in and looking more like a rabbit. The Arms are dated 1725 and the records state that in this year *"Ye King's Arms in ye rood loft were new drawn and ye obliterated sentences new written"*. These "sentences" are in fact the Creed and Lord's Prayer, painted on the back of the coat of arms. When in place on the rood loft they would have been visible to the priest at the altar - perhaps a useful crib sheet.



From this point walk into the centre of the church to see the octagonal **font (37)**. This is carved from Beer stone, and dates from 1430-50. The upper tier of carving includes Bishop Lacy's coat of arms (three wild ducks heads), as well as the arms of the Courtenay family, and a Tudor rose. The lower tier includes the figure of St. Andrew, holding the X-shaped cross, and a figure holding a sword and a church - possibly St. Paul.

Above you is the 24-light **chandelier (38)**, most unusual for a country parish church. This originally hung in the church of St. Michael in Stone in Staffordshire, a wealthy town in the Potteries midway between the county town of Stafford and Stoke on Trent. It was purchased for St Andrew's in 1864 for £20 by Robert Harris, vicar of Ipplepen. There are 2 tiers of 12 branches; the height is 5 feet; the width 4ft 3in.; the weight is 176 lbs. There are 170 separate parts, including one iron rod in the centre, 2 lynch pins, 24 nuts and 24 washers. Exeter cathedral has one of comparable size. The one at Totnes is smaller with only 2 tiers with 9 branches. The use of brass, the size and rococo style suggest that it dates from 1765 and was made in London.



# General Information

## The Churchyard



Above the south door is a Sundial with the date 1715. The church is Grade 1 listed, as is the restored churchyard cross and a number of ancient tombs and grave stones. There are also six typical Commonwealth War Graves headstones, marking the graves of local men who died as a result of war.

Beyond the large trees is the grave of Bertram Fletcher Robinson, who lived at Parkhill, marked by a large granite cross. He was a journalist, and Assistant Editor of the Daily Express. He was a great friend of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who often stayed with him at Parkhill. It was

on one of these visits that they visited Dartmoor and we know they stayed at Princetown. Fletcher Robinson's coachman who drove them was called Baskerville and eventually the story they worked on was called "The Hound of the Baskervilles". In recent years it was suggested that Sir Arthur had been jealous of Fletcher Robinson and had poisoned him. There was a request to exhume Fletcher Robinson's body for a detailed autopsy, but following a prolonged hearing in a church court, the Chancellor of the Diocese refused the request as being groundless.



Also in the churchyard, close to the west lych gate is the grave of the some of the Baskerville family.

Adjoining the churchyard is the **Church Hall**. This was originally built as a Sunday School, with a cottage for the Superintendent next door. It has been modernized with a fully equipped kitchen and is in frequent use for church and parish events - and still for a "Sunday Club" for children.



## The Parish

Ipplepen is a large parish, and was originally the centre of the Deanery which included the whole of Torbay and the surrounding countryside. Its name is still perpetuated in the name of the present Deanery of Newton Abbot with Ipplepen.

In the 9<sup>th</sup> Century England was divided into “Hundreds” - about the same size as the Rural Deaneries - for administrative purposes. In 1187 the name of the local Hundred was changed to Haitor, Heytor or Haytorre. The area is nowhere near Haytor on Dartmoor and it has been suggested by Mr. Arthur French, a local historian, that the name comes from Hettor in Ipplepen. The tithe map of the 1840's shows the Hettor area as “Haytor Common”.

It seems that Ipplepen, with its Priory next to the church, and giving its name to the Deanery and Hundred, was an important centre in days gone. The only larger place in the area recorded in the Exeter Domesday Book, was Totnes. It is a place of great antiquity - a copper axe head discovered at Parkhill, now in the British Museum is dated at 1500BC and there are Romano-British remains at Orley Common and extensive ones at Dainton Cross which are the subject of a long-term excavation. An Iron Age settlement has been excavated near Stoneycombe quarry.

Much more information about the church and parish is contained in the booklet “Ipplepen” by Arthur French (ISBN 1 903585 28 7) and a booklet, now out of print, “The Churches and Parishes of Ipplepen and Torbryan” by The Rev R.D. Cooke, Vicar of Ipplepen 1897-1939.

## The Vicarages

Vicars of Ipplepen have lived in at least four different houses. In Tudor times they occupied part of the house now called The Priory (The Priory is a relatively modern name, the original Priory at Ipplepen being next to the church where the Health Centre now stands). Later, Church House opposite the east Lych gate was built for the Vicar (although William Taunton, Vicar 1723-83, complained that “with 12 rooms 'tis very small”). The Vicarage in Orley Road was built in 1890 and a modern house in Paternoster Lane was converted as a Rectory in about 1980.

## The view from the tower

Looking eastwards over the roof of the church you can make out the oval boundary of the original Saxon village. Church Path and Paternoster Lane, immediately below with ancient limestone walls, mark the nearest boundary. You can follow this round, down the present main street and North Street. The car park of the Wellington Inn, and the nurseries beyond, are the original village green. There is much modern development beyond this.



The Georgian house nearest the end of the church is a previous vicarage. Looking West the Victorian vicarage adjoins the churchyard and towards the south, beyond the large yew tree, the modern Health Centre is the site of the original Priory.



Looking south



Looking west



Looking north



# The “Beacon Parishes” Mission Community

St. Andrew’s Ipplepen is part of an active Mission Community, sharing a priest with Torbryan, Denbury, Broadhempston and Woodland. The parishes work closely with each other, sometimes joining together in one of the churches for a service, especially Patronal Festivals and special occasions.



Being a Mission Community allows us to pool our talents and resources and to work together in a common aim and purpose. As our name suggests we are beacons of God’s mission in these places, sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and God’s love... and we do it together. The flames of our logo represent the three parishes of the Mission Community (two parishes each have two churches), each of which has had, at some time, a beacon and each different and special in their own way but growing and working in the same direction. The green centre of the logo represents the rural nature of our communities and the cross, of course, represents Christ who is at the very centre of all that we are and do.

There is more information on our website: [www.missioncommunity.org.uk](http://www.missioncommunity.org.uk)

