

Holy Trinity Church

Religion: Church of England/Anglican

Catchment Area: Bracknell community



The parish church of Holy Trinity was built by public subscription and completed in 1850 at a cost of £1,450 on land previously owned and donated by Lord Baybrooke. It was considered that a Parish church was needed as the churches of Warfield and Easthampstead were too far out for the Bracknell Street village population of 500, which was expected to grow to 1000 with the projected railway to Reading. It was consecrated on 26 February 1851 by Samuel Wilberforce, the Lord Bishop of Oxford. A Plaque on the South Transept wall reads “A gift of Land” towards the endowment of Holy Trinity Church Bracknell, meadow know as “Gibbles” near Brock Hill in the parish of Warfield, containing two acres, one rood and sixteen perches.

Architecture: It is built in the early English style of the Middle Ages, constructed of locally made bricks, faced with knapped flints and sandstone dressings and a slate roof. The design was unusual with the tower built on the north east corner instead of in the traditional position at the west end. Originally the windows were plain glass, but stained glass windows have been added, mainly as memorial windows. The south window of the transept depicts the origins of Christianity in the area, St Birinius preaching to King Cynegils of the West Saxons in AD634, holding a model of Dorchester Abbey, although the face is said to be that of Canon Herbert Barnett who was vicar for over 40 years. (1886 – 1919).*

Canon Herbert in 1888, started to raise funds to extend the church and finance proper restoration and maintenance. He produced plans to improve and extend the church including provision of a new porch, re-locating the organ to a new chancel aisle and moving the font to the west end. A priest’s vestry was also built on the base of the tower. The present oak pews date from 1910.

Interest/uniqueness:

- The tall spire used to be the highest structure in the village , which could be seen quite clearly from vantage points around the countryside. When the church was built the spire housed only one bell, marking the status of a daughter church of Warfield.
- The “Beautiful East Window” stained glass of the Crucifixion scene was given by Mrs S Lane of Martins Heron, Lily Hill, in memory of her husband. Martins Heron was demolished to make way for the housing estate that now bears its name.
- Barnett Court, sheltered accommodation was named after Canon Barnett.
- Many couples walked down the long path of the church for their wedding, giving village children a good view of the lovely dresses. Villagers would turn up for weddings and line the church walls, especially if it was the wedding of a well known family. Around 1970 the lych-gate had to be moved due to roadworks and the boundaries of the churchyard being altered. As the lych-gate was moved, the lovely long path now leads to a brick wall!
- *However, the copyholder of the land was Richard Milliard (host of the now demolished Hind’s Head). The site was given free of all rents and dues for the proposed church in 1848. It is also said that it is his face in the window depicting St. Birinius.