

**11TH-13TH
CENTURIES**

**THE
TOWER**

Cherish
the past
Embrace
the future

The **Norman** barrel font suggests that there could have been a church here as early as the **11th century**.

In 1215, '**Robert, parson of Mottram**' was recorded as **witnessing a local document**. Then in 1291, the church was mentioned in the **papal taxation** of that year.

This shows that there was a church on this site well **before the present building** was erected. It probably didn't have a tower, as you'll see...



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Edmund Shaa died in 1488, having bequeathed money to the church for ‘the **making of the steeple**... if it not be made at my decease’. We think that more money was found and the whole **church rebuilt** at around the same time.

EDMUND SHAA AND RICHARD III

Sir Edmund Shaa was born in Dukinfield, but rose to fame and fortune in London, becoming Lord Mayor. During his mayoralty a series of turbulent events shook the nation. Shaa took advantage of these events to secure his position.

In 1483, he gave his support to the Duke of Gloucester in his assertion that the sons of the late King Edward IV - The Princes in the Tower - were illegitimate. On 25th June, as Lord Mayor, he offered the crown to Gloucester, who thus became Richard III.

It is perhaps most remarkable that he managed to curry favour with three very different monarchs - Edward IV, Richard III and Henry VII. Whether he achieved this by fair means or foul remains a matter of some controversy. However, it is without doubt that he was a talented man and a survivor in some of the most stirring events in English history.



16TH CENTURY

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In 1548, it was reported that the church had ‘a rynge of iij (**3**) belles’. The metal of these **old bells** is still contained in those which hang here now!



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18TH/19TH CENTURIES

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In 1723, Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester accepted the contract to ‘cast the **three** bells into **five** good new tuneable bells’ for £141-13s. The following year, a **sixth** was cast. In 1805 two treble bells were added, making **eight**, but by 1855 they had to be recast.



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**20TH
CENTURY**

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By this time, the **bellframe was rotten**, and in 1910 it was replaced by the **steel and cast iron frame** that is here now. At the same time, the **bells were recast** again, the whole work being carried out by **John Taylor & Co** of Loughborough.



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We think that a **clock** was first placed in the tower in 1761, but that clock was **replaced thirty years later** in 1791 by one made by Samuel Ashton of Bredbury. Either that early clock was a particularly poor one, or it was much older than we think.

A **diamond shaped clock-face** can be seen on the west side of the tower in an engraving dated 1819, and the **square face** now on the north side is present in photographs from around 1860.

At some point, the **diamond** shaped face was replaced with the **round** one we see today.



**20TH
CENTURY**

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By around 1937, the **old clock** which had served the parish for 146 years finally **ground to a halt**, and Mottram was without a public clock for 15 years.

In 1952, the Bishop of Stockport dedicated a new clock. This was **second hand**, having been built in 1878 by J. B. Joyce, and recently removed from **Ardern Park** in Bredbury.

The clock had to be **wound twice a week**, a job shared between the vicar and the bellringers - the **weights** having to be raised all the way **from the bottom of the tower!**

In 2000 it was fitted with an **electric winder** and both faces restored, paid for by a millenium grant from Tameside Council.



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OUR PLANS FOR THE TOWER

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The **bellframe** is now almost 120 years old, and is **very rusty**. We carried out some **emergency repairs** earlier this year, but a further **£40,000** needs to be spent on a complete refurbishment.

We urgently need to make some **major repairs to the tower** itself, which lets in the **rainwater** very badly in the walls above the belfry. The problem has led to the building being placed on the **Historic England At Risk Register**. We expect the repair work to cost about **£300,000**.

The tower repairs will ensure the long term future of the church building, a significant heritage asset for the community, and will protect the restored bellframe.

Local people have told us they love to hear the sound of the bells, which remind them of their faith, and of special occasions like weddings, especially for visually impaired people. Having the bellframe restored will enable us to ensure that we can continue this ancient tradition in safety for years to come.

We'd love to know what you think:



~ Fill in a paper or on-line **questionnaire** ~ Leave a **post-it** comment on one of the white boards ~

mottramparish.org.uk/heritage/bigplan



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