

When Portsmouth Diocese was formed in 1927, plans were made to extend the building in the Neo-Byzantine style. Work was halted by the Second World War and a temporary West wall erected. 50 years later this became unsafe and the work was completed in its present form in 1991, being

dedicated in the presence of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.



The new font signifies the progression of baptism candidates from the nave, under the historic tower and up towards the altar.

St Michael and All Angels, Paulsgrove

PO6 4AS

Back on the mainland, we find one of the newest churches on our lists (consecrated in 1957); having said that, one of its bells is reputed to be of Norman origin.

Its two frescoes by Hans Feibusch – a painting of angels and another of The Temptation of Christ – are likely to become “antiquities” of the future.



Hampshire and the Islands Historic Churches Trust DAYS OUT: *near Portsmouth*

These brief notes are intended to whet your appetite for the unusual and quirky secrets hidden in our churches. We have in Hampshire and the Islands the oldest bell in the world still being rung, Handel’s organ, myriads of TV and Film locations and many other lovely oddities.

And, yes, please do tell us if you discover something we haven’t spotted.

Portsmouth and Cosham

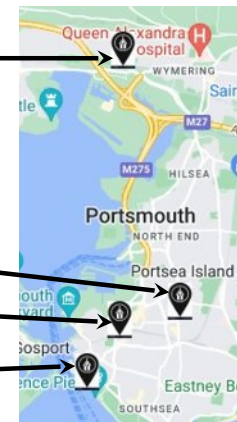
The title of our trust includes “Islands”: the Isle of Wight, the Channel Islands and Hayling Island, but also the only city in the UK located on an island – Portsmouth with at least 20 churches to explore.

Paulsgrove

St Mary’s Fratton

St John’s RC Cathedral

St Thomas CofE Cathedral



Copy link to get map: <https://tinyurl.com/mryrtazf>

St John's RC Cathedral PO1 3HG

Until 1791 it had been illegal for Roman Catholics to own churches or chapels in most of our towns and cities.

From 1791 various buildings were used until, in 1879, work began on this Pugin style Gothic Revival church.

Pope Leo XIII decided to create a new RC diocese with St John's as its

cathedral and it was consecrated on the 29th March 1887 by the first bishop – the Rt Revd. John (nicknamed "The Magnificent") Vertue.

Although damaged in the Second World War, it has been restored and extended with some striking stained glass – well worth a visit.



One of the main features of the church is the magnificent Walker organ with 2,622 pipes. When in 1909 Cyril Garbett (later Bishop of Winchester and then Archbishop of York) was being interviewed for the post of Vicar, the then organist is reported to have told him, "You get them in, I keep them in."

St Thomas CofE Cathedral PO1 2HA



Work on this fascinating building began in 1180 as a memorial to Archbishop Thomas Becket, martyred 10 years previously. In 1642 its tower was used by the Royalist garrison to spy on the advancing Parliamentarians, who responded with damaging gunfire from Gosport. Repairs in 1703 included the installation of the wooden cupola and lantern used as a navigation mark for shipping.

St Mary's, Fratton PO1 5PA

Originally founded in 1081, the present building is not only one of the largest parish churches in England but also considered "the finest Victorian building in Hampshire". Regular worshippers have included Charles Dickens, Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Cosmo Gordon Lang.

