



About St Peter's

The church of St Peter the Poor Fisherman is in the small Devonshire hamlet of Revelstoke, in a remote and picturesque location on a cliff overlooking Stoke Bay. It is a modest church comprising a nave, chancel, north transept, south aisle, south porch and north-west tower. A churchyard surrounds the church, encircled by a perimeter wall.

The nave is roofless and separated from the aisle by a four bay arcade, while the chancel is divided off by a blocked-in arch with glazing. The walls are constructed of slate rubble stone and red sandstone, with granite dressings throughout; the roof is slated with a dark grey Welsh slate with terracotta ridge tiles. The transept contains patches of hard limestone, which may have been quarried nearby.

The first documentary mention of the church is in 1225, when it was a chapelry of the Church of St Bartholomew in Yealmpton. However, the earliest dated fabric, a segment of an Anglo-Saxon cross, may be as early as 10th century. The nave, chancel and tower are probably 12th century in date, whilst the aisle, transept and porch date to the 13th and 15th centuries.

By 1856 the church was described as much dilapidated and by 1870, despite expenditure on the fabric of over £800, it was abandoned when the new church of St Peter was built in Noss Mayo. By 1926 the church was partly in ruins and despite some conservation work in the 1960s it was transferred to the care of The Churches Conservation Trust in 1972 and has since been extensively repaired. St Peter's remains available for occasional services and events.

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Access

Due to their age, historic church floors can be uneven and worn, and lighting can be low level. Please take care, especially in wet weather when floors can be slippery.

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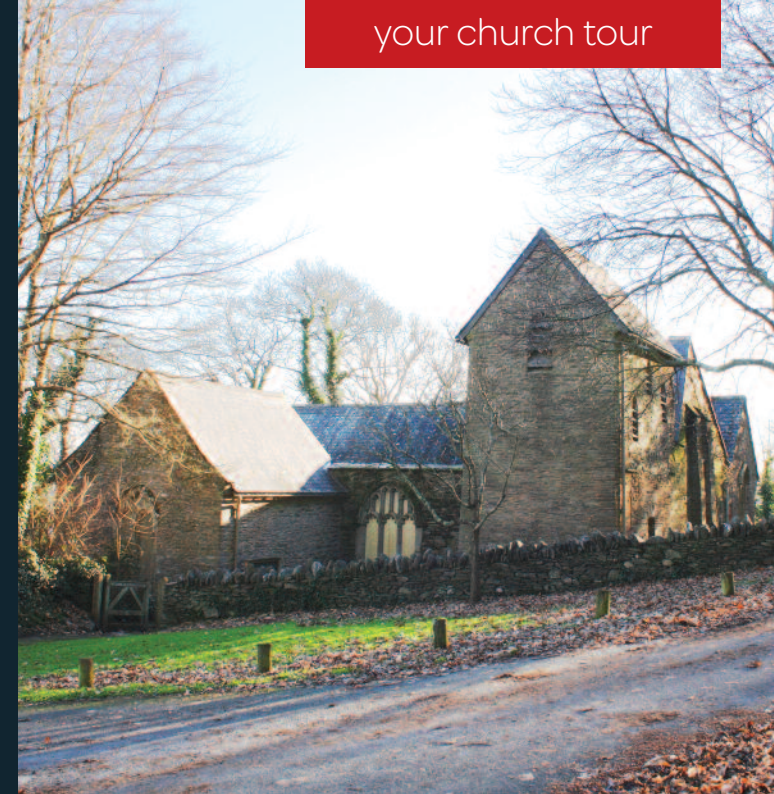


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Church of
St Peter the
Poor Fisherman

Revelstoke, Devon



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1 The **west wall** contains two blocked-in **triangular-headed windows** just below the gable, of a style common to the Anglo-Saxon building tradition. Below these are fossilized lines tracing a blocked-in rectangular opening, suggestive of a former lower roofline and perhaps a bell-cote above.



2 The **nave floor** has many interesting **ledger stones**, including one to John Sprey, dated 1697 and decorated with a skull and crossbones.

3 The **south aisle** dates from the 13th century but the **arcades** were remodelled in the 15th century. The addition of the south aisle in the 13th century may have been due purely to an increase in population (it is estimated that the population of England increased from c. 4 million to c. 6 million between 1200 and 1300) and the need for increased congregational space, or it may have been the result of **changing liturgical practices**. Services incorporating processions became more common at the end of the 13th century and the need for aisles to increase the available space within churches was a common theme. Of course, the addition of aisles may have served both these purposes.



4 The south aisle's long **wagon roof** is a mixture of original 15th-century oak trusses, wall plates, bosses and ribs together with Pitch Pine additions from the 1960s.

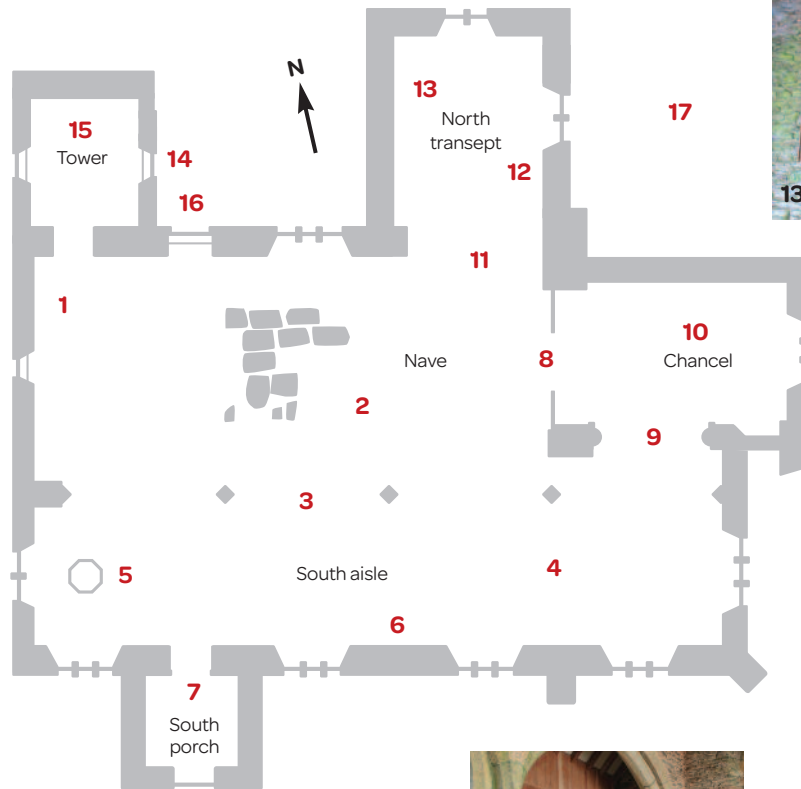
5 The **granite font** is of a simple design with a square base and octagonal stem. It is medieval but of uncertain date.

6 On the south aisle wall are two crudely inscribed **ledger stones** dated 1589, which were repaired and mounted in 1991.

7 The gabled **south porch** also has a wagon roof with a mixture of original oak members and Pitch Pine rafters, from the same 1960s renovation. Like the aisle, the oak trusses feature carvings of **foliage patterns**.

8 The **chancel arch** appears to have been blocked in during the 19th century – presumably once the **nave roof** was partially or completely removed, to allow better light in the chancel.

9 A **modern limestone archway** leads from the south aisle into the chancel – the chancel's original opening onto the nave having been blocked in.



10 Inside the **chancel** significant portions of the interior walls are lime plastered, the only section of the church to feature this. The chancel's three-light **east window** has tracery in **Gothic Perpendicular** style, though unlike the other windows, the tracery and jambs are of limestone, not granite. They may therefore be of 19th-century provenance.

11 A broad arch separates the nave from the **north transept**. Inside the transept is a marked use of light **yellow-coloured limestone** – in parts of the quoining of the two windows, and in the piscina. This limestone resembles the carved block in the



jamb of the tower's east window, and some of the lower quoins in the nave's north entrance, perhaps suggesting concurrent construction periods.

12 In the transept's east wall is a 14th-century triangular-headed **piscina** of limestone with a granite surround.

13 Two 19th-century painted **decalogues** are mounted on the transept's west wall.

14 A fragment of a carved **Anglo-Saxon cross-shaft** has been reused in the **window jamb** low down on the east wall of the tower. This could date to as early as the 10th century and suggests that a very early church may have existed on this site.

15 The **north-west tower** has a saddleback roof and seven small round-headed arched windows with slate louvers. A small cross is visible in the masonry in the south gable end. No **bells** are present – records indicate the church once had three. The tower is of especial interest for its irregular characteristics. It was possibly added in conjunction with the south aisle, but its appearance recalls earlier **Norman** defensive or domestic structures.

16 The **north doorway** features a four-centred rounded arch, with occasional red sandstone in the quoins and voussoirs.

17 The **churchyard** contains many interesting monuments and chest-tombs.

