

crosses, zigzags, bobbins and a hoodmould with wheels.

Inside the church is a simple Norman font; it has a plain square bowl on an octagonal central stem and four squat columns with volute capitals.

### 3. St Mary's Church, Haddiscoe

The tower of St Mary's Church, which is probably 11th century, is divided into three separate stages by stone string courses.

There is a 15th century south porch that leads to an elaborate Norman doorway with concentric bands of scalloping and zigzags supported by decorated capitals. Above the doorway, in a niche with an equally decorative frame, is a rare piece of Norman sculpture. It depicts a figure, possibly a priest, with hands raised in blessing. The north doorway, although much simpler, is also Norman.

On the north nave wall are the remains of a 14th century wall painting of St Christopher and the Christ child and further east are three heads, possibly from the 'Three Living and Three Dead' sequence of wall paintings.

Jane Chick (University of East Anglia, Norwich), January 2007.

## norfolk heritage explorer

This heritage trail comes from a website which documents Norfolk's 50,000 archaeological sites, finds and historical buildings. To find out more information about any of the sites mentioned in the trail or to investigate the archaeology on your doorstep go to:

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### Norfolk Churches Trail Round Towers and Norman Doors



Visit all three churches and compare the intricate carvings around the Norman doorways, try to interpret the remains of the medieval wall paintings and wonder at the sheer durability of the buildings and the faith that founded them.



# Norfolk Churches Heritage Trail

## Round Towers and Norman Doors

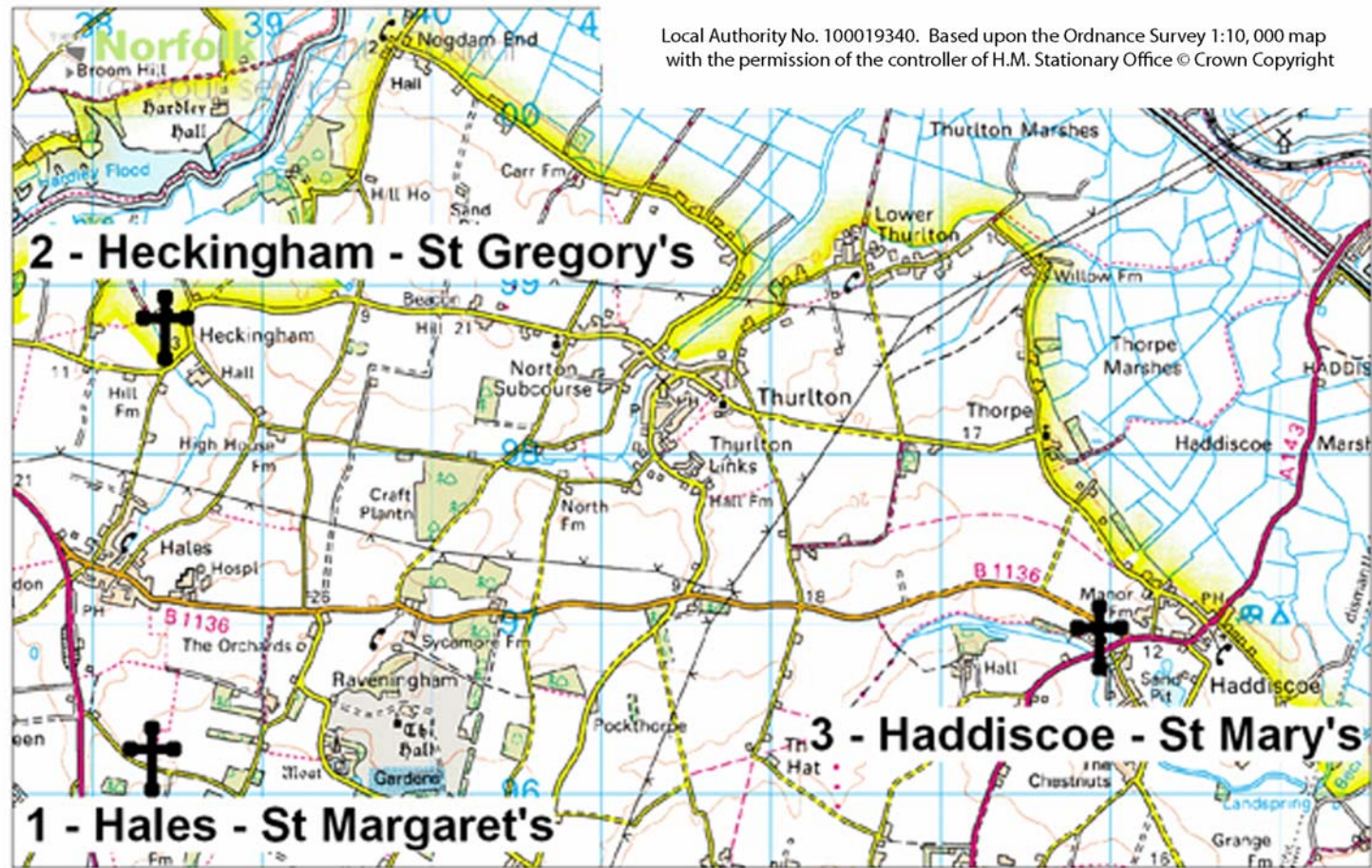
These beautiful round tower churches are all within easy reach of each other. Visit all three and compare the intricate carvings around the Norman doorways, try to interpret the remains of the medieval wall paintings and wonder at the sheer durability of the buildings and the faith that founded them.

### 1. St Margaret's Church, Hales

Hales church is one of the most unspoilt Norman country churches in the region. It has been redundant since 1973 and is cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust.

St Margaret's Church has two magnificent Norman doorways. The south doorway is the simpler of the two with five orders in the arch and decorative mouldings. The doorway on the north side is more ornate with six orders including zigzags, bobbins and a hoodmould with wheels, each separated by a band of decoration and supported by decorated capitals. It is generally accepted that these doors were carved by the same craftsmen who worked on Heckingham church.

From the gallery at the west end of the church the remains of various medieval wall paintings can be seen. The spandrels of the chancel arch are decorated with angels blowing trumpets –



Map of Norfolk Churches Heritage Trail, Round Towers and Norman Doors

probably originally part of the 'Last Judgement', and in the window embrasure by the pulpit is a 14th century image of St James the Great with his staff. Above this is a foliage trail thought to date to the 13th century. On the south wall of the nave it is just possible to make out the remains of St Christopher with the Christ child.

### 2. St Gregory's Church, Heckingham

St Gregory's Church, set in an elevated position, is very similar in shape, style

and size to St Margaret's Church in Hales. This church is also redundant and in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

The south doorway is the outstanding Norman feature of this church and, like the doorways at Hales, probably dates from the mid 12th century. It has four orders of shafts, nook-shafts and decorated capitals and the decoration includes chevrons,

Continued overleaf...