

Historic Towns & Villages

Shenley Church End

Home of the Sacred Tree



Alms Houses



St Mary's Church



The famous Holy Thorn tree



The Toot

Shenley Church End is closely linked with Shenley Brook End, lying about a mile to the north. Whilst Brook End was a farming community, Church End provided the educational and pastoral care with a school and the Church of St Mary which dates back to the 12th century. Close to the church are six almshouses, built in 1654 in memory of Thomas Stafford, whose effigy can be found in the church.

The village claims a history linked to Joseph of Arimathea. Joseph, who buried the body of Jesus Christ after his Crucifixion is claimed whilst spreading the word of God stuck this staff in the ground at Glastonbury which took

root and a hawthorn grew. The tree that can be seen by the play area near Holy Thorn Lane is thought to be a branch from it. It was seen as sacred and only blossoms at Christmas.

The ancient Toot, a lookout hill built for defensive purposes at the time when the Empress Matilda was trying to take the English throne from King Stephen, is located within the area bounded by Oakhill Road and Holy Thorn Lane.