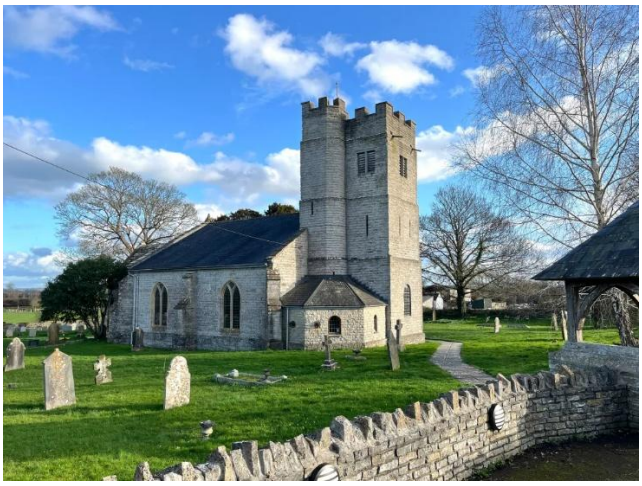

The Church of St Mary Magdalene, Keinton Magdalene

The church is situated at the end of a lane at the southernmost end of Keinton Mandeville, within the area of the Saxon and Medieval settlement. Geoffry de Mandeville [died c. 1100, also known as de Magnaville [from the Latin de Magna Villa "of the great town"]], held the manor of Keinton [then known as 'Kington', which means 'the King's settlement] and which might have once been part of a manorial estate. The graveyard has been in use since medieval times.

The church is first mentioned in 1242-3. A plain 2-cell structure, the church comprises a nave, chancel, porch and a square embattled tower at the west end. It is built from Blue Lias stone, hewn from a local quarry with Doulting Stone dressing. It was dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene by the 16th century. The chancel remains the oldest part of the church. In 1791, a Mr Collinson describes the interior: 'from the north side of the nave an arched passage led into the tower which was an octagon of eleven feet in diameter and forty feet high with a conical tiled roof.' The original roof was constructed of elm, with stone slates and supported by two pillars.

13th Century	The lancets in the church suggest it was probably constructed in the early part of the 13th century [but this could have been earlier] and, like many other parish churches, was expanded and developed to meet the religious and social needs of the parishioners down the centuries. The tower contained three bells. The chancel arch is in the Early English style. The font may be from 13th century.
14th Century	The south door is made of oak boards placed vertically on the outside. The boards placed horizontally on the inside may be older.
1634	Date of the oak altar table, although the top is Victorian.
1749	Hatchment on north wall of the nave presented by a churchwarden.
1776	Slab monument in northeast corner of the chancel dedicated to the Dauncey family.

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1804	The church was repaired and the nave virtually rebuilt. The balcony or gallery was probably built at the same time. The octagonal tower was removed and replaced by the plain tower seen today. The bells were retained, held on a wooden frame.
1840	The church was enlarged as the congregation increased. The north wall was removed and a side aisle provided. Additional seats were added in the body of the nave and the gallery.
Late 19th Century	The two 'Y' traceried 2-light windows on the north wall and the 3-light windows on the south wall were added. The pulpit was changed in 1878 as part of a late-Victorian liturgical reordering, replacing an earlier panelled wainscot pulpit and reading desk recorded in the 1780's. It carries the carved date "AD 1604 1878" , reflecting either reused Jacobean panelling or a commemorative nod to the earlier 17th century woodwork. The Lectern was installed alongside the new pulpit, and the Communion Rail was also replaced [which coincided with the introduction of weekly Sunday communion and a surpliced choir in the 1870s.]
1883	The single plain lancet window in the east window, depicting a pelican, was inserted as a monument to Rev. Henry S Livius, a former Rector.
1903	The roof was removed and replaced by an 'A' frame roof made of pitch and pine covered in Welsh slates. The north wall of the nave was lowered in order to provide the correct level for the new roof. The gallery was removed as no longer required.
1903	The existing pine pews were installed and sited on the wooden block floor.
1946	Electricity installed.
1979	The organ, built about 1820-1840, was installed.
1996	The choir stalls in the chancel were removed and the tiled floor replaced with Blue Lias stone.
1998	The boiler house was demolished and a new central heating system installed.
1998	The kitchen extension was added and the vestry redecorated.

