

## The Approach to the Church

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The Church is approached through a metal gate and along the flagged path that was the old Priest's walk. The walk is lined with lime trees and has a multitude of first snowdrops and then daffodils. The wooded area to the north is a haven for wildlife including many voles. After a wedding the gate is tied shut and the guests throw money to distract the locals whilst the groom cuts the ties. Local children collect the money and traditionally spend it on sweets in the local shop.



## Conservation Developments

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Grassland in old churchyards is usually species-rich, but this diversity is often not apparent because of regular mowing.

This year, the Churchwardens have set aside a small area in a quiet part of the churchyard, which will not be mown until the Autumn. The area was established a little later than would have been preferred, but already 16 species of flowering plant have been recorded in leaf and/or flower, including: primrose, ox-eye daisy, crosswort, bush vetch, germander speedwell, lesser stitchwort, meadow cranesbill and self-heal.

It is hoped that more mower-free areas will be established next year.



## The Church of St Oswald, Kirkoswald

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The church can be seen from the road as you approach Kirkoswald having crossed the River Eden. St Oswald's stands under the brow of a hill with its remote bell tower visible on the top of the hill.

The church is dedicated to St Oswald the King of Northumbria who toured northern England in the company of St Cuthbert.

There has been a church on this site since the seventh century.



## The Church

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Parts of the church date back to the twelfth century. The Chancel was built in 1523 when the College was founded. Beams in the porch date from this time. The nave is narrow with two arcades of arches some of which are Norman and others date from the thirteenth century. The west window is Tudor and has part of an old cross head bedded in the window sill. The east window shows St Oswald with a sceptre and cross, St Cuthbert, the Crucified Christ and 4 evangelists.



## The Bell Tower

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The remote bell tower is an unusual feature and is the only one in Cumbria. It was built in 1743 and rebuilt in 1893. It contains 3 bells inscribed 1619, 1729 and 1892. The bells were used to call the village to worship and were thought to be used also to warn of Scottish raiding parties. The tower is crenellated with projecting water spouts. The tower is built on a stone plinth with steps to the entrance and

## The Churchyard

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The graveyard contains many ancient grave covers with interesting carving. St Oswald's Well is found by the far wall of the church. The source of the water is unknown but runs under the nave. There is a cup on a chain for people to try the waters.

In one area of the churchyard a garden is being developed in memory of Bunty Cranston, who for many years led the village entry to Cumbria in Bloom

A cross of daffodils shines across the valley around Easter time each year from the bank to the left of the church.

