

What are Priory Fields?

Hidden away behind Priory School in the centre of Bicknacre lies an area of unspoilt countryside known as Priory Fields, named after an old priory whose remains still stand in the south west corner.

There are 32 acres of open fields, water meadows and wooded areas to be explored. This is a great place for a Sunday afternoon stroll or for a picnic in the summer but why not just come to enjoy the tranquility or study the wild flowers, trees and wildlife that abounds here.



There are many old and interesting trees around the fields. There are several large oaks, some housing woodpeckers, also wild service trees that indicate field boundaries several hundred years old.

The Priory Arch

There was a priory on this site from about 1154, however the arch you can see today is all that remains of the Priory built in around 1250. It originally accommodated fifteen monks but the numbers gradually fell until the death of the last Prior in 1507.



Following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536 the priory rapidly decayed, the stone being used for other local buildings or roads. The tower and part of the nave were used as a farmhouse until 1812; by around 1830 only one arch remained.

There is currently a study being undertaken to try to establish the outline of the original buildings.

This arch and the surrounding field is now a national monument, maintained by local volunteers, under the guidance of English Heritage.

The Future

Much work has already been done to make the main paths as accessible as possible and this work will continue. It is proposed, in due course, to add a picnic area, which could be used as an outdoor classroom, also information boards, benches and safety fencing.



Priory Fields is an ideal location for schools and youth organisations to study local history and nature or to take part

in other activities, such as orienteering, that heighten, for youngsters, their awareness and understanding of the great outdoors. This would also be an ideal venue for art or photographic courses.

There are plans to carry out ambitious tree planting schemes, using typical native species, within and around the fields. New hedging will be planted where required and all redundant fencing removed.

The fields are a wonderful location for all kinds of interests so please make full use of them.



Motor vehicles of all types, except of course mobility aids, and horses are however banned in order to protect the structure and tranquility of the area.