Significant Features
There are many interesting architectural features to be found within St Andrew's Church including:

- A fine Norman arch with beautiful mouldings separating the nave from the chancel.
- Over the entrance of the 15th century timber porch is a carving representing the mesh of a fish net with a caught in it. On either side are shields, one bearing the cross of St Andrew and the other a fish.
- The steps which led to the rood loft. A rood loft is a gallery above a rood screen which in many medieval churches separated the nave from the chancel symbolising the division between the priest and the congregation. Many were removed with the Reformation and the one at St Andrew's has long gone. 'Rood' is a Saxon word for 'cross'.
- A window depicting scenes from Bunyan's "Pilgrim Progress". John Bunyan had read the book "The Plaine Man's Pathway to Heaven", written by Arthur Dent who was Rector here between 1580 to 1602, and used it as a model for his famous book.
- Three fine windows which depict Christ 'The Good Shepherd', Christ 'The Light of the World' and Christ 'The Bread of Life'.
- The list of incumbents from 1267 to the present day.
- The consecration cross (about 2 inches high) on the right hand of the south doorway carved there when the Church was consecrated about 860 years ago.

Historic Churchyard
The earliest known burial was in 1704 of Elizabeth Dimond. But no headstone survives so we do not know the location. The earliest burial with a headstone was in 1745 of Mr Alexander Baker - this is by the south porch and has a distinctive skull and crossbones on it.

Over 60 military graves are in the Churchyard reminding us that for over 130 years, from the 1850s, an Army Garrison was part of the Parish.

Produced jointly by Southend Borough Council & St Andrew's Church, July 2003

5. The interior of St Andrew's Church with its distinctive variety of archways
6 & 7. Stained glass windows depict scenes from Pilgrims Progress and The Good Shepherd.
8. The Historic Graveyard of St Andrew's Church.
St Andrews is a fine example of a small Norman parish church, founded to serve a scattered rural and fishing community shortly after the Norman Conquest. The building contains good surviving Norman architecture and demonstrates how the Church was adapted over the centuries to meet changing needs. It is now protected as a Grade II listed building.

**Church Name: St Andrew's Church**

The Church is on slightly raised ground overlooking what were once marshes to the south and east and the Thames Estuary beyond. As well as being the focus for a small and scattered rural community in South Shoebury, it is likely to have also seen local fishing activity. It is believed that this fishing activity led to St Andrew being chosen as the patron saint of the parish church. Andrew was a fisherman who became a disciple of Jesus along with his brother Peter. He was probably crucified in the early years of the Christian Church.

**Historic Development of the Church**

St Andrew's was founded as an outreach of the Priory at Pringlewell, itself an outreach of the Priory at Cluny in France. Until the destruction of the monasteries in the mid 16th century, St. Andrew's remained attached to the Priory at Pringlewell.

At one time, the living of South Shoebury was in the hands of Robert Bristow, a Hampshire Squire possibly a descendant of the Robert Bristow who was Prior of Pringlewell in the reign of King Edward IV.

The original Church building dates from 1100 to 1140 and had a simple plan form, comprising only a chancel (the area for the priest) and nave (the area for the congregation). It is a fine example of a small Norman parish church. Norman architecture typically used massive walls and columns with round arches and simple patterns of decoration such as chevrons, all of which are evident in St Andrew's.

As with many local churches, it is built of Kentish ragstone rubble and flint. In contrast to most domestic and farm buildings, parish churches were traditionally built of the best and most permanent materials which, if possible, would be stone. For the earlier Churches, such as St Andrew's, this was often to provide a safe place of refuge for the parishioners in troubled times, as much as to demonstrate the Church's status in the community. Our part of Essex has no natural stone, other than some flint. But a coarse type of limestone (ragstone) from Kent is readily available and transporting it by boat is easy. So, many churches in our area are built in Kentish ragstone.

Over the centuries the Church has been adapted to changing needs and shows many alterations:

- The first alterations were probably between 1200 to 1250 when certain recesses were made in the walls.
- In the 14th century a Tower as added - the lower part of the tower walls may belong to the original building. The Tower is of flint rubble and ragstone. The battlemented brick parapet was added in the 18th century. The walls are exceptionally thick due to its lining internally with blocks of chalk.
- In the 15th century the Church was re-roofed in oak and the wooden porch built. At that time the Norman windows in the nave were replaced by the present larger ones of the Perpendicular Style which have pointed rather than round arches.
- Up to the end of the 15th century the east wall had a group of small Norman lights but at the beginning of the 16th century these were replaced by a large east window with stained glass. This was unfortunately destroyed along with various interesting fittings and furniture in the 1852 restoration.
- Between 1550 and 1852 a loft and plaster ceiling was probably installed below the roof, the doors were renewed and alterations were made to the Tower.
- In 1749 two of the three bells were blown down and damaged, they were sold and the money used to beautify the Church. The one bell remaining today is dated 1847.
- In 1852 there was a restoration mainly to the nave and chancel stone work.
- The vestry was built by voluntary labour in 1902.
- During the second half of the 1960's there was further restoration work. The loft and plaster ceiling was removed, exposing the oak beams, and the rendering on the interior wall of the tower was removed.