

# Church with iron “jougs” put up for sale

**An historic Scots church has become available on the property market – complete with its own rare set of iron punishment “jougs”.**

Garvald Church, near Haddington in East Lothian, has roots dating back to the 12th century, but has been deemed no longer viable due to falling congregations and is now available for offers over £55,000.

Among its unique selling points, mounted on the wall near the entrance, is a set of jougs – an iron collar and chain infamously used by ministers from the late 16th century to humiliate “sinners” on Sundays.

Garvald Church is the latest among hundreds of kirks and buildings listed for sale by the Church of Scotland in its bid to downsize its property portfolio.

In recent years its congregation has fallen as low as a dozen people at times, and keeping the B Listed building was deemed “no longer viable”.

Former elder Fiona Sheldon, session clerk at Garvald Church, said: “Unfortunately the church is now having to be sold.

“The church has been altered through the years – and was modernised considerably in the 1960s – but the jougs have been there for centuries on the wall as you go in.”

Garvald Church was built in the 12th century when it, along

with 120 acres of land, was granted to the nuns of St Mary's Abbey in nearby Haddington. It remained in the care of the nuns until 1565 when it became part of the Presbytery of Haddington.

The joughs were attached next to the entrance after an Act of Parliament in 1593. The building was remodelled in 1829 and the interiors modernised in the 1960s, but the joughs remain as a reminder of the building's – and Scotland's – history.

As well as the rare surviving joughs, other notable features include its mort house, once used to thwart body snatchers; carved 17th and 18th century gravestones; and a sundial dated 1633 fixed on its south wall.

Scots historian Craig Mair said: "Joughs were used at churches to publicly chain up or shackle people who had been declared sinners by the Kirk.

"Offenders were placed in the joughs to be seen by the congregation as they entered the church for Sunday service.

"Once everyone was seated, the offender – who could be male or female – would then be brought in last and placed at the front of the church, usually on the 'stool of repentance'.

"They would serve as an example of sin and be scorned, pointed at, shouted at and humiliated during the minister's sermon which, unlike today, could last over two hours.

"At the end of the service, the offender would often be taken out first and put back in the joughs, so that they could be passed by everyone else as they left.

"They served as a warning to others not to sin, or they too would be publicly humiliated."

The Church of Scotland is downsizing its property portfolio due to soaring costs, falling congregations and the dwindling number of ministers.

The sell-off has led to some of Scotland's best-loved churches being disposed of over the last five years.

A Church of Scotland spokesman said: "Reducing the number of buildings we own has been one part of a raft of radical reforms being undertaken by the Church in recent years aimed at ensuring we are lean and fit for mission in the 21st century and have well equipped spaces in the right places.

"It is through a range of reforms that we aim to reduce the significant deficits that the national Church has been carrying."

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/property-and-church-buildings/properties-for-sale/properties/churches-and-halls/garvald-church-garvald-eh41-4ln>



GARVALD CHURCH IN EAST LOTHIAN HAS BEEN PUT UP FOR SALE BY THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND FOR OFFERS OVER £55,000.





