

UTVÄNGSTORP CHURCH AND ANCIENT FIELDS

The site of the church in Utvängstorp has long historical continuity, and the immediate area contains a range of interesting features demonstrating that this was an important parish centre. The church dates back to the 12th or perhaps even the 11th century. According to legend, Saint Sigfrid's well, located east of the church, is believed to be associated with Saint Sigfrid, and the church is said to have been built as an offering church in his honour. The medieval church was a small, rectangular building. In 1838, the church was rebuilt and largely received the appearance it has today. The church contains a square medieval baptismal font in limestone.

Instead of a tower, the church has a bell tower carrying the bells. It is said to be from 1735. Just east of the church, on what was once common land, is the poorhouse, built in the 1890s. From 1907, this building was used as a primary school. To the west of the church, on the other side of the river Tidan, is the old shop, with shop buildings from two eras.

Around 400 metres north of the church are a number of ancient fields, i.e. fields from an earlier cultivation period. Their structure can be found for example in some 17th century maps. The ancient fields were investigated in 1959 and were then described as a "stone string" field system. Today, they are registered as fossil fields. The area is approx. 300 x 200 metres and consists of so called parcels of land, around 80 to 200 metres long and 10 to 70 metres wide. They are separated by earth and stone walls or terrace edges. The fossil fields are possibly of prehistoric or – more likely – medieval origin. Fossil fields are ancient monuments and protected under the Historic Environment Act. Adjacent to the fossil fields are prehistoric graves including a burial cairn, two stone settings and a stone circle, which probably represent both the Bronze and Iron ages.



Interior from Utvängstorp Church with the pulpit above the altar and the baptismal angel hanging over the font. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



HIDDEN GEM 25



HOW TO GET HERE

Utvängstorp is situated approx. 3 km north of Mullsjö. The church is located around 250 m west of the village, and the ancient fields are around 300 m to the north.

Coordinates:

Utvängstorp Church:
N 6433374 / E 433451
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 58°
2' 24.732", E 13° 52' 22.858"
(WGS84)



North of the church are terraced ancient fields. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.

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HIDDEN GEMS

There are so many things to discover in the countryside! Here, Jönköping County Museum presents some of the cultural environment and heritage attractions in the county.

They include well-known cultural monuments such as Habo Church and the Smålandsstenar Stone Circles, but also lesser known gems such as log-driving remains in the river Valån and Stengårdshult Church. Around the county you can find evidence of how people lived and worked in the past, everything from castles and manors to abandoned embankments and clearance cairns in forest areas.

The idea with Hidden Gems is to tempt you to make excursions in the cultural landscape – here you find our history, revealed in different ways in the physical environment. This heritage is worth experiencing and protecting. Bit by bit, we will be adding more sights under the heading Hidden Gems, both for people living in the county and visitors from further away. The more people who discover these gems, the better chance that they will be preserved for the future.

FACTS

In Jönköping County there are more than 4 000 registered ancient remains, 87 cultural environments of national interest, close to 130 listed buildings, around 150 churches, some 100 rural community centres with old settlements, a large number of industrial heritage sites, and two cultural reserves. There are also a large number of cultural environments with buildings worthy of conservation. More information about the sites can be found on the websites of the County Administrative Board, the municipalities and the local heritage societies.

GOOD TO KNOW

Access to the Hidden Gems varies. Some sites are well signposted, with easy access and proper parking facilities, etc. Others are more challenging to reach. Visitors may have to walk some distance, sometimes through scrubby forest, only to be met by a broken sign (if there ever was one) when they reach the site. All the sites, however, have an exciting and interesting history.

Please note that many of the cultural heritage buildings are privately owned and can only be viewed from the outside. Also, please respect private land. Many churches are open in the summer. During other times of the year, the churchwarden may be able to open the church for you.

