

# The History of Milton Keynes IN 100 Objects... ...the first 15

## MK City Discovery Centre

### The Bradwell Abbey Great Seal Matrix



Bradwell Abbey Seal Matrix. The latin inscription reads: "(of the) blessed Mary of Bradwell (the) seal (of the) community (of the) house"

This important object was found at Wolverton. The decoration shows that it belonged to Bradwell Abbey, a Benedictine Priory. The matrix would have been used to stamp into wax, covering the opening of a document, to ensure its safety and also as proof that it came from the priory. The patron of the priory, Sir John Longville, may have taken the seal matrix to his house at Wolverton for safe keeping at the time of the dissolution.

The late 14th century seal matrix is made of bronze and is finely decorated. It shows the Virgin, with the infant on her right knee, and a kneeling priest below.

The Benedictine complex of Bradwell Abbey was founded by Meinfelin, Baron of Wolverton, in the mid-12th century as a cell of Luffield Priory. It gained independence under his son, Hamo. It was home to a prior and about twelve monks. Below is an artist's impression of what the medieval complex may have looked like.



Sketch showing the possible layout of Bradwell Abbey in the 14th century

