

# A NEW CHAPTER IN THE



## LIFE OF ST. EDMUND'S IN STOULTON

*A COMMUNITY CONSULTATION*

The PCC of Stoulton with Drakes Broughton

June 2020

**FIVE STEPS TO POSITIVE WELLBEING  
CONNECT, BE ACTIVE, TAKE NOTICE, KEEP LEARNING, GIVE**

**I**n 2016 all residents of Stoulton Parish received an invitation to take part in a consultation about the future of St. Edmund's Church. Those who attended the public meeting wanted the church but considered more use should be made of the building "An 'iconic' place that more people should know about, understand, visit and use."

## **THE PAST: THE STORY SO FAR.**

St. Edmund's PCC agreed to make the building more available and asked for suggestions for its use. With a thriving Village Hall just yards up Church Lane it was difficult to know how best to forward this decision. The PCC listened, considered various ideas and concluded :

- that its activities needed to make positive differences to people's lives and complement, not conflict, with the Village Hall.
- St. Edmund's would remain a church but would be made available for hire as a place for fellowship and learning, art and music, local history and heritage.
- it would hold its own programme of festivals and events beginning with activities to celebrate 900 years of Stoulton history in 2020. (Unfortunately now postponed)
- whenever possible the building would be open to welcome walkers and heritage visitors and to provide a comfortable informal and open meeting place for residents.

But the 12th century building lacked essential 21st century facilities - it had no internal water supply, no external drainage, no toilet or refreshment facility, a condemned heating system, only one door and very little parking. The building must be made fit for purpose.

## **THE PRESENT: WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN ACHIEVED: THE BUILDING.**

The PCC spent more than three years developing plans and getting permissions to reorder spaces and install facilities in the west end and in the tower to prepare this 900 year old grade 2\* heritage building for a new chapter in its long life.

Much fundraising has already been done. St. Edmund's won the first prize of £10,000 in the Ecclesiastical 'Great Community Mural' national competition. Funds have also been raised by The Friends of Stoulton Church, Stoulton Village Hall Committee, 'LEADER', the Worcestershire & Dudley Historic Churches Trust and the AllChurches Trust. These, together with help from kind individuals and the church's own resources have made it possible to:

- *Conserve and reopen a doorway blocked in 1821 and fill it with a beautiful double glazed and etched door, bringing life and warmth into the building and giving it a much needed second door so more people can use the building safely.*
- *Take out the condemned large bore oil fired heating system and cast iron radiators ready to replace it with a cleaner, all electric system in the autumn of 2020. This system has been designed to warm people not walls and will include heated cushions on the pews. This should also make them more comfortable!*
- *Convert a single phase electricity supply to three phase.*
- *Replace peeling plaster with new lime plaster and redecorate.*
- *Create a social space suitable for many uses:- removing some partition walls and redundant pews and tiling the floor to match existing tiles.*

## **THE PRESENT: WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN ACHIEVED: EVENTS & ACTIVITIES.**

St. Edmund's Church, the Village Hall, the parish footpaths and the woodlands are rich resources. Supporters have already:

- created a new parish map and three new parish walks to help people to understand and explore our beautiful area. These have been published online and can be downloaded from [www.stoultonworcester.org](http://www.stoultonworcester.org).
- collaborated with Wychavon. This has resulted in the map being included on a new Information Board that will go up in the car park at Stoulton Woodlands. Hopefully it will also be featured in the old telephone box in Hawbridge along with other local walks.
- begun to create an augmented reality app to help first time visitors and families explore somewhere new to them. This will be available later in the year and will encourage visitors to take a closer look at the natural and built heritage of the parish.
- held two big community events: 'Coming Home' to commemorate the end of WW1 and 'An Afternoon in the Countryside', the three day event that took place in 2019.
- created a new web site <https://www.stoultonworcester.org> to publicise the developments taking place.

## **THE FUTURE: OPENING A NEW CHAPTER IN THE LIFE OF St. Edmund's.**

1. St. Edmund's will remain a church, a place of Christian worship offering instruction in, and the exploration of, the Christian faith. It will hold baptisms, weddings and funerals and celebrate the traditional Christian festivals of a church in the countryside.
2. St. Edmund's will become a special, shareable and user-friendly building that contributes to the health and wellbeing of many people, local residents and those from beyond the boundaries of the civil parish.
3. Income will be earned from rentals, events and educational tourism. The objective is to bridge the gap between church income and ongoing revenue costs.
4. With a more sustainable future St. Edmund's will be able to welcome people of all faiths and none and its door will be open daily.
5. St. Edmund's will be a meeting place, ready for residents and visitors e.g. to enjoy each other's company, share information, play board games, do craft, knit, read, take photographs, learn or chat over a cup of coffee or tea.
6. It will continue to be the home of the Stoulton Bellringers and the headquarters of the Stoulton Local History Group. It will become a hub for everyone taking part in 'We are all part of the story!' a new community wide project to create an audio visual digital record of Stoulton's past and present for the benefit of future generations. The information collected will be available to schools and students of all ages; informal cultural packages will be developed for visiting groups. More information visit [www.stoultonworcester.org](http://www.stoultonworcester.org) .
7. Some of the above activities will be possible without a toilet or proper refreshment area (people have coped for 900 years so a few more months/years won't make too much difference.) But the provision of these facilities, clearly important components of the 2016 Vision 2020 Development Plan, will require increased community involvement as well as external funding.

## **IN CONCLUSION:**

### **MAKING A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S LIVES IN THE POST COVID WORLD.**

St. Edmund's was built 900 years ago for the benefit of the whole community. Today the nature and needs of the community have changed but St. Edmund's remains a building for the community. In opening this new chapter we are mindful of the contribution the church

has made, and can continue to make to community wellbeing. With a focus on activities that bring people together and encourage exploration and discovery of the natural and built heritage of the local countryside we believe we can lay a foundation for all to walk the five steps to positive mental wellbeing: **CONNECT, BE ACTIVE, TAKE NOTICE, KEEP LEARNING AND GIVE.**

**More than £70K, plus VAT, will have been spent by October 2020 but the building will still lack the essential toilet, internal water supply and refreshment/storage facility. The PCC would now like to raise funds for these community facilities and needs evidence of your support to make it clear to funders that this would be a wise investment.**

## TEN THINGS FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT

1. When this first phase of the building work is complete the building will have been reordered and it will look good. It will be useable as a church but with a toilet and refreshment area its potential for additional uses and vital income earning will be much increased.
2. Increased income will be needed to complete the plans as set out and to cover the extra running costs: e.g. cess pool tank emptying, toilet cleaning and additional maintenance work.
3. More volunteers will be needed, they do not have to be church goers or live in Stoulton. Currently many helpers are over 70 and some do not live in Stoulton.
4. Going forward there will be a need for someone to open and close the building, do the cleaning and prepare the spaces for visitors. The brasses will still need to be polished and the flowers arranged.
5. The cutting of the churchyard grass is currently organised and paid for by Stoulton Parish Council but many other jobs need doing: by volunteers e.g. litter clearing and dog mess cleaning and by paid professionals: e.g. pruning the hedges and trees.
6. Many new skills will be needed: e.g. preparing and serving refreshments, maintaining booking arrangements, meeting visitors and organising activities.
7. Apart from small donations and occasional legacies the church's income comes from those who worship in St. Edmund's. By installing 21st century facilities it will be possible for the building to be hired out and some additional income earned.
8. The costs of insuring and maintaining a Grade 2\* listed building; paying for water, heat and light, running church services and a contributing to the costs of the clergy; and the expenses of the Diocese of Worcester are always increasing.
9. St. Edmund's is always grateful to everyone who contributes to the finances of the church especially The Friends of Stoulton Church, the independent charity set up in the 1990s to help maintain the building.
10. Finally and most importantly how will you engage with and support these plans?

Please indicate your response by completing and returning the attached form.

**A NEW CHAPTER IN THE LIFE OF ST. EDMUND'S IN STOULTON  
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION: - COMMENTS FORM.**

**Closing date for comments. 5pm, 19th June 2020.**

*We are interested in your views on how these plans will make St. Edmund's more resilient to change; give it a more sustainable future; and create a legacy for the future generations. For each statement asked, we would like you to answer stating whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree or don't know.*

***(Please circle your response and then complete the details overleaf)***

**1. The installation of the proposed community facilities will make St. Edmund's in Stoulton more resilient to change and give it a more sustainable future.**

Strongly agree / agree / disagree / strongly disagree / don't know

**2. More people will visit and use St. Edmund's in Stoulton if it has a toilet.**

Strongly agree / agree / disagree / strongly disagree / don't know

**3. People will be more likely to hire St. Edmund's in Stoulton if it has an accessible toilet and a refreshment area with running water.**

Strongly agree / agree / disagree / strongly disagree / don't know

**4 The proposal to research and use the environment, history and heritage of the parish will contribute to the social, economic and mental well being.**

Strongly agree / agree / disagree / strongly disagree / don't know

**5. Opening a new chapter in the long life of St. Edmund's in Stoulton will generate a lasting legacy for future generations.**

Strongly agree / agree / disagree / strongly disagree / don't know

**6 Your general comments on these proposals.** Please continue overleaf.

**Closing date for comments. 5pm, 19th June 2020.**

Please send your comments to Reverend Emma Goldby at The Rectory, Manor Farm, Stoulton. or email them to [revdemmagoldby@gmail.com](mailto:revdemmagoldby@gmail.com)

Please note we will not accept comments that are anonymous.

NB: see Privacy Statement at end of form.

The PCC cannot enter into direct discussions with any person or organisation submitting a response, as all the comments will need to be considered together.

Details of the project can be viewed on <https://www.stoultonworcester.org/>

**Thank you for your help and support in this consultation exercise.**

Title                      First name    Last name

Email address

Please complete email address to enable us to contact you again with information about the developments at St. Edmund's and the new community project "We are all part of the story". Thank you.

Post Code

Age Group: 18 to 24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-75, 75 plus (please circle)

Date completed

1.  Please **tick the box** if you agree to the PCC using the submitted data in relation to this consultation as required by the Data **Protection Act 2018** which is the UK's implementation of the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**.
2. Your personal information will not be shared with any third party unless required to do so by law; data will be kept for the purpose it was collected and only for as long as is necessary after which it will be deleted.
3. If you wish for your personal data to be removed or have any queries please contact The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Stoulton with Drake Broughton: [revdemmagoldby@gmail.com](mailto:revdemmagoldby@gmail.com)