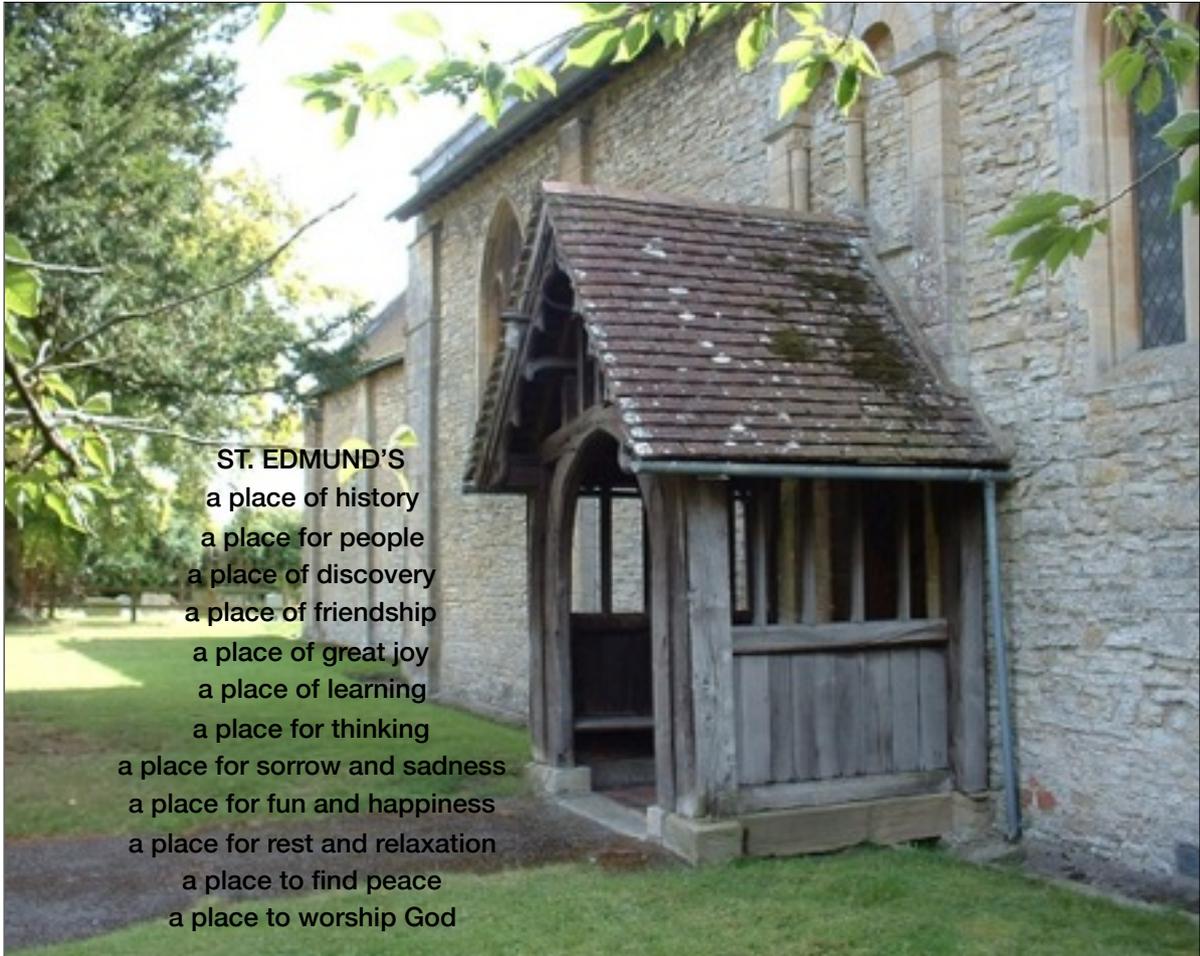


THE CHURCH OF ST. EDMUND, KING & MARTYR  
STOULTON. WORCESTERSHIRE. WR7 4RE.

St. Edmund's stands as a beacon on the top of 'the bank' in Stoulton. It has been there for 900 years, if its walls could speak just think of the stories it could tell. What will they say about us?



A small Worcestershire parish celebrates its past  
and looks to its future.

**VISION 2020**

**‘Stoulton 900’**

# FOREWORD

Social and economic change have resulted in a disconnect between church and parish in Stoulton threatening the survival of St. Edmund's Church. Nonetheless a consultation about the future of the building resulted in the wider community recognising the place of the church in the community and the historic and heritage value of the building. Many have 'bought into' the idea of a collaborative parish project to secure a more sustainable future for St. Edmund's. The project is outlined in this document.

St. Edmund's is a Grade 2\* listed church building. It is not only very old but its Norman walls connect directly to a time when our country, and this community, was adjusting to new rulers and new ways of doing things; some would see parallels today! We do not know what the future will be, but we do know that in the last 900 years this piece of built heritage and the congregation that has worshipped in and cared for it have experienced many ups and downs, and survived!

Our task must be to create the circumstances that will help make our building, this place and our community resilient to change. This does not mean digging in our heels and resisting new ideas and new circumstances, it means ensuring that we have the organisation and systems in place to make the very best of whatever the future presents.

Discussions to develop a plan to create a more sustainable future for St. Edmund's began early in 2016. After several false starts, many learning experiences and developments beyond our control, this plan has evolved. The big hope is that we will be able to fund it with a 'Heritage Grant' from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The chances are slim but as a grant would cover most of what we plan to do we have already made initial inquiry. It was made very clear that we need to think 'big' and when we finally submit an application it must come from a body that represents our whole community and not just the church. This has meant a whole new way of thinking but as a consequence 'Stoulton 900' was born. Earlier this month the PCC adopted the 'Stoulton 900' plan and put forward the names of three representatives prepared to be part of a Management Team to implement it.

Now we need to complete the management team with representatives from the wider Stoulton community. Only with such a team in place can we:

1. Go back to the HLF and talk through what we still have to do to make a successful funding application.
2. Go back to our community, bring everyone up to speed with the proposed plans and create a 'Stoulton 900' Supporters Group.
3. Start to implement the plans to celebrate 900 years in Stoulton in 2020.

# SUMMARY

The civil parish of Stoulton no longer has a community made up of farmers, market gardeners and agricultural labourers. Many of the 1,959 acres of parish land are still farmed and the parish is covered with footpaths linking the village to small scattered hamlets. Today there are no lay patrons or great landowners and since 1932 there has been no school. There are 22 listed buildings including a grade 2\* listed parish church situated in the village conservation area. Most of the 176 householders live in houses that are owner occupied, many were once tied cottages. Residents come from a variety of lifestyle, educational and social backgrounds, but are mostly well educated and articulate, with English as their first language. Many are retired having 'escaped to the country'. They value the thriving village hall, the historic and well preserved church building, the farm shop, the good and improving transport links and the beautiful rural setting.

Those responsible for St. Edmund's Church want it to be a vibrant and resilient Christian hub where all are welcome; a place of art and music, a place of discovery and learning, a place where God is worshipped, the love of God is expressed, and the compassion and teachings of Jesus felt, learned and shared: but the building lacks the basic amenities expected of a public building in the 21st century. Despite the fact that 337 out of a total of 453 residents registered as Christians at the last census, there is little tradition among today's residents of regularly attending St. Edmund's Church. Nonetheless there is considerable goodwill towards the church. Many support the idea of VISION 2020, a collaborative church and community project, which aims to celebrate the 900th anniversary of St Edmund's in 2020 in a warm and comfortable building adapted, equipped and ready for ongoing use as a place of Christian worship and as a place where residents and visitors can enjoy local history, heritage, art and music.

VISION 2020 has developed into 'Stoulton 900' a plan to use the years leading up to the 900th anniversary of St. Edmund's in 2020 to run a series of interlocking but self contained projects that can engage the wider community in preparing for and running a festival to celebrate 900 years of history in Stoulton. St. Edmunds will be the base for the festival and a focus for some of the projects. If successful in attracting sufficient funding its amenities will be upgraded for the festival. 'Stoulton 900' will leave behind a building with greater resilience to change. Specifically it will have created high quality, warm and welcoming public spaces:

- In the chancel - a self contained chapel seating up to 24 people.
- In the nave - a multi-use auditorium comfortably seating up to 70 people.
- At the west end - a well designed open space including a new baptismal area, surrounded by storage cupboards and including simple refreshment facilities appropriate for many uses.
- An emergency exit from the church into the churchyard through a reopened south doorway. The door will be glazed to bring additional light and warmth into the building.
- An accessible toilet and cloakroom in the tower.
- A glazed screen between the ringing chamber and the nave.
- An achievable financial strategy benefitting from rental income and increased donations.
- A long term care and maintenance plan established against a projected income stream, in order to provide for repairs, upgrading and ongoing use of the new amenities.
- Facilities for exhibitions, audio/visual presentations and learning activities.
- Information for heritage visitors.
- A digital history archive of a small agricultural community and its church over 900 years.

# **STOULTON 900**

## **a Festival of Local History and Heritage to celebrate the 900th Anniversary of St. Edmund's Church in 2020**

The community creates a 'Stoulton 900' supporters group to prepare for and run 'Stoulton 900' a programme of activities promoted to the general public.

Examples of activities that might be part of the 'Stoulton 900' programme.

1. The premiere of 'The Stoulton Story' - a digital documentary recreating scenes from 900 years of Stoulton history.
2. The official 'reopening' of the south doorway and the launch of a short video telling its story.
3. An exhibition of art and poetry created as a response to the re-opening of the south doorway.
4. A colourful ceremony to create a band of 'Stoulton Heritage Knights.' Heritage detectives who successfully complete a heritage quests to solve some of the mysteries of Stoulton history are dubbed heritage knights!
5. Festival Services throughout the year to mark the traditional Agricultural Year, starting with Plough Sunday in January 2020.
6. 900 years of Music and Song. Afternoon(s) of singing for all ages.
7. A programme of walks along the footpaths of Stoulton, including the ceremony of 'Beating of the Bounds ' followed by a Parish Supper.
8. An event featuring the bells.
9. A special community event yet to be determined.

The plan is to use the years from 2017-2020 for volunteers to:

1. Investigate 900 years of Stoulton history and tell the story using archives and recreations, as a digital documentary video with supporting trails and activities around the parish using St Edmund's as a base. These will be available for visitors beyond 2020.
2. Collate and catalogue the archives of church and parish, the information to be available online for schools and lifelong learners.
3. Families to be detectives and undertake quests to uncover the history of Stoulton.
4. Upgrade the amenities of St Edmund's to enable it to function as a base for these and other activities in the future.
5. Run a series of talks and workshops on heritage buildings, their care and maintenance featuring the work going on in the church and the re-opening of the south door.
6. Digitally record in sound and image the capital works going on in the church to illustrate some of the issues involved in the care and maintenance of historic buildings.
7. Create a map to promote local facilities and the trails around the parish for the benefit of visitors to the parish.
8. Promote the activities of Stoulton 900 to a wider audience and sell tickets to the festival events.

**How will this be paid for?**

The proposal is that we apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for an Heritage Grant - this could fund all aspects of the 'Stoulton 900' plan. If successful 2017 will be spent making comprehensive working plans to enable everything to be properly costed and the necessary permissions granted. If unsuccessful with the Lottery the project may need to be scaled down but the Festival can still take place. The work already done to design the amenities and cost the plans will enable alternative funding channels to be approached.

**How will the Project be managed?**

A Management Team will be appointed to oversee the implementation of the 'Stoulton 900' plan. Volunteers from a 'Stoulton 900' Supporters Group will contribute the talents and skills needed to carry out the many and varied tasks that will be needed.

# VISION 2020

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Edmund the Martyr,  
Christian King of 9th century East Anglia, killed by pagan Danish invaders.  
He is remembered because he fought a good fight and died for his faith.

He became first Patron Saint of England and still is the  
Patron Saint of St Edmund's Church in Stoulton, Worcestershire.  
His feast day is celebrated November 20.

# 1. THE PLAN IN MORE DETAIL

*This plan should be read in conjunction with the church 'Mission Statement'. See Page 16.*

The plan is to celebrate the 900th anniversary of St. Edmund's in 2020 with a festival that celebrates 900 years of history in Stoulton and leaves behind a building equipped and ready for the future. The years leading up to 2020 will be used to prepare for the festival. A series of interlocking, but self contained, projects will each contribute to the festival programme.

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## 1.1. THE BUILDING PROJECT

*Enhancing the amenities of St. Edmund's*

Before the P.C.C. can implement any of its plans it must install a toilet and an internal water supply; this can only be achieved as a part of a wider plan to develop, update and adapt the building. The building needs to be resilient to change, cost effective enough to be afforded by a small rural community with two public buildings to support and attractive enough for people of all ages to want to ensure its ongoing survival. There is a need to create a series of high quality, warm, accessible and welcoming public spaces in the church.

### **1.1.1. In the Chancel. A self contained permanent worship area seating up to 24 people.**

The provision of a partition between the chancel and the nave will complete the re-ordering of the chancel into a warm, comfortable, flexible and self contained worship space begun in 2012. A sensitively fitted clear glazed screen with integral and lockable double glass doors will focus attention on the beautiful Norman chancel arch which is a significant feature of the interior of this building. The view through the glazing will create a permanent reminder that the prime purpose of the building is the worship of God. This together with the upgrading of the heating system and the re-plastering of the north and west walls will complete the work in this part of the building.

### **1.1.2. In the Nave. An auditorium seating 50-70 people, ready for multi-use.**

The main pews and the traditional church furniture will remain as both are functional and heritage items. The auditorium created will be used for large services, major Christian festivals, weddings and funerals; where appropriate the doors into the chancel will be opened enabling the entire church to function as one building.

The auditorium will also be available for concerts, exhibitions and presentations. The organ will remain and be a focus for musical activities and singing. The space will benefit from an integral audio-visual system with the sound enhancement connected to the current sound system. Temporary staging to cover the aisle floor at the east end will be needed for small scale concerts as will, possibly, some sort of acoustic screen to mitigate the harsher acoustic of the glass. It is envisaged that this equipment will be stored in a shed erected outside on the concrete base left behind when the oil tank is removed. The walls will make good exhibition space but thought needs to be given to best method of display.

Heating this space needs careful thought as there is considerable heat loss every time the external door is opened. Consideration has been given to the idea of 'pew heating cushions' in addition to a low level of electric background heat and an electric booster heater over the door. These cushions

would make the pews more comfortable and would warm the people rather than the air around them. More research is needed to confirm the effectiveness of the proposals under consideration. (see 4.6)

### **1.1.3. At the West End. A flexible open space.**

The current plan is to maximise the area of flexible open space at the west end of the church by removing the south vestry screens, this will complete the work begun in 2009 when the north vestry curtain was removed. There will be a need for new flooring but the cleared open space will facilitate new opportunities for additional use. When the nave is used as an auditorium for secular activities an emergency exit will be needed as there is only one outside door. The plan is to reopen the old south door as a glazed emergency exit. This will also bring light and the warmth of the sun into the building making it more attractive and welcoming for heritage visitors and concert goers in addition to providing new open space for children's activities and a dedicated baptism area. The reopening of this doorway will be a heritage project in its own right.

Removing the vestry screens will create a need for a well designed wall based storage system including lockable cupboards fashioned from the old oak vestry screens to match the door into the tower. They will need to include a simple refreshment facility including a covered sink. Appropriate furniture will be needed to furnish this area.

### **1.1.4. In the Tower. A toilet and cloakroom area on the ground floor and upstairs a glazed screen between the Ringing Chamber and the Nave.**

Currently the base of the tower houses the oil fired boiler, the safe, cleaning and flower arranging materials, it is also the route to the tower steps. There is no water supply inside St. Edmund's and outside, no mains drainage. The proposals to install electric heating will enable the boiler to be removed creating space for a trench arch toilet and cloaks area while still enabling vital access to the tower for bell ringers.

The bell ringers are important members of the church community, they care for the bells and encourage ringers from other churches to ring the Stoulton bells. Currently a curtain divides the tower from the nave but the ringers have long wanted a glazed screen in its place. Fire and safety considerations concerning the tower will need to be considered as part of this proposal.

### **1.1.5 Health and Safety**

As recommended by a fire safety officer the building should have a fire alarm system and an emergency exit.

### **1. 1.6. The entire building needs a heating system that is quick to respond, efficient, and effectively controlled.\***

This will require the removal of the old oil heating installation, hacking off old plaster, re-plastering and decorating before installing the new system. *See section 4.6. for more about the heating.*

### **NOTE.**

The P.C.C recognises the current policy of Historic England not to allow the use of solar energy on listed church buildings where an installation on a roof would be visible, but it wishes record that it would, if it could, make such installation on its property believing that this would be for the benefit of the community and the environment now and in the future. An investigation into the possibility of installing a ground based solar installation in the churchyard will be part of the ongoing development of this plan.

### 1.1.7 The Timetable

Before any work can begin it will be necessary to raise the funds and get the necessary faculties i.e. permissions from the Diocesan Chancellor. This will probably take a full year to complete. The aim to get the work done by 2020 is achievable even if the availability of finance makes it necessary to phase the work. It is unlikely that any of these capital works will begin before Spring/Summer 2018. The church may have to be closed for a period but services can, by arrangement, be held in the village hall as they have in the past.

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## 1.2. THE HERITAGE PROJECT

*A project to record and share the story of 'This place.'*

At the Consultation Meeting last year St. Edmund's was identified as an iconic building with significance for everyone; it brings together the Christian, community and agricultural heritage of 'this place'. The records of 'this place' are rich but they have never been joined up in any way. The proposal is to develop a community heritage project that gathers, digitally records and digitally shares stories from the history of Stoulton. A highlight of the project will be the videoing of scenes from our common past featuring local people as re-enactors. There will be something for everyone as the project will offer opportunities for research, storytelling, scriptwriting, camera and editing work, digital activities, dressing up and all sorts of associated activities - including making the tea!

The research phase will start informally this summer when, on occasional weekends, a 'History Tent' will be erected outside the church. It will be there for residents and friends to come and share their thoughts about these and any other ideas that occur to them. There will be opportunities for families to start some detective work and everyone will be asked to 'dig around' and discover secrets hidden in and around their homes.

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## 1.3. THE 'RESILIENCE' PROJECT.

*A project to help develop a culture of care for the heritage of the parish*

The Diocese of Worcester recognises that its churches morally belong to the people who care for them. Creating a festival of local history and heritage based on the 900th anniversary of St. Edmund's will create opportunities to connect the wider community to the heritage of Stoulton and its ancient church. There are 22 listed buildings in the parish; many are in the Church Lane conservation area. The work going on in St. Edmund's will be used to illustrate a series of talks and workshops that focus on the care and maintenance of heritage buildings. Central to this will be the opening up of the south doorway to provide an emergency exit. This south door was the main entrance to the church until 1821 when the doorway was blocked to enable the construction of a west end gallery in the fashion of the time. The gallery was taken down in 1848 but the doorway remains blocked and unsightly. It will be necessary to replace the missing columns of the Norman doorway, this will put the focus on medieval building techniques and the selection and shaping of stone. The need to replace failed internal plaster will give an opportunity to consider the use of lime in traditional buildings and the introduction of new glass screens and doors will provide opportunities for the community to engage with the whole design process.

A new Resilient Heritage Team will work with the Management Group to create a Care and Maintenance Programme for the new amenities in St. Edmund's but a resilient building is only part of

the solution for St. Edmund's. Stoulton is rich in the skills, talents and resources of its residents, this team will also be tasked to consider how these might best be used to secure a financial future for St Edmund's.

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## 1.4. THE VISITOR PROJECT

*A project to bring visitors into Stoulton to contribute to the economic well being of the community.*

Visitors, whether they are friends and family of residents or visiting tourists, will be crucial for the ongoing sustainability of St Edmunds. This project will:

1. Promote St. Edmund's as an historic building, a place of Christian and community heritage and a place to enjoy history, heritage, art and music, including the Stoulton Story presentation.
2. Promote the church and its parish to new visitors and tourists through the creation and creative use of an annotated Parish Map.
3. Use the facilities of the smart phone to promote the parish and its walks to families and encourage them to become heritage detectives on a quest to discover the answers to some of the mysteries from Stoulton's past.
4. Improve promotion and signage around the village to help visitors explore the footpaths, woodland and hamlets of Stoulton and:
  - To find and visit the church and use the cafe, the restaurant, the farm shop.
  - To use the caravan site, the self-catering lodges, apartments and B&B.
  - To download and discover more about the story of the place on phone and tablet.
  - To learn about Mucknell Abbey the local Benedictine monastery.
5. Monitor increases in visitor numbers and visitor spend.
6. From 2020, if considered appropriate,
  - Encourage fee paying groups to visit the church for talks and tours and see the archive documentary video of the 'Story of Stoulton'.
  - Encourage other small country churches to participate in creating local trails.

The map will help the Stoulton community manage its visitors. It will:

- give information about public transport
- identify appropriate places to park - specifically it will promote the car park at Millennium Wood
- encourage visitors to explore the parish on foot by promoting the footpaths that connect its scattered hamlets.

The map will

- be used to promote Stoulton parish as a destination.
- promote food and drink outlets, accommodation and places to visit.
- help visitors to make the best of their time in Stoulton
- involve visitors in the history and heritage of the place through links to mobile technology.
- encourage visitors to go into the church and
  - find out more about the customs, practices, objects, artistic expressions and values of the church and parish.
  - access information about the local area.
  - find out about the community and its cultural and community events.
  - discover a Wayside Chapel.

This will assist local businesses by encouraging visitors to:

- spend more time and money in the parish.
- stay longer and encourage repeat visits.
- recommend a visit to family and friends.
- increase overnight stays in the parish.

Help strengthen a sense of identity and place amongst the local community and visitors.

- encourage the community to discover and share its own story.
- create an archive documentary to add to the heritage resources bank
- use footage from that film for educational purposes to share with visitors.

All will benefit from an enhanced and comfortable building with basic facilities and a warm welcome.

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## 1.5. A FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE 900 YEARS

The plan is for the parish to celebrate throughout the year 2020 with a Festival of Local History and Heritage. The programme of activities designed to promote the parish to visitors will be based in and around the Church and where appropriate the Village Hall.

**Examples of activities that might be part of the ‘Stoulton 900’ programme.**

1. The premiere of ‘The Stoulton Story - a digital documentary recreating scenes from 900 years of Stoulton history.
2. The official ‘reopening’ of the south doorway coupled with the launch of a short video telling its story.
3. An exhibition of art and poetry created as a response to the re-opening of the south doorway.
4. A colourful ceremony to create a band of ‘Stoulton Heritage Knights.’ Heritage detectives who have successfully completed heritage quests and solved some of the mysteries of Stoulton history are dubbed heritage knights.
5. Festival Services throughout the year to mark the traditional Agricultural Year, starting with Plough Sunday in January 2020.
6. 900 years of Music and Song. Afternoon(s) of singing for all ages.
7. A programme of walks along the footpaths of Stoulton, including the ceremony of ‘Beating of the Bounds ‘ followed by a Parish Supper.
8. An event featuring the bells.
9. A special community event.

---

## 1.6. OUTCOMES

These activities will have outcomes for everyone:

- Residents and visitors will have a greater understanding of their ‘place’.
- Residents will be in a better position to contribute to future parish plans.
- Residents will have had the opportunity to reconnect with St. Edmunds, as a building and as a place of worship.
- Children will have been introduced to the concept of heritage in an exciting way.
- Individuals will have a better understanding of what is involved in caring for listed heritage.
- Many will have learned new skills - e.g. in digital technology and interpretation techniques.
- Volunteers will have shared their skills and used their talents.

The community will have learned about itself:

- It will have the satisfaction of securing a future for the most significant building in the parish.
- It will benefit from contributing to the economic well being of the businesses in the community.
- It will have the opportunity of engaging with visitors from different backgrounds and experiences.

Local heritage, including the 900 year old church building will be more sustainable and more resilient to change.

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## 1.7. BEYOND 'STOULTON 900'.

### *St. Edmund's Prepares For The Future*

Underpinning all the changes and developments needed to implement the 'Stoulton 900' plan will have been a culture of respect and welcome for all people. St. Edmund's was, and will remain, a Christian Church, but in our secular and multi cultural society the organisers recognise that there is much to be learned from the intermingling of ideas and cultures.

The anniversary activities will engage many people but then it will necessary to build on the legacy of 'Stoulton 900'. There will be many ways to do this and success will depend on who and how many people have 'caught' the vision.

St Edmund's has the potential to become a place of activity and enjoyment for the whole community.

- Open for Sunday Services, daily prayer and Christian Festivals.
- Available for baptisms, weddings, confirmations and funerals.
- Open daily for casual visitors from 10am to 6pm daily unless in use for weddings or funerals.
- Open and heated for special events from 1st November to 31st March.
- Spaces available for hire throughout the year.
- Equipped with information for visitors interested in the history and heritage of the parish.

A multi-use Nave auditorium with associated flexible open space.

- A place for art with specially designed exhibition space.
- A place for music and song with an organ and good sound system.
- A place for bellringing with an easy viewing facility.
- A place for history and heritage learning.
- A place for children's activities.
- A place for fellowship and caring.

With access to simple refreshment and comfort facilities and

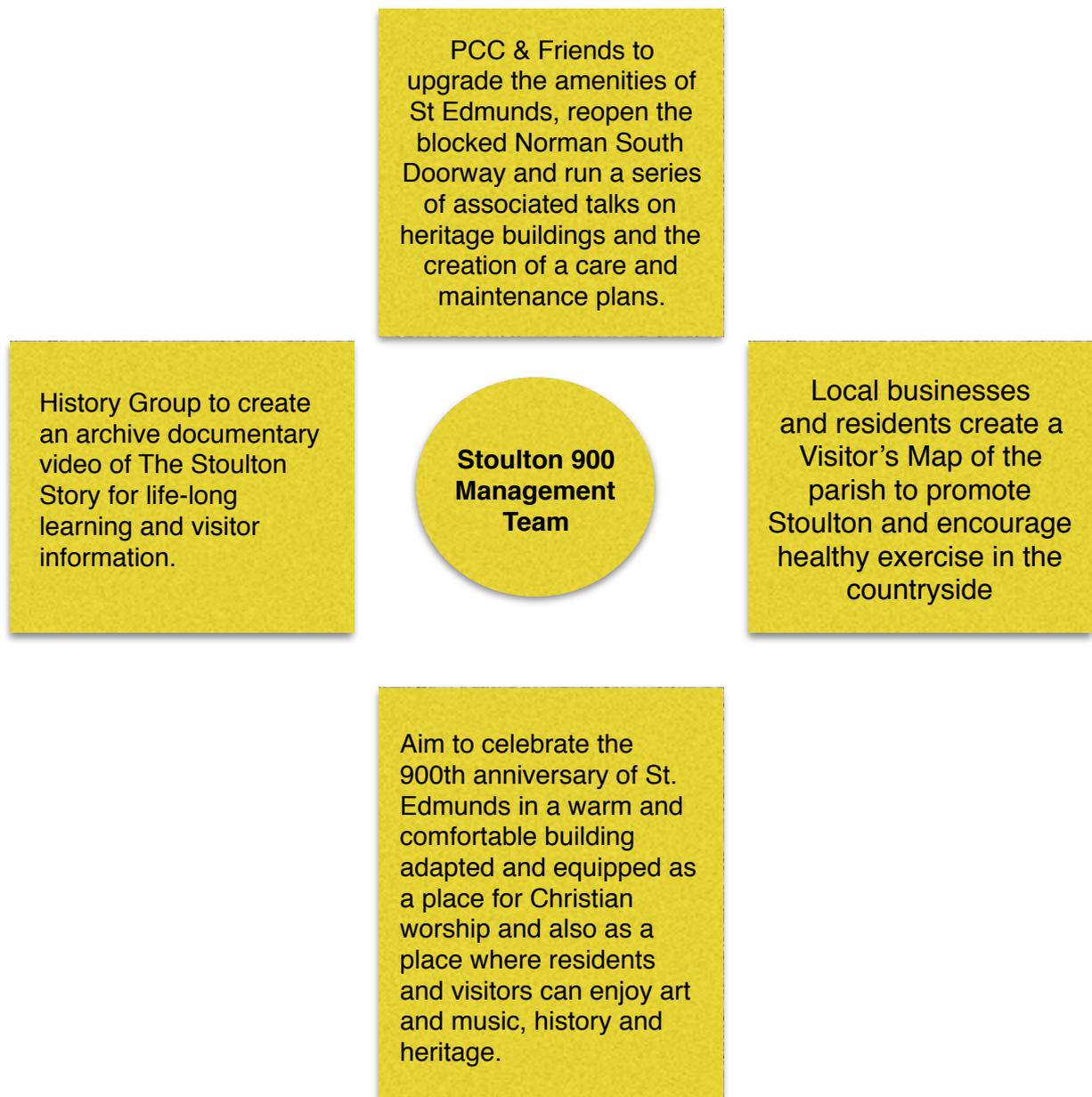
- A parish chest of local treasures to help stimulate discussion between generations.
- A timeline to illustrate major changes and activities in the parish over 900 years.
- Tourist information for visitors to the parish and reference material for visitors to the area.
- Access to digital information about the parish and its history and heritage.

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## 2. IMPLEMENTING 'STOULTON 900'

A small rural parish in south Worcestershire celebrates its past and looks to the future.

A coming together of residents and friends with representatives of the Stoulton Parish Council, St. Edmund's Church, The Friends of Stoulton Church, Stoulton Businesses and the Village Hall to form 'Stoulton 900' to prepare for, and run, a Festival of Local History and Heritage to celebrate 900 years of Stoulton History in 2020.



## A FESTIVAL OF HISTORY & HERITAGE



## 2. 1. Funding.

'Stoulton 900' is a big project, it will not be cheap to implement. The PCC does not have the money to upgrade the amenities of St Edmund's, neither is it likely that local fundraising alone will raise enough money to implement the many elements of the 'Stoulton 900' plan. It will be necessary to approach external funders.

- External funders impose tight conditions on the release of their funds and applications are likely to be competitive. e.g. The Heritage Lottery Fund has many different funds, one is specifically for 'Places of Worship' but St. Edmund's will not qualify for this fund because the condition of our building is 'just too good'! Many funders change their priorities and conditions over time and funds do not last forever, e.g. Landfill is due to close this Spring and European funding like 'LEADER' is no longer appropriate.
- There are many funders who could be approached for contributions to different elements of the total building plan but each will need to be approached independently.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund has several different funds each with its own priorities. A new fund called 'Resilient Heritage' seemed to fit our bill but the 'Heritage Grant' fund is an even better fit. It deals with projects that cost from £100K to several million. This fund does require a 5% contribution but that can be 'in kind' or from the value of any volunteering associated with the execution of the project. There is a two stage application procedure for a 'Heritage Grant.' Stage one offers assistance to develop a project, i.e. help with fees for architects, quantity surveyor etc. With the project fully costed and with all the necessary budgets, plans and permissions in place a stage two application for funds to implement the project can be made. All HLF funds offer an initial enquiry service. An enquiry as to whether the VISION 2020 proposals would be of any interest as a Heritage Grant project received a reply that was neither positive nor negative but it did offer some hope and included a recommendation to discuss the project with Andrew Mottram, the Diocesan Heritage and Community Buildings Officer, before resubmitting a bigger and better costed proposal. The plan now under discussion has developed as a consequence of those discussions. Currently it seems sensible to continue to work up the detail of this plan to get some idea of the total costs involved. Armed with this information the project can be resubmitted to the HLF.

### From 'Vision 2020' to 'Stoulton 900'.

- It was made clear in the advice given in response to our initial enquiry to the HLF that any resubmitted enquiry should be made from a group that represented the wider community and not just the PCC. As a consequence Vision 2020 has been rewritten to make the focus of the application the celebration of 900 years in Stoulton. 'Stoulton 900' is now the name of the project, it will be managed by a team of volunteers representing the wider community as well as the PCC. This structure will provide the evidence that 'Stoulton 900' is truly a community project with the community wanting and needing to use St. Edmund's as the base for the projects that will build into the celebrations surrounding the 900th anniversary of St. Edmunds in the ways outlined above.
- The PCC has passed a motion to adopt the 'Stoulton 900' plan.

### Funding 'Stoulton 900'.

7. If the result of the next enquiry to the HLF is positive then the 'Stoulton 900' Management Team can proceed with a Stage one application. Hopefully this will be followed, within a year, by a Stage 2 application.
8. If it is unsuccessful at any stage then 'Stoulton 900' and the PCC will need to consider how best to proceed. Figure 2.1.8i below outlines alternative funding routes.

**A PHASED FUNDING APPROACH**

**VISION 2020 PLAN FOR 'STOULTON 900'**

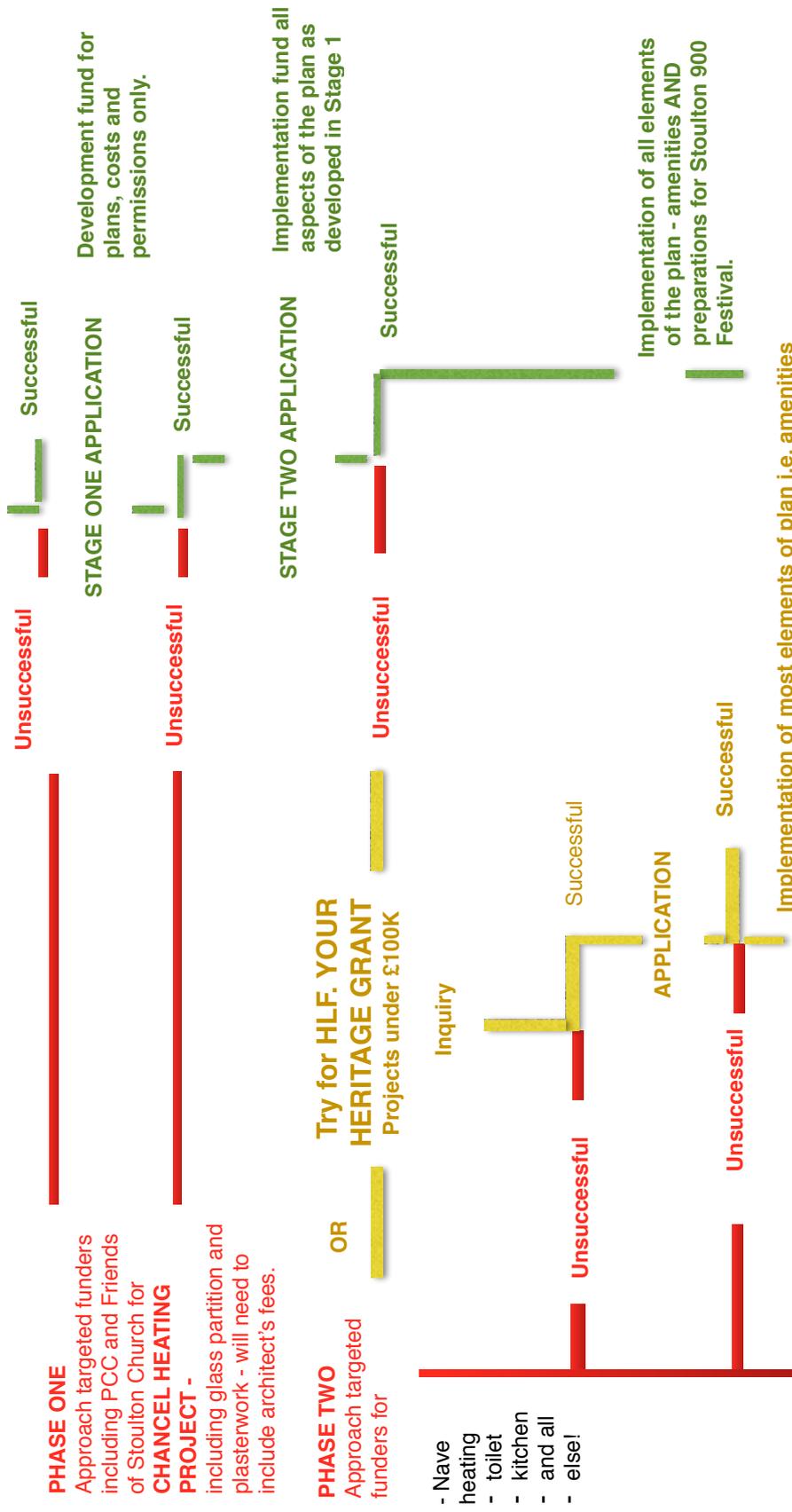
**A SINGLE, FULLY FUNDED, APPROACH**

**GO IT ALONE.  
TARGET AND APPROACH  
INDIVIDUAL FUNDERS**  
Best with community support.

1. The plan is adopted by the PCC
2. The plan will also need to be adopted by the community for any HLF funding

**HLF: HERITAGE GRANT  
£100K+**

Inquiry



**Implementation of whatever can be funded. ? Community aspects.**

**Implementation of most elements of plan i.e. amenities and preparations for Stoulton 900 Festival as long as**

**STOULTON 900 FESTIVAL**

## 2.2. Organisation and Management.

1. 'Stoulton 900' will be led and managed by a Management Team of residents and friends, including representatives of the Stoulton Parish Council, St. Edmund's Church, The Friends of Stoulton Church, Stoulton Businesses and the Village Hall. The Priest in Charge and Church Wardens will be ex officio members of the Management Team reporting regularly to the full PCC on all activities that involve the church building.
2. The Management Team will have umbrella responsibilities for ensuring that the individual projects that make up ' Stoulton 900 ' are fully funded and governed in a law abiding and responsible way. It will also be responsible for considering how best to ensure the ongoing care and maintenance of the amenities in St. Edmund's Church, including their transfer of ownership to the church authorities. The Management Team will determine their terms of references but these should include: a duty of care to the volunteers who take part in the projects and to the visitors who attend the various events and activities. Specifically its responsibilities will include:
  - Fund Raising, including liaising with the HLF and other funders as appropriate.
  - Accounting and the managements of the funds.
  - Insurance and the management of risk.
  - Health and Safety and the management of events.
  - The management of and duty of care to volunteers and visitors.
  - All other legal compliance.
3. Teams of volunteers with specific interests and skills will be set up to progress the individual project of 'Stoulton 900' They will each have a representative on the Management Team.
  - **A Design Team**, led by the Architect and including the Church Warden will monitor the capital works.
  - **A Resilient Heritage Team** will work to develop the plans and policies needed to ensure the long term future of St. Edmund's.
  - **A Heritage Team** will work towards the production of the digital outputs.
  - **A Visitors Team** will work on the development and distribution of the Stoulton Promotional Map and the promotion of the Anniversary Celebrations.
  - **Welcome Team** will be responsible for visitor management and wellbeing.
4. **Policies and procedures.** All activities will need to be assessed for risk. Policies and procedures must be developed to run the project and protect those taking part.
5. **Partnerships.** Specialists, individuals and organisations, paid and unpaid, will be needed to implement the plan. The value of their work will require costing, decisions will need to be made as to whether such contributions are given on a voluntary or a paid basis. These decisions will affect the content of budgets and will affect funding applications. e.g. The appointment of an architect with whom we can establish a rapport is perhaps the most obvious partnership that will need to be paid for, but there will be others who may get involved on an entirely different basis e.g. selected students from the University of Worcester may well help implement some of the more technical aspects of the plan as part of their course work. 2017 will be a year for sorting out this sort of detail.

## 2.3. The 'Stoulton 900' Supporters Group

The support of local people is vital to the success of 'Stoulton 900'. The whole project needs to be light hearted and fun to encourage people of all ages to be involved, only then can the fundamental aim of reconnecting the community to its iconic Norman church building and the objective of giving it a sustainable future be achieved.

# 3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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## 3. THE CHURCH OF ST EDMUND, KING & MARTYR

### 3.1.1. MISSION STATEMENT (2017) *Draft*

#### PURPOSE

Our purpose is to be a Christian 'spiritual hub' for all who live in, work in and visit the civil parish of Stoulton and the ecclesiastical parish of Stoulton with Drakes Broughton.

#### AIMS

We will work to:

1. Provide a sustainable future for the Church of St. Edmund, King & Martyr and support its missionary activities and service to parishioners and to visitors.
2. Play a full and active part in community affairs and work to increase awareness of social issues and injustices locally and around the world.
3. Develop and use our church building as a cultural and heritage asset.

#### VALUES

1. Worship Heritage
  - We are committed to providing a vibrant centre of Christian worship, prayer and learning, respecting and learning from all Christian traditions e.g. Roman Catholic, Liberal and Evangelical.
2. Architectural and Historic Heritage
  - We are committed to safeguarding and sharing the heritage of our building and its community over the centuries.
  - We seek to conserve the architectural integrity of our church building.
  - We seek to sensitively adapt and develop its spaces to make them appropriate for the 21st century and for the additional and complementary uses outlined in VISION 2020.
- 3 Community Use
  - We want to ensure that as many groups and individuals as possible have access to the unique spaces within our church building.
  - We see our building as an asset that should contribute to the social and economic well being of our local community.
  - We aim to be a Wayside Chapel for all who pass this way.
  - We aim to offer a welcome to all, recognising people of all faiths and none.
- 4 Event Use
  - We seek to use our building to facilitate lifelong learning of our Christian and community heritage
  - We seek to encourage music and arts events, providing arrangements can be made for the appropriate parking of cars.

### 3. 1. 2. MISSION PLAN. 2017-2020.

To use the opportunities provided by VISION 2020 to further the work of St. Edmund's as outlined in the Mission Statement (2017). Not all the activities proposed in the VISION 2020 are core activities for the PCC of Stoulton with Drake Broughton, for this reason the PCC supports and will be

represented on the proposed Stoulton 900 Group. Its representatives will play a full and active part in the activities of that body.

It agrees with:

- The proposal to celebrate the 900th anniversary of St. Edmund's with a Festival of History and Heritage.
- The use of St. Edmund's as a base for the Festival.
- The upgrading of the amenities of St. Edmunds including the reopening of the south doorway of the church as an emergency exit ready for this festival.
- The training and involvement of volunteers to assist with welcoming visitors.

### **3.1. 3. THE BUILDING**

The building is well cared for and in a very good state of repair but has few amenities; there is no toilet, no internal water supply and the current oil fired heating system rarely raises the temperature above 15 degrees. The chancel roof was completely replaced and the nave roof repaired around 20 years ago and the gutters and gullies are sound and well maintained. Most of the window glass has been re-leaded in recent years. The biggest threat to the building comes from water; rain water and ground water. The blue lias stonework has a tendency to split in wet and frosty weather and is beginning to suffer from the increasingly heavy rainfall of recent years. Stoulton has a high water table; heavy rain and saturated ground results in water permeating through the Norman shallow foundations and up the walls causing the internal plaster to fail. Replacing the failed plaster was the only major requirement of the 2016 Quinquennial Building Inspection.

### **3.1.4. THE SETTING.**

St. Edmund's sits amid grassland and trees, mostly yew trees of no great age. To the south and east is an open churchyard and to the north across the tarmac is the 'Old' Vicarage, home to the vicar from early times to 1959. Church Lane is narrow, there are no footpaths or street lighting. There is very little parking space outside the church and beyond it the lane peters out into private drives making turning difficult for drivers who fail to notice the cul-de-sac sign. Most of the properties in Church Lane speak of the past, the old school is now the Village Hall, Manor Farm is a housing development and who would guess that the Old Malthouse which really was once a malthouse also housed a village shop and one of the first post office counters in the country!

The village of Stoulton lies both sides of the busy B4048 just 2 miles from Junction 7 of the M5 motorway and about one mile from the proposed Worcester Parkway railway station, this is due to be constructed in the adjoining parish of Norton, close to the boundary with Stoulton parish.

### **3.1. 2. ITS SIGNIFICANCE**

The parish church of St Edmund, Stoulton, is a Grade 2\* listed building set in a conservation area. It dates from about the year 1120 and the original "footprint" of the church has changed little since. For the first 400 years or so it was a chapel of ease for the Minster church of Kempsey, it became a parish church in 1529. The building has been adapted and restored over the centuries.

The walls of the church are pure Norman, three small Norman windows still remain in the chancel and the outline of another can be seen in the south chancel wall. Externally, Norman 'blind arcading can still be seen above both the north and the south doors, (currently blocked up). At least one consecration cross has been carved in the jambs of the North door and a very careful inspection of the door jambs in the south doorway will reveal part of a mediaeval scratch clock, there are faint traces of others. A restored tablet to the right of this door is in memory of George Allen (1608 to

1657), who was minister of the parish for over 50 years; a surprising length of time in a period of considerable flux and disturbance.

The original roofline was low, the interior, like many Norman churches must have been rather dark despite the internal splay of the windows. By the early 14<sup>th</sup> century three larger windows had been inserted with two more being part of the 1848 restoration. Fragments of medieval stained glass can be seen in the tracery of some of the windows but most of the windows contain plain glass. These were re-leaded in 2010-2011. The 19th century stained glass of the East window, above the altar, came from St. Helen's Church in Worcester in the 1950s. It is a memorial to Madelaine Chaytor, daughter of the Reverend Hamilton Kingsford, vicar of Stoulton from 1867 to 1912. The tower was built in 1936, it is a memorial to the Reverend Kingsford. This tower replaced a brick tower built in 1799 and is probably the third tower on the site..

The font is Norman, probably in the church when it was built. It was cut from one piece of stone tapering towards the base and carved with "wave and pellet" mouldings. The church still has its original Elizabethan silver chalice and lid, these were saved during the Civil War by the churchwardens hiding them along with certain linen.

According to the Register "This church was repaired, new ceil'd and resealed in the year 1769 and was opened on Christmas Day the same year." In 1821 a gallery was erected and two windows put in on the South and North side at 'the expense (sic) of the parishioners.' The south door was bricked up at this time.

The timber nave roof, nave pews and pulpit date from the 1848 refurbishment. The west gallery was removed and the belfry arch re-opened. Two further windows to replace the 1821 windows were installed and a 'suitable' porch erected. It is believed that this was fabricated from old roof timbers. The Register states that nothing but the walls of the old structure were left before reconstruction commenced and the total cost of the work was recorded as £603.7s.7d. This is the equivalent of more than £42,412.80 today! The chancel roof was replaced in 1996 and the building rewired when a new lighting system was installed in 2007. In 2012 the chancel was reordered as a chapel within the church, it is used for Sunday worship. The internal walls are plastered, probably from 1848, and finished in a light stone colour. In 2015 new soakaways were built outside in an effort to reduce damp ingress into the walls, which is causing some of the plaster to fail.

The communion table is Elizabethan (1571) and the altar rails are Jacobean (1639). A number of 17<sup>th</sup> century ledger stones are to be found in the chancel, they relate to the Acton and Vincent families. The carved oak reredos with statues of St. Edmund and St. Wulfstan was given in memory of John Kingsford Mylius killed in the Battle of the Somme during World War 1. A carved memorial to those from the parish killed in both World Wars is on the north wall of the nave. The memorial was made by the Bromsgrove Guild. The bells were recast in 1936 at the time of the rebuilding of the tower.

### 3.1.6 CURRENT INFORMATION

For the past few years there have been just two services a month at St Edmund's; one an evening Eucharist, the other Morning Prayer. The church is also used for festivals, occasional weddings and funerals and is frequently open for visitors. The bells are rung regularly.

In recent years there has been:

- a decline in the number of people engaged in church activities.
- A shortfall in income and a reduction in reserves.

On the face of it the future of St. Edmund's seems unsustainable but the members of the church, some of whom are very elderly and now live outside the parish, are very loyal and determined to see the church survive. They have consulted the wider community, asked for their ideas and for their help. Together they have created VISION 2020 a plan to give St. Edmund's a more sustainable future.

In the past five years the congregation has supported the PCC in its strategy to reorder the chancel into a warmer and more comfortable worship area. This work will be completed with the installation of the proposed glazed screen with integral double opening door between the chancel and the nave.

Members of the Church engage in many local activities including the running the Contact Coffee Club, supporting the fund raising activities of the Village Hall Committee and running special events.

### 3.1. 7. WHO BENEFITS FROM THE BUILDING?

- Congregations. On Sundays and at Christian festivals.
- People who book weddings and funerals.
- Families with children who come for occasional events.
- Bell ringers.
- Families and friends visiting the churchyard
- Walkers and other visitors.
- Flower arrangers and other volunteers.

### 3.1.8. HOW DOES THE CHURCH PROMOTE THE BUILDING TO OUTSIDERS?

Notice boards - Church and others in parish.

Advertising - 'The Villager' local magazine, sometimes more widely.

Leafleting - in the parish.

### 3.1.9. WHEN IS THE CHURCH OPEN?

For advertised services

From 10- 6pm most days - as a sacred space and as a place of heritage interest for visitors.

The churchyard is never locked and has many visitors.

### 3.1.11. HOW MANY PEOPLE ATTEND THE SERVICES?

After a period of declining church attendance the congregation of St. Edmunds is on the increase.

Average attendance on a Sunday

2012 - 10 adults; 2015 - 12 adults 2016 -15 adults.

### 3.1. 12. DEMOGRAPHICS

2011 CENSUS Total population = 453

Parish statistics		Comments
Population in 2001	479	Population probably increased a bit since 2011
Population in 2011	453	
Under 16		16%
Over 65		17%
Health issues		
Limit daily activity lots	8.8%	
Limit daily activity a bit	6.8%	
Country of Birth	European	443
	English	417
	Scottish	12
	Welsh	14

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## 3.2. THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF STOULTON WITH DRAKES BROUGHTON

St. Edmund's Church, Stoulton dates from the early 12th century (circa. 1120). It was built as a Chapel of Ease to St. Mary's Kempsey. After the Reformation it had its own perpetual curate and the Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral were the rectors. Lord Somers leased the Rectory from the Cathedral c.1820 for around 100 years before the parish was dissolved to be merged with the Drakes Broughton. The parish of Stoulton with Drakes Broughton was created in 1922 when the District Church of St. Barnabas, Drakes Broughton, which had previously been a part of the Parish of Holy Cross, Pershore and the Parish Church of St. Edmund, Stoulton were joined as one parish with St. Edmund's as the Parish Church and St Barnabas, a District Church.

### 3.2.1. THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF STOULTON WITH DRAKES BROUGHTON (PCC)

The PCC of Stoulton with Drakes Broughton, an 'excepted' charity, came into existence in 1922. The object of the PCC is the promotion of religion and related religious activities. Its elected members are the Trustees of the Charity. They are responsible for the Governance, Mission and Ministry of the Church in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Stoulton with Drakes Broughton. The PCC is responsible for two church buildings: St Barnabas Church, Drakes Broughton, an unlisted District Church, and St Edmund's, Stoulton, the Grade 2\* Norman Parish Church built c.1120. The primary use of both church buildings is public worship according to the rites and rituals of the Church of England.

The PCC has considerable experience of the reorganisation and adaptation of church buildings. St Barnabas church, built for the then tiny agricultural community of Drakes Broughton in 1851, is unlisted and located in the rapidly expanding village of Drakes Broughton (population now about 1450 and set to rise). To keep abreast of these changes the old pews have been removed and the space reordered to enable greater flexibility of use. A toilet has also been installed in the Vestry. These changes have enabled the building to be available for wider community use and public hire. In Stoulton the PCC has also been engaged in reordering St. Edmund's to make it more 'fit for purpose.' In 2012 the under-used Chancel space was reordered into a warmer and flexible space and for Sunday worship.

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## 3.3 THE CIVIL PARISH OF STOULTON

**The Place:** The boundary of the Stoulton civil parish follows much of the line of the old ecclesiastical parish enclosing ancient farmland, the village of Stoulton and several scattered hamlets that have grown up around ancient farmhouses. Many of the old houses and farmhouses are listed; once tied cottages have been 'gentrified,' and many of the 33 houses built for rent in the 1950s - down the road on the Claverton Estate in the hamlet of Hawbridge, - are now privately owned. The land is still farmed but very few people work on it, footpaths criss cross the farmland, many, including the way marked 'Millennium Way' lead to the church of St Edmund, King and Martyr

**The People:** On the night of the 2011 census 453 people were living in 176 households in the parish. The population is about to rise as redundant farm barns have been converted into modern homes

and a small number of new, family sized, houses are under construction. Stoulton no longer has a community made up of farmers, market gardeners and agricultural labourers, there are no lay patrons or great landowners and since 1932 there has been no school. Stoulton children attend St. Barnabas CE First and Middle School in Drakes Broughton and Pershore High School, or local independent schools. Stoulton residents come from a variety of lifestyle/educational and social backgrounds, but are mostly owner-occupiers, professionals, well educated, articulate, with English as first language. Many are retired having 'escaped to the country'. Most of those at work drive out daily to workplaces but an increasing number work from home for some, if not all, of the time. They value the thriving village hall, the historic and well preserved church building, the farm shop, the good transport links and the beautiful rural setting. There is a strong community spirit, much informal pastoral support and a considerable sharing of expertise. Many engage in village activities and volunteer to help organise celebration meals, coffee mornings and contribute to working parties. However there is still much to do to restore social contact between the various parts of the civil parish.

Among today's residents there is no tradition of regularly attending St. Edmund's Church despite the fact that 337 people registered as Christians at the last census. Nonetheless there is much good will towards the church; attendance at Christmas is good and there are many informal links between "churchgoers" (of whatever regularity, frequency and location) and others within the wider community.

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## 3.4 THE STOULTON VISITOR ECONOMY

*"Tourism is based largely on our heritage, culture and countryside and, therefore, needs to maintain the quality of the resources upon which it depends. Tourism can provide an incentive and income to protect our built and natural environment and helps to maintain local culture and diversity".*

*"Tomorrow's Tourism" National Tourism Strategy, Department for Culture, Media and Sport – 1999*

Research indicates that the local economy is made up of many small micro businesses. Agriculture is still important but often landlords are absent and very few people actually work on the land. Tourism is important to the local economy.

### **Stoulton is an easy place to get to and has good connections.**

Worcester, Hereford, Malvern, Pershore, Evesham, Oxford, Stratford, Cheltenham, Birmingham and Bristol are all within easy reach by train, bus and car. The A44, a main trunk route, passes through the parish and connects to junction 6 of the M5 motorway. The B4084 Worcester to Pershore and Evesham passes through Stoulton village; it connects to junction 7 and will, very soon, pass by the new Worcester Parkway train station with its north-south and east-west rail connections. A regular bus service linking Worcester to Pershore stops in the village near the brown signposts to the church in the Church Lane conservation area.

### **Stoulton Businesses**

Overnight visitors use the caravan park, the self catering lodges and cottages, the bed & breakfast establishment and the Benedictine monastery. Day visitors eat at the Fusion Restaurant, the Woodpecker Cafe and the Berkeley Arms. The Farm Shop is well known for its butchers shop and the Fruit Farm has plums and apples in season. Motorists use the facilities at the car sales centre in the village; for rugged Land Rovers they go to the garage at Egdon. Walkers use the many footpaths that criss-cross the parish, some follow the way-marked Millennium Way that passes by the church.

To date little has been done to connect these businesses in any way or to encourage visitors to explore the parish. There has been no joint promotion of Stoulton as a place to visit.

### **Is it easy to park in Stoulton?**

Most, but not all businesses have their own car parks. There is easy car parking at Millennium Wood where footpaths converge and link the scattered hamlets to the village and the church. The restricted parking outside the Church and the Village Hall can cause problems for residents.

### **Do visitors to Stoulton visit the church?**

Although tourism is important to the local economy very few people actually visit St. Edmunds despite the fact that it is often open, free to enter and stands as a beacon on the top of the bank. The way marked Millennium Way that passes through the churchyard is used by walkers, some of whom come in groups, but like those who visit and tend family graves, very few come inside the building.

### **Opportunities and challenges**

Every community needs its economy to thrive and must take advantage of opportunities presented to it. In Stoulton the proposed Parkway Railway station will offer such an opportunity. The centre of Stoulton could become a walker's paradise set to benefit all of the small businesses. Already the Millennium Way brings visitors to the parish on foot and the associated circular walks that link to it are available for download on the internet. They take people to little visited parts of the parish and, on the way, they pass places of refreshment and places of interest. Such connectedness needs to be supported and furthered.

Vision 2020 supported the wider use of St. Edmunds Church, the intention being to contribute to the local visitor experience and indirectly contribute to the local economy. The 'Stoulton 900' Visitors Project will build on this concept and present St. Edmund's as a visitor venue in its own right.

The great challenge for St. Edmund's is its restricted car parking and its position at the head of a small narrow cul-de-sac with little room for vehicles to manoeuvre. To be part of a walking trail route would be to its advantage.

The Visitors Project will create an annotated parish map to encourage visitors to explore, use their services and find out more about the church and the whole parish. Working with the Parish Council this project will consider signage and other footpath management issues.

## **4. RESEARCH and DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Background Research into additional and complementary uses of church buildings.**

The Church of England has established a Church Buildings Review group under the Chairmanship of John Inge the Bishop of Worcester. The group reported in October 2015, and the content has informed the way the PCC decided to move forward.

Desk top research including

<http://www.churchinwales.org.uk/structure/representative-body/church-heritage-and-conservation-resources/development-community/>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/our-buildings/churches/extended-use.aspx>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/9766796/New-uses-for-churches-could-revive-villages.html>

## 5.2. Research into the proposed development as a Visitor Venue

- The National Churches Tourism Group
- Historic England
- The Churches Conservation Trust
- Heritage Open Days, the Civic Trust
- Hexham Abbey
- Other examples on the internet
- 'The Churches of the Romney Marsh and the creation of a Visitor's Centre in St George's Church, Iychurch, Kent.' by Sandy Marchant. A Dissertation for a Master's Degree in Heritage Management the University of Birmingham. 1989.

## 4.3. Research into the use of the facility by the wider community the PCC has consulted

- Stoulton Parish Council
- Stoulton Village Hall Committee
- The Friends of Stoulton Church
- Residents of Stoulton
- Wychavon District Council Planning
- Public Consultation in Stoulton on the initial 'Welcome to our Future' document

## 4.4. Research into Stoulton visitors

- Visitors to the Village Hall usually visit for a specific purpose and do not often venture into other parts of the parish. Dog walkers do exercise their dogs down Church Lane but rarely enter the churchyard.
- Visitors to the church and the churchyard - a surprising number of visitors visit the graves in the churchyard, they rarely enter the church itself. Many local people pop in and out of the church many are volunteer flower arrangers, brass cleaners etc.
- Visitors to Mucknell Abbey do walk down to the church.
- Visitors who use the Farm Shop, food outlets at farm gates rarely visit the church
- Those who use the facilities of the accommodation providers, there is scope to encourage more overnight visitors to make a visit to the church.
- Those who walk the footpaths - the way marked Millennium Way passes through Stoulton parish. The creators of this walk created two circular walks that leave the route and explore other parts of the parish. Both walks pass through the churchyard and past the church. There is little evidence that these visitors actually visit the church.
- Those who visit friends and family sometimes visit the church.

## 4.5. Regarding the heating system the PCC has undertaken desk research and consulted:

- An energy consultant who offered advice and introduced examples from other churches around the country.
- Consulted - ChurchCare the Church of England's national resource set up to advise churches in the care of their buildings and The Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches
- Followed up individual cases on the internet.
- Visited other churches to experience their installations.

## 4.6. ALTERNATIVE HEATING DESIGNS: The Discussion

The PCC has considered and rejected several alternative heating plans including:

- Replacing the oil fired system with a new oil fired system. This would require a new boiler, new pipe work, possibly additional and new radiators PLUS the installation of an internal water supply

and the adaption of the boiler room to provide additional ventilation. BUT the oil itself would remain at risk of theft, (the oil was stolen twice in two years) and the system would be environmentally dirty also this system would not release space to install a toilet

- There is no gas in the village.
- Air pumps were considered but were unsightly and unlikely to receive permission.
- Ground source pumps were considered but the water table is very high and the ground consecrated.
- Calor and propane gas would need to be kept outside, something considered inappropriate
- Electricity is expensive but is more acceptable in buildings not in continuous use. It can be zoned, timed and thermostatically controlled. Ultimately the intention is to use solar energy but this is not appropriate on the south facing roof of a Grade 2\* listed building. The PCC is investigating deploying a small area of the older part of the churchyard for ground mounted PV panels - this is at the suggestion of the conservation officer at Wychavon District Council.
- Considered and rejected alternative methods of draught exclusion including curtains but a Fire Officer indicated that clear sight to the only exit door is important, curtains are therefore not appropriate. A glass screen seems more appropriate.

It is hoped that it will be possible to get some assurance that the current proposal to install an electric system as outlined will in fact be appropriate and affordable.

#### **4.7. IMAGINING THE FUTURE; WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE IN JULY 2020**

The time is sometime in July, the year is 2020 and in Stoulton residents and visitors of all ages, are congregating to celebrate the 900th anniversary of a very special community building - the village church.

They are gathering in the newly re-ordered nave auditorium of that church to watch the premiere of "The Stoulton Story". The decision to tell this story from the perspective of the old church was innovative, it remains to be seen how well it has worked but nearly everyone here knows someone who has taken part in the development of the video so excitement is high. The new refreshment area is proving useful for events like this and has really come in to its own today! The new toilet makes such a difference but it is a comfort to have the back up of the toilets at the Village Hall at busy times.

For the organisers there is just a little tension - this is the first time the new audio-visual system has been used and despite all the money spent on the building in recent years they are only too aware that the old pews, despite the new cushions, are not the most comfortable of seats! Fortunately everyone who has been involved in the Vision 2020 developments of the past three years is well aware that the decision to keep the pews was a deliberate one, they remain a piece of heritage in a building about to embrace a new and additional role as a place of welcome for visitors to the parish.

Parking remains a bit of a problem around the church so the parish map created to encourage visitors to walk the footpaths that connect the car park at the Millennium Wood and the new Parkway Station to the places of interest in the parish is significant. It has been trialled by visitors staying with local accommodation providers over the last year or so; we hope that visitors using the map will make a useful contribution to the parish economy. A new app for families, who we want to encourage to walk the footpaths as heritage detectives, is ready for the summer holidays.

Whether these ideas will actually contribute to the ongoing care and maintenance of our ancient church hangs in the balance. No matter how good the ideas or how enlightened the management practices, finding people to open the doors, meet the parties and do all the necessary little jobs behind the scenes remains a challenge. The Resilient Heritage Team has been exploring new management ideas and practices and learning from other places around the country. They will share their findings at the Stoulton Conference later in autumn. It may then be appropriate to start to promote the last piece in the Vision 2020 jigsaw, a programme of walks, talks, debates and discussions for pre-booked parties of visitors, many of whom will come by coach. Whatever happens the funders of our capital works expect the building to remain open and accessible for the next 20 years!

#### **THE CULTURE**

Underpinning all the changes and developments needed to implement the VISION 2020 plan has been a culture of respect and welcome for all people. St. Edmund's was and remains a Christian Church, but in our secular and multi cultural society the organisers recognise that there is much to be learned from the intermingling of ideas and cultures.

## 4.8. DIARY FROM JANUARY 2016

DATE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSE	COMMENT
Jan	Concern re. how sustainable was St. Edmund's - resources of people and money questionable.  Consulted with Roy Walford and Friends of Stoulton Church	Wrote and distributed "Welcome to our future" paper	
Feb	Welcome to Our Future - a PCC agenda item  Friends of Stoulton Church - promotional leaflet	Many of the ways churches traditionally added to their income seemed inappropriate - e.g. increased giving, fees from weddings and funerals etc. Agreed needed to know the mind of the community - did they want the church? Agreed to consult the community	Developed a 'Welcome to our Future.' document ready for community consultation
March/ April	Community Consultation concluding with a Community Meeting	Individual consultations, PCC consultation, Villager Consultation Invitation.  Meeting well attended. Clear indication that the community wanted its church and would help to ensure its future.	Many offered their skills and some indicated more in-depth involvement.  St Edmund's recognised as an iconic building that more people should see
March	PCC accepts Mary Kenchington's offer to be licensed as a Reader		
April	3 new names on the Stoulton Electoral Role 2 new members elected onto the PCC representing Stoulton  Gift of Organ to the church		Only one Church Warden
May	PCC Unanimously accepts Welcome to our Future and accepts the need for fundraising  Jim Burgin Heritage Officer. Wychavon		Plan to create a Development Plan that would build on the opportunity leading up to the Church's 900 Anniversary in 2020.  Project to be called VISION 2020
	Revd Sloggett announces his retirement at end of September		

DATE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSE	COMMENT
June	<p>Time of great activity. Development work on plan now known as VISION 2020.</p> <p>Work begins on an application to LEADER</p> <p>Community consulted over plan for increased visitor activity in Stoulton by encouraging walkers to explore the hinterland of the parish and visit the cafe, shop, church etc</p> <p>This application was successful and work began on Stage Two - had to get quotes for work that had yet to have permission.</p>	<p>Great response to the proposal circulated prior to Stage 1 application to Leader -</p> <p>The time table was very tight but the team worked hard and an application seemed possible</p>	<p>Recognise that the church building and the church can play in the economic well being of local businesses.</p> <p>With hindsight obvious that would not get anywhere but the experience was helpful and it looked as though something was happening.</p>
	Referendum - BREXIT		
July	<p>Application (temporarily) withdrawn - not well enough developed to be a serious contender - no faculties for the capital works etc,</p>	<p>Indication given that a fully worked up plan could be considered at a later date.</p>	<p>Unfortunately Brexit made a developed application unlikely</p>
	FSC Talk on Pilgrimage	Well attended and appreciated	Took place in the Church
August	<p>Development work on plan. Took advice:</p> <p>Meeting with Nick Joyce architect Meeting with Andrew Mottram</p>	<p>Learned that we would need to develop an overall plan before making applications for faculties.</p>	<p>The work could still be phased. Faculties last for enough years.</p>
August	<p>Mary Kenchington licensed Reader.</p> <p>Revd Sloggett's final Service at end of month</p>		
September	<p>Development work on VISION 2020</p> <p>Investigated different funding organisations</p>		
	<p>A Planning application may result in some additional parking for the village.</p> <p>Revd Don Sloggett retired at end of September</p>		<p>Much additional work for the single Church Warden and the Reader and everyone</p>
October	Development work on VISION 2020		

DATE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSE	COMMENT
	<p>Archbishop's Visit</p> <p>Diocesan Discussions on Pastoral Reorganisation</p> <p>Work begins on the Parish Profile</p>	<p>Given the way we had already involved the community it seemed sensible to follow this with the development of the Parish Profile so decided to invite anyone interested to take part.</p>	
	VISION 2020 Update Meeting	<p>Held in the church. New people attended. Good to get together.</p> <p>Interested in what had been going on - general supportive.</p>	<p>Received a feeling that could be becoming too 'secular'</p> <p>Priorities reorganised and focus on the mission opportunities.</p>
November	Special Service for Remembrance Sunday	Well attended and appreciated	A Festival Service?
	<p>STOULTON PARISH PROFILE MEETING.</p> <p>Good attendance - a lot of learning Became clear that there was a need for activities with children and that some parents would be prepared to get involved.</p>	<p>Information used to inform the Stoulton contribution to the Parish Profile and the VISION 2020 plans</p>	This meeting took the place of a FSC meeting
	Meeting with Archdeacon - Stoulton and DB to stay together with Pirton		
	Development work on VISION 2020 Gets to the stage when Church Warden involved	Creation of timetable and Gantt chart	Aim to get some sort of response from HLF re ideas before Christmas
December	Sent initial enquiry to HLF.	Received reply indicating that it might be worth working things up further. Suggested contacting Andrew Mottram - will do this.	Would now seem to be a good idea to go forward with the most ambitious plan if it proves to be of benefit to the mission of St Edmund's
	<p>Christmas activities</p> <p>Widened involvement in Carol Service and Crib service</p>	<p>New Readers</p> <p>One aged 9 and two early teenagers one who says she does not 'get' God</p>	Must follow up these up because they are interested enough to want to participate.
2017			
January to March	A new way of thinking needed to implement the VISION proposals Development of 'Stoulton 900' plan. The PCC had to approve these proposals before the plan could be shared with the wider public.	Early March the PCC adopted the plan and gave approval for steps to be taken to develop a Management Group with members drawn from the wider community	If support from those who indicated they might consider involvement in management of a project then can take it to the wider community and start the fund raising process.

DATE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSE	COMMENT
January	<p>Discussion with architect re. possibility of opening south door and making the restoration of the doorway an heritage project. Also considering the idea of installing glass screen for bell ringers to make them 'visible.'</p> <p>Discussions with Andrew Mottram</p>	<p>This would all increase the light and life of the building!</p> <p>Follow up after AM and Church discussions</p> <p>Need to turn the project on its head. Church needs to be clear about how it views Vision 2020 Needs to talk about amenities Project needs to come from a Community Group Great Malvern Priory will be asking for £5m +</p>	<p>This year has been a year of growth for the parish of St. Edmund's and its church. More people have engaged with the building and more with the worship</p> <p>Have created a community project from where we are now.</p> <p>Whole PCC needs to be encouraged to read and comment on proposals .</p> <p>Go back to community and report. Depending on response go forwards</p>
	VISION 2020 to PCC FOR COMMENTS		