

St Edward's- a special building

St Edward's Church is:

- A site of worship for over 1000 years, holding a central place in the town's history and the story of the English Civil War 1642 - 1646
- The largest indoor space in Stow
- The No 1 tourist attraction in Stow

Our challenge in updating the building is:

- to deliver a space which remains beautiful but more flexible
- to ensure the largest indoor facility in our town is held in continued affection and used by all the community
- to pass on this precious gift from our rich past, revitalized and renewed for the future

St Edward's has been extended and adapted in most generations to meet the changing needs of its worshippers and community. We believe that now in 2020 the time is right to set up the building for the challenges of the rest of the 21st Century.

Currently the church's interior is still designed to deliver a Victorian style of worship to meet the needs of the 19th Century.

St Edward's has honoured the traditions that have sustained people in their Christian faith for a long time and will continue to do so. But the time has now come to focus more on future generations and their needs too.

Our building needs to work better:

- to accommodate all styles of worship;
- to provide a space that meets the needs of local communities; and
- to offer an even better experience for our large number of visitors.

The changes now proposed reflect these aspirations and fulfil the church's long-standing criteria against which a successful project of this sort would be judged

- 1 Retain the feel of an historic church
- 2 Enhance its ability to serve the people of Stow
- 3 Be a welcoming space that draws people in and connects them with local faith and history

- 4 Offer space better suited to worship
- 5 Offer accessible and flexible space for community events - especially needs that cannot be met by other venues in Stow
- 6 Improve facilities for children and young people
- 7 Improve heating, lighting and storage

We wish to enable the building to fulfil its primary purpose better, retain its traditional feel and yet be better able to host other appropriate occasions; to keep its beauty and continue to make good provision for a renewal of choral singing and other forms of music and drama.

Flexible success:

The pilot project of making the Lady Chapel a more flexible space has been a significant success. The flexible space is used most weeks in at least three different configurations. We now want to extend this success to the rest of the building.

Seizing the moment:

It is important to do this now. The number of regular worshippers continues to decline across the country, their primary challenge is to keep funding a local priest. This means that there will be less regular income in future to help support the upkeep of the building.

So we must now ask all who value St. Edward's to help set up our church for the future. The challenge is to give our successors a building that will continue to wow visitors, be well used by the community and inspire both groups to contribute to its future costs.

Please join us:

We are inviting you to help us with this timely transformation of St Edwards. We are looking for '**Stakeholders in the Future**':

- to preserve the best of St Edward's now
- to invest in the future of our lovely building and
- to ensure that it is best placed to serve the generations that will follow.