



Church and Community Newsletter August 2026



From Revd Karen

At the time of writing summer is in full flow in Stow. I was asked recently if we really do have 1000 visitors a day at St Edward's. The answer is yes and it's a lot more between Friday and Sunday. Last Saturday I sat by the North Door with my knitting and there were 376 visitors between 2-3pm. After a cup of tea, vicars run almost entirely on tea, I went back to the church and sat inside for an hour. There were around 150 visitors between 4-5pm. We really are very popular and probably have more visitors than some cathedrals and abbeys.

I've heard that some people are asking why bother with our visitors because they won't come back. There are two answers to this. The first is that the congregation of St Edward's is too small to generate the income that is needed to finance the running of this beautiful grade 1 listed building. I am hugely grateful to Marion for all her work in her first month with the shop as we find new ways to encourage visitors to part with their cash. The sheep are particularly cute and only £9 each. The second reason is that we are a church and we are tasked by Jesus (Matthew 28:19) to make disciples of all nations. A friend of mine who studies mission in the 21st century wrote that there are two key questions for us to ask: *Where are people already gathering in the neighbourhood?* *And how might we meet them there with the love of Christ?*

Our response at St Edward's are the booklets about prayer, a prayer tree and notices letting people know they are welcome. Marion has sourced a small mission grant which is enabling us to give away resources to those who came to visit some trees and found themselves asking questions that they did not expect to ask.

If you want to read more about contextual mission, you can find Ian Mobsby here: <https://postsecularcontemplative.substack.com/>

It can be hard to be the host to so many over the summer which is why I am focusing on prayer and praise in our Sunday services over the summer. Please let me know if there are any particular hymns or ways of praying you would like me to explore.

Church Contacts

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Website and Social Media for St Edward's

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14393/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/people/St-Edwards-Church-Stow-on-the-Wold/61566790355827/>

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/st_edwards_stow/

Online services links

2 August: <https://bit.ly/StEd020826>
9 August: <https://bit.ly/StEd090826>
16 August: <https://bit.ly/StEd160826>
23 August: NO STREAMING
30 August: <https://bit.ly/StEd300826>

Blessing

As Glasgow hosts the Commonwealth Games:

Beannachd Dia dhuit
(blessings of God be with you - ScotsGaelic)

RIP

Sheila Heath's funeral is on Friday 31st July at 1pm. Sheila was well known around the town and is mum to our own Janet and grandmother to Leah, from Closely Knit. The funeral will be followed by the burial in Stow Cemetery and the wake at Stow Social Club.

Fundraising news!

We are already starting to raise funds for the Nave lighting project and we are delighted that the Benefact Trust has generously authorised a grant of £2,800.

July's visitors feedback

One of my many hats, as St Edwards' Operations Director, is to develop a visitor engagement strategy and program. For this purpose I've had the immense pleasure over the last few weeks to spend some time in church to chat to visitors, and also with many amongst you.

It's incredible how people come from all over the world in such large numbers. While they are very diverse in their background and understanding of the Christian faith, our visitors certainly all have in common their praise for our building, its beautiful surroundings and all the life within. I love hearing first hand their praises, and I thought you may also like hearing about it. Going forward I will share recent reviews found online with you all every month. Below are my top picks for the month of July:



Sara Zanatta

Local Guide · 57 reviews · 18 photos



6 days ago

NEW

The portal is iconic, the entire church is interesting to visit, it welcomes everyone with fresh water and, when we visited, a lovely little market was open to finance the maintenance of the clock.



Genevieve Robinson

Local Guide · 259 reviews · 223 photos



a week ago

NEW

Gorgeous picturesque church in a lovely town. There is a car park down the high road which is the best place to park. That way you get to walk through town. Glorious flowers and yew trees!



Angela M. Santander M.

Local Guide · 316 reviews · 1404 photos

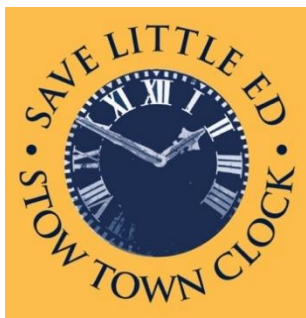


3 weeks ago

NEW

St Edward's Church is an absolute must-visit if you are exploring Stow-on-the-Wold! The church itself is beautiful and steeped in history, but the true highlight is the iconic north door at the back. Framed perfectly by two ancient, twisted yew trees, it looks like something straight out of a fantasy novel—it's easy to see why it supposedly inspired J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*.

The atmosphere around the grounds is incredibly peaceful, magical, and timeless. It is the perfect spot to take some breathtaking photos and soak in the historic charm of the Cotswolds. Highly recommended!



Tick Tock Save Our Clock Update

Closely Knit Knits On!

Closely Knit and the Little Ed fundraising team have decided to 'knit on' in the campaign to save our clock. The team is keeping the needles clicking and the crochet hooks crocheting to reach a new target of £35,000.

The original fundraising campaign to 'Save Little Ed – the Stow Town Clock' had a target of £25,000 to pay for a clock face facelift and to repair the clock mechanism. But further investigations have shown that the autowinder now also needs replacing. Di Close from Closely Knit, St Edward's knit and natter group which meets each Saturday at 10am, said: 'We have been blown away by the support to Save Little Ed and when we heard about the autowinder, we decided to knit on. 'The new autowinder will future-proof our lovely town clock for decades to come. Demand for our knitted and crocheted goods seems to be at an all-time high and we thought let's keep going! We are so proud of the fundraising so far and really grateful to everyone backing our campaign.' Closely Knit has been spearheading the fundraising which now stands at £24,000 and work will start soon on the first phase of repairs.

Meanwhile, news of the campaign to 'Save Little Ed – the Stow town Clock' has travelled north of the border! Sybil was proud to show the Little Ed artwork to her childhood friend Tracy (right on photo) who was on a coach tour of the Cotswolds with her friend Fiona (left).

Sybil said: 'While motoring down from Edinburgh, Tracy, who I grew up next door to in Shropshire, had been reading all about the fundraising to Save Little Ed. After a cuppa on the lawn at Stow Lodge Tracy suddenly asked: 'Where's this Little Ed then?' I was surprised that she'd read about Little Ed and was delighted to tell her about the campaign to save the clock. I was thrilled that news of the campaign had made it to Scotland!'

Thank you for all your support to 'Save Little Ed – the Stow Town Clock.' If you would like to donate to the campaign,



please use the QR code. You can also make a cheque payable to PCC Stow on the Wold – please put your cheque in an envelope marked 'CLOCK' and pop it in the red safe beside the church door. You can also hand your cheque to Church Treasurer, Peter Dixon and let him know it's for the 'Save Little Ed' fund.

It costs £80,000 a year to keep the doors open at St Edward's and all this money comes from our congregation. We do not receive any funding from the central Church of England. We are a small congregation and keeping our church open isn't an easy task. The population of our town has fallen as homes become tourist accommodation. We also appreciate that money is tight for many people with the ever-rising cost of living. But because we are self-funding, work like restoring our lovely old clock is an extra cost, on top of our day-to-day church running costs. We appreciate any help you can give to 'Save Little Ed.'

THANK YOU FOR HELPING TO 'SAVE LITTLE ED – THE STOW TOWN CLOCK.'



Ride+Stride returns this September



Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust (GHCT) is pleased to announce that this year's Ride+Stride event will take place on Saturday 12th September. St Edwards Church will be listed as a venue, while not clashing with the use of the space by the fantastic team of Music at Stow.

The annual event invites participants to walk, cycle or even horse ride between churches across the county, raising money to support the repair, maintenance and improvement of these special buildings and helping to ensure they can continue to serve their communities for years to come.

Some participants take on ambitious challenges, aiming to visit as many churches as possible in a single day, while others take a more relaxed approach, enjoying the route and the activities hosted by churches along the way. In previous years, visitors have been welcomed with bake sales, tower tours, car boot sales, organ recitals, concerts and more. As in previous years, Peter Dixon will be doing a 20-mile sponsored solo walk visiting ten churches in the Cotswolds. He will walk on Monday 7th September, as he tends to be rather busy with Music at Stow from Tuesday to Saturday.

Last year's event raised more than £37,000, which has since been distributed to local churches to support a wide variety of projects, including a grant to St Edward's towards the cost of replacing copper roofing panels above the north porch. 50% of the Ride & Stride funds raised by participants from St Edward's comes back to our church, making it an important fundraising opportunity.



Can you think of a sponsored activity you could do to support the effort? Find further information on the GHCT website: <https://ghct.org.uk/ride-and-stride> or speak to Peter.

Services

Mondays at 9.00am (not Monday 31 st)	Morning Prayer in the Lady Chapel at St Edward's Stow
Sunday 2 nd August 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 9 th August 9.15am	BCP Matins, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 9 th August 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 9 th August 11.00am	BCP Matins (lay led) St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 16 th August 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Mary's Upper Swell
Sunday 16 th August 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow with Baptism
Sunday 23 rd August 9.15am	BCP Holy Communion, St Nicholas Condicote
Sunday 23 rd August 10.30am	Holy Communion, St Edward's Stow
Wednesday 26 th August 12.30pm	Wedding, St Edward's Stow
Sunday 30 th August 10.30am	Morning Service, St Edward's Stow
Wednesday 2 nd September 3.30pm	Wedding, St Nicholas' Condicote

Dates for your diary

Saturday 8th August 2.00-7.00pm – Summer Music Festival at Edwardstow Court: an afternoon packed with live entertainment, delicious BBQ food and plenty of opportunities to sing, dance and celebrate with friends and family.

Friday 21st August 7.30pm – Summer Showtunes Performance in church – more information to follow when booking opens

8th – 12th September – Music at Stow: [Welcome](#) | [Music at Stow](#)

Saturday 12th September – Ride and Stride - [Ride+Stride](#) | [Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust](#)

Regular Events

Wednesday Coffee Club - 9.00-10.30am in Huffkins

Closely Knit - 10am-noon every Saturday in the Church

Mother's Union – First Thursday of the month at 2.30pm in the Church Room

Cotswold Dementia Café Every 1st and 3rd Friday of the month, 2-4pm at the Baptist Church Hall off Back Walls. A community café offering friendship, support, advice and more for anyone living with or caring for someone with dementia.

Baby and Toddler Group First Wednesday of the month 11.00am – 12.30pm at Edwardstow Court