

A photograph of the Stonehouse Church tower, a prominent stone structure with a crenellated top and a cross on its roof. The tower is situated behind a lush green pond with tall reeds and lily pads. The sky is filled with dramatic, grey clouds, and a small bird is visible in the upper right. The overall scene is a blend of natural beauty and historical architecture.

The Stonehouse Church Reordering Project

Embracing our Future
Renewing our Heritage
Enhancing our Community



Welcome

St Cyr's Church is situated by the beautiful Stroudwater Navigation, a recently restored canal in Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. The church's serene surroundings make it a cherished landmark for both locals and visitors.

The church is more than a place of worship; it is a hub for community events and gatherings. It regularly hosts activities such as the Stonehouse Canal Festival, initiatives by Cotswold Boatmobility and the Cotswold Canals Trust, as well as events involving local schools and choirs.

However, as we embrace the future, our beloved building needs updating to better support the needs of its growing community. The Stonehouse Church Reordering Project aims to meet these needs by creating a welcoming, accessible and sustainable space. Our goal is to enable St Cyr's Church to serve as a hub of faith, culture and social activities.

The community at St Cyr's Church has always been a supporter and friend to help us achieve this aim in so many diverse ways. Recently celebrating our 10th birthday they generously allowed us to use at no cost, all the facilities needed to mark this auspicious occasion. Being ideally placed alongside the canal the annual Canal Festival and also the Walking Festival enjoy the space and the opportunities that engenders.

Mattie Ross, Chair of Cotswold Boatmobility

Historical Significance

St Cyr's Church is a popular spot on the UK's canal network. It is set in scenic countryside alongside the Stroudwater Navigation and features 50 Grade II listed tabletop tombs. The church has existed in Stonehouse since 1225, with the current building being rebuilt in the 19th century by Henry Crisp, with its medieval tower dating to the 14th century.

Now part of the Stroudwater Team of 15 parishes, the church is central to Stonehouse's community and spiritual events. Surrounded by its tranquil surroundings and embraced by the evolving needs of its parishioners, the church continues to unite residents and visitors alike.

St Cyr's Church is a vital part of the Stroudwater Navigation landscape at the Ocean site along the Cotswold Canals. Beyond its beautiful and historic presence, which enhances the character and vision of the canal, the church plays an important role in our local community. It has regularly hosted and supported our community events and fundraising activities, offering a welcoming space that brings people together. Its continued involvement has helped strengthen the connection between the canal and the wider community. We fully support the Stonehouse Church Reordering Project. Creating a more accessible and versatile space will not only honour its historic legacy but also ensure it remains a valued and inclusive place for generations to come.

Lisa Mant, General Manager at the Cotswold Canals Trust





Opportunity to Transform

The church's current configuration and facilities are inadequate to meet the needs of the community. The kitchen and toilet facilities are outdated and insufficient for large gatherings. Additionally, the layout does not provide the flexibility required for informal gatherings, large groups of children, or community events.

Exciting opportunities await, particularly through partnerships with local groups like Cotswold Canals Connected and the Stonehouse Walking Festival. The area is seeing more visitors thanks to new housing, the canal restoration, increased interest in versatile venues for gatherings and worship, and initiatives aimed at lessening the church's environmental impact.

We support the outreach work of St Cyr's by providing a monthly prayer service to support members of our community who have been bereaved or who have asked for prayers on our prayer tree, a monthly coffee morning where we provide refreshments and homemade cakes, as well as support other events such as the Stonehouse Canal Festival, Stonehouse Walking Festival, the Historic Churches Ride and Stride and the Poppy Appeal. The setting of the church makes it a popular venue for the community and visitors alike. Having a decent heating system, functioning lighting, a proper kitchen and modern toilet facilities would enhance what we offer.

Olga Gibbons, Stonehouse Mothers Union

Our Vision

Our vision is transformative: to make St Cyr's Church a welcoming, inclusive and sustainable space for all. It is a visionary plan to preserve the historical essence of the church whilst adapting the space to meet the needs of our community.

The project will enhance accessibility, create adaptable spaces for worship and events, update facilities, and aim for carbon net-zero. We want every visitor, whether at a service, concert, or in quiet reflection, to feel at home.

St Cyr's Church is both our rehearsal and concert venue. This beautiful historic Church is in an idyllic setting and is both tranquil and peaceful and offers us wonderful acoustics for our singing. We are always made very welcome by the church members.

However, there is much which could be improved. In the winter, the Church is very cold, and the lighting is poor. The toilet facilities are inadequate and not user friendly for those with disabilities. The kitchen area is also in need of improvement.

I feel that were these improvements made; we would see a significant increase in footfall in this lovely church which is a vital hub of the Stonehouse community. As a Choir, we strongly back this project.

Jane Williams, Musical Director of the Cotswold Singers





The Plans

We aim to enhance the church's functionality, accessibility, and sustainability in several ways:

- Upgraded toilet facilities with two accessible toilets, both of which will be disabled-friendly and suitable for young families.
- Improved kitchen, with the removal of the existing facilities and the creation of a new open-plan kitchen.
- Reconfiguring the interior to provide an expanded, flexible and welcoming space by improving the layout for gatherings and events.
- Improving the experience for visitors with a new glazed lobby by the north porch, allowing the main door to be left open during the day and more natural light to come in.

St Cyr's Church has been pivotal in the organisation and inclusiveness of the Stonehouse Canal Festival which has been an event bringing joy and happiness to the local community and beyond. The church is a well-loved landmark throughout the district which would benefit from an upgrade for all-comers to enjoy the facilities they strive to offer.

Councillor Dixon, Stonehouse Town Council

The Plans (continued)

- Enhanced lighting by replacing the existing system with LED lights, strategically placed to offer the best possible light for church users.
- Improved heating with the existing gas-fired heaters being replaced with a combination of underpew and panel electric heaters.
- Restored Architectural Features such as revealing various stained-glass windows and improving natural lighting.
- Creation of step-free access to all areas of the church including stone flag ramps and the lowering of the pew bases.
- New projector and drop-down screen for church services and events.

We have used St Cyr's Church for special services and events such as Christmas and are always made to feel very welcome and included within the church community. The sense of history (both inside and outside the church) is striking, and when St Cyr's is filled with the light and love of children it is a truly wonderful place to be.

Jennifer White, Art, DT, RE and PSHE Lead at Hopelands Preparatory School





Community Impact

St Cyr's is more than a church – it is a key part of our community. Although we are focused on the future, we are also deeply committed to preserving the past, whilst also embracing sustainability. Our upgraded facilities will be accessible for all ages and abilities, enabling us to host events that meet diverse needs while fostering an inviting atmosphere and reducing energy use.

Local schools, choirs and community groups have expressed interest in using the church building more regularly, and with the planned improvements, we anticipate an even greater uptake.

We have seen first-hand how the church's unique location beside the canal creates a natural focal point for community engagement. Many of our events such as the Canal Festival, Lock Challenge, and themed children's activities like Froglets and Pirates draw people to this area, and the church has served as a gathering point. However, the lack of modern facilities limits its potential. A refurbished church with accessible toilets, a functional kitchen, and a warm, flexible indoor space would significantly enhance our ability to host inclusive events and expand our programming year-round. It would also provide a much-needed base for volunteers and visitors, strengthening the connection with the wider community.

Sophie Wakefield, Events and Youth Manager at Cotswold Canals Connected

Funding the Vision

The project, with an estimated cost of over £500,000, will be executed in two phases:

- Phase 1 (approximately £400k): Upgrade toilets/kitchen, build glazed lobby, open up interior space, create meeting room under tower, install new heating and lighting, and install three-phase power.
- Phase 2 (approximately £150k): Adjust pews for access, complete heating/lighting upgrades, ensure step-free access throughout, reconfigure chancel/plinth wall, add projector/screen, repair floor and redecorate interior.

Indicative costs are as follows:

	Phase 1	Phase 2
Stripping out	£11k	£3k
Ground services	£39k	£15k
Masonry and Carpentry	£22k	£14k
Plastering and Decorating	£12k	£12k
Plumbing	£7k	-
Flooring	£16k	£14k
Joinery and glazing	£66k	-
Heating, Lighting and Electrics	£58k	£69k
Conservation works	£15k	-
Projector and screen	-	£10k
Consultant fees	£15k	£5k
Other costs: preliminary, temporary works, VAT and contingency funds	£130k	£64k





Join Us in Building the Future

Your support is vital to making the Stonehouse Reordering Project a reality. By supporting our project, you can:

- Help create a welcoming space that serves the entire community.
- Preserve an iconic historical building for future generations.
- Leave a legacy in Stonehouse.

Your generosity, whether big or small, will enable us to safeguard the legacy of St Cyr's while adapting the church to better meet the needs of our evolving community. Together with your help, we can ensure St Cyr's Church continues to be a place of faith and community for generations.

We believe this project is essential for the preservation and enhancement of our historic church. St Cyr's has been a cornerstone of our community for generations, providing a place of worship, solace and fellowship. This project will not only help maintain the structural integrity of our beloved church but also ensure it continues to serve as a vibrant centre for community activities and outreach. We are confident that with the necessary funding, we can preserve the rich heritage of St Cyr's Church for future generations and continue to be a beacon of hope and support for all who enter its doors.

Steve Allen and Chris Amys, Churchwardens at St Cyr's Church

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