

Stamford Bridge Tapestry Project

The Stamford Bridge Tapestry Project commemorates the Battle of Stamford Bridge (September 25, 1066). It is a large-scale embroidery, which comprises 12 narrative panels (1m 20cm long and 60cm high), an introductory panel, and two final panels listing stitchers and sponsors. First stitches were worked in September 2015, and the final stitches on June 21, 2021. The completed tapestry is now on permanent display in Platform 66, part of the Old Station Club, 24 Church Road, Stamford Bridge YO41 1DG.

The Battle of Stamford Bridge was a crucial turning point in British history, and we want more people to understand that. The Saxons defeated the Vikings so comprehensively that almost an entire generation of Viking warriors was wiped out. If the Saxon troops had not had to fight the Battle of Stamford Bridge, they would almost certainly have been victorious at the Battle of Hastings, less than a month later, and British history would have been very different.

Like the Bayeux Tapestry, our tapestry is actually an embroidery, stitched in Appletons crewel wool, on linen twill. We use only two stitches - outline stitch and Bayeux stitch - and nine colours, plus small amounts of red, white and purple for the two kings involved. It has been designed in the style of the Bayeux Tapestry by Chris Rock, former Chairman of the Battle of Stamford Bridge Heritage Society and professional graphic designer.

It has been stitched by a team of volunteers, under the direction of Shirley Smith, professional textile artist and former York Minster broderer. The intention is for it to become a national heirloom for Britain, in the same way as the Bayeux Tapestry is for France.

We were determined from the start to complete the tapestry to the highest standard possible, not only as a national treasure, but as a lasting memorial to our friend Tom Wyles, who sadly died in February 2016. Tom had the original idea for the project, and we are continuing with it as he would have wished.

It's a wonderfully vibrant piece of work, which has been featured in numerous magazines including *Yorkshire Life*, the *Yorkshire Post* Saturday magazine, and *Medieval Warfare*. We have appeared on local BBC television and radio, the *History In The Making* series, and on Forces TV. We are currently writing a book about the project.

As well as numerous private talks and displays for individual groups, we appeared two years running both at the International Mediaeval Congress at Leeds University, and at the Royal Armouries in Leeds.

Our website is at www.stamfordbridgetapestry.org.uk, where you can also see a video made about the project.

To contact the project, please email secretary Heather Cawte at publicity@stamfordbridgetapestry.org.uk