

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



Guild of St Edmund Committee Meeting

Thursday 14 January 2021 at 10.15 am on Zoom

Geoffrey House	[GH]	Chairman
Sarah Friswell	[SF]	Visitor Experience Manager
Sarah-Jane Alison	[SJA]	Chief Operating Officer
Sandra Harbord	[SH]	Tourist Information Point (TIP)
Susan Cockram	[SC]	Flower Arrangers
Kim Judge	[KJ]	Discovery Centre
Jo Dean	[JD]	Volunteer Recruitment Assistant
Jill de Laat	[JdL]	Welcomers
Stephen Dart	[SD]	Tour Guides
Louise Martin	[LM]	Lego
Joan Garrett	[JG]	Bell ringer
Canon Matthew Vernon	[MV]	Sub Dean

1. The Chairman welcomed everybody; Canon MV opened the meeting with prayers.
2. Apologies were received from Marion Bonfield, Ann Brown (Shop), Catherine Cox (Servers), Rachel Clover (on leave), Jane Harrison (furlough). There is currently no representative for the chaplains (due to the retirement of Canon Lawrence Pizey) nor Groundforce (due to the retirement of Alan McAndrew)

3. The minutes of the meeting 10 September 2020 were approved.

4. **Matters Arising**

St Edmund's Day 2020. It was good to do the online service and Zoom chat. The day got good coverage on social media and we should replicate this in the future alongside events in the Cathedral. The Edmund 'crown and arrows' in the Cathedral was stunning.

5. **Administrator's Update (SJA)**

Finances. The end of year is likely to show a breakeven situation, or very near to that. This is only possible thanks to the regular giving of the congregation, volunteers and patrons. Some new patrons have donated, both as regular donors and as one-off donations. SJA confirmed that these donations will go to designated projects or into the general fund. Budget holders have also kept costs under control. The Cathedral has benefited from the Government Business Support grant and Furlough schemes. Grants have also been received from the Cathedral Sustainability Fund and the Church Commissioners. The budget for 2021 is projected to have a £30K deficit. This was agreed prior to the second lockdown so may need to be revised further as all income

streams are lost at present. Support will continue to be sought from the furlough scheme and the Cathedral's fundraising consultant is actively seeking financial support.

Masterplan. Thanks to volunteers who gave feedback on the 'values', which were agreed as Faith, Welcome, Compassion and Confidence. A roll-out plan will be presented at the February Chapter meeting and thereafter it will become operational. The Masterplan acknowledges the value of volunteers and they will be involved in the implementation of it, sharing their expertise and knowledge. The Masterplan also sets out a vision for the development of the Visitor experience. SJA confirmed that the reference to sustainability and records referred in part to the backlog of archiving of office paperwork.

Kickstart scheme. The Cathedral is contributing to a national initiative which offers young people the chance of a six-month placement to learn life skills in the workplace. This will include placements for two young people 'front of house' to work alongside the Welcomers. Volunteer leaders would be involved, where appropriate, in the integration of the young people. Job descriptions are being written and the programme will start once lockdown restrictions allow.

6. Volunteering Update (SF)

Despite the pandemic by the end of 2020 about 30,000 people had visited representing 40 % of our usual visitors' numbers. The number of volunteers is fairly stable though one or two volunteers have moved away and several volunteers have decided to retire (total 18) – significantly Alan McAndrew as Head of Groundforce. Five new volunteers are waiting to start. Thanks to Jo Dean for keeping that process ticking along. A thorough 'audit' of who is still 'on board' will be needed once restrictions ease and we may need to do a recruitment drive. Communication to volunteers is done mainly via email with regular updates to the whole Guild and also to groups within the Guild. Some of this communication has been done by the volunteer co-ordinators.

A new Digital Communications Manager joins the staff on Monday (18 January). He will take over responsibility for Cathedral communications (website and social media) – but SF will continue to communicate with volunteers. A trial of Better Impact, a new software package, which should help us with managing online rotas, will start on 1 February. Various offers of help were received.

Volunteers have had to make adjustments and work within new guidelines and some volunteers have not been able to do any duties. It has been a long time with no volunteering so SF will run some 'back to volunteering' sessions when it is right to do so to give people confidence and to help them re-connect.

7. Terms of Reference (ToR)

The ToR were reviewed and some minor amendments made regarding the Minute-taker. The phrase 'One representative from each of the properly established Volunteer Groups' was discussed. Most volunteer groups are represented on the Guild Committee but others can be invited to attend without making the group too big. It was noted that there is no representation of the choirs who are all volunteers. The Minutes go to Chapter and will then be circulated to the volunteer co-ordinators who in turn will share them with their groups. The Minutes will also be on the Intranet and website.

8. Volunteer Co-ordinators' Forum – matters for discussion.

SH welcomed the idea of refresher courses for volunteers and stated that the TIP volunteers would welcome shorter, more regular shifts.

SC reported that two flower arrangers continue to prepare arrangements for services, including funerals, though it is not yet known what will happen for Easter. She keeps in touch with all arrangers. Some may step down.

JdL has been impressed by the desire of Welcome Stewards to continue volunteering, though of course have dropped out on health/age grounds.

JG give a resume of what the bell ringers have achieved within the guidelines including ringing at Christmas and hand bell ringing.

KJ reported that in the absence of school visits, resources are being made available online, with support from the volunteers. She too is aware of a couple of volunteers who may step down, though she is also in communication with two prospective new volunteers.

LM commented that some LEGO building had happened both in the Cathedral and in homes and new volunteers are waiting to start.

SD reported that the guides had enjoyed taking on the role of Information Stewards. The monthly Guides meetings continue on Zoom.

JD and SF are in regular contact about potential new volunteers.

MV thanked everyone for their hard work and perseverance.

GH informed the group that he hopes to re-start Chapter 4 on Zoom-a time for chat amongst volunteers, past and present – and any others who wish to join the meeting, plus the chance to hear a speaker.

GH commented that it is good to hear about the work of the Guild. Things will be different going forward but change will be embraced.

9. The meeting finished with the Grace.

Date of next meeting – 6 May 2021 at 10.15 am

Currently the Guild AGM, Evensong and supper is in the Cathedral diary on Tuesday 15 June 2021