

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



Guild of St Edmund Committee Meeting

Thursday 13 January 2022 at 10 am

1. LM welcomed everyone to the meeting which was held on Zoom. MV opened the meeting with silent prayer.
2. Apologies: GP, JH, SC, VM, CT, TS, CC and SH.

JD has now stepped down from her role as Recruitment Assistant. Through SF, she expressed her thanks for the excellent collaborative work which has assisted her in her task.

3. The minutes of the meeting 16 September 2021 were approved and signed.
Matters Arising

Choirs SF has had a further meeting with the Director of Music and the men of the choir will now be offered the chance to join the Guild. Also the application process for joining the Youth Choir will include the volunteer agreement and information on the Guild, so all members of the Youth Choir will automatically become members of the Guild.

4. Cathedral Update

SJA reported that at the end of 2021 the Cathedral finances were good thanks to support from grants, a legacy and the committed giving by the community. New staff members (Cressida Parsons - Philanthropy and Membership Manager and Katie Short - Trusts and Foundation Manager) will be helping source funding to support the work of the Cathedral. 2022 will see the launch of the project to replace the pews in the Nave with chairs.

The new Cathedral Measure has gone through Parliament and been agreed at synod. The Cathedral will become a registered charity – a process which could take 18 months. In response to a question, MV confirmed that the Cathedral Council will cease to exist but the changes will not affect the Guild Committee. Terms of Reference for all groups/committees may need updating.

The Shop is being re-fitted, due to re-open on 9 March. The area in front of the Anselm building will be used as a work site from 17 January, so no parking bays will be available, though the disabled space will remain and access to the bike shed.

The Masterplan is now being implemented and KJ will be leading workshops for volunteers on

values. The management team and heads of departments will be attending an awayday to develop ideas further.

5 **Volunteering update**

Generally, things are going well. Obviously there are still anxieties around activities and some volunteers have stepped back again from volunteering as they do not wish to be in a public space with a lot of visitors. In the light of the government NOT imposing further restrictions, SF felt that there will be a cautious start to the visitor season, but that things will pick up quite quickly. In 2021, we ended up with a total of 41,500 visitors but very few groups and just a modest number of people on tours and Tower tours.

MW has been carrying out a visitor survey. We will continue this until end of February and then we will evaluate our data to date. Then we will repeat the survey periodically through the rest of the year.

We are poised ready to move to a new database. JD has been helping cleanse the data for us before moving it across.

6. **Safeguarding**

The focus of training has changed so that the emphasis is on a change in culture. It is important to look at the wider picture, which includes issues of diversity and inclusivity. Greater awareness of these issues impacts on how we deal with vulnerable people. It is important for volunteers to alert the leadership team if they have any concerns.

7. **Long Service Awards**

Whilst recognising that it is vital that we value volunteer contribution and publically acknowledge long service, the existing scheme sometimes inadvertently causes issues (such as omitting someone). Awards by the giving of a certificate are made annually and in increments of 5 years.

ACTION: SJA, SF and LM will look at the existing policy and review

8. **Guild Annual and Edmundtide meetings**

SF proposed that the annual meeting be held on Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 4 pm (using the marquee for the meeting and supper, and attending Evensong (choristers) in the Cathedral) and the Edmundtide meeting to be held on Friday 18 November at 1 pm (Eucharist, lunch and talk). These dates were agreed.

9. **Recruitment and training**

We had a stall at the Volunteers Fair organised by Volunteer Suffolk last year. We were pleased with our input but sadly it has not resulted in a huge influx of volunteers. Work will continue with Volunteer Suffolk, using their website and networks to attract new volunteers. They are

currently working on a volunteer passport scheme which would mean that volunteers could transfer from one organisation to another quite easily. The Cathedral will help pilot that scheme.

SF reported that our Youth group is going to be working on a project to turn the garden space behind the Shop into an Eco Yard. It will be a garden with facilities for young people to meet. We hope to recruit a team of young people to transform the space.

The curate has also made a good contact at the West Suffolk College which might give us a lead into student volunteers.

All volunteers will be invited to an 'update' session this March, which will cover basic Health and Safety matters and update in general on operational matters. We have all forgotten things due to the pandemic.

SD reported that it is hoped to run a training course for new tour guides in June or July.

All co-ordinators were reminded to let SF know if they have potential new volunteers so that they can be welcomed into the Guild and the necessary paperwork completed.

10. Volunteer Co-ordinators' open forum

AB reported that the Shop had done well in the Christmas period. Due to the refurbishment all volunteers have stood down and stock ordering is on hold.

JS reported that a new volunteer verger will be joining the team shortly and it is hoped that Andrew Whitfield will return as a verger. JS reported that the Christmas Market had generated £2500 from stall rental and £3500 from sales on the Cathedral's own stalls. Pilgrims' Kitchen and the Shop also recorded good trading. JS was thanked and Catherine Rayson too for the excellent marketing of the event. JS will be in discussions with the Council about 2022 plans.

RB advised that the gardeners are in good heart and have had an encouraging year. One new volunteer has joined the team. Several projects have been undertaken (planters, repaving, re-siting of Godspeed sculpture) with more planned to improve the gardens for visitors. Regular meetings with Canon PB and SF continue. The vergers team assists with maintenance work.

KJ reported that over 270 children had attended on school visits in October. Due to ongoing uncertainties, no schools visited for the Advent trails but craft activities went well at the Cathedrals at Night event and the two craft mornings pre-Christmas. Bookings are already being taken for February-April.

BP reported that there are three new deputy wardens and two more will join the team later in the year. The team is working hard on its 'welcome' and focussing on safety.

JdL commented that there are 36 Welcomers and that the rota is running smoothly.

JG reported that the bell ringers are going from strength to strength and that they are now able to ring each Sunday morning and most Sunday afternoons, as well as rehearsing on Thursdays. They will be ringing for special days (such as Suffolk Day, 21 June) and the Queen's Jubilee. The focus is on the national 12 bell striking competition on 26 March. SF and JS are meeting with JG to discuss details.

SD commented that the roving guides scheme had worked well and the tours at the Cathedrals at Night event. Regular meetings continue. The Ancient Library has had a good number of visitors. The vergers' team were thanked for their support of FOCC with interval drinks at concerts.

SF commented that during 2022 the half way mark (100,000 bricks) will be reached on the LEGO model.

MV commented that Abbey 1000 will give additional opportunities for volunteering.

11. The meeting finished with the Grace.

Dates of meetings in 2022 – Thursdays at 10 am - 5 May and 15 September in the Chapter Room