

St Edmundsbury
Cathedral



The Guild of St Edmund

Annual Report



Reports

The following reports give an overview of the many activities carried out by volunteers at the Cathedral in 2021. All volunteers are part of the Guild of St Edmund, which has over 300 active volunteers. Without the dedication, loyalty and support of this team of volunteers the Cathedral would not be able to fulfil its ministry. This Annual report is a testament to the importance of volunteering and we give thanks for each volunteer.

Sarah Friswell, Visitor Experience Manager

Ancient Library *Stephen Dart*

The Ancient Library webpage was updated at the beginning of the year to provide a virtual exhibition and features on specific topics and books. During the summer months, when numbers were restricted, 22 people took the opportunity to join our 'exclusive tours' of the Library and Treasury. The Heritage Open Days in September attracted 106 visitors. We also had visits by students from university and Abbeygate Sixth Form. The Cathedral Archives, Libraries & Collections Association gave us a grant towards the cost of conserving our splendidly ornate 1579 volume by Peter Baro which needed its front board to be re-attached. Library volunteers continued with the rolling programme of inspecting the condition of each of the books.

The Treasury Exhibition 'Animals Galore in the Ancient Library' included camels, lions, elephants and a cat and mouse. Dean James Atwell brought the Library back to the Cathedral in 2004 and, in his memory, a picture of him and Leonard Goff, the designer of the bookcases, now hangs in the Library.

Society of Norman Tower Bellringers *Joan Garrett*

We currently have 20 active members, and two retired members who are no longer ringing due to ill health. Despite the difficulties of the last two years one lapsed member returned to ring with us last year and 3 experienced ringers have moved to the town and are ringing with us regularly.

In the absence of being allowed to ring on tower bells, and as a way of keeping the band together, we used Zoom and an online facility 'Ringing Room' using 'eBells' which were developed by one of our band members. Several members are still continuing to develop their handbell skills further.

Ringling on the Norman Tower bells resumed in mid-May, but only on restricted numbers for the first two months and back to ringing on higher numbers from August. Sunday morning service ringing is from 9.30 am - 10.30 am There were 30 quarter peals in the 5-month period to the end of the year, often for Evensong but some for special occasions, such as the Cathedral Beer Festival, the County Harvest Festival, the Feast of St Edmund, Christmas services and the wedding of the Revs Laura Pope and Tom Mumford. We also marked the deaths of HRH Prince Philip, a past Suffolk Guild of Ringers master David Salter, The Very Reverend James Atwell former Dean, and Air Marshall Sir John Kemball with specially arranged quarter peals.

We are always pleased to see the Dean or Canon Philip on Sunday mornings when they can spare some time from their very busy schedules. Practice night is now on a Thursday evening on a trial basis and the success of this will be reviewed at the next Norman Tower AGM.

Chaplains *Georgina Pinches*

The Chaplains' rota has been running from May to September in previous years but on return from Covid restrictions it was decided to extend the cover. Subsequently November 2021 saw chaplain's duties beginning the run up to Christmas commencing in November and concluding at the end of December. Although we have lost several volunteers for various reasons we managed to provide a presence in the Cathedral although not every day of the week.

We commenced duties again in March this year, again for the run up to Easter and hope to continue to the end of the year. That will leave the 'down time' of just January and February with no chaplain provision. Feedback regarding the presence of chaplains in the Cathedral is positive and it continues to provide opportunity to speak to visitors and lend a

listening ear. Chaplains also lead short prayers at 12 noon and 3pm which again is appreciated. As with most volunteer situations we would like to welcome more into the fold. The majority are retired clergy but we endeavour to spread the word and hope to recruit more lay or ordained personnel if possible.

Flowers *Sue Cockram*

It was indeed wonderful to be able to return to flower arranging in our Cathedral following the restrictions imposed by COVID and the many months we spent with no flowers – it was indeed a strange time for us all. Now we are back enjoying arranging again in our beautiful Cathedral and being able to welcome the return of our Parish arrangers.

If you would like flowers arranged for any special occasions, anniversaries, weddings, birthdays, or christenings, do please get in touch.

Amongst many events postponed during COVID was the proposed flower exhibition to celebrate 1000 years since the establishment of the Abbey. I am pleased to report that this will now be held in the North Aisle of the Cathedral 22-26 June. It is called "Through the Centuries" and the arrangements will depict important events that happened at the Abbey. Please put the dates in your diaries and tell your friends!

Fun, Flowers, and Friendship is the motto of flower arrangers, and we exercise that to the full, adorning our beautiful building, having fun, and making friends! We always need plenty of help and would love to welcome anyone who would like to join us.

Forum *Louise Martin*

The Cathedral Forum usually meets four times a year to discuss issues and hear updates on various matters affecting the Cathedral. A list of members is displayed on the Cathedral community notice-board in the Cloisters and on the website. There are fourteen elected members who are on the church electoral roll. The Forum may co-opt up-to eight additional members; at any time not less than half of co-opted members are members of the Cathedral Community. The Cathedral Chapter may attend Forum as may Readers and retired Clergy; six deputy wardens are

ex-officio members.

At all Forum meetings Dean Joe Hawes updates members on the Cathedral Master Plan based on the priorities Worship, Mission, Hospitality and Sustainability. Financial reports are shared at Forum and names of new staff are given throughout the year as well as information on Cathedral life.

In January 2021 Forum met via Zoom and gave support, after a discussion, to a financial contribution being made to the Diocese.

In June 63 congregational members met in Open Forum via Zoom to discuss in detail the recently launched Master Plan in break out groups. The meeting proved extremely fruitful with questions and answers being subsequently published on the Cathedral website.

In October Forum returned to meet in Pilgrim's Kitchen and three new Deputy Wardens; Kathryn Mitchell, Robert Lant and Carole Arnold were appointed. Reports on the new All Age Eucharist, Environmental action and the Hope into Action charity housing project were discussed.

This year there are five vacancies on Forum. Being a member aids communication with the Cathedral community and is a means of putting forward new ideas. Do consider joining the Forum which meets at 6.30 pm in Pilgrim's Kitchen. Observers are always welcome to any Forum meeting.

Cathedral Gardeners *Robert Bourne*

The Cathedral Gardeners were not able to resume work before March of 2021, because of the lockdown. When they did so it was with reduced numbers of volunteers, Alan McAndrew and Frances Roberts having retired, and Helen Taylor and Jim Hartley having moved away, over the previous few months. All had given long and faithful service. Christopher Barlow has taken over the coordination of the team, with Margaret Ellis in an advisory capacity. Simon Puttock has since joined and brings new energy. In view of these changes, the mowing of the Garth and the Pilgrim's Kitchen lawn, and the trimming of the major hedges, have been contracted out, but otherwise the team remains fully responsible for the

tending of the Cathedral gardens. During the year, the name “Cathedral Gardeners” was adopted in place of “Groundforce”.

A most helpful development has been the holding of regular meetings with Canon Philip, Sarah Friswell and the maintenance verger, Steve Cole. These have borne fruit in the completion, with the involvement of the Cathedral Gardeners, of a number of projects that have enhanced the Cathedral’s surroundings: the re-siting of the “Godspeed” statue by the entrance to Pilgrim’s Kitchen, the resurfacing of the paths surrounding the Remembrance Garden lawns, the replacement of the rope fences in the Remembrance Garden, and the provision of planters near the entrance to the Cathedral premises and by the Pilgrim’s Kitchen marquee. The team continues to enjoy excellent relations with the Abbey Gardens manager and her staff, who have kindly provided plants, advice and encouragement.

All our members enjoy spending Tuesday mornings in the gardens, year-round and in almost all weathers, to keep the Cathedral’s surroundings attractive. We are pleased, after lockdown, to be returning to the high standards of care and floral displays achieved in the past.

Guides *Sarah Friswell*

When it was not possible to offer guide-led tours, we adapted our offer and had ‘information stewards’ on duty. This meant that the guides could still be in the Cathedral, ready to share information and stories on a casual, ad hoc basis, rather than a formal led tour. As visitor numbers increased, from May onwards, this was a useful way to engage with visitors and helped the guides regain confidence in answering all those tricky questions which visitors seem to ask.

The regular public guided tours were re-instated from July to September with a total of 85 people joining a tour. The guides on duty for the Cathedrals at Night event in November were kept very busy offering continuous tours throughout the evening.

However, group visits have not yet resumed in any meaningful numbers. There were just four group tours in 2021, one pilgrimage group and two self-guided groups. The difficulties of every changing restrictions, both in

terms of coach transport and for leading guided tours, as well as the anxieties of older people not wanting to mix in groups, meant that this area of our visitor ministry was not going to pick up in 2021. We have invested in some promotion of our group tours for 2022, and hope that this will bring groups in greater numbers in the near future.

Guild of St Edmund *Louise Martin, Chair*

The Guild of St Edmund, which supports all volunteers in the Cathedral met three times in 2021. In January representatives of the various volunteer groups met via zoom. Volunteers had given valuable feedback on the Cathedral values of Faith, Welcome, Compassion and Confidence and the Master Plan would reflect a number of the issues raised. In May we looked forward to being able to cautiously re-start some volunteering roles with the Lego model, Tower and Guided tours. A discussion on whether to include volunteer adult members of the Cathedral choirs to the Guild was positive and this was taken forward as a proposal to the new Director of Music.

In July, at the Guild AGM, Geoffrey House stood down as Chairman after extending his planned six years service for an extra year owing to the pandemic. Geoffrey was warmly thanked for his hard work and steady hand in this role. Long Service awards were acknowledged and Louise Martin was appointed as the new Chair. In September the Guild were able to meet in person in the Chapter Room. Amongst topics for discussion were volunteer long service awards and a welcome was given to new representatives, Robert Bourne from the Gardeners group and Georgina Pinches from the Chaplains. It was also confirmed that the St Edmundsbury Singers were now members of the Guild.

In November Guild members happily celebrated St Edmundtide with Eucharist, light lunch in the Edmund Room and a talk by the Sub Dean on the Abbey 1000 plans.

Home group *Christopher Andrews*

Nine people have continued to meet on a Monday evening in one another's homes over this year. During Covid and the lockdowns we

were able to meet by Zoom. Either way most people were able to take a full part in reading a book together and learning from the Bible.

Our books for study this year have been “The Meaning in the Miracles” by Jeffrey John, a thorough and stimulating examination of the miracles of Jesus in his ministry. The book is designed for group or individual study. This was followed by “The Parables” by Paula Gooder, similarly written and designed. Both books have in different ways been a pleasure to read and rewarding.

The meetings allow friendship and support to grow in a quiet way. We celebrated a house eucharist based on the liturgy of Iona as a way of marking our return to normal meetings.

Susie Sloane was a regular member of the meeting and we greatly miss her sharp insights and the pleasure of her company.

Kagera Link *Valerie Moore*

The link between the our Diocese and the Diocese of Kagera in north west Tanzania has existed for more than 25 years and both diocese have gained a great deal in knowledge, development and friendship. The visits to and from Kagera have not been possible in the last two years but the Bishops’ Lent Appeal 2021 has enabled significant changes to be made in our support.

Pastors have many churches in their care and often spread out over a very wide area where access has been on foot or on bicycle over very rough roads or paths. Money raised by the Appeal has been used to purchase twelve light motor cycles known as pikipikis. One of the recipients has been Christian Joachim, a young pastor, who has twelve churches in his care. The most distant church from his home is 28 miles away. Each Sunday he takes two services in different churches including for each a one hour long sermon. The other four churches have a service mid week on the rota. The gift of a pikipiki has transformed Christian’s ministry and life. He has sent his thanks and deepest gratitude to all in our Diocese. Although only a small number of pastors have benefitted so far, we hope that we shall be able to provide more pikipikis in the future.

Another recipient of financial support is Dr Christian who is undertaking specialist surgical training which will enhance the work of the hospital in Murgwanza where the Cathedral is situated.

These are just two ways in which money from our Diocese is making a difference. Please continue to support them in your prayers.

Sunday Coffee *Valerie Moore*

It is good to be back serving coffee. During lockdown we lost a number of excellent volunteers but have welcomed new recruits. We serve Fairtrade tea and coffee, squash and biscuits in the south transept after the 10:30 Service. It is good that many people are now bringing their own cups whether of fine china or insulated mugs and anything in between. We have a supply of disposable cups but these come at a cost and are not recyclable by our local Council. They have to be disposed of in the black bin.

Sunday coffee is a time to meet old friends and make new friends, catch up with news and even discuss the sermon. If you have time after the Service come and join us, you can always find a pew to sit if you prefer not to stand. You may even think of becoming a coffee volunteer, you will be very welcome.

Junior Church *Sarah Geileskey*

Happily, Junior Church has been sustained by a team of dedicated leaders whose preparation and presence facilitate prayer, song, liturgy, story and often a craft-based response to the gospel in an age-appropriate way. The leaders are well-supported by our senior young people whose presence at Junior Church is welcomed and encouraged. Members of Junior Church take turns in leading prayer and in sharing the peace before we gather with the congregation in the Cathedral to receive Holy Communion or a blessing. In 2021 clergy committed to serving the youngest members of the Cathedral community by ensuring that the clergy rota facilitates regular attendance at Junior Church, joining in weekly with leaders' plans. Numbers in 2021 have fluctuated between 1 and 12 young people in Junior Church: in 2022 signs are that these numbers are on the increase.

The Yard Project *Sarah Geileskey*

In early 2021 a group of about 8 young people (aged 11-15) who had been meeting throughout lockdown on zoom expressed the desire to embark on an 'outdoor eco-project'. The Hundley Yard (aside the Anselm Building and the Garth). An overgrown area was cleared by the young people over the 2021 Easter Holidays – during which the extent of the project, as well as the many possibilities to engage with Young People in this space began to emerge.

As fortnightly youth group meetings in the summer term continued, a funding application was submitted to The Dulverton Trust, working in partnership with The Heritage Lottery Fund under the umbrella of their #Iwill funding (100% funding to work with young people aged 10-14 and beyond, within heritage settings, meeting identified needs including isolation, deprivation and mental health and well-being). Happily, the £32,000 bid was approved in the late Autumn and the project has been launched in 2022 with the appointment of a Youth Project Lead, Jane Dow. The garden room has since been made water tight and the young people will now gradually be involved in renovating the space. Holiday activities have included gardening, repurposing and reusing furniture, creating habitats and helping to shape the plans for an eco-garden. We are grateful for the guidance of a project steering group that includes an open invitation to young people, congregation members Paul Baines and Helen Leggett as well as Gavin Stone, Chief Executive of Suffolk 4YP, an organisation working with young people across Suffolk.

LEGO *Sarah Friswell*

Despite the pandemic seriously restricting our ability to build, we have continued to make steady progress on the LEGO model with the numbers of bricks added nudging up towards the halfway point (100,000). We hope to celebrate this milestone in 2022. It is great to see visitors engaging with the model, including visitors who come occasionally, returning to add another brick. It is a magnet for families with children and people of all ages are surprised to find such a project in a cathedral and therefore are usually positively disposed to donate to add a brick.

During Cathedral closures, generous people gave online, enabling us to add bricks once building resumed. The model is now up to the clerestory level. More bricks arrived from Bright Bricks, which include those which will allow the building of the Tower.

The team of volunteers is somewhat depleted, with several not returning after the pandemic. However, we have been pleased to welcome several new volunteers including a young volunteer who is using the experience as part of his Duke of Edinburgh award.

World Day of Prayer *Mandy Alderman*

There are 19 representatives from churches in Bury St Edmunds.

As last year's World Day of Prayer Service was held by zoom it was lovely to prepare this year for a service in person. The Preparation Day was held on 5 November 2021 at All Saints Church. This year the service was represented by the Christian Women of England, Wales and Northern Island. Scotland have their own World Day of Prayer Service.

The World Day of Prayer Service was held at the United Reformed Church in Whiting Street on 4 March 2022 at 10.30 am and at the Northumberland Avenue Methodist Church at 7.30 pm. Approximately 70 people attended in the morning and about 25 in the evening. Service donations amounted to £714.80.

The role of the altar server is to assist the clergy, the joy is to be in the presence of the Lord. Servers are at most services at the Cathedral as acolytes (candle bearers), Crucifers (Cross bearers) and Thurifers (incense bearers). It has been wonderful to rebuild the role to precovid days, with servers once again being able to present the offerings from the congregation.

Servers Catherine Cox

We have a core, committed group of servers, ranging in age from teenagers upwards and from beginner to 'old hands' in experience. We would like to have a larger group of servers, especially now that full duties are resumed, so if you are even slightly curious, pleased do ask one of us

or one of the clergy; we'd love to have you join us.

This year we have been involved in many events: Ordinations, the Justice Service, Plough Sunday, Installation of Canons, as well as the weekly 8 am, 10.30am and Evensong. It is also a delight to watch members of the 9 am service taking on serving roles at the all-age service.

There are so many ways to dedicate your time to God. Being a server gives a unique chance to serve.

Cathedral Shop and Tourist Information Point *Jane Harrison*

The shop and Tourist Information Point (TIP) are open seven days a week, selling a wide range of gifts and souvenirs as well as cards, books and church supplies. We have 50 dedicated volunteers whose role includes serving customers and dealing with queries from visitors to the town and cathedral. All of this is done with a smile and we really are grateful for their commitment and continued support of the shop and TIP. Due to lockdowns and prolonged periods of closure a number of volunteers have decided not to return to their volunteer roles so if anyone is interested in volunteering please do get in touch. We ask for volunteers to commit to one duty a week either morning or afternoon. Government restrictions meant the shop and TIP were closed until mid-April but we were all keen to return to our roles as soon as we could. Sales started gently while the public regained confidence and began to venture out. We were then hit by a water leak which saw the TIP closed again from May until October while repairs were carried out. Reopening was perfectly timed, however, to support the shop with a big up turn in sales as customers began to shop for Christmas. A bumper December and careful stock management meant that although sales were a little lower due to our enforced closure, our profits were higher than budgeted. This was a great result for a difficult year in retail.

Plans for the shop and TIP refurbishment were made. While I write this I can hear builders working away and by the time you read this we will have a lovely shiny and new shop. What better way to start 2022.

Tower Tours *Sarah Friswell*

Tower tours resumed in July 2021 with limited numbers to observe COVID restrictions. They are offered on Wednesdays and Saturdays. There was modest but sustained take up of the tours and we were able to do 3 private tours, the twice weekly tours (through to October) and some extra tours for the Christmas market.

During 2021, four new guides completed their training, which had begun in 2020. All tours operate with two guides on duty, so this new cohort has strengthened the team.

The tours are always well received and renewed efforts will be made in 2022 to increase marketing to get more bookings. Several gift vouchers were sold at Christmas time, offering an excellent present for friends and family.

Christian Aid *David Eaton*

Christian Aid is part of the Faith in Action group at the Cathedral. This helps to embeds Christian Aid directly within the mission of the Cathedral.

The pandemic has meant that it has not been possible to run the house-to-house collections during Christian Aid Week in the last two years (May 2020 and May 2021). Instead, a Bury St Edmunds-wide Justgiving page was set up which was reasonably well supported. An envelope collection was held at the Cathedral last year.

All being well, the house-to-house collections are resuming next month (May 2022) but there is still understandable nervousness about door knocking with Covid still prevalent.

The work of Christian Aid continues with a new focus on Ukraine where Christian Aid are working as part of a coalition of aid agencies there. As Christian Aid says,

“At least 3 million people are on the move. They're the Ukrainians of all ages who have seen their towns and cities reduced to rubble. People who just a few weeks ago were leading ordinary, peaceful lives not much different from our own. They were forced to flee from everything they knew, often without time to

pack or prepare, as they became a target for the next airstrike.”

Meanwhile, the needs of other parts of the world grow no less pressing. Christian Aid works with some of the world's most vulnerable communities in 29 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Communities often out of the headlines but in desperate need of support.

Wardens *Barbara Pycraft and Terry Stark*

Our enthusiastic team has continued to welcome and keep everyone safe as Covid rules such as distancing, mask-wearing and sanitising changed throughout the year.

Our aim has been to manage services seamlessly, with no two weeks ever the same in the required handing out of books, service sheets and bulletins, along with ensuring the congregation don't trip over the tv monitors on their way to communion.

For us, who work very closely with the vergers, the highlight of 2021 was our joint Nativity play, including a very special Angel appearance by the Dean!

Newcomers in 2021/2022

Since July 2021, we have been pleased to welcome the following new volunteers:

Maddison Whitelaw *Welcomer*
Linda Gee *Welcomer*
Jane Paton *Shop/TIP*
Barbara Lindsay *Welcomer/TIP*
Dee Sharp *TIP*
Karen Carpenter *Welcomer/TIP*
Lucy Perkins *Sunday Morning Coffee*
Frances Parr *Sunday Morning Coffee*
Michael and Cornelia Coates *Sunday Morning Coffee*
Emma Williamson *Sunday Morning Coffee*
Pat Kirby *Deputy Warden*
Sandra Lant *Deputy Warden*
Christine Kreckler *LEGO/Events Steward*
Paul Baines *Yard Project*
Pat and Julian Lees *Welcomer/Bell ringers*
Helen Leggett *Yard Project*
Catriona Smart *Events Steward*
Alice Absalom *St Edmundsbury Singers*
Annie Yager *Young Families*
Gavin Boby *LEGO/Events Steward*
Julia Lewis *Events Steward*
Pat Nash *Events Steward*
Bridget O'Donnell *Events steward*
Linda Simpson *Sunday Morning Coffee*
Tim Reynolds *Welcomer/Events Steward*
Susan Howlett *LEGO/Welcomer*
Katharine Flynn *Welcomer*
Tricia McNeeney *Welcomer/Shop/Flowers*
Tiffer Robinson *Chaplain*
Susan Moore *Yard Project*
Mark and Ruth Ingledew *Bellringers*

Long services Awards

The Cathedral Chapter considers that it is important to show appreciation to, acknowledge and reward long serving staff and volunteers. Those who have completed a certain number of years of service receive recognition of their commitment and contribution to the Cathedral.

The acknowledgement of a volunteer's service begins at five years and awards are presented when a volunteer has completed five, ten, twenty five and thirty years' service.

All volunteering is appreciated and valued. We appreciate the volunteer who offers an hour a month and the volunteer who does multiple roles and have been a volunteer for many years.

This year we are pleased to recognise the following long service:

5 years (joined the Guild between July 2017 and June 2018)

Heather Dexter	Pam Nicholson
Barbara Emmett	Robert Lant
Sandra Harbord	Estelle Watson
Jane Harding	

10 years

Marion Bonfield	Linda Harrison
David Crawley	Jane Olive
Maureen Cunningham	Lionel Simpkins
Jenny Gregory	Katherine Soper
Colin Harrison	

25 years

Debbie Bowles	James Knowles
Delphine Coiley	Frances Roberts

30 years

Terry Stark