

Guild of St Edmund Committee Meeting

Thursday 19 January 2023 at 10 am

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Canon Matthew prayed a prayer marking the Feast day of St Wulfstan.
2. Apologies were noted. It was noted that there is no representative of the Tourist Information Point at present.
3. Minutes of the last meeting on 15 September 2022 were agreed and accepted.

4. Cathedral update

SJA reported that, following a 28-day public consultation period, the work on the new Constitution and Statutes is now complete and comes into force from 19 January, when Mark Pendlington will take up the new role of Senior Non-Executive Member of Chapter. The Cathedral Council has ceased and there are changes to the College of Canons. A new Risk, Review and Audit Committee and a Nominations Committee are being formed. The Cathedral will be registered and regulated by the Charity Commissioners on Certificate Date 2 which will be 1 May.

As part of the safeguarding work of the Cathedral a cultural survey is being undertaken to get feedback on perceptions of the current culture. Volunteers are encouraged to complete the survey.

The new Theo chairs will arrive in mid-February and will replace the pews in the centre of the Nave. Working with a company called Rough Stuff, the pews will be converted into smaller one, two and four seater pews for sale and the remaining wood used to make chopping boards. The Edmund chairs will be delivered later in the year. At this point the Theo chairs will be stored, leaving the side aisles clear, and will be brought in as required. In response to a query, an additional 200 (pre-existing) chairs are also available if required to create a larger seating capacity. It is hoped that a (changing) display of the kneelers can be made with others re-located to the chapels and chancel.

5. Terms of Reference update

The Terms of Reference were updated to bring them in line with the new Constitution and Statutes.

6. Volunteering update

Visitor Survey

As reported at the last meeting, we are part of a national visitor survey this year, which has been organised through the Association of English Cathedral. We have a team of our own volunteers helping as well as students from West Suffolk College. The survey will run through to September and then we will be provided with comparative data from other participating cathedrals.

Development opportunities

There are a number of opportunities this year to develop our knowledge as volunteers.

All volunteers will be invited to a workshop to look at the Cathedrals values (as detailed in the Masterplan).

In addition, the Welcome Stewards will be invited to a session led by the Dean, when we will be looking in particular about how to encourage donations.

We are also looking at how we welcome people with additional needs – such as visual impairment or access needs. The first of these sessions, which will be offered to all volunteers, will be on dementia awareness and will take place on 13 March.

Volunteer paperwork

Last year, Canon Jutta Brueck worked with the Cathedral staff, looking at what the term 'Benedictine values' means to our community. She made some suggestions in terms of what we might do to embed these values in what we do as volunteers. This is in part will be included in the training mentioned above. She also suggested a few 'tweaks' to the volunteer handbook and policy – aligning what we say with the Masterplan.

Recruitment

A steady trickle of new volunteers has been joining us in recent months, in particular joining the LEGO team. Recruitment will be ongoing in 2023 – please let me know if you need more volunteers! One group which we hope to augment in 2023 is the chaplains.

7. Safeguarding

Many volunteers have recently done a refresher Safeguarding course. A face to face training course is being planned too. There was positive feedback on the marking of Safeguarding Sunday (15 January).

8. Feedback on Edmundtide meeting and confirmation of dates for 2023

The Edmundtide meeting had been well received with good attendance.

The annual meeting will be on Tuesday 6 June and will follow the format of a meeting, Evensong and supper with recognition of long service and welcome to new volunteers.

The Edmundtide meeting will be on Monday 20 November. The format and speaker ideas will be discussed at the next meeting.

9. Time and Talents

Consideration is being given to how to showcase all that the Cathedral does with a view to encouraging involvement and engagement (including taking on volunteering roles) by congregation members. The Welcome Pack will be refreshed. Further ideas are being discussed.

10. Chapter 4 review

The hope is to find a new name for this group ('Volunteers' Coffee mornings' was suggested) and to promote it more widely. It currently meets four times a year with refreshments and a speaker. The idea of having some sessions which are just an opportunity to meet and talk was welcomed.

11. Open forum

Bell ringers: Christmas was a busy and enjoyable time for the ringers and they are

looking forward to celebrating the centenary of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers during 2023.

There will be some extra ringing taking place for the Centenary Dinner Day, 25 March, and they will also be celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III with a peal on Monday 8 May.

Welcome Stewards: There are 38 on the rota, and everyone seems happy. A bin and heater would be appreciated.

LEGO is going well with over 108,000 bricks added. Some damage was sustained recently so a protective panel has been added.

GP was pleased that chaplains had been able to cover some days on the extended rota including the Christmas Market. The new rota will start in March.

SD reported that the candlelit tours as part of Cathedrals at Night event had gone well. The Guides went on a visit to the Fitzwilliam Museum to see the Bury Bible. Monthly training sessions are being planned. Tours will start on 1 April.

JS reported that there are now 15 concert/event stewards. December was a busy month. Livestreaming is part of the vergers role now, though consideration could be given to this being a volunteer role.

KJ reported that the Cathedrals at Night event was busy and the October and Christmas family activities were successful. School bookings are now picking up.

More flower arrangers are needed. The Christmas flowers were very good. Visiting parish flower arrangers will start again soon.

The gardening team will resume their duties from 24 January. RB reported that there is concern over the damage to the Abbey wall. The Memorial garden turf is in a poor state and will be replaced. The beech hedge will be reduced in height.

The Cathedral Shop is going from strength to strength since the refit. Both November and December were good trading months with figures back up to pre-pandemic levels.

VM reported that the Sunday morning coffee arrangements are going well with a new system for washing up cups. Help from the vergers is much appreciated.

12. MV thanked all volunteer co-ordinators for their work. The meeting closed with the Grace.

11 May 2023

14 September 2023

All at 10 am in the Chapter Room