

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



Minutes of the Forum meeting held on Tuesday 21 November 2023

1. Present: Canon Matthew Vernon (Chair), Sarah-Jane Allison, Canon Philip Banks, Dean Joe Hawes, Revd Anita Rooney, Catherine Rayson, Paul Elkin, Michael Wilde, Chris Andrews, Sandra Lant, Robert Lant, Barbara Pycraft, Albert Shipton, Jane Leung, Pam Pitts, Margaret Wheeldon, Terry Stark, Sue Cockram, Debbie Bowles, Fiona Knapp, Simon Hill, Doreen Young, James Knowles, Geoffrey House, Liz Steele, Margaret Steavenson, Hugh Steavenson, Alan Bond, Margaret Bond.

2. Welcome: Canon Matthew opened with a reading from Philippians 2 and the Collect for St Edmund. Matthew highlighted how the agenda has been adapted in line with previous discussions about Forum's role.

3. Apologies: Louise Martin, Alice Sheepshanks, Sue Hughes, Liz Rowlands, Gray Elkin, James Stark, David Eaton.

4. Minutes: Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2023 were approved and duly signed.

5. The Future of Forum (for Forum views) – Canon Matthew Vernon

Forum terms of reference

Matthew thanked Chris Andrews for his help with the terms of reference document and took Forum through the draft terms of reference. Barbara added that the purpose of this document is to try to make Forum a positive working group rather than ticking a box. It allows chapter to understand what people are thinking.

- James Knowles suggested a change to "licensed lay ministers"
- Paul Elkin questioned the total membership number against the Dean's invitation for anyone to attend. Matthew confirmed that it's elected Forum members that make up the core of Forum, but that anyone is welcome to attend.
- Pam Pitts queried Chapter minutes being available online. Catherine confirmed they are available on the chapter page of the website.
- Canon Philip made a suggestion that it should be three meetings per year plus the APCM rather than the four suggested, as chapter meets six times a year.
 - Is there a danger that three meetings means longer meetings
 - A quick indication was taken and two thirds showed preference to four meetings
- Robert Lant asked about the wording in the Appendix re. how chapter and Forum work together. Canon Matthew confirmed this was from the new cathedral statutes which stated Chapter can agree terms of reference for Forum.

Forum venue and refreshments

- General preference was upstairs (more comfortable chairs and loop system and projector). It was decided that Forum would meet in the Edmund Room.
- Debbie raised the point of time of day of meetings. Dean Joe flagged that daytime meetings would be too hard for clergy and staff to attend. Suggestion was made to provide a zoom link for those who don't want to come out in the evenings. Agreed to stick with 6.30 pm.
- Differences of opinion re. refreshments at Forum included Barbara questioning how they will be paid for and who will organise them, as well as the Dean's strong preference for refreshments to be available. Soft drinks would be welcomed. Fairtrade wine is needed. The Dean declared refreshments will be available for those who want to partake!

5. Dean's Report (for information and questions) – Dean Joe Hawes

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



Deanery update

The Dean gave an update on the Deanery and the various options that were reviewed. He shared with Forum that Chapter have agreed to keep the Deanery in the Cathedral portfolio and sell 3 Crown Street to pay for refurbishment costs for the Deanery and the five flats above the Hunter Gallery.

Prisons Sunday

Really valuable service. A question has been raised ‘what can we do as a Cathedral community to support our prisons in an ongoing basis?’ Mark Pendlington (current High Sheriff and Chapter SNEM) and Canon Philip will be thinking about this question.

Community Partnerships

Highlighting some partnerships that people may not know about. West Suffolk College have an extended reality lab that is supporting our NLHF bid. The Royal College of Defence Studies came to the Cathedral as part of their learning. Jane Dow and Dean Joe attended the opening of a sensory garden at the Wedgewood House secure unit and looking forward to a deeper partnership with them.

Feast of Edmund Installation of Canons and new Chapter members

Installed four honorary canons, two lay canons and an ecumenical canon during the Evensong for the Feast of St Edmund. We also installed two new chapter members, Jamie Mellows and Jane Haviland Webster.

Precentorial Headlines (Canon Philip)

Messy Messiah

The Cathedral was packed on Saturday 18 November for this outreach event to bring Handel to young people, led by Richard Hubbard.

Admission to Communion

We offer this each year for children to be admitted to communion before being confirmed. This is part of our mission through music. It will take place Advent Sunday as part of the 10.30 am service with 9 children being admitted.

Pews/chairs

Removal of pews has been approved. Chairs are going into production this side of Christmas and delivered sometime in February. In response to a question about the kneelers, Philip explained how a working group has come up with a solution (which will be communicated to the Cathedral community in the near future).

6. Open Table (for information and discussion) Canon Matthew Vernon

- The Open Table movement provides ministry for people who don't feel secure worshipping as openly LGBTQIA+ in their own church. An advisory meeting was held in September to discuss the possibility of being an Open Table venue.
- Chapter has decided to pursue becoming a venue and the next step is to visit a current venue – ideally the original venue in Liverpool, but possibly a church in Cambridge or Colchester.

7. ‘You said, we did’ (for information) – Catherine Rayson, Marketing Manager

Catherine gave a brief overview of the new communications group that meets twice a year and includes representatives from the Cathedral community such as guides, volunteers, shop, pastoral etc. One of the new communications initiatives to come from this meeting is reinstating suggestion boxes and the ‘you said, we did’ posters to show we are listening to and where possible, implementing feedback.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



8. Abbey of St Edmund NLHF project (for information) – Dean Joe

The application was submitted last week. Next step will be to receive additional questions from the NLHF East Anglia team and then we should know in March whether the application will be progressed. The Cathedral is the lead partner working with English Heritage and West Suffolk Council. The project includes the re-purposing of the Anselm Building and the building of a west cloister, with conservation of Abbey ruins, outstanding interpretation and learning, and environmental improvements such as the two chalk streams (Lark and Linnet).

9. Safeguarding (for information and questions) – Sarah-Jane Allison

- Safeguarding Sunday will take place again on 14 Jan 2024 across all services that day. Sarah-Jane asked Forum about the format. Any suggestions to be sent to Sarah-Jane via email sarah-janeallison@stedscathedral.org

10. Financial Report (for information and questions)

Where are we currently

There was a forecasted budget deficit of £88k and we are currently at a deficit of £81k, so we should end the year better than suggested. Moving forward, we need more income generation as areas of income are down.

Events and Fundraising Assistant

We have received funding for an Events and Fundraising Assistant, who will assist James Stark and Cressida Parsons with more income from events.

Budget 2024 on agenda for Chapter tomorrow

Chapter will receive the budget prepared by the Finance Committee.

11. AOB

Edmund Lecture postponement – we hope to have Dame Barbara Woodward when she's back in the UK which may be spring 2024. We will keep you updated.

12. Forum dates 2024:

Tuesdays 13 February & 14 May. Wednesdays 3 July & 6 November **APCM**: 23 April