

# St Edmundsbury Cathedral



## Minutes of the Vestry and APCM meeting held on 23 April 2024 at 6:30pm

Dean Joe Hawes as Chairman began by welcoming all to the meeting and opened with a prayer for St George's Day. Thanks were expressed to all staff for putting in the extra hours by being at this meeting.

**Present:** There were 51 members of the Cathedral community attending (names on file)

### Vestry Meeting

1. **Re-Election of Churchwardens:** **Terry Stark** and **Barbara Pycraft** were the only nominations received and were proposed by Tim Allen and seconded by Sue Cockram and therefore duly re-elected and greatly thanked for continuing in their roles as Churchwardens since appointed on 1 Jan 2021. All Deputy wardens, sidespeople and welcomers were also thanked.

### APCM

1. **Apologies:** There were apologies from 59 members of the electoral roll (names on file)
2. **Minutes:** The Minutes of 25 April 2023 were approved, proposed by James Stark and seconded by Terry Stark and duly signed as an accurate record. No matters were arising from the minutes.
3. **Electoral Roll officer:** Thanks were extended to David Eaton who was standing down. Simon Waters was elected to replace David and reported that the Electoral Roll has 340 members. At April 2023, the Roll had 343 members. During the year to April 2024, 10 new members were added, 13 removed (8 moved away, 2 died, 3 removed due to data adjustment). This gives the current membership of 340. Next year there will be a full revision of the Electoral Roll.
4. **To elect eleven members of the Electoral Roll to Forum.** Eight members have stood down from Forum: **Gray Elkin, Paul Elkin, Jane Leung, Louise Martin, Alice Sheepshanks, Karen Smith, Margaret Steavenson** and **Doreen Young**. There were eleven nominations for the eleven places and so the following were duly elected: **Penny Bentley, Judy Broadway, Sue Cockram, Kierstan Foreman, James Mansfield, Valerie Moore, Dan Soper, Liz Steele, Abbi Thorpe, Catherine Walsh** and **Simon Waters**. Proposed by Scarlett Blacker and seconded by Stewart Alderman.  
The Dean highlighted that the Forum has new Terms of Reference developed under the Cathedral's new Constitution & Statutes which articulate Forum's role in informing Chapter's decision-making.

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5. **Representatives to Churches Together: Pam Pitts and Margaret Steavenson** were thanked for their prior service and both were duly re-appointed. Proposed by Penny Bentley and seconded by Stephen Brunner.
6. **Representatives to World Day of Prayer Committee: Jane Leung and Mandy Alderman** were duly re-appointed and thanked for their prior service. Proposed by Barbara Pycraft and seconded by Joan Brame.
7. **The Cathedral's Annual Reports** were available on the website and emailed to all electoral members prior to the meeting. Gratitude was expressed for all who worked so hard to produce them. The social action group was especially noted as a sign of our cathedral facing outwards.

**Finance report 2023** was presented by Paul Torrington, chair of the Finance Committee who has been in post for three months. In 2023 we set a deficit budget of £88,367

From our management accounts we ended the year with a £6,702 deficit. This can be seen on page 52 where on 1 January the general fund shows £2,917,608 and on 31 December the balance shows £2,910,906 the difference being the £6,702 deficit.

As shown on the audited accounts on page 31, we had a year end deficit of £65,241 this is due to funds that were designated in 2022, such as some of the chair appeal money that came in in 2022, but was spent in 2023, also due to depreciation, variation in investments and valuation of properties.

Pages 23-25 give the narrative financial review with a summary of our income and expenditure.

We are most grateful for funds received from Stewardship from all of you here this evening and want to again thank Liz Steele for being chair of the Planned Giving Committee for many years and to introduce the new chair, Felix Von Nathusius.

We are thankful to receive funds from Patrons, legacies and visitors. Last year James and Cressida raised more income from events than ever before and Pilgrims' Kitchen had their best year ever.

In 2023 we received an additional contribution from the Church Commissioners with a one-off grant. Income remained stable from rental income and commercial properties in 2023.

Chapter's aim is to build all its funds, including its reserves held in unrestricted funds, to levels sufficient to address the Cathedral's long-term sustainability and perpetual need to maintain and preserve the Cathedral's heritage and fabric.

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Robert Lant wished to know what the difference was between donations, appeals, fund raising and trading income such as where the paid tours show in the accounts. Sarah-Jane Allison replied that fundraising and visitor incomes comes under the Cathedral and trading comes under Enterprises. Any further detailed questions can be asked and answered outside of the meeting. Michael Watson asked if the chair appeal money had been treated as a restricted fund or an unrestricted fund? SJA will go back to auditors to query why they appeared as unrestricted when the Cathedral had in actuality treated them as restricted. To date on this fund there is a £16,000 deficit with more money still to be received from the sale of pews in 2024. As a charity we had to produce a set of accounts in accordance with charity rules. Lovewell Blake were the auditors. Alan Bond could not reconcile the accounts between the narrative and the actual account figures for example, Visitor income did not appear to be consistently reported. SJA noted that the narrative is based on an average visitor, and that visitor income will also include additional income lines such as candle sales which show separately on the Cathedral's profit & loss account but are added together in the audited accounts. The meeting did not allow time for individual detailed questions and it may be that the Auditors are invited to next year's meeting for a general summary and could be available to answer any detailed questions following the meeting.

## 8. Dean's report

Dean Joe said that 2023 he felt like a helicopter circling, looking for somewhere to land and now many things have landed.

- The National Lottery Heritage Fund application has been approved with an initial grant of £730,000. This is in partnership with English Heritage and West Suffolk Council which will see a massive step change in the life of the Cathedral with more visitors to the Abbey site following a second stage application with a bid for £6.7 million.
- Delivery of the chairs following a chair appeal and the removal of the pews.
- The implementation of the Cathedral Measure 2021, and all the new committees of Chapter are up and running for good governance.
- Planning permissions have been sought for the Deanery renovations to now take place.
- The music produced by all our choirs and all the delivery of many major services.
- Pilgrim's Kitchen is always full to the brim and provides much needed income.
- The warmth of welcome made to visitors and tourists from all staff and volunteers strengthened with the addition of the Paid Welcome Stewards.
- All the work taking place with social action and school visits at the Cathedral.
- The number of pastoral visits and support given.
- The income generated from the Grand Nave Dinner, Beer Festival, Exhibitions, Concerts by Candlelight and other events that also welcomed people previously unknown to the Cathedral.
- Support from the Patrons and Friends of the Cathedral.
- Parish Sunday visits and new members of Cathedral Community welcomed.

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**Richard Cook** reported on a busy and productive year seeing the benefits of a core of professional singers alongside our volunteer lay clerks. Messy Messiah was the culmination of visits to 15 schools where 150 children came to sing with an adult Cantus Firmus choir and orchestra. In all 800 children were taught the music in schools. A Cathedral Choir CD recording on the Regent label will be available towards the end of the summer term. The recent successful Choir tour to Normandy saw them give concerts in Lisieux, Falaise and Bayeux. They also participated in a French Mass and the Calvados experience. The St Edmundsbury Singers had a successful mini tour to Worcester Cathedral and performed their second annual concert of Britten's Ceremony of Carols in January with a professional harpist. A BBC Radio 3 live broadcast is planned for the 3pm Choral Evensong on 19 June. A new Philip Moore Mass has been commissioned by Bishop Graeme Knowles to celebrate 50 years of his ordination. Claudia Grinell from Winchester Cathedral will be arriving in September as our new Director of Music. Her first major concert will be Noyes Fludde, another singing schools event like Messy Messiah in the autumn. An arts council grant of £35,000 had been awarded for this event which is exciting news. There will be time to wish Tim Parsons farewell on 9 July when the joint choirs will perform a celebratory concert.

**Catherine Rayson** reported that she had no actual highlights as we are telling everyone, everything, all the time! Instead she quizzed the meeting about which were the top three events in terms of media coverage. In first place was the Christmas Market with 14 pieces of coverage. In second place the Coronation themed events had seen 9 pieces of coverage and tied third with 6 pieces of media coverage were the Pet Service, the Yard opening and the Ukrainian Christmas service and Ukraine Vigil. Coming up this year for communication are the sale of pews, a dog calendar and the heritage fund application.

**Matthew Vernon** reported on behalf of **Sarah Friswell** that a year long visitor survey had been completed by our excellent volunteers, twilight talks and tours series had introduced new audiences to our story, we are also working with students studying travel and tourism at West Suffolk College offering them work experience placements and the opportunity to take part in a masterclass when they worked on ideas for new guided tours which would appeal to their age group. Coming up in 2024 is the Kneeler project including the display of kneelers and returning some duplicated kneelers to the parishes who had made and donated them. Paid Welcomers have now just started alongside volunteer welcomers in order to increase donations.

**Kim Judge** reported that the Learning hub had seen a year full of creativity, uplifting to see popular re-occurring family activities taking place in the nave pavement. Seeing families return to these regularly was wonderful. Creativity panels produced during these activities are on display at the bottom of the gallery stairs. Messy Messiah had been an engaging project with colourful banners produced by the schools and the young people in the cathedral community. Kim looked forward to booking more schools visits in 2024 and producing new material for these tours. Chris Eyden joined Kim in January and will be working in particular with King Edward VI School and

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organising the Annual Edmund Lecture (political and social), Benedict Lecture (spirituality) and the Ronald Blythe Lecture (literature) series.

**Katie Schutte** arrived in January and reported on behalf of Cressida Parsons, the success of the Grand Nave Dinner which will be returning in 2025. She celebrated new relationships with corporate business and individuals, Patron numbers were increasing, and links with Aldeburgh Music over concerts. Going forward she will be working with the NHLF project and will soon be full time with Cressida working one day a week remotely.

**Matthew Vernon** mentioned on behalf of Cressida that the Paid welcomers were only in week two of encouraging visitor donations. The paid welcomers will soon be wearing uniforms, as well as amendments to signage.

**James Stark** reported that Cathedral events were not possible without the concert and event stewards for whom he was especially grateful. 2023 had been really busy, attracting both new audiences and generating much needed income. It did seem like a year of Everything by Candlelight however the core will always be worship as it should be. Cressida had joined the events team in 2023 followed by Katie. The Silent Disco in 2023 was to be repeated in 2024. The Beer Festival allowed us to welcome new people through the doors. The Vergers were now all fully trained, but unfortunately Ben has moved on to a new role and as a result a new full time Verger appointment will soon be announced. Special thanks to the part time vergers often working unnoticed behind the scenes. Thanks also to the Friends of the Cathedral Choirs for their event bar services, raising funds for the choirs. Fiona Knapp mentioned the need for a balance between worship and quiet space. It was acknowledged that the Silent disco was also a welcome safe space for young women.

**Matthew Vernon** reporting on social action mentioned the Cathedral's Fair Trade status had been renewed, the Yard Project had seen fabulous work by Jane Dow with young people and Young Families meets weekly in the Edmund Room. There is ongoing work for the Cathedral to be more dementia friendly.

In partnership with the town we are extending an inclusive welcome to the community further away from the cathedral. The Hope Into Action project continues seeing the children well settled in school and the mother now in employment. In the next year the family are likely to move on since finite tenancy is part of the model.

**Philip Banks** reported that the Cathedral liturgy and worship was enriched by the work of Naomi Sturges, James Stark and Fiona Knapp. Prayer and worship underpins everything we do. Holy Week was a highlight as always. Coming up we have a celebration service for 30 years of women's ordination and the summer Ordinations. Building work with hoarding around the Abbey precincts is thankfully not our responsibility but the hope is repairs will start this year. The small area of wall repairs we are responsible for will cost £8000. There is currently scaffolding outside the shop while the flats are being renovated which is funded by the sale of No 3 Crown Street which will also allow for the Deanery to be finally renovated.

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**Frances Parr** as Chair of Governors for St Edmundsbury CEVA Primary School  
There have been turbulent times but now good news as a new head, Kim Bramley is appointed. The safeguarding issues raised in the failing Ofsted report are now resolved, the school will now be part of an Academy, the Elveden Schools Trust which is Christian based. Better results from a recent Ofsted report are hoped for but not yet announced. Need for 2 more foundation governors. Thanks to Scarlett Blacker, Alice Sheepshanks and Anita Rooney for their roles as governors. Faith profile has been raised in the school. Children have been in church for Harvest and Easter at St Johns and the Cathedral. Funding is now being received for school trips. There is a need for readers to listen to the children in school.

**Felix Von Nathusius** was welcomed and he reported on Planned Giving offering thanks to Liz Steele for her last chairmanship, he moved two years ago from Berlin, and expressed what an enormous privilege it was to be part of this community.

**Dean Joe** noted that Bishop Martin will be retiring in 2025 at Candlemas. Thanks were expressed to Louise Martin for being secretary for 6 years. Thanks also to all wardens and deputies, welcome stewards, chapter & committee members, bell ringers, honorary vergers, concert and event stewards, flower arrangers, gardeners, sidespeople, servers and Eucharistic ministers, coffee volunteers, singers, Choir Mums and Dads, members of Forum, Friends of the Cathedral, Friends of the Cathedral Choirs, social action folk, pastoral visitors, junior church leaders, learning hub volunteers, Tourist Information Point and shop volunteers, Mothers Union, School Governors, Stewart Alderman and the Enterprise Board, Staff who were hugely overworked and undervalued and blessed by all his Colleagues.

The meeting finished with prayers at 8.15 pm.

Louise Martin/April 2024