St Edmundsbury Cathedral

CHAPTER MINUTES

Minutes of the 249th Chapter Meeting
Monday 8 May 2025 at 1.00 pm
Chapter Room

Present:	The Very Rev'd Joe Hawes, Co-Chair (JPH) Mark Pendlington, Co-Chair (MP) Archdeacon Sally Gaze (SG) *via Teams* The Rev'd Canon Dr Victoria Johnson (VJ) Jaime Mellows (JM) Barbara Pycraft (BP) Terry Stark (TS) Paul Torrington (PT) The Rev'd Canon Matthew Vernon (MV) Jane Haviland Webster (JHW)
In Attendance:	Sarah-Jane Powell (SJP) *formally Sarah-Jane Allison (SJA)* James Mellish (JMsh) Erin Seligman (Clerk to Chapter)

1. Opening Prayers

1.1 The Dean (JPH) opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies for Absence

2.1 Apologies were received from Stewart Alderman, Caroline Rouse and Sue Hughes.

3. Conflicts of Interest (No conflicts reported.)

4. Notification of AOB (No other business raised.)

5. Correspondence (No correspondence received.)

6. The Dean's Report

6.1 Chapter received a written and verbal report from the Dean.

6.2 Recent services were noted, and Chapter received an open invitation to forthcoming services in the Cathedral diary.

6.3 Bound by confidentiality, the Dean could only report the process to appoint a new Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich is underway. Members of the College of Canons will be required to affirm the candidate. The date of this election is not yet known, but attendance is mandatory.

6.4 Organisers of Bury Pride have submitted a request to hold a picnic on the Garth on 30 August. Bishop Graeme Knowles is happy for this event to proceed if Chapter is in agreement. Chapter **approved** the Bury Pride picnic.

6.5 Sue Hughes (SH), Terry Stark (TS) and James Mellish (JMsh) attended a public meeting at which community members were invited to share their thoughts on future uses for the Green King site once company operations move to a new location. Chapter received both written and verbal

reports and **agreed** the Cathedral should take part in future conversations and monitor plans for the site going forward.

6.6 Philip Orchard, the Cathedral's architect and surveyor, plans to retire at the end of 2025. The appointment of a new architect/surveyor sits with Chapter, subject to the approval of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission (CFCE), and Trustees **recommended** the FAC prepare a candidate pack and invite CFCE representation on the appointment panel.

6.7 Chapter **approved** the appointment of Canon Mark Haworth as volunteer Cathedral Chaplain from September 2025. A role description will follow.

7. Sustainability

7.1 Finance

7.1.1 Paul Torrington (PT) reviewed the Management Accounts for the month of March.

7.1.2 The profile of the Events budget has been amended to level the income more evenly over the year. As a result, it would appear the Events budget may have been slightly optimistic as the actual income of £22,841 year to date is below the budgeted £34,413.

7.1.3 Visitor income also continues to fall short, and the Chief Finance Officer is investigating reasons as to why. Two new Welcome Assistants have just been recruited. Funding is available for additional training.

7.1.4 Expenditures are under budget.

7.1.5 Enterprises had a slightly slower quarter than the previous year, although Pilgrims' Kitchen did lose a day and a half of trading in February due to closures.

7.1.6 The £45k deficit forecasted for 2025 has increased to £58k.

7.1.7 Chapter received a summary of Planned Giving to date. Chapter discussed opportunities to encourage enrolment in the Planned Giving scheme. Data protection regulations limit the Planned Giving Committee from contacting those on the Electoral Roll who are not in Planned Giving. Figures and an action plan will be reviewed more closely when the Income Generation Group meets next week.

7.1.8 Claims for costs related to the Abbey, Reborn project are now submitted on a monthly basis to aid cash flow.

7.2 Worship and Buildings

7.2.1 The Deanery refurbishment project has been completed within budget and the Dean is expected to move in on 2 June.

7.2.2 The Precentor house has been spruced up in preparation for Canon Katy Cunliffe's arrival on 19 May.

7.2.3 The Deanery's West Wing should bring in rental income from September.

7.3 The Abbey, Reborn Project

7.3.1 Project Manager James Mellish (JMsh) provided a verbal report and an updated Project Management Plan. The project has reached a major milestone with the architects having now completed Riba Stage 2 and feedback is currently being sought on their 500-page design interpretation.

7.3.2 Another exciting phase – survey investigations – will begin shortly to ascertain soil types and determine building foundations. Archaeological investigations will follow and include moderately sized excavation pits. Hard hat tours of these sites will be arranged. While offering a fantastic opportunity for exploration, the archaeological digs pose a certain degree of risk to the project should items of great importance be uncovered. JMsh said project partners are already well aware of the existence of a medieval road in the vicinity. An ecological survey is also underway.

7.3.3 Large information boards detailing the first phase of English Heritage's conservation works as well as the Abbey, Reborn project will be installed along Angel Hill in the coming weeks.

7.3.4 JMsh provided an overview of the progressing interpretation plan, which centres around a number of themes and includes input from local schools, charities and community groups.

7.3.5 Given the Norman Tower is mostly inaccessible to the public, funding for proposed improvements within the Tower will now support other Abbey, Reborn works.

7.3.6 Chapter **approved** the Cathedral Precinct Red and Green line plans. Associated fees for the scope of works will be covered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

7.3.7 JMsh left the meeting at 2.04 pm.

7.4 **Safeguarding**

7.4.1 Results from the Cathedral Community Safeguarding Questionnaire were presented to Chapter. The Safeguarding Committee will also review the results and determine an action plan to be shared with the entire Cathedral community.

7.4.2 JPH reported the College of Deans are requesting Church Commissioners make funding available for part-time safeguarding administrators as the upcoming INEQE audit is putting great pressure on staff members. JPH and SJP highlighted the hefty workload and need for extra support within the Cathedral's Safeguarding department and are in communication with the Director of Bishoprics and Cathedrals re: funding opportunities.

7.4.3 Senior Leadership Training will be held on Monday.

7.4.4 Chapter **approved** the nomination of Will Wright as the Chair of the Safeguarding Committee. Updated Safeguarding Committee posters including the three new committee members will be in place soon.

7.5 **Eco St Eds**

7.5.1 Jane Haviland Webster (JHW) had her first Eco St Eds meeting as interim chair. The Committee agreed to increase the number of meetings and JHW reported good energy and actions moving forward.

7.5.2 Trial solar panels have been placed on the south roof and efforts are underway to submit a planning application to the local authorities.

7.5.3 Eco St Eds will meet again on 19 May and 30 June. In the meantime, Claire Allen will take JHW on a tour of the River Lark.

7.5.4 JPH is working with Canon Alison Alder on Climate Sunday preparations. Parishes will be invited to send two eco representatives to the service.

7.5.5 The Cathedral continues to work towards an A Rocha Gold award.

8 Mission

8.1 Lent Course

8.1.1 Chapter received feedback from this year's Lent Course, which was a brilliant programme and well attended. Many comments from participants were received and Chapter thanked Canon Victoria Johnson and the Revd Chris Eyden for curating the course so wonderfully.

8.1.2 **Actions**: Costs incurred will be reviewed. All speakers opted to have a donation made to a charity of their choice in lieu of payment. Archdeacon Sally Gaze (SG) will pursue a suggestion to make future courses available through a Diocesan app.

8.2 Bury Psalter

8.1.1 Chapter received a conditions report for the Bury Psalter.

9 Governance

9.1 Fabric Advisory Committee

9.1.1 JPH clarified the Dean and Precentor are non-voting members of the FAC.

9.1.2 Chapter **approved** the nominations of Sarah Robinson and Polly Saltmarsh as members of the FAC.

9.2 Chapter

9.2.1 Jaime Mellows (JM) has a busy year ahead with work, studies and family and has therefore made the decision to resign from Chapter. The Dean and trustees relayed their gratefulness for JM's time on Chapter and wished JM every success.

9.2.2 The Nominations Committee will be informed of the need to recruit another Chapter member. Candidates skilled in buildings/property management are of a particular interest.

10 Minutes and Reports

10.1 Chapter received the Chapter Minutes and Action Log

10.1.1 The Chapter and Confidential minutes from the 18 March meeting were amended and approved.

10.1.2 The Action Log was reviewed, and any outstanding actions noted.

10.2 Matters Arising

10.3 Chapter received the Ancient Library Budget Plan and minutes from the 11 March meeting.

10.4 Chapter received the minutes from the 17 March Enterprises Board meeting.

10.5 Chapter received the minutes from the 12 March and 8 April Finance Committee meetings.

10.6 Chapter received the minutes from the 7 April Fabric Advisory Committee meeting.

10.7 Chapter received the minutes of the 24 March Risk, Audit and Review Committee meeting.

10.7.1 Judi Newman (JN) has stood down as chair of the RARC. As chief executive of St Elizabeth Hospice, JN will be very busy overseeing plans to construct a new hospice in Gorleston and not able to give the RARC the required attention. She will remain a member of the College of Canons.

10.7.2 A new chair will be sought through recruitment or from within the RARC.

11 Any Other Business

11.1 Chapter will celebrate its 250th Chapter meeting on 21 July with cake and fizz. Former Chapter members to be invited.

11.2 Greater Chapter will be held on 18 June. Bishop Tim Stevens will chair and JMsh will provide an update on the Abbey, Reborn project.

11.3 Chapter was warmly invited to attend today's Evensong marking VE Day.

12 Confidential Items

13 Upcoming Chapter Meeting Dates

- Wednesday 18 June Greater Chapter 3.00-8.00pm
- Monday 21 July 3.00-5.00pm
- Monday 6 October 3.00-5.00pm
- Wednesday 5 November 1.00-3.00pm

The Chapter meeting concluded with prayer at 3.55 pm.