

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



CHAPTER MINUTES

Minutes of the 250th Chapter Meeting
Monday 21 July 2025 at 3.00 pm
Chapter Room

Present:	The Very Rev'd Joe Hawes, Co-Chair (JPH) The Rev'd Canon Katy Cunliffe (KC) Sue Hughes (SH) The Rev'd Canon Dr Victoria Johnson (VJ) Neil Parsons (NP) Mark Pendlington, Co-Chair (MP) Barbara Pycraft (BP) Terry Stark (TS) Paul Torrington (PT) The Rev'd Canon Matthew Vernon (MV) Jane Haviland Webster (JHW)
In Attendance:	Stewart Alderman (SA) Caroline Rouse (CRo) Sarah-Jane Powell (SJP) Erin Seligman (Clerk to Chapter)

1. Opening Prayers

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

2. Welcome and Introductions

- 2.1 Chapter warmly welcomed Canon Precentor Katy Cunliffe (KC) to her first Chapter meeting.
2.2 JPH was also delighted to welcome Neil Parsons (NP). Chapter **approved** NP as a Chapter trustee via email ahead of today's meeting. NP briefly spoke of his work experience and introductions were made.

3. Apologies for Absence

- 3.1 Apologies were received from Archdeacon Sally Gaze.

4. Conflicts of Interest

- 4.1 NP has completed a Declaration of Interest form.

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

6. Correspondence (No correspondence received.)

7. The Dean's Report

- 7.1 JPH provided a brief recount of key decisions made at the recent meeting of General Synod. The new round of Cathedral Sustainability funding will begin in 2026. JPH is advocating for an extension to the Section 21 grant from the Church Commissioners to include a chief operating officer and chief finance officer. Such an arrangement could significantly help those cathedrals with smaller reserves and income remain financially sustainable.

- 7.2 JPH confirmed he is now settled into the newly refurbished Deanery, which he called stunning and beautiful.
- 7.3 The College of Canons will 'elect' the Right Rev'd Dr Joanne Woolway Grenfell as Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich during a special ceremony on 25 July. Confirmation on whether statutes restrict the public (and Chapter members) from attending the election has yet to be received. Confirmation of this election will take place on 5 September and following that the Bishop will have to pay homage to the King. As the King cannot receive homage while at residence at Balmoral, scheduling an appointment may take time. The Bishop's installation date may only be announced once homage has taken place.

8. Sustainability

8.1 Enterprises Update

- 8.1.1 Stewart Alderman (SA) will invite Kitchen Manager Nikki King to a future Chapter meeting to provide an update on Pilgrims' Kitchen's achievements and challenges.

8.2 Finance

- 8.2.1 Caroline Rouse (CRo) circulated and summarised the Management Accounts for the month of June. Net results for the half year show a disappointing loss of £71k against a budgeted loss of £38k.
- 8.2.2 Shortfalls within Cathedral revenue continue. Main areas of concern are Stewardship (£9.9k received per month against a budgeted £12k per month), Patron income (under budget by £8,728 for the year to date) and visitor income which also continues to fall short. A £20k deficit for Events is also forecasted for the year, although efforts are underway to reduce that shortfall by securing additional events and exceeding the budgeted income for both the Beer Festival and Christmas Market.
- 8.2.3 Pilgrims' Kitchen expenditures reported a positive variance of £28k as food and beverage costs continue to be significantly under budget, meaning gross profit margins are good. CRo would encourage this trend to continue as long as food quality remains uncompromised.
- 8.2.4 CRo has met with the chair of the Planned Giving Committee and opportunities to better support this scheme were identified (e.g. communications).
- 8.2.5 The number of people enrolled within the Patron scheme has increased.
- 8.2.6 The Fundraising Manager is currently putting together a visual for leaflets / communications going forward.
- 8.2.7 Plans are underway to organise professional training for the Welcome Assistants. Training costs of £4,500 will be covered via the training budget and an applicable grant. The programme will allow for one day of observation of our current procedures, a day of bespoke training and a final day implementing newly acquired techniques.
- 8.2.8 Chapter discussed raising the default donation on the Visitor tap boxes.
- 8.2.9 Mark Pendlington remarked on the minutes of a recent Income Generation Committee meeting and hoped efforts will move to strategic planning and actions. He sought clarification on who would be responsible for taking actions forward. The Group should also be investigating successful income generating initiatives adopted by other cathedrals and organisations. CRo said the Income Generation Group may be too big and efforts are underway to create smaller, distinct groups to tackle specified initiatives. A small staff and immense workloads, however, will bring limitations on the level of action that can be undertaken.
- 8.2.10 Likewise, strategic plans with regards to legacies are needed. Implementation of such plans should be done imminently as a legacy scheme takes years to develop and bring results.
- 8.2.11 Paul Torrington (PT) noted the impact the Abbey, Reborn project is having on the Cathedral's day-to-day activities. JPH spoke of ongoing efforts to enrol all Electoral Roll

members into the Planned Giving scheme (e.g. letter writing campaign, Giving ambassadors, regular announcements/reminders).

8.2.12 Chapter volunteered various suggestions for improving income, to include making the donation process more simplified and clearer, following up on legacy promotion/interest, incorporating teachings of stewardship within worship, and having all giving schemes under one umbrella.

8.2.13 JPH assured Chapter the Cathedral is maintaining laser-like focus on income generation.

8.3 Worship and Music

8.3.1 KC has been at the Cathedral for seven weeks now and is coming to grips with the demands of the Canon Precentor post.

8.3.2 KC reviewed significant services held of late, to include the Installation of the Archdeacon of Ipswich, as well as upcoming events to note in the diary (the election and enthronement of the new Bishop, Lord Tebbit's funeral, Harvest, ordinations, Advent and Christmas).

8.3.3 KC has sensed a tendency to organise services / events at the last minute and is working to implement liturgical preparations earlier. Systems and instructions for services will also be introduced, as well as efforts to better connect our worship, liturgy and mission and build on opportunities to draw in people of all ages and backgrounds.

8.3.4 The choir term has come to a close and the Director of Music has done a good job in her first year and the team is working well together. Organ Scholar Matt McVey will soon depart to become Assistant Organist at Brecon Cathedral. A new organ scholar was appointed last week. A junior organ scholar has been recruited as well.

8.3.5 The Choir will soon depart on its tour to Carlisle Cathedral.

8.3.6 Chapter thanked KC for the positive impact she has made to date.

8.4 Order of St Edmund

8.4.1 Chapter was invited to submit nominations for the Order of St Edmund to the Dean. An invitation to recommend recipients for this, the Cathedral's highest honour, will also be relayed to the Cathedral community via the Weekly Bulletin.

8.5 Buildings/Property Update

8.5.1 The West Wing of the Deanery has been redecorated and advertised for let. More viewings have been scheduled. Fencing will be installed to provide tenants with a private garden.

8.5.2 The Angel Hill flat that was let for six months will revert back to staff accommodation.

8.5.3 Some 200 people attending the Congregation Garden Party at the Deanery.

8.5.4 Efforts to gain permissions to repair damage to the Lady Chapel ceiling are progressing.

8.5.5 JPH is awaiting final drawings for the glazing of the Great West Doors.

8.5.6 Drainage survey results re: Great South Door improvements are also awaited.

8.5.7 Lillias August has gifted the Cathedral two pictures as part of the Tower's 20th anniversary celebration.

8.6 Eco St Eds

8.6.1 Chapter was briefed on design changes to the Solar Panel Project. Due to the amount of wind the PV panels would be subjected to, a non-penetrative solution is no longer preferred. Structural engineers are now suggesting fixing the panels to the lead roof via short posts. (The lead is not part of the Cathedral's historic fabric.) This system has been successfully used on a number of heritage buildings, including Norwich Cathedral and Kings College. Consent of the Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee and an approved planning application are forthcoming.

8.6.2 The Eco St Eds Group is determined to have satisfied the conditions required to be categorised as a committee and will now serve as a recommending body to Chapter and be referred to as the Eco St Eds Committee.

8.6.3 The application for a Gold A Rocha Award has been updated. The various workstreams within the new application have been divided amongst the members of the Eco St Eds

Committee and efforts are underway to ensure a budget and programmes find an achievable place to meet a successful application. Many eco aspects of the Abbey, Reborn project will fulfil A Rocha requirements.

8.7 The Abbey, Reborn Project

- 8.7.1 Chapter **approved** the nomination of Dr Susan Goddard to the Abbey, Reborn Project Board.
- 8.7.2 Final drawings for the cloister return and Visitor Centre await.
- 8.7.3 Project partners and Historic England will meet on 24 July to agree to a plan for the Anselm Building.
- 8.7.4 Excellent work is being done on the required conservation management plan; and how this will be incorporated into the Cathedral's Masterplan is another exciting thread of the project.
- 8.7.5 The College of Canons received an update on the Abbey, Reborn project and previously challenged the articulation of the theology of the project. Canon Matthew Vernon (MV) reported the canons now felt that the theology of the project is being addressed.
- 8.7.6 Project Manager James Mellish to attend the next Chapter meeting.

8.8 Safeguarding

- 8.8.1 SJP thanked Chapter members for completing the INEQE survey. Congregation input has been low, but reminders will be relayed and wardens will be on hand on Sunday to help people scan the QR code to the survey. Paper copies of the survey are not available.
- 8.8.2 SJP to circulate each completed section of the audit to Chapter for review. The final document has to be submitted on 6 August.
- 8.8.3 The auditors will be on site the w/b 6 October, while virtual meetings with focus groups will be arranged the week before.
- 8.8.4 The Cathedral's Safeguarding Strategy is now on display and available on the website. Chapter was invited to submit any feedback.
- 8.8.5 Chapter received updated guidelines for dealing with vulnerable people.
- 8.8.6 An opportunity to apply for funding for a shared Safeguarding Officer with Chelmsford Cathedral is being investigated.
- 8.8.7 With this INEQE Audit, Chapter acknowledged this was a stressful time for SJP and Drew Parnell and relayed their gratitude to both.

8.9 Policies

- 8.9.1 Chapter **approved** the Drone Policy.
- 8.9.2 Chapter **approved** the Use of Organ Policy.

9 Governance

9.1 Nominations Committee

- 9.1.1 Chapter approved the nomination of Liz Harsant to the Nominations Committee.

9.2 Fabric Advisory Committee

- 9.2.1 Chapter **endorsed** the Cathedral Fabric Commission's appointment of Edmund Harris to the Fabric Advisory Committee.

9.3 Abbey, Reborn Project Board

- 9.3.1 Chapter **approved** the appointment of Professor Darryl Newport to the Abbey, Reborn Project Board.

10 Minutes and Reports

10.1 Chapter received the Chapter Minutes and Action Log

- 10.1.1 The Chapter and Confidential minutes from the 8 May 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 minutes from the 5 June Information Protection Group meeting as well as an updated Terms of Reference.

10.4 Chapter received the minutes from the 10 June Health and Safety Committee meeting.

10.4.1 The Cathedral will acquire a new pager system to replace the current outdated model.

11 Any Other Business

12 Confidential Items

13 Upcoming Chapter Meeting Dates

- Monday 6 October 3.00-5.00pm
- Wednesday 5 November 1.00-3.00pm

The Chapter meeting concluded with prayer at 17.05 pm.