



St Edmundsbury
Cathedral



West Suffolk
Council



Abbey of St Edmund Reborn - Project Board Recruitment

An opportunity to contribute to a major heritage, environmental and community project in Bury St Edmunds.

The Abbey of St Edmund Reborn is an ambitious £9.83 million project that will reunify the fragmented 60-acre Abbey of St Edmund site and create a coherent, accessible and sustainable cultural destination for Bury St Edmunds and West Suffolk.

The project is being delivered through a partnership between St Edmundsbury Cathedral, West Suffolk Council and English Heritage, who together form the Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership, working alongside a further 29 local organisations.

The project has secured a £7.137 million grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, alongside significant contributions from other funders and partners, contributing to a total project cost of £9.83m. The three-year delivery programme is due to commence from October 2026.

The opportunity

As the project moves into its delivery phase, the Project Partners are looking to strengthen the membership of the Project Board with individuals who can bring professional expertise, strategic insight and constructive challenge to the project.

The existing Project Board comprises eight members and provides strategic oversight, advice and support to the Project Partners and Project Team. Project Board members represent the project partner organisations, while serving in an independent capacity.

The Project Board is looking to appoint two or, potentially, three new members and would particularly welcome expressions of interest from individuals with experience or professional networks in the following areas:

1. Natural heritage and local biodiversity

Experience or knowledge in areas such as:

- Biodiversity and nature conservation
- Environmental management and ecological restoration
- Chalk streams and freshwater habitats
- Landscape management
- Climate change and sustainability
- Community engagement with the natural environment

2. Community engagement, education and learning

Experience or knowledge in:

- Further and higher education

- Schools, colleges and lifelong learning
- Community development and engagement
- Skills development and employability
- Volunteering
- Inclusive and accessible learning
- Working with young people and under-represented communities

3. Visitor economy, tourism, communications and marketing

Experience or knowledge in:

- Tourism and destination development
- Visitor attractions and cultural tourism
- Hospitality and the visitor economy
- Marketing and communications
- Audience development
- Digital engagement
- Place-making and regional promotion

We are particularly interested in individuals who can bring a strategic perspective, rather than simply technical expertise, and who are able to contribute constructively to the development and long-term sustainability of the project.

About the Abbey of St Edmund Reborn

The project will reconnect the historic Abbey site with St Edmundsbury Cathedral and the wider town, creating a more coherent experience of one of England's most significant medieval heritage sites.

Key elements include:

- Conservation of the medieval Abbey ruins, securing their long-term sustainable future, alongside a new Visitor Centre and West Cloister providing orientation, interpretation and flexible community space.
- A 1.4km accessible circular route designed to support mobility, sensory and cognitive needs, physically and visually reconnecting the Abbey ruins, Cathedral and historic town and strengthening understanding of the site's national significance.
- An extensive activity programme, delivering 47 coordinated community and educational activities, 200 volunteering opportunities and 21 training opportunities across 19 roles, two apprenticeships and five funded staff posts, working in collaboration with 29 local organisations across the heritage, biodiversity, archaeology and creative sectors.
- Biodiversity enhancements along the rare chalk stream rivers Lark and Linnet, enriching the historic landscape and strengthening its ecological value.
- A successor CIO, providing strong and resilient governance and securing a free-to-enter destination with lasting cultural, educational, environmental and social impact

The role of the Project Board

Project Board members will provide strategic oversight and advice throughout the three-year delivery programme.

Board members will be expected to:

- Provide constructive challenge and professional advice to the Project Partners and Project Team.
- Contribute expertise and insight relevant to the successful delivery of the project.
- Help identify opportunities, partnerships and networks that could strengthen the project and its legacy.
- Consider the needs and interests of local communities, visitors and stakeholders.
- Support the project in achieving its heritage, environmental, educational and community outcomes.
- Contribute to discussions around risk, sustainability, legacy and long-term impact.
- Act as an ambassador for the project where appropriate.
- Board members will not be expected to manage the day-to-day delivery of the project, which is the responsibility of the Project Manager, staff and professional team.

Commitment

The Project Board currently meets monthly, in person, at St Edmundsbury Cathedral.

Members will be asked to attend monthly Board meetings and to contribute their expertise and experience between meetings where appropriate. The role is a voluntary position.

The appointment will be for the duration of the delivery phase, subject to the needs of the project and the individual member.

The Project Board is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds, perspectives and experiences. We recognise that a strong Project Board benefits from a diversity of professional backgrounds, skills, experience and perspectives.

How to Express an Interest

If you are interested in contributing to the Abbey of St Edmund Reborn Project Board, please submit a written letter of interest of no more than two sides of A4 outlining your interest in the project and the objectives and the relevant experience, skills and professional or community background that you could bring to the Project Board in one of the following roles:

- 1. Natural heritage and local biodiversity**
- 2. Community engagement, education and learning**
- 3. Visitor economy, tourism, communications and marketing**

Please submit your letter of interest via email to:

James Mellish, Project Manager. james@jmenvironmental.co.uk

Application deadline, 17:00 on Friday 13th November 2026

Applications will be assessed by the three lead partners, St Edmundsbury Cathedral, West Suffolk Council and English Heritage and applicants may be invited to interview.