



Keeping you connected

Newsletter

20 June 2025

From the Executive Director

A message from Anna Pitt

Dear colleagues and friends,

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our AGM in London this week. We were delighted to host several speakers; Rob Barward-Symmons from The Bible Society shared fascinating insights into the rise of Gen Z attendance at church.

The research indicates that Cathedrals are the frontline of Scriptural engagement and that sight-seeing in Cathedrals is a specific space of encounter for people.

There was much for us to consider in how we continue to create moments and space for spiritual encounter for a younger generation.

After lunch we heard updates on the recent Cathedral survey, the findings of the pilot Project Narthex and an update on the TFWG decision on triennium funding for the next three years.

Collectively this supported us to name and frame the real challenge of the financial sustainability of cathedrals. In short, historical underspend on fabric and capital works, means the structural deficit across the sector is not fixable with local solutions. Nor will the statutory and discretionary funding from the Church Commissioners meet the shortfall. We are therefore beginning to understand the scale of the sector-wide funding gap over the coming 5 years.

How can AEC support in this challenge? Our commitments are as follows:

- Continue to advocate on a national level for the sector. We are in the final stages of commissioning economic impact research, giving us concrete evidence of the impact of cathedrals, in a 'treasury' language for conversations with parliamentarians.

- Continue to work with Michael Minta and his team to look at opportunities for shared procurement, economies of scale, shared training and resources; making sure the limited CSF funding pot works as hard for the sector as it can and is accessed efficiently where appropriate.
- Explore national level opportunities for fundraising for the sector.

As always, I'd be delighted to what your thoughts are.

Warm wishes,
Anna Pitt
Executive Director, Association of English Cathedrals

News from Our Project Boards

This Week's Highlights

Communications Project Board - this week we shared an update from Jan 22- Dec 24 of the project in a slide show at the AGM. During this period, we have seen a huge shift in the comms landscape - the gutting of the BBC - esp in religious and ethics broadcasting - demise of regional news, newspapers and the toxicity of some social media platforms.

In that period our social media platforms grew: X - 13 percent; FB - 18 percent and Insta - 45 percent. We joined BlueSky and LinkedIn Dec 24 - both are good channels for us - BlueSky remains niche.

New opportunities for all our cathedrals: content contributors for their local news/media platforms (who need all the copy they can get!) and influencer marketing - many of your cathedral comms teams are already exploring these options.

If you want a copy of the slideshow - Do get in touch. jane.bower@englishcathedrals.co.uk

Art in Cathedrals Advisory Group - we met this week. A summer newsletter is in production.

We will be undertaking an evaluation study exploring different types of exhibitions at smaller and larger cathedrals to assess their impact in economic, spiritual and engagement terms with a keen eye on how we resource them - cost and people power!

There are a number of artworks available for cathedrals on loan - with small/minimal cost implications.

Religious iconography interpreted for a new generation by Renaud Muraine

<https://www.renaudmuraire.com/>

Stations of the Cross from Anthony Lawrence: [Stations of the Cross | Anthony Lawrence](#) and a long term loan of Quercus by Rebecca Newnham

[Quercus 2021 - Rebecca Newnham Sculptor and Designer](#)

Do speak directly with our partner, arts curator, Jacqueline Creswell if you want a further conversation on any of these: jacquiline@visualartsadvisor.org

Vacancies and Appointments

- York Minster is seeking a new Head of Bell Tower (10 hours pw) to coordinate their group of volunteer Bell Ringers. The Head of Bell Tower will deliver specialist technical support and training to ensure high quality bell ringing at York Minster. The successful candidate will have proven experience of both the theoretical and practical aspects of change ringing as well as a passion for developing and teaching others. <https://yorkminster.org/latest/job/head-of-bell-tower/>. Closing date 30 June 2025.
- The CFCE have published a nationwide Expression of Interest Advert for FAC membership: <https://internalvacancies.ncisgateway.com/jobs/job/Cathedral-Fabric-Advisory-Committees/8517>
- Christchurch Oxford is looking to appoint an Education and Pilgrimage Officer: <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/vacancies/education-and-pilgrimage-officer>

Don't forget, all the job descriptions you share with us are uploaded to the CAFA website and can be accessed here: <https://cathedralcafa.org/request-login/>

Training & Conference Opportunities

Upcoming events and learning opportunities:

- You will have received details of the **CAFA Conference: 'Hearts for Mission; Minds for Money'** being hosted at Peterborough Cathedral 22-24 September 2025. Please note the deadline for booking is **30 June 2025**.
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Interesting Reports & Information

- The Heritage Alliance have published their review of the Government's Spending Review this week: <https://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Heritage-Alliance-Briefing-June-Spending-Review-2025.pdf>
 - ALVA have shared the slide deck from their recent forum for Heads of Education and Learning. Please forward to colleagues who may find this of interest: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/54oehklo184prg0gghi70/AOobMsKtAWv0vVlxnkw9A-8?rlkey=w8bvp3jz7cd9d9eyc0jzm0bhq&st=u264ih76&dl=0>
 - They have also shared a slide deck from their recent forum for Heads of Finance - please also share this accordingly with colleagues: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/maj5vaa294sfx6bs04sc/AECZsBJCH8eDISE49cMRIBk?rlkey=7ae167y71gp6filztfzz08v7l&st=lz664g0n&dl=0>
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Don't Forget...

- The CAFA website is an excellent portal for the storage of bespoke and template policies, job descriptions and plans. Any number of colleagues from your cathedral can register for free: <https://cathedralcafa.org/request-login/>

Stay Connected

Have news to share in next week's edition? Let us know by Wednesday at midday.
Contact: Anna Pitt – anna.pitt@englishcathedrals.co.uk

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