



Keeping you connected

Newsletter

31 October 2025

From the Executive Director

Dear colleagues and friends,

This week we have heard an update on the progress of the THEOS research, and all the team are incredibly excited by the early reports. The THEOS researchers have been on site with 5 of the 6 case study cathedrals, with a visit to Derby Cathedral scheduled next week. I'd like to again articulate our thanks to the teams at the case study cathedrals who have worked hard to facilitate these visits, interviews and surveys. Your willingness to be part of something bigger is instrumental in generating a report which can be a tool for us all to use in future.

I am so very encouraged by early survey results reflecting Cathedrals as gathering places, as places of sanctuary and as places where people can meet to ask and discuss difficult questions. What a gift and a responsibility! I'm so encouraged that despite very real challenges of financial sustainability, our Cathedrals keep on striving to be more and to serve more and to love more. It's a testament to you all.

My week draws to a close with a pile of second handbooks on my shelf, written by some of the speakers we have coming to the conference next year. I'm excited to dive in (especially now the nights are longer and darker!), and even more excited to imagine how they will help us reflect on our place in the world when we gather in Bristol.

My thoughts are with you all as you minister to your communities with All Souls services this weekend.

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

1. News from the: Communications Support Project Board

It's the season of Remembrance and we've sent a round-up with pictures to the church press and King Charles III was at Lichfield Cathedral this week!

2. News from Art in Cathedrals Advisory Board

Good to know someone gets it - the latest art installation in Canterbury discussed here...

<https://livingchurch.org/covenant/are-they-only-stickers/>

<https://www.newcastle.anglican.org/jagged-edges/> -- Anyone interested in hosting the exhibition (after Holy Week and Easter next year), should contact Maggi Creese, Newcastle Diocese's Lead Officer for the Chaplaincy to Survivors, at m.creese@newcastle.anglican.org or 07826405972.

3. Your AEC National Cathedral Conference Update



BURSARIES: I am delighted to report that. With generous support from CCLA and CAFA, we will have enough bursary funding to support every Cathedral that requests a bursary with at least one funded place. You can find the bursary application form alongside the booking form here: <https://www.nationalcathedralsconference.org/book-now/>

WHO SHOULD WE BRING? An average delegation number per Cathedral is 8. It might be helpful to think of a delegation including Dean, 2 Canons, COO, CFO, SNEM and a representative from the staff team and a representative from Chapter. Do consider that we will be launching our research findings, and you will have that research as tools to support you in your ministry and engagement and work towards financial sustainability, so consider who in your team will be using those tools - perhaps a fundraising / development colleague, a comms / marketing / PR colleague, a colleague working in education / outreach. Who best to cascade the learning and information back to your team at home?

Do continue to check the website regularly for updates on the programme as we confirm speakers, but over the coming weeks we'll share more information via this newsletter on the confirmed speakers and what you can expect to hear.

EARLY BIRD BOOKING RATE: the early bird booking rate ends on 31 December 2025 so please make sure you book in time to secure this for your delegates. Thank you.

4. Vacancies and Appointments

Winchester Cathedral are looking to appoint a Director of Music. Further Information: <https://www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk/director-of-music/>

5. Training & Conference Opportunities

Historic Religious Buildings Alliance (HRBA) have issued an advice note on Martyn's Law updates available here: <https://www.hrballiance.org.uk/meetings/talks/>

The Charity Commission are running an excellent day long training session on 2nd December in Birmingham on '**Managing your Faith Chairty**' aimed at trustees. Use this link to register to attend this face-to-face event: [Charities Engagement Team Events – Booking by Bookwhen](#)

The **Charity Tax Group** have a series of helpful training sessions:

How do I get my Gift Aid claims right?

- Thursday 13th November at 3.30pm – [Book here](#)

Do I need to submit a corporation tax return?

- Wednesday 26th November at 10am – [Book here](#)

What is employment status for tax? When is a volunteer not a volunteer for tax?

- Wednesday 3rd December at 3.30pm – [Book here](#)

6. Interesting Reports & Information

The UK Home Office are opening their Protective security schemes for places of worship, a funding scheme for places of worship at risk of hate crime. Some cathedrals have previously benefitted from this scheme. There is a short window for applications which closes at the start of December so please pass this on to colleagues who can progress. We will share this directly with colleagues in the Fundraising and Development Forum.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/places-of-worship-protective-security-scheme>

Our friends at Community Safety Trust are also running free webinars to help with applications, the last one being on Monday 3rd November :

<https://bit.ly/SAFEZoomHub>

End of Microsoft support for Windows 10

It is estimated that around 21 million UK users, including many organisations, use the Windows 10 operating system. As you may have seen in the press, Microsoft ended

support for this on 14 October 2025 and is encouraging users to move to the new Windows 11 system - however many PCs more than four or five years old will not meet the system requirements for Windows 11.

Go to the Windows Update area on your PCs (type 'update' into the search box) where you can run a check for your machine's compatibility with Windows 11 system requirements and upgrade free. If not, the page will direct you to the option of signing up for Extended Security Updates for Windows 10 for a further year, which is free if you have a Microsoft account (e.g. if you run Office 365) or otherwise costs \$30 (£22).

It would be advisable for all your Windows 10 users who can't upgrade to Windows 11, including any 'Bring Your Own Device' and home users who access your systems, to sign up for the Extended Security Updates while they consider next steps. This should continue to protect them from security risks for the coming year. Windows 10 computers may become slower over time and some programmes will not be optimised for them in future, but for most purposes they will remain functional and there has been considerable concern expressed about not only the cost but the amount of electronic waste that will be created by replacing millions of them worldwide. Given the political pressure, it will be worth looking out for any further developments, such as further extension of the Security Update or changes in the system requirements, over the coming year.

See BBC article here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy0vzegkqweo> and <https://www.euwid-recycling.com/news/business/electronic-waste-due-to-windows-update-011025/>

If you have any specific concerns contact the AEC's Support Panel Coordinator Anne Locke anne.locke@englishcathedrals.co.uk and she will put you in touch with the panel's cyber security expert Dr Tim French.

7. 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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