



Keeping you connected

Newsletter

5 December 2025

From the Executive Director

Dear colleagues and friends,

I am delighted this week to share news of a lunchtime webinar series planned for 2026 as a follow up to the Cathedral Music Day held this time last year. Thank you for your patience as we have worked with Cathedral Music Trust to develop this next stage of our work together.

Having listened to the feedback we have identified the areas that people most wanted some follow-up sessions on and have planned accordingly. More detailed email communications and zoom links will be circulated, but for now, please be aware of the following dates (all midday hour long sessions):

- **Wednesday 21 January** - Fundraising for Music (led by AEC)
- **Wednesday 18 March** - Chorister Recruitment Models (led by CMT)
- **Wednesday 17th June** - Clergy Training for Cathedral Music/Liturgy (led by CMT)

We are also looking at an additional session on Financial Sustainability, but it makes sense for us to work with Michael Minta and his team and await the outcomes of the Project Narthex work, to ensure we are offering coherent support and training. This session is likely to be held in early July, and may form part of a more substantial training opportunity.

Prayers in this busy season,

Warm wishes, Anna Pitt

Executive Director, Association of English Cathedrals

1. Your AEC National Cathedral Conference Update



This week I had an opportunity to talk through the process for submitting booking forms with the COOs, and I wanted to reiterate some important information:

- Please submit your **booking form before 31 December** as this supports us with confirming booking numbers for hotels.
- The invoice can be **paid in 2026**. Payment of **invoices can be staged** if that would support cashflow, please contact Anthony O'Connor to discuss how this can be arranged.
- Bursary Forms can be submitted at the time of booking. We will be assessing bursary applications on **Tuesday 6 January** so please make sure they get to us before then. We want to support as much as we can with the **generous bursaries** on offer, so do please apply.
- At this stage, when booking, only an indication of numbers is necessary, so you can make a final decision about who will attend from your team nearer the date.

May I address some concerns that I am aware of about the gathering of a large group of cathedral clergy and staff for a large conference whilst the narrative for our sector is one of financial instability and insecurity. I understand that signing up for the conference is a significant financial commitment, and hopefully the following information can support with justifying your decision to send a delegation:

- All of the logistical elements of delivering the conference (catering, AV, Comms support, digital support and staffing) **are covered through generous sponsorship**, the delegate fee purely covers the cost of accommodation (for which we have negotiated competitive rates) and the availability of bursaries will reduce the average per head cost for each of your delegates.
- The length of the conference allows for **depth and variety of skill-building** and an immersive and concentrated opportunity to engage with the most pressing issues and opportunities for the Cathedral sector. The conference allows an opportunity for **creating and deepening professional bonds** as well as the invaluable informal networking. We know from previous feedback that this is a tremendously valuable element of the National Conferences, and we are building in time for cohorts to spend valuable time together.
- As good employers, all Cathedrals ought to be considering the **professional development (CPD) opportunities** for their staff, and this conference represents an

excellent opportunity for high quality training and engagement with professional contributors.

- We are committed to making this conference as accessible as possible. If you have any concerns about sending a delegation from your cathedral, then **please contact us**, we want to work with you to make it viable for your team.

BURSARIES: remember 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/>

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.

2. Vacancies and Appointments

Rochester Cathedral is recruiting a Cathedral Safeguarding Officer. This is a permanent role (21 hours pw). Closing date is 6 January 2026. You'll find full details on their website here: <https://www.rochestercathedral.org/job-vacancy-input/2025/cathedralsafeguardingofficer>

3. News from the: Communications Support Project Board

Filming took place in Rochester Cathedral at the weekend to create a short feature package for The One Show's as part of its Christmas editions - TX is expected 19/12. Peterborough Cathedral's Wonder of Christmas featured in its local BBC this week. Our Christmas fairs/markets feature is in the Church Times this week and Christian Today - thanks to everyone who helped pull that together. And Ely's choristers on the carousel made front page pic in the Church Times this week too.

We are now a week in to our #DivineLight campaign which is seeing strong performance across all our social media platforms. It has also made short pieces in both the Church Times and Country Life magazine.

Thanks as always to all those involved making time and space to accommodate media inquiries, I know how busy and time-consuming that can be.

With Advent and Christmas now fast approaching, please keep us updated regarding your events via our [Event Capture Form](#). We love to showcase the vast array of events taking place across our network with the aim of amplifying your event and driving more people to your event and to your website. The form is quick and easy to complete - and please remember to include an image or two. Thank you!

4. Interesting Reports & Information

The Heritage Alliance are seeking nominations for their **Young Heritage Hero Award**. More information as follows: The deadline for nominations has been extended to this Sunday, 7th December - if you need additional time beyond this date, please get in touch directly and we'll do our best to accommodate. Full details on the awards and how to nominate can be found here: <https://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/our-work/heritage-heroes/>

The Cathedrals and Major Church Projects Support Panel - an AEC resource

If you had a day or two of free advice from an expert on an issue your cathedral faces, what would you ask them?

This is your regular reminder that the Cathedral and Major Church Projects Support Panel offers cathedrals free advice and consultancy from nearly 70 volunteer experts. It aims to help cathedrals at the early stages of projects. Since its launch in 2017 it has dealt with over 200 requests from cathedrals. It's run by the Association of English Cathedrals and funded by the Church Commissioners.

Panel expertise includes architecture, conservation, fundraising, heritage interpretation, grant applications, project management, strategic planning, visitor engagement and many more areas. Recently we have recruited several former cathedral senior officers to provide an additional resource for enquiries such as overall reviews of commercial activities.

Contact the Support Panel's Cathedrals Coordinator Anne Locke for more information or to make a request. She will aim to link you up with a suitable expert or team of experts for an initial discussion, possibly followed by a site visit – travel expenses are paid by the project. If the panel can't help she may well be able to signpost you to other sources of advice and support.

anne.locke@englishcathedrals.co.uk or 07908 472082.

5. 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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