



12 December 2025

## From the Executive Director

Dear colleagues and friends,

This week I have been very pleased with the news from Cathedral Music Trust that they are working on an expression of interest to UNESCO with regards the designation of English Sacred Choral Music as an intangible heritage. Many of you and in particular your Directors of Music will have been part of the consultation process back in October. CMT will continue to share details of the progress of their application and will be launching a public campaign for support. The short description is as follows: ***“English Sacred Choral Music is a living practice of collective music-making characterised by a distinctive choral sound and a rich body of repertoire. Originating in English cathedral and collegiate foundations, it has become a defining element of cultural life in the UK, expressed through cross-denominational liturgical services and secular performances.”***

Remaining on the theme of music, our friends at the Choir Schools Association have relaunched their termly newsletter, Cantamus, which can be read here:

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/aacda41b1c.html>

We are working with Rev Julia Porter-Pryce who is supporting us on a voluntary basis to extend our research into the area of **Art Exhibitions in Cathedrals**. She is undertaking some qualitative research with a number of cathedrals, and we hope to produce a concise document to share with all our members to support with some of the practicalities of hosting an exhibition: funding, engagement plan, installation, logistics, evaluation. If you are interested in knowing more, or having a conversation with Julia, please contact me directly and I will put you in touch.

Julia will be joining us at the conference in May, alongside David Olusoga, Eve Poole, and Canon Leslie Francis as we explore the cultural impact of our cathedrals. Information on booking and bursaries below.

This week our cathedral family were celebrating the announcement of a new Dean of Winchester, and we look forward to welcoming Canon Chris in his new role. We also hold

our friends at Ely very close this week as they mourn the sudden, untimely loss of Canon Jim. May he rest in peace.

Continued prayers for a joyful Advent season,

Warm wishes,

Anna Pitt  
Executive Director, Association of English Cathedrals

## 1. Your AEC National Cathedral Conference Update



We are delighted to announce that our after dinner speaker at the conference gala dinner will be **John Lloyd**. John has been behind some of the most successful and well-loved TV and radio of the last three decades (The News Quiz, Not the Nine O'Clock News, Blackadder and Spitting Image). He's also written or co-authored over 30 books, and is the driving force behind developing a new concept of education based on his BBC panel show, QI. John also has a passionate interest in Cathedrals, and we look forward to welcoming him for a very enjoyable evening.

**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/>. **Bursary forms need to be submitted by 5 January 2026.**

**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

**Manchester Cathedral** currently have vacancies for a:

- Community Heritage Officer
- Project Quantity Surveyor
- Lead Project Architect

As part of their latest Development Project. Further information can you found on the cathedral website: <https://manchestercathedral.org/about-us/vacancies>.

## 3. News from the: Communications Support Project Board

We held our monthly comms drop-in this week. We were joined by **Claire Card** from The Choir Association to look at how we can better work together.

We shared updates on our **Divine Beauty** campaign - two weeks in. We're seeing a huge uplift across all our social media platforms - including 122 per cent uplift on FB and over 100 per cent elsewhere. The Divine Beauty launch news story was the most visited page on the AEC website during November.

**A reminder** - The One Show segment from Rochester Cathedral will be aired 19<sup>th</sup> Dec!

**Statistics for our Advent services** -so far early indications are that we are welcoming more people this year into our cathedrals for our services. Be great to be able to share a story on this if I have enough statistics to make it viable.

*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.*

**Events** - The events page on our website attracts over 2.5k visitors every month. 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 there and to your website. The form is quick and easy to complete - and please remember to include an image or two.

#### 4. Training & Conference Opportunities

We will circulate a zoom link for the first AEC / CMT Lunchtime Webinar, but please hold the time in your diary **Wednesday 21st January 12-1** and share with colleagues.

#### 5. Interesting Reports & Information

AEC are members of the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA), and as such, all of our members are entitled to sign up for **ALVA newsletters**. Their distribution lists are segmented as follows: Membership, HR, Education, Events, Finance, Fundraising, Security, Sustainability, Marketing, Public Engagement, Ticketing, Catering, Council Meeting & Benchmarking and you can **follow this link to sign up** and select your preferences: Link: <http://eepurl.com/cD61Kv>

The Cathedral Archives, Libraries and Collections Association (CALCA) have issued their most recent newsletter which you can access here:

<https://cathedrallibrariesandarchives.wordpress.com/resources-publications/>

#### 6. 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](mailto:anna.pitt@englishcathedrals.co.uk)

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