



Keeping you connected

Newsletter

30 January 2025

From the Executive Director

Dear colleagues and friends,

This week I had the pleasure of spending time with Benefact Trust Director, Helen Gray, understanding more about the Trust's funding streams and how they support Cathedrals. Helen is also the SNEM on Chapter at St Albans, so it is fantastic to be able to welcome Helen to our National Cathedrals Conference in May to lead a session on 'The Fundraising Landscape'.

With our attention on Fundraising, please find below a link to our lunchtime Webinar on Wednesday 4th February at noon - 'Fundraising for Music' which we will co-host with Cathedral Music Trust. The hour-long webinar will be an opportunity to share learning and best practice from colleagues and also hear about CMT's funding streams.

Still considering financial sustainability, our colleagues in the Cathedrals and Church Buildings team are working hard with Historic England (who will administer the new £92million Places of Worship Renewal Fund to do some business case planning, for which we are supporting with information on the VAT arrangements in Cathedrals. We will continue to share information on the new fund as and when it is available.

Prayers with you all as you celebrate Candlemas,

Warm wishes,

Anna Pitt
Executive Director, Association of English Cathedrals

1. Your AEC National Cathedral Conference Update

We are pleased to confirm that Justin Brierley will be delivering an inspiring plenary speech that seeks to unlock the immense potential of our spiritual capital for the next generation. Cathedrals are more than just buildings; they are wellsprings of faith, history, and community. Justin's session will explore how we can share this spiritual wealth with young people, fostering a new generation of stewards and worshippers.



2. Vacancies and Appointments

Appointments:

Derby Cathedral have appointed Reverend Prebendary Romita Shrisunder as Canon for Community Outreach and Social Justice

Vacancies:

St Paul's is looking for an Anglican priest with a breadth of liturgical knowledge and experience, a love and knowledge of music, and good administrative and pastoral skills to join its busy Liturgical Department, as a Minor Canon and Succentor.

Please visit <https://www.chalkdownresearch.com/stpaulscathedralsuccentor/> for more information. Or call Ali Hollingbery on 01730-776655 / ali@chalkdownresearch.com for an informal conversation.

Manchester Cathedral is looking for a Sound Beginnings Lead. This pioneering role will support the sustainability of the Cathedral Choir by creating a pathway for children from the earliest ages to become choristers. You'll find further details on the cathedral website here: <https://manchestercathedral.org/about-us/vacancies>.

3. News from the: Communications Support Project Board

Divine Light - Have you voted? It's the last chance to join the 5,000 plus people who have already voted in this public competition to find the people's favourite stained glass from the top 12 most liked/engaged stained glass images we shared during our winter Divine Light campaign - based on Janet Gough's latest volume of the same name.

Voting is open until midday on Sunday 1 February. - Vote [here](#)

The top five will then be revealed - one a day throughout next week - with the winner revealed Friday 6 February.

Press: You can hear Janet on BBC 4's Today programme talking about the competition <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m002qhzw> starts at 2:43:51. The campaign featured in the Sunday Times - online and in the newspaper. Janet is expected to feature on this weekend's BBC Sunday Morning Live.

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 - please send through information regarding your events, exhibitions and special services. The AEC events page attracts over 2.5k visitors every month. You can keep us updated 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. Thank you!

4. **Arts in Cathedrals Advisory Board** - our arts curator Jacquiline Creswell has let us know there are two pieces of work available for smaller cathedrals. See images in this drop box link <https://we.tl/t-wVembYDzWc>

Children of Albion: 300 × 200 cm, Oil on canvas, 2024–2025

Children of Albion was conceived as a contemporary altarpiece — a single, immersive image intended for sustained looking and reflection. Inspired by the great masterpieces of Northern Renaissance painting, and by traditions of religious symbolism, the work explores both the darkness and the light of Britain's history, and the enduring complexities of the human condition.

The painting is deeply informed by the vision of William Blake.

Where Must We Go In Search Of Our Better Selves, Mixed media sculpture 230 × 270 × 100 cm, on wooden plinth

Where Must We Go In Search Of Our Better Selves is a sculptural self-portrait of the artist as the Garland King — a figure first explored in painting in 2017 and one that has since become a central symbol within Ben Edge's wider vision of Albion and his work. Conceived as a work of inner contemplation, the sculpture was created specifically to inhabit sacred space: a quiet monument to inward reflection, self-realisation, and the lifelong process of becoming.

The costs should be around £1,000 for tech and install.

Do get in touch with Jacquiline to find out more and/or express interest: jacquiline@visualartsadvisor.org

5. Training & Conference Opportunities

AEC Introduction to Cathedral Governance Training

There are still a couple of spaces available on the first **AEC Introduction to Cathedral Governance training** of 2026. The date is **24 February (10.30am-4.30pm)**, and the

venue is **St Martin's House, Leicester Cathedral**. If you have members of Chapter, SMT or other governance committees who have been appointed in the last 2 years and who have not attended one of our training events, please do encourage them to join us. Full details and a link to the booking form, can be found on the AEC website here: <https://englishcathedrals.co.uk/resources/events/>

The other training dates for 2026 are 4 June at Sheffield Cathedral and 15 October at The Royal Foundation of St Katharine, London E14. The course on the 4 June is currently full (waiting list open) but there is space available in October.

6. Interesting Reports & Information

Peterborough Cathedral is inviting people to take a part in a survey as they look forward to an exciting year of change and growth. There are prizes to be won for those who take part. Closing date for completing the survey is 12noon on Wednesday 25 February 2026, the prize draw will take place on Thursday 26 February 2026, and winners will be contacted by email and/or phone.

<https://form.jotform.com/260132316351040>

The Ouseley Trust for Cathedral Music (OTCM) have been in contact with information about their main grant funding stream, with two closing dates in February and May. We have circulated that information directly to Precentors, Musicians and Development Forum members (where we have contact details) but if you have vacancies, or would like that information directly, please let me know. Additionally, OTCM have a small grant funding stream for individuals born or brought up in **Lincolnshire** or **Nottinghamshire**. If you know of anyone within your choir who might be eligible, please do encourage them to consider making an application, Full details are available on our website www.ouseleytrust.org.uk If you would like a pre-application discussion, please do contact our Clerk, Neil Parsons clerk@ouseleytrust.org.uk 07912 696852.

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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