



CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER'S NEWSLETTER FOR VOLUNTEERS 31 OCTOBER 2025

Introduction

1. Another challenging and hectic month, but a massively fulfilling one with the Cathedral and Seasons full of people attending the various events or coming to see the Jacqui Parkinson exhibition. It has also been hugely significant for the future of the Cathedral with further financial assistance having been pledged by the Music Development Foundation, for which we are all extremely grateful. Congratulations to Louise Musgrove for her appointment as my successor from 1 January 2026. I know Volunteers will give Louise the unstinting support that I have enjoyed over the years, and for which I am truly and humbly thankful.

2. At the link is an advertisement for Mental Health Awareness Training now available.

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/cq0aofuklgmlh4wlhxyz/ADzFWV-iNtaHVMbK0RHTfiU?rlkey=vn9stfi9by352eje36cyjt365&st=s3g6zhw9&dl=0>

Worship

3. The times of services are as follows:

Sunday – 7.30am Morning Prayer, 8.00am Holy Communion, 9.45am Cathedral Eucharist, 6pm Evensong.

Monday - 8.30am Morning Prayer, 9.00am Holy Communion, 5.30pm Evensong.

Tuesday - 8.00am Morning Prayer, 8.30am Holy Communion, 5.30pm Evensong.

Wednesday - 8.30am Morning Prayer, 9.00am Holy Communion, 5.30pm Evening Prayer.

Thursday - 8.30am Morning Prayer, 12.30pm Holy Communion, 5.30pm Evensong.

Friday - 8.00am Morning Prayer, 8.30am Holy Communion, 5.30pm Evensong.

Saturday 9.00am Morning Prayer, 9.30am Holy Communion, 4pm Evening Prayer.

Opening Hours the Cathedral, Shop and Seasons

4. The Cathedral opening times are as follows:

- Sunday – 7.30am to 5pm.
- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday – 8.30am to 5pm.
- Tuesday – 7.30am to 5pm.
- Saturday – 8.30am to 5pm.

The Shop is open from Monday to Saturday from 9.30am until 4.30pm. Seasons is open from Monday to Saturday from 9am until 3pm, and on Sunday from 9am until 12 noon.

Chapter

5. Chapter met on 11 October and were briefed on the financial situation and presented with the Annual Report and Accounts for approval. The Annual Report was signed on 22 October by the Dean and the Treasurer and on 24 October by the auditors. It has now been filed with the Charity Commission (a new requirement this year as the Cathedral is now a registered charity).

Bellringing

6. The Cathedral ringers held their annual outing on Saturday 11th October, visiting St Andrew's and All Saints Hertford, St Michael's Bishops Stortford (recently augmented from 10 to 12 bells, St Mary's Harlow and the heavy ring of 12 at Waltham Abbey. On the same day some of the those not taking part in the outing, with a little help from elsewhere, rang for the wedding at the Cathedral. On the previous Saturday a Cathedral team took part in the inaugural South-East area 12-Bell Striking Contest at Portsmouth Cathedral and came first. They were particularly pleased to beat the Portsmouth team on their own bells. Two quarter peals were rung in October, on Sundays 12th and 19th. The latter formed part of the Guildford District's quarter peal weekend and was a first of Stedman Cinques for a Haslemere ringer.

Development Department

7. Nicola Pratt, Head of Development, has been collating consultation responses for the Vision and Strategy work and has produced an update for the Vision and Strategy Steering Group. The Group meets again in November to consider the next steps in delivering the strategy during Eastertide next year. Nicola has also been meeting with iKnow Church to discuss the new Customer Relationship Management system which will go live next month. The new and dare it be said improved and bumper 'What's On' has arrived and distributed to parishes and in Guildford Town Centre (Tourist Info, theatres etc). Work is underway for the John Rutter concert programme, and planning has started for 2026 regular Cathedral home grown events to create the necessary designs for marketing.

Facilities

8. The follow up inspection by Surrey Fire and Rescue went well and the Cathedral now will receive one further inspection in early November. Fire awareness training of Cathedral Staff, Guides and Stewards was conducted on Thursday 16 October, and more will be programmed next month. New fire doors at the base of the Tower (South Gallery level) have been fitted, and the heaters in the Ringing Room are being moved away from combustible materials. All of this activity was recommended by Surrey Fire and Rescue. One of the doors in the Ringing Room was blown off its hinges overnight Friday 3 October/Saturday 4 October during Storm Amy, but contractors T J Hunt managed to repair it the following Sunday morning. The Fabric Advisory Committee has approved an application for extra CCTV cameras (including inside the building) and an automatic gate in the North Car Park. These are being funded by the Home Office.

Families Engagement and Schools

9. Nicola Cole, Head of Schools, has had a busy month including school visits to the Jacqui Parkinson exhibition, which have all been very well received. The following feedback was received from one school:

'I just wanted to thank you for a wonderful morning. The girls were so inspired by the exhibition, it was wonderful and I have recommended it to our other classes and staff. Thank you for spending the time with us, we really did appreciate it. Good luck with the rest of the exhibition.'

Rachel Johnson, Family Engagement Officer, ran another successful Cathedral Tots service on Wednesday 1 October, Story Time on Thursday 23 October, and a Family Fun Day on Wednesday 29 October.

Liturgy and Music

10. This month the team has auditioned several organ scholar candidates (with one successful candidate being offered the job) and the vocal coach Hilary Jones has once again been working with choristers and probationers. Katherine undertook her third and final visit to George Abbot School, and their chamber choir sang Evensong alongside the Cathedral choir as part of the Cathedral Music Trust sponsored Schools' Evensong project on Friday 10 October. There was a complicated wedding that was very well received by all who attended and the annual Evensong attended by members of the Guildford Cathedral Choir Association, all on the same day – Saturday 11 October! After a quick half term break the team are now hard at work preparing for All Saints and All Souls services on 1 and 2 November, and for the Remembrance services the weekend after. Katherine Dienes-Williams, Organist and Master of the Choristers, returns on 4 November as she travels to Kenya on Friday to adjudicate a hymn festival in Mombasa.

Virgers

11. Huge thanks to the team for all their efforts during a very busy and complicated month. Their efforts are hugely appreciated.

Visitor Experience and Events

12. The Jacqui Parkinson exhibition 'Threads Through The Cross' has been in the Cathedral since Thursday 25 September and is proving very popular. Emily Bollon returned with her community choir for the Coffee Concert on Thursday 9 October. On Friday 17 October there was a large scale concert by Sir William Perkins School in commemoration of their 300th anniversary and on Saturday 18 October the last sponsored abseil for some time was staged by the cancer charity Maggies. The week commencing 20 October was hugely busy for the team with the University Festival of Social Science event on Monday, the Farnborough Tech graduation ceremony on Wednesday, and the School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) graduation on Friday 24 October. The exhausting sequence continued on Saturday 25 October with the Vintage Superstore market. Thanks and farewell to Catherine Barber, Events Officer, who moved on to pastures new this month. Welcome back to Tracey Pusey who is rejoining us temporarily as Events Assistant.

M J O'GRADY Chief Operating Officer