



**GUILDFORD  
CATHEDRAL**

## **CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER'S NEWSLETTER FOR VOLUNTEERS 25 MAY 2023**

### **Introduction**

1. Another hugely busy month for the Cathedral. The challenges you will read about in subsequent paragraphs, plus shortages in the Staff complement, were overcome by very willing help from a number of stalwart Volunteers. Chapter has asked me to pass on its grateful thanks to everyone yet again for being there when it counted, as well as their day to day support to ensure that the routines and support for services, welcoming and so much other activity goes on as normal during difficult times. Meanwhile there has been good progress as we plan for the future in many areas, with a Chapter Away Day being conducted and an important visit by a Church Commissioners' team being hosted. I am very sorry indeed to announce that Julie Mitchell, who has been our Volunteer Co-ordinator for four extremely challenging years, will be leaving us in July. Details of an event to say goodbye to Julie will be forwarded in the near future.

### **Tower Tours and Volunteers' Service**

2. We are offering **FREE** Tower Tours to all our volunteers on Wednesday 7 June at 2.30pm. You will need to book a place using the following link:

<https://www.guildford-cathedral.org/events/boxoffice/671>

Then on Sunday 11 June at 6pm there will be a special Choral Evensong with a Thanksgiving for Guildford Cathedral Volunteers providing an opportunity to say a huge thank you to all of you who give so much of your time and resources so willingly.

### **Volunteers – Welcome**

3. A warm welcome to these new Volunteers: Anne Anthony, Bell Ringer; Clare Chardin, Reader; Berrie Norton, Reader; Nicola Pratt, Chaperone (volunteering in addition to her Staff role); Mary Sweeney, Server; Frances Williams, Archivist and Guildford Cathedral Singer.

### **Volunteers – Fair Trade**

4. Volunteers to help our wonderful Fair Trade team are urgently required. Guildford Cathedral Fair Trade is now in its 18th year. The stall is run by a very small team of volunteers and sells produce most Sunday mornings after the 9.45am service at the west

end of the Cathedral as well as at monthly Coffee Concerts. Our aim is to promote the principles of Fairtrade, enabling some of the poorest people of the world to trade their way out of extreme poverty. The producers are guaranteed a fair price for their produce, so they are able to increase their productivity, feed their families, send their children to school, and have access to healthcare. We contribute to the Cathedral's efforts for an eco-friendly Cathedral award (currently bronze with aims to get the silver award this year) by supplying them with Fair Trade products. The Cathedral is a certified Fair Trade place of worship. With profits made we support other charities initiatives including Seeds for Development, a small locally organised charity that helps very poor farming communities in northern Uganda, still recovering from the effects of a 20-year war. If you can spare time to help on the Fair Trade stall please contact Julie Mitchell, Volunteer Co-ordinator (01483 547885 or [volunteer@guildford-cathedral.org](mailto:volunteer@guildford-cathedral.org)).

### **Volunteers – Tower Tour Guide**

5. As we enter a new season of Tower Tours, we would love to add more people to our team of volunteer guides. This is an important activity that attracts many visitors to our Cathedral. It is a role that requires training, health and safety considerations and a certain level of fitness (there are 249 steps to the top of the Tower). The Cathedral Tower Tours are frequently requested and interest the public greatly. It is a great asset of the Cathedral that we have such splendid viewpoint across the county. As the present team is small, we have only managed five dates for this year but urgently need to grow our team so we can offer more tours. Please consider anyone in your contacts who might be a possibility to train as a new team member and ask them to contact Julie Mitchell, Volunteer Co-ordinator (01483 547885 or [volunteer@guildford-cathedral.org](mailto:volunteer@guildford-cathedral.org)).

### **Worship**

6. Worship times remain as follows:

- Sundays – Holy Communion at 8am, Cathedral Eucharist at 9.45am, Evensong at 6pm.
- Morning Prayer and Eucharist at 9.00 and 9.30am on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday; at 8.00 and 8.30am on Tuesday.
- Choral Evensong at 5.30pm on Monday, Tuesday Thursday, and Friday.

No evening services on Wednesday or Saturday.

### **Opening Hours the Cathedral, Shop and Seasons**

7. The Cathedral opening times are as follows (please note early closing on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 5pm during choir holidays):

- Sunday – 7.30am to 7pm
- Monday, Thursday and Friday – 8.30am to 6.15pm (whole Cathedral);
- Tuesday – 7.30am to 6.15pm
- Wednesday and 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 12noon.

## **Chapter**

8. Chapter met on 9 May and approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022, as well as the budget for 2023. There was also a brief on the potential way forward with the Cathedral development. Chapter met again on 23 May for its strategic away day when the opportunity was taken to refresh the Strategic Development Plan. Revised strategic aims and Chapter priorities were agreed.

## **Bellringing**

9. The Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla was celebrated with a peal of Cambridge Surprise Maximus by an essentially local band on Sunday 7 May, starting just after the end of the County service. The bells had also been rung before the service. Unlike at many churches, the bells were not rung on Coronation Day itself, but two of our ringers, Richard Burton and Nigel Smith, and former Cathedral ringer Tessa Beadman, had the privilege of taking part in the Coronation ringing at Westminster Abbey. Otherwise, service and practice ringing has continued as normal, and two quarter peals have been rung. The ringers were sorry to learn of the recent death of Gerald Norris, who rang at the Cathedral for 35 years up to 2016 when he and his wife moved to near Nottingham.

## **Development Department**

10. The Development team and the Dean's PA are working hard to cleanse the ThankQ (Customer Relation Management) database before the update goes live this month. The new upgraded ThankQ will be a vital tool as the Cathedral seeks to communicate with supporters old and new in these difficult times. Nicola Pratt, the Head of Development, has been continuing her work on music patronage to generate more income to support choral activity. Karen Taylor, the Fundraising Officer, has been organising and publicising the Cathedral abseil on 27 May. If you would like to donate or know of someone else who might be able to help, the link to the fundraising website is below. Thank you in advance.

<https://guildfordcathedral.enthuse.com/cf/leap-of-faith>

## **Facilities**

11. AE Hughes have erected the abseil scaffolding and platform for the summer series of charity abseils which is now underway. The damaged parts of the floor in the Cathedral are being assessed and Martin Gwilliams, an experienced stonemason, and Andy Saunders, the Cathedral handyman, will be assisting. Jim Blake, Head of Property and Facilities is involving the Cathedral Architect and the team are in the process of identifying the areas which should be given the highest priority. Jim has also discussed the progress towards electric vehicle charging points with Horizon Parking and has met with Diocesan colleagues to assess other potential net zero carbon related activity. Jim has also asked the tree specialists to visit shortly to assess the unhealthy looking tree on the main Cathedral Green, and he was expecting the access lift at the North Porch to be repaired on 26 May with a team visiting from Germany to ensure the work is completed successfully. He has tasked TJ Hunt to complete repairs to the dangerous road surface in Cathedral Close; it is likely to be

undertaken in late May or early June. Please see attached an updated computer security aide memoire.

### **Families Engagement and Schools**

12. Cathedral Tots took place on Wednesday 3 May, welcoming 5 families (8 adults, 6 children). The group explored the five senses using magnifying glasses, music, candles, a Cathedral brick, and an informal communion led by The Dean. On Thursday 11 May, the Cathedral welcomed the Year 5 pupils from Queen Eleanor's Junior School to take part in a workshop led by Jeremy Sampson on the WOOFYT, a wooden one-octave organ that allows children to explore music, science, and technology in the same session. Christ's College Year 7 pupils visited the Cathedral on Wednesday 24 May for their retreat day. Becki Hartley, the Head of Family Engagement and Schools, is very sadly leaving at the end of July, the recruiting process to find a successor has begun.

### **Guildford Cathedral Development (Land Sale)**

13. Discussions with Vivid homes are ongoing to determine the way forward in the wake of Guildford Borough Council's refusal of the Cathedral's application for planning permission last month.

### **Liturgy and Music**

14. Sunday 7 May's County Service to mark the Coronation of the King and Queen was a great success; congratulations to everyone involved. Katherine Dienes-Williams, Organist and Master of the Choristers, chaired the Cathedral Organists' Association conference at Oxford during the week commencing 8 May. There were beautiful and moving sung services to mark the feast day of St Mathias (Monday 15 May), the anniversary of the Cathedral's consecration (Tuesday 16 May, also featuring a choir from Charterhouse School) and Ascension Day (Thursday 18 May). On Tuesday, 23 May, Katherine gave a recital at Hereford Cathedral. Sunday 28 May is the feast of Pentecost and there will be a Patronal Festival Eucharist (sung jointly with the Guildford Cathedral Singers) and a Festal Choral Evensong in the evening.

### **Virgers**

15. Huge thanks to Steve, Jake, and Nicola as always. It has been an extraordinarily busy month with a packed programme and additional staff shortages with which to contend, but the team have overcome all the challenges incredibly well. Many thanks in addition to all those who have volunteered to help the Virgers by plugging the gaps that have inevitably occurred.

### **Visitor Experience and Events**

16. The first charity abseil of 2023 took place on Saturday 13 May, and there were two concerts on the same evening by the London Film Music Orchestra on Wednesday 17 May. As both were sell outs (audiences of 900 at each) it was an extremely challenging night, but the reduced team managed admirably thanks to robust prior planning and very generous help from a number of volunteers. The very next day (Thursday 18 May), after a remarkably swift turnaround, there was a very successful Coffee Concert given by Erik and Jo Levi,

playing cello and piano. On Saturday 20 May there was another busy day with two charities carrying out an abseil at the same time as a Craft and Flea market was taking place. The final event of the month is the Cathedral abseil on Saturday 27 May.

M J O'GRADY Chief Operating Officer