



Chelmsford Cathedral Strategic Plan

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'

John 20.19-21

FOREWORD

This document supersedes the Cathedral 2016-2021 Strategic Plan. Work on this plan began in January 2020, however the last two years have been unprecedented. Working in the context of a global pandemic has meant that completely new thinking has had to be developed, and longer-term strategic plans put on hold, to be replaced by implementing emergency measures to deliver the Cathedral's ministry. However, it is now the right time to revisit that work and what follows is the product of refreshed thinking recognising that we are still in a period of transition.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Cathedral is at the geographical centre of the diocese. The Cathedral, as the national church's free gift to the diocese, seeks to use its resources in the service of the networks of the city, diocese and region, delivering much of its ministry through the strength of its partnerships. The challenge for the Cathedral is how it serves a large and complex region and Diocese, covering Essex and East London.

The Cathedral's strategic plan is predicated on the Diocesan mission statement '*Transforming Presence*' namely:

- Inhabiting the world distinctively
- Evangelising effectively
- Serving with accountability
- Re-imagining ministry

Building on this, the mission and ministry of the Cathedral are rooted in John 20.21: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" and is expressed in the four themes of the Strategic Plan - the Cathedral as:

- a thriving, outward facing community
- the church of the Bishop
- a community shaped by worship and learning
- a public space for everyone

This strategic plan analyses and develops the mission and ministry of the Cathedral through a range of different lenses, identifying our mission fields, our foundations, our vision, and our strategic priorities. It lays out the way ahead for the Cathedral as we seek to respond to God's call in shaping that future.

2. THE CATHEDRAL'S MISSION

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'

John 20.19-21

This text has become fundamental for the Cathedral as we seek to continue to explore our mission. On the evening of the first Easter Day, Jesus, the wounded risen saviour, empowers the disciples and sends them out to be instruments of peace and reconciliation. This is a headline throughout this strategic plan.

The Four Themes

The Cathedral Chapter agreed four themes in our 2015 Strategy document and these themes remain the pillars upon which our refreshed strategy is based. They are:

- The Cathedral as a thriving, outward facing community
- The Cathedral as the church of the Bishop
- The Cathedral shaped by worship and learning
- The Cathedral as public / cultural space

i. The Cathedral as a thriving, outward facing community

This theme has become the banner headline for the whole of the Cathedral's vision – a sense of what we already are alongside what we aspire to be. The need for the Cathedral to be a place of welcome, accessible and available, reaching out to churches and communities across the diocese and beyond boundaries of tradition, combined with the need to reach out visibly in response to social need and developing a presence in the public square.

Home to thriving congregations is the aspect of the Cathedral's life which is probably most familiar to most people – the worship and community life around the Sunday morning gatherings, and around smaller weekday services including learning and prayer groups, work with children and young people, etc.

However, an important part of the development of the narrative has been the recognition that this is at the service of our whole identity as Cathedral, and indeed that our thriving congregational life itself is to be formed and shaped by our emerging sense of being a sent / apostolic community.

'Parish' is part of Chelmsford Cathedral's DNA. Alongside its other ministries and responsibilities, it has specific responsibility as the local Christian community for the geographical area in which it is set, including the people who live there, and the institutions and businesses located there. As a community of followers of Jesus, we have the responsibility and privilege of being a transforming presence in the networks of the city centre, the schools, the university, the City Council, the County Council, the Courts, the Police Station, the Fire Station, the Railway Station, the pubs and clubs and retail centres. We are a City Centre Church. And that means we are the church for those who live in our growing parish as new housing and businesses are being developed.

In practice, work will continue to develop:

- ✓ Children and Families ministry
- ✓ Pastoral care
- ✓ Support for parish ministry in the Diocese
- ✓ Schools Ministry
- ✓ Social responsibility
- ✓ Collaboration with St. Mellitus College and Anglia Ruskin University

ii. The Cathedral as the seat of the Bishop

The Cathedral as the seat of the Bishop is key to the Cathedral's identity. The Chapter is committed to developing this further, with the Cathedral as an active integral component in the life of the diocese.

There are at least two other clear aspects to this key role:

- the Cathedral as the spiritual heart of the diocese – therefore a place of prayer for the Bishop and the work of the diocese, the natural "home" for major diocesan services and events.
- the Cathedral at the service of the diocese, and in particular sharing in the ministry of a Bishop who puts teaching and evangelism at the heart of her work.

Our role as Cathedral *for* the Diocese certainly means the Cathedral as welcoming host and the appropriate place for a range of diocesan events and celebrations. For nearly 100 years the Cathedral has been entrusted with St Peter's Chapel, Bradwell – the only other church which is for the whole diocese rather than for a specific locality.

The Cathedral has a growing role as a place of Christian formation for ministry – i.e. the formal processes of discernment and training for candidates for ordained and authorized ministry in the church. The Cathedral has particularly strong relationships with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, the Continuing Ministerial Development team and St. Mellitus College. The work stemming from this means that the Cathedral as a place of ministerial formation is becoming a significant theme and one that is fundamentally oriented outwards towards enabling mission and ministry across the communities of the diocese.

The Cathedral's ministry of welcome, worship and hospitality extends to visitors from Kenya, Sweden and beyond, demonstrating how the Cathedral as church of the Bishop supports the Bishop's ministry and the life and identity of the Diocese.

iii. The Cathedral shaped by worship

The Pattern of Cathedral worship has been affected by the pandemic. There is now an established on-line community who gather on Facebook for daily Morning Prayer. In a similar way much of the Cathedral's teaching and learning moved on-line during the pandemic and much of it has remained so. As a result, this reaches a wider audience in the diocese and beyond.

With the return of in-person worship in the Cathedral on Sundays, the current pattern is:

- 07:45 Morning Prayer (on-line only)
- 08:00 Holy Communion (in-person only)
- 10:30 The Eucharist (in-person and on-line) with simultaneous worship for young families, and all joining together once a month
- 15:30 Choral Evensong (in-person and on-line)

There is a Eucharist at 08:15 every weekday and Saturday; and 10:30 on Thursday. Morning Prayer takes place every day at 07:45 and Evensong/Evening Prayer every day at 17:15

The pattern of Cathedral worship will continue to evolve. Key to this is the recognition that Cathedral worship does have a distinctive culture whilst at the same time it seeks to be accessible to and sustaining for a very diverse spectrum of worshippers.

In practice, work will continue to develop:

- ✓ Patterns of Worship
- ✓ On-Line worship
- ✓ Our Choral tradition
- ✓ House and Prayer groups
- ✓ Civic and Diocesan services and celebrations

iv. The Cathedral as a public and cultural space

The Cathedral is important as a public space. It is open every day for services, private meditation, a place of quiet to enjoy the ambience, or the many cultural events regularly taking place. We will continue to develop our programme of cultural events including hosting Gaia for three weeks in October. This will be the launchpad for considering how we can maintain hosting events which have a real resonance with our local communities.

In practice, work will continue to:

- ✓ Develop an increased number of cultural activities including a 'significant' event every two years
- ✓ Make progress towards implementing the Cathedral Precinct Plan
- ✓ Support the work to achieve a good outcome to develop the Shire Hall

3. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – SUPPORTING OUR MISSION

- **Implementing the Cathedrals Measure**

Anglican Cathedrals are governed by legislation and on 29 April 2021, the Cathedrals Measure 2021 received Royal Assent and became law. The Measure contains some fundamental changes for Anglican Cathedrals, most notably that over the next few years they will each need to register as a charity and be co-regulated by the Charity Commission and the Church Commissioners. It is expected that we will be in a tranche to change our status in 2023. We have started preparing for this important change, and as a first step have instigated a Nominations Committee to oversee the appointment arrangements for new Chapter members.

- **Internal Reporting and Organisational Structure**

The way we operate as a team is under constant review. New and impending changes will allow a recalibration of our staffing structure and reporting mechanisms. A senior lay appointment is pending and we are working with the diocese to regulate our policies and procedures and link in for essential support including Information Technology and Human Resource Management.

- **Financial Security**

Sound financial management over a number of years has meant that whilst we have experienced a significant financial shortfall over the last two years we have not been forced to make staff redundant as our income from congregational giving was maintained. The loss of income was mainly caused by being unable to let the Chapter House for external bookings. Through the support of the Cathedrals Sustainability Fund we have recruited a Business Development Officer to reinvigorate income from this and other sources. Other key initiatives for this year will include a stewardship campaign in the autumn and the identification of projects to which we will promote a targeted financial support approach. We will continue to identify other sources of financial support as they arise.

However, a harsh economic environment will challenge our ability to ensure appropriate levels of income are available to support our mission.

Chapter will receive quarterly financial report and forecasts to monitor progress and advise accordingly.

- **Using staff and volunteers effectively**

The Cathedral has traditionally encouraged volunteers to take on a number of roles in the Cathedral. This has led to a proliferation of roles, quite a few of which have no direct bearing on the Cathedral's core mission and purpose. Expectations around governance and safeguarding means that the roles of volunteers, and the duties which should be assigned to members of staff need to be revisited. Proposals will be brought to Chapter to redefine roles and responsibilities in this important area of work.

- **Convergence with the Diocesan Team**

Our relationship with our diocesan colleagues has never been better. Conversations over the last year have born much fruit with collaborative initiatives across a number of areas of common interest including safeguarding and property maintenance. It is in the interest of both organisations to develop this work further and this will form a major part of our organisational development going forward.

- **Communication – Internal and External**

Good Communication lies at the heart of every organisation. A Communications Strategy will be developed over the coming months and be presented to Chapter by the end of the year.

- **Safeguarding**

The preparation for the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) Safeguarding Audit in 2001 and the report arising therefrom, has provided the basis for the strengthening our safeguarding arrangements through:

- Appointing a full-time Safeguarding Officer
- Appointing a Chapter member with specific responsibility for monitoring our safeguarding arrangements
- Developing a SCIE Report Action Plan with target dates for individual items
- Instigating a Safeguarding Working Group which monitors progress against the action plan
- Regular reporting to Chapter

The SCIE action plan will be updated annually and presented to Chapter for ratification.

- **Infrastructure**

The Cathedral

The Cathedral fabric has been maintained to an extremely high standard, under the supervision of the Cathedral Works Committee supported by our Surveyor to the Fabric. However, work has been limited over the past two years and planned projects put on hold. Our challenging financial position means that work on the fabric will be limited over the next two years. Emergency repairs and general maintenance will continue and the recent quinquennial report will be actioned where recommendations have been made.

The Cathedral's Properties.

Our Cathedral properties now come under the care of the diocesan properties maintenance system. This major new development means that we have better access to necessary maintenance and relieves the Cathedral of sourcing in-house provision. As with the Cathedral, maintenance has necessarily been limited and the upkeep of our stock will need investment as a key source of existing and future income will be our capability to let our vacant properties at a market rent.

Office Accommodation

Our office accommodation is satisfactory but not ideal as it does not afford disabled access. It forms part of the Guy Harlings Trust, in which we have an interest. We will continue to work with the diocese to untangle the complicated legalities surrounding the Trust which may offer new opportunities for developments which could include shared office accommodation.

4. KEY PIECES OF WORK

- ✓ Progressing the implementation of Cathedrals Measure
- ✓ Developing a Communications Strategy
- ✓ Finance Recovery Plan/ Business Development Plan
- ✓ Developing a Social responsibility Plan
- ✓ Cathedral/Diocesan Partnership Plan.

5. CONCLUSION

To end where we started – with Jesus’ words to his first followers on the first Easter Day:

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’

John 20.19-21

This document is – and must remain – both a work in progress and something to which we are held accountable. New projects will certainly develop and priorities will change. Unforeseen events and new opportunities will demand a fresh response.

*Father, pour out your Spirit upon your people, and grant us:
a new vision of your glory,
a new experience of your power, a new faithfulness to your Word,
and a new consecration to your service;
that your love may grow among us,
and your kingdom come: through Christ our Lord. Amen*