

Draft AGM Minutes

Thursday 15th January 2026 at 10:30–11:10am
at Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, in the Henry Roe Room

Current Council (those present in bold): The Very Revd Dr **Anthony Cane** (Chair); **Clark Brydon** (Saint Patrick's, Dublin, and Treasurer); **Jackie Holderness** (Secretary); **Sarah Page** (Co-Secretary); **Laura Arends** (Westminster Abbey); **Revd Canon Jane Brooke**; **Lisa Power** (York Minster); Revd Canon Kevin Walton (St Albans Cathedral); **Gillian Bunn** (Wakefield Cathedral); **Yvonne Pearson** (Liverpool Cathedral); **Jen Stratford** (Chester Cathedral); Dr **Jane Southward** (Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham); Charlie Rowbotham (St Paul's Cathedral); **Owen Towndrow** (Hereford Cathedral); Zoe Willis (Canterbury Cathedral).

Plus **other representatives from member institutions** were present.

1. Welcome.

The Very Revd Dr Anthony Cane, our Chair, welcomed everyone.

2. Opening prayer.

Led by Anthony Cane.

3. Introductions.

4. Notices.

Notices for conference delegates only – reminder to return lanyards & feedback forms before leaving the conference site. Also, a guidebook for Saint Patrick's Cathedral is offered free to any delegate who would like to take one from the luggage retrieval table before departure.

5. Minutes of the last AGM.

Approved. No matters arising.

6. Apologies for absence.

From Council members: Zoe Willis, Charlie Rowbotham, and Kevin Walton.

7. Chair's report.

This was circulated in all the delegate packs and to Council members ahead of the AGM and is appended to these minutes. The Chair added his grateful thanks to all the organisers and to the staff and volunteers at our host cathedrals — Christ Church and Saint Patrick's Cathedrals — for a wonderful conference in Dublin.

8. Revised constitution.

The current Trustees and Council members have worked on a new constitution for Cathedrals Plus, which was proposed by Clark Brydon and seconded by Sarah Page. The AGM resolved that Cathedrals Plus should adopt the new constitution with one abstention and no objections.

The same majority approved the byelaws and policy documents that accompany the constitution. The latter were drawn up by Clark Brydon, approved by the current four trustees of Cathedrals Plus, and ratified by the current sitting Council at the Council Meeting held on 14th January 2026. The new constitution was drafted from a template provided by the Charity Commission, and included revised changes to the charity's objects. The revised constitution and the accompanying documents (Byelaws & Policies) were thus proposed to all members to be ratified and adopted at this AGM.

9. Council membership.

The new constitution includes a streamlined Council with a maximum of 12 members who are all to be trustees of Cathedrals Plus, including the three Officers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer).

Nine applications to join the new Council of Trustees had been received, which included three from the current Officers seeking re-election to the roles held. The Very Revd Dr Anthony Cane, Sarah Page,

and Clark Brydon were unanimously re-elected to the Officer roles of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

With nine further trustees required, the remaining six applicants were elected. Five of these were received from current Council members, which will ensure continuity for the Council of Trustees going forward.

The trustees of Cathedrals Plus (hereafter referred to as Council Members), are:

- The Very Revd Dr Anthony Cane (Chair & Dean of Portsmouth)
- Sarah Page (Secretary)
- Clark Brydon (Treasurer)
- Laura Arends (Westminster Abbey)
- Yvonne Pearson (Liverpool Cathedral)
- Geoff Pring (Buckfast Abbey)
- Owen Towndrow (Hereford Cathedral)
- Jen Stratford (Chester Cathedral)
- Zoe Willis (Canterbury Cathedral) *elected in absentia*

A brief discussion then followed regarding the remaining three trustee positions. A skills audit will be conducted by the new Council, and approaches may be made to co-opt trustees for this year once the required experience or representation is identified.

The Chair then thanked outgoing Council members for their service and commitment to Cathedrals Plus. He also briefly expressed his thanks to Jackie Holderness, who is retiring as Secretary, but would say more under AOB.

10. Membership update.

We have 41 members, and we are delighted to welcome five new Irish cathedrals in this number, who were offered a year's subscription as part of their conference delegate fee. We will continue to encourage new memberships and extend a reduced rate offer to new and returning members. We hope to widen our membership to the Major Churches Network and also reach other ecumenical sacred spaces.

11. Finance update.

The Treasurer circulated a summary of the current financial situation and a draft budget for the year. He emphasised the importance of sponsorship to enable the conferences to go ahead at an affordable rate. It is proposed to realign the membership year to the calendar year ie. to run from January to December instead of (currently April to March). The proposal is for the year 2026 to be billed pro rata in April for membership until December 2026, thereafter a proposed increase in annual subscription to take effect from January 2027 for the full calendar year as follows: £185 p.a. for each sacred space; £45 p.a. for an individual member; £135 p.a. for a new member.

All members present approved the following as detailed in the Treasurer's report, by a show of hands:

- a. to receive the Treasurer's Report and Audited Accounts
- b. to approve the change to a calendar-year membership cycle
- c. to approve the proposed subscription increases from January 2027
- d. to approve the draft budget for the coming financial year
- e. to approve expenditure as per the budget, subject to the trustees' monitoring, review and reporting

The Chair expressed grateful thanks to Clark for his excellent work.

12. Website and social media.

Website: Sarah shared the good news that our website has seen a 15% increase in the number of views and a 27% increase in the number of different visitors to the site.

WhatsApp: Our WhatsApp group has proved very lively and interactive over the last year, and Sarah encouraged everyone to share any resources discussed on that platform with her so they can also be put onto the Resources Hub for all members to access. There is a Visitor Management WhatsApp group as well. Whilst this group was not initiated by Cathedrals Plus, Sarah is nonetheless a member, and hopes to pick up any resource ideas or topics to discuss and share these with members who are not included there.

Facebook: Our Facebook page has also seen increased traffic, with 69% of views being non-followers. Sarah asked members to request that Comms colleagues either tag Cathedrals Plus in any upcoming events or news to maximise publicity or to send any requests to disseminate information about Schools, Family or Visitor Events to Sarah to share more widely. Yvonne Pearson, Liverpool Cathedral jointly share the admin role for the account with Sarah.

Resources Hub: This is still a burgeoning benefit for members – all are encouraged to provide resources to share as its usefulness can only be appreciated the more resources are uploaded. Details to access the Resources Hub on Dropbox are provided on cards being distributed today (and will be emailed post conference to all members). Jane Southward, OLW shrine jointly shares the admin role for the account with Sarah.

13. **Regional hubs.**

Laura Arends is the Regional Hub coordinator. She hoped that colleagues found it useful to meet up on Day 1 of the conference and that having the prompt questions for discussion had been helpful. These questions focused on our conference theme and it was hoped that people's responses might contribute to the Inspiring Lives project later in the year. Regional Hub coordinators were reminded to send any notes from the conference meet up to Laura please. Most regional groups had met at least once during the year. It is very exciting to now have a new Regional Hub in Ireland, with Louis Parminter as the group coordinator (*Post meeting note: this will now be Kryzel Bonifacio at St Patrick's Cathedral*). Laura and Sarah confirmed that Regional Hub coordinators may invite known sacred spaces to a regional meet as a 'taster session' if they are not members of Cathedrals Plus – sharing their contact details with Laura and Sarah to follow up with a request for feedback and an invitation to join.

14. **Next residential conference.**

It is confirmed that our next annual conference will be hosted by Liverpool Cathedral and Cathedrals Plus would like to thank the Chapter at Liverpool for their interest and support. The dates for this will be 12–14th January 2027. Yvonne Pearson is already researching hotels and other spaces for us to visit as well as possible speakers and activities. Members are invited to suggest ideas for the next conference theme. It is hoped that the conference in January 2028 may be hosted by Sheffield Cathedral (tbc) by Charlotte (Roberts).

15. **Future directions.**

Westhill Endowment project. Sarah had given a presentation about the Inspiring Lives project on January 14th. Delegates were invited to participate in the project by sharing any resources that they have that tell the stories of the saints to whom their sacred space is dedicated. This could also be a well-known historical figure instead of a saint, but essentially an Inspiring Life that is remembered or an event(s) is organised to share their story. In addition, colleagues are invited to interview each other, a colleague or volunteer, asking 3 questions about an inspiring life that is personal to them. The Inspiring Lives project intends to create a resource bank of digital materials/ video clips/ interviews/ etc) for members to use and adapt to their setting. Further details will be shared with all members by email post conference. The Council wish to record their thanks to Westhill for funding this project.

16. **AOB.**

The Chair invited all those present to join him in a round of applause to thank Jackie Holderness, our retiring Secretary, for her dedication and commitment, and for the enthusiasm and time that she has dedicated to Cathedrals Plus in her role as Secretary. All members and trustees expressed their thanks and good wishes for her retirement and are delighted that she would like to continue to be involved with our work.

After ten years on the Council and five years as Secretary, Jackie thanked her Cathedrals Plus colleagues for their inspiration, kindness and camaraderie. She said, "I have very much enjoyed working with Sarah, Clark and both Chairs, Jane and Anthony, and I am delighted that Sarah has agreed to take over the role of Secretary."

Date of next Conference: 12th – 14th January 2027 in Liverpool

Date of next AGM meeting: 14th January 2027

Dates for future Council meetings in 2026 (on Google Meet) tbc

Draft Minutes Approved for Circulation

Signature	Name	Date