

Issue 27
Winter 2021



THE BUTTRESS

SUPPORTING BRISTOL CATHEDRAL

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WELCOME TO THE BUTTRESS

Dear Fitz Members and friends. It has been a while but I am delighted to be in contact with you again via the Buttress.

I last wrote to you in June and October 2020 and those letters serve to remind us of the challenges we have lived through during Covid.

This new Winter 2021 edition of the Buttress gives a real sense of renewal in Bristol Cathedral and exciting times ahead.

Since I last reported we welcomed a new Dean Dr Mandy Ford to Bristol Cathedral and a new Canon Missioner Jonnie Parkin.

New Cathedral Staff have also joined including Ben Silvey the Chapter Clerk and Chief Operations Officer.

This means of course that we have sadly said farewell to former long serving staff and we thank them all for their commitment to Bristol Cathedral.

The 18 days of Luke Jerram's Museum of the Moon offered many the chance to visit Bristol Cathedral, some for the first time.

We welcomed 65,000 visitors. It was tremendous to see so many enjoying our Cathedral and there is an open invitation to return and spend more time with us.

We have all missed Fitz gatherings and I do hope that in 2022 we will offer a varied range of opportunities to join together.



Stephen Parsons
MBE DL Chairman



The Organ refurbishment is scheduled to begin in 2024. The Dean and I will hold a briefing on this in the new year.

I wish you and your families well this Advent and look forward to spending time and conversation with you over the next year.

Canon Stephen Parsons MBE DL

NEW FACES

The Cathedral has made some exciting staff appointments over the past months.

Ben Silvey, Chief Operations Officer & Chapter Clerk

Ben leads and enables the smooth running of the Cathedral in all spheres of life. Ben is a proud Bristolian, born and bred, and has spent his career working with charities in the city, most recently leading YMCA Bristol

Frances Bircher, Head of Visitor Experience

Frances joins us from Gloucester Cathedral where she has led the welcome team, respecting the past while looking for ways in which Bristol Cathedral can be more accessible to a greater diversity of visitors.

Nic Harris, Curate

Nic's curacy will combine ministry at the Cathedral with a continuing part time role as Chaplain to Bristol Housing Festival.

The Revd Jonnie Parkin, Canon Missioner

Jonnie will focus on helping the Cathedral grow, and grow younger. He will have particular responsibility for working with the schools in the Cathedral family, as well as with young people and organisations throughout the city. He will also be taking the lead on environmental issues as the Cathedral works towards climate justice and Carbon Zero status.

Charles Wyld, Chair of Cathedral Council

The Cathedral Council supports the work of the Cathedral, spiritual, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical; reviewing and advising upon the direction and oversight of that work by the Chapter. Charles will have a particular responsibility for overseeing the transition of the Cathedral's governance under a new legal framework in the next two years.



Ben Silvey
COO & Chapter Clerk



Frances Bircher
Head of Visitor Experience



Nic Harris
Curate



The Revd Jonnie Parkin
Canon Missioner



Charles Wyld
Chair of Bristol Cathedral

CATHEDRAL STRATEGY

It is now over a year since I was installed as Dean of Bristol, but it is really only in the past few weeks that I have seen the Cathedral get into its stride and worshipping rhythm. While the staff and clergy did a wonderful job during the pandemic to ensure the continuity of worship and access to worship via live streaming and broadcasting, there is nothing quite like standing at the high altar and looking down at full choir stalls and a full nave at the end of a service of Choral Evensong.

It is a privilege to lead this community in its life and worship, and I'm immensely grateful for the gifts of my colleagues and the dedication of the many volunteers who support us in small ways and large, from polishing brass to overseeing our finances. We will emerge from the pandemic able to invest in the future and with a renewed sense of purpose.

During the past year, in tandem with the Diocese of Bristol, we have taken the opportunity to review and renew the Cathedral's vision and values. I am grateful to the many people who participated in workshops, questionnaires and conversations as we discerned our priorities in response to the needs of city and diocese going forward.

Our vision will be launched informally in early November, with the strapline: **Bristol Cathedral; Here with you, yesterday,**



The Very Reverend Dr Mandy Ford
Dean of Bristol

today and tomorrow. Our hopes are rooted in the inheritance we enjoy: a unique building; a superb musical tradition; worship, education and service over hundreds of years. In responding to the present we seek to be more open, generous, creative and brave as we welcome people to the Cathedral, seeking to serve others, support our bishop and diocese, effect transformation in ourselves and the wider community, and continue to offer worship that inspires, encourages and consoles. We look forward in the hope and expectation that we can will bequeath to the next generation a cathedral fit for the future. This will include a refurbished organ and, we hope, new sound and lighting systems that will contribute to our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint.

The Museum of the Moon provided a snapshot one possible future. Supported by seventy volunteers, many of whom are members of the congregation, we welcomed a huge cross section of society into the Cathedral. Toddlers raced around, poets dreamed, scientists explained, grandparents reminisced, musicians crooned, and one couple even got engaged! Many of our visitors had never experienced the Cathedral before and spent time exploring the chapels, the garden and the café.



We have work to do in shaping our vision into a strategy with full costed proposals and a time frame, but I am confident that Bristol Cathedral can make an impact on our city and diocese in the years to come, working with others to promote flourishing lives and a healthy planet.

The Very Reverend Dr Mandy Ford
Dean of Bristol



LUKE JERRAM

MUSEUM OF THE MOON

In August 2021 Bristol Cathedral hosted Bristol artist Luke Jerram's celebrated Museum of the Moon artwork: a 1:500,000 scale model of the moon using NASA photography printed onto a balloon from Cameron Balloons in Bristol.

In the 18 days it was presented in Bristol Cathedral, over 65,000 visitors came through the doors. This is more than any other exhibition at the Cathedral in living memory, and almost certainly ever.

Thanks to the generosity of Luke Jerram, and of the many thousands who donated so freely during their visit, we have been able to raise £13,000 for St Mungo's, the homelessness charity.



Luke Jerram, the artist, said:

"It's been wonderful to present the Museum of the Moon in my home town. Visiting several times and attending many of the events, it's been great to meet so many people who've come from right around the UK to visit the artwork. Thanks again to the staff and volunteers of the Cathedral for all their hard work, making the exhibition such a success. I met people of all ages and from all walks of life, who'd come to from London, Wales and the North of England specifically to see the Moon."

Lamorna Hooker, St Mungo's, said:

"We are delighted that Luke Jerram chose to support St Mungo's with the Museum of the Moon in Bristol this summer. It has been an amazing opportunity to introduce St Mungo's to so many new people and we are honoured to have been associated with such an incredible exhibition. Your generous donations will help us to support even more people who are experiencing homelessness in Bristol; to support people in their recovery journey and prevent homelessness in the future."

ADVENT & AT BRISTOL

Preparing for Advent

Saturday 27 November
8.50 to 3.00pm

An Advent Quiet Day with poetic responses to Mary the Mother of God

The Advent Procession

Sunday 28 November
6.00pm

Join us for the start of Advent as we journey from darkness to light

The Pause

Wednesday 15 December
7.00pm

Contemporary reflective worship and prayer with a worship band

Carols by Candlelight

Friday 17 December
Saturday 18 December
7.00pm

A Candlelit concert of festive music and seasonal readings. Tickets £7-£25

Muddy Christingle Trail

Saturday 18 December
10.00am to 4.00pm

Games, quizzes and everything you need to know about Christingles

Family Carol Services

Sunday 19 December
3.30pm

With blessing of the crib, nativity, and Charlie the Donkey!



Christmas Shop

A Special Christmas shop in collaboration with Southville's Independent Design Collective and Bristol Pop Up Shop. You'll find Cathedral Christmas cards and decorations alongside locally made gifts for everyone. Open from 18 November until Christmas Eve.

CHRISTMAS

CATHEDRAL

La Nativité

Monday 20 December
7.00pm

Free candlelit organ concert with music by Olivier Messiaen

Shoppers' Carols

Tuesday 21 December
5.15pm

Pause from the busyness of shopping for a brief service of readings and carols

Toddlers' Carols

Wednesday 22 December
10.00am & 2.00pm

Two brief informal services for babies and very young children

The Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

Thursday 23 December, 6.00pm
Friday 24 December, 3.30pm

Traditional readings and carols

Midnight Mass

Friday 24 December
11.00pm

The Eucharist of Christmas Night

Festival Eucharist of The Nativity of Our Lord

Christmas Day
10.00am

Celebrate Christmas 2021 in Bristol Cathedral

Children's Christmas Trail

Journey through the Christmas story with our special trail for children throughout December. The Trail will be on display whenever the Cathedral is open. Please check Cathedral website for latest times.

Concert Tickets

www.bristolcathedral.eventbrite.com

See back page for further information

FABRIC PROJECTS: THE SEAFARERS' CHAPEL

The Seafarers Chapel in the North Quire Aisle of the Cathedral, has a long association with the maritime community in Bristol. The chapel was dedicated to Seafarers in the 1990's and an altar frontal showing the logo of the Mission to Seafarers commissioned at the same time.

We want to make the Cathedral as warm, welcoming and accessible to as many people as possible as we can. The Seafarers has the potential to be our most physically accessible chapel, with only one small step just behind the organ case. The floor of the chapel itself is level, and made up of pennant slabs, large ledger stones and diamond shaped memorials. The pennant slabs are heavily worn, leaving a very uneven surface.

Having undertaken some research including the digging of trial pits with the Cathedral archaeologist, Kevin Blockley, we have established that the whole floor was re-laid sometime in the 19th century, with many of the memorial stones having been relocated to the chapel from what is now the crossing, before the Nave was constructed in the 1860s.

In order to create a fully accessible chapel, we are working towards taking up and relaying the floor of the chapel – replacing the heavily

worn pennant slabs. We will also be able to form a permanent ramp, which would remove the single step (and associated temporary timber ramp). The space is currently unheated, making it somewhat inhospitable in the winter months, and so while the floor is being taken up, we would like to install underfloor heating. Working with our team of professional advisers we have agreed that this is not only most efficient way of achieving a comfortable temperature for our visitors, but also the best way of creating a consistent temperature and humidity in the space and so protecting the fabric of the building including the nearby organ.

We are currently in the process of fully specifying and costing the work, and identifying potential sources of funding. We would hope to be making an application for permission to undertake the work to the Cathedrals Fabric Commission of England early in the New Year.





FABRIC PROJECTS: RENOVATING THE ORGAN

After delays due to the global pandemic, and the original organ restoration company ceasing trading, we are excited to now be on the cusp of signing a contract with Harrison and Harrison Ltd of Durham to restore our precious instrument. We have recently heard that the Cathedral's Fabric Commission for England have discharged the two conditions necessary for us to start. There is still some way to go until we can celebrate the completion of this project, but we are delighted to have reached this important milestone. We have also placed the order for the temporary organ that will enable us to keep the Cathedral music going while the organ is being worked on. This will be with us early in the new year.



We are now turning our attention to the second part of this project – the rather outdated Cathedral sound system. If you have been to an event or service recently in the Cathedral, you probably will have found yourself leaning in a little closer, perhaps without even realising it, to hear what is being said. To ensure that those that come to worship in the Cathedral can fully take part in services, and visitors to

our events programme feel able to engage we desperately need to upgrade the system. As you can imagine this isn't a straight forward project in a Cathedral – as we need to make sure that any system not only performs as far as the quality of the audio is concerned in the face of some pretty challenging acoustics but also it is installed discretely, without damaging the fabric of the building.

CATHEDRAL GIN

Bristol Cathedral is excited to collaborate with Bristol spirits producer Espensen Spirit to launch this limited edition gin.

Chapterhouse Gin was inspired by herbs and spices grown and used by monks like those who lived, worked, and worshipped in the Augustinian abbey which later became the Cathedral.

The name Chapterhouse comes from the Cathedral's Chapter House, the room in which a chapter of the rule of the community was read each morning. The reading of the chapter became synonymous with both the space and the people, and the governing body of cathedrals today is still known as the Chapter. You can find Chapter Houses in nearly every cathedral in the country.

This exceptional gin is made in a copper pot still, then compounded with botanicals including chamomile, coriander seed, angelica, lemon peel and frankincense. A beautiful pale yellow in colour, the gin is 45% ABV, and available in 70cl and 5cl bottles via the Cathedral website.

The production of this gin has been co-funded with the Friends of Bristol Cathedral.

Sam Espensen, co-founder, Espensen Spirit, said:

On the gin

Inspired by the Augustine monks and their gardens, I used traditional herbs and spices for the botanicals including chamomile flowers, angelica root, coriander seed and lemon peel. I also wanted to take some inspiration from

life inside the Cathedral, so the gin also contains a tiny bit of Frankincense - tricky to use - but a beautiful botanical when balanced right, giving a wonderful piney taste. We use traditional bathtub methods at Espensen Spirit, so the gin is first distilled, then the botanicals are infused into the gin in tubs - resulting in its beautiful pale yellow colour that comes from the chamomile flowers.

On Cathedrals

This has been a dream project for me, as Cathedrals have always been part of my life. I lived in Wells, went to university in Canterbury, graduated from that Cathedral and now I live in Bristol. I have always been fascinated by and felt at peace in them.

On working with the team at the Cathedral

The team has been an absolute dream to collaborate with and they're inclusive and great fun to be around.

On the labels

This is a new bottle and a new design for us, created in partnership with the Cathedral team. We wanted it to be strong, and bold, and really stand out on a shelf. There is also a little surprise when you drink the gin, because the inside of the bottle is illustrated with the Chapter House wall, which dates from the 12th century and is one of the oldest parts of the Cathedral.





Buy your limited edition bottle
of Chapterhouse Gin at
www.bristol-cathedral.co.uk



VISIT US

All are welcome. Admission is free. Donations are gratefully received and support the life and work of the Cathedral.

Finding us

Bristol Cathedral, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TJ
T: 0117 926 4879



/bristolcathedral



@BristolCathedra



bristolcathedral

bristol-cathedral.co.uk

**The Cathedral is open
to visitors**

Monday-Friday 8am – 5pm

Saturday-Sunday 8am – 3pm

Occasionally there are special services and events which mean opening times change. Please check the website for more detailed information about what is happening.

Bristol Cathedral Trust and the Fitzhardinge Society

Life at Bristol Cathedral would not be possible without the help and support of a large number of people. Bristol Cathedral Trust is the Cathedral's charity which maintains the Cathedral Fabric and strengthens the vital work and historic role of the Cathedral in the city and Diocese of Bristol. We engage with the widest range of funders, including charitable trusts, corporate sponsors and individual donors.

The Fitzhardinge Society was formed in 2006 to preserve the Fabric of Bristol Cathedral and is named in honour of Robert Fitzharding, founder of the Augustinian Abbey which was to later become Bristol Cathedral. Annual subscriptions are paid to Bristol Cathedral Trust and provide an endowment fund and distribute grants to support the exciting and varied work of the life of the Cathedral and the development and preservation of our beautiful building.

In recent years, the Trust has supported a wide range of activity in the Cathedral, including:

- renovating the Rose Window
- funding staff posts in development, education and archives
- bringing theatre, exhibitions and artwork to the Cathedral
- refurbishing and improving the Cathedral toilets
- refurbishing the Cathedral bells
- assisting with the renovation of the North Cloister roof
- supporting the Choral tradition and the music of the Cathedral
- building a strong endowment for the Cathedral's future.

Thank you for your ongoing support