

SOUTHWARK

◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

New Constitution & Statutes for Southwark Cathedral Information

On 10 April we begin a process of consultation with the Cathedral community and parish which will conclude on 8 May. The purpose of the consultation is to allow members of our community to comment on the proposed new Constitution and Statutes (C&S) which are the governing documents of our Cathedral.

Why is this happening?

In 2017 the Church of England established a working party to look again at the governance of cathedrals following some high profile failures in a number of cathedrals. Their recommendations became the basis of a new Cathedrals Measure, the final draft of which was approved by the General Synod and came into law in 2021. This requires all cathedrals to prepare a new set of C&S and to apply to the UK Charity Commission for registration as a charity.

The Church Commissioners have provided us with a template C&S which we have been required to follow as much as possible but which we have adapted to take account of the fact that we are a parish church cathedral.

How does this apply to Southwark Cathedral?

The current C&S, first approved in 2000 and subsequently amended in 2008 and 2013, will cease to have legal status at the end of this process and the new version will apply, in conjunction with the rules that govern us in our capacity as a parish church.

What will change?

At present, three bodies are responsible for governance of the Cathedral – the Cathedral Chapter, Cathedral Council and College of Canons. The new Measure replaces this tripartite arrangement and concentrates on Chapter as the primary governing and oversight body of the Cathedral. This means that the Cathedral Council will cease to exist and the College of Canons will have a less formal role.

In addition, the Measure requires cathedrals to register as a charity with the UK Charity Commission. Members of Chapter will therefore become charity trustees and will be subject to oversight by the UK Charity Commission, rather than just the Church Commissioners.

The Measure is specific about the size, composition and membership of Chapter: the Dean, the Sub Dean and Canon Precentor will be Executive Trustees; the other three Residentiary Canons and six lay members will be Non-Executive Trustees. The Bishop is required to appoint the Senior Non-Executive Member (SNEM) who will effectively be the Vice-Chair of the Chapter. The chair of the Finance Committee is now required by law to have recent and relevant financial experience and is also required to be a trustee so that finance is given a new emphasis on Chapter. First consideration will also be given to appointing our two Cathedral Wardens to be trustees, as it has always been our practice for them to be Chapter members. The two remaining places will be filled by individuals whom it is felt will bring specific skills to the Chapter. There are also rules about the balance of lay and clergy and executive and non-executive members on Chapter, and the senior executive role in the Cathedral (Comptroller/COO) is no longer able to sit on Chapter.

The Cathedral's Nominations Committee is working to a new Terms of Reference, (again drafted by the Church Commissioners) whose responsibility it will be to nominate to the Bishop and the Dean individuals to be considered for appointment to the Chapter and its committees. The main committees are Finance Committee and the newly formed Audit and Risk Committee. We are seeking new members of all these groups.

Members of the congregation, apart from the two Wardens, will no longer be elected to the Chapter but instead the Nominations Committee will work carefully to encourage and support those from our congregation who wish to be considered for appointment as trustees and committee members, based on their particular skills and experience. The Nominations Committee will also, as a priority, carefully consider how it can achieve a fully diverse and inclusive governance structure and one which fully reflects our community to specifically include those from under-represented backgrounds.

In order to fulfil their task, the Nominations Committee is keen to get to know the specific skills, experience and professional backgrounds of members of the congregation and strongly encourage all those who feel they can contribute to get in touch.

What will happen now?

The consultation will be conducted in a number of ways

- The new C&S can be downloaded from the Cathedral website, or via the QR code displayed in the Cathedral. Hard copies are also available from the Cathedral Reception desk in Montague Chambers.
- A webinar, hosted by the Dean with the Chief Operating Officer, Justine Horseman Sewell, Cathedral Warden, Daniel Chumbley, and Diocesan Registrar, Jon Baldwin, will be held on Wednesday 20 April at 7pm. A link will be published nearer the time.
- An in-person presentation will be held in the Cathedral on Sunday 24 April at 12.30pm.

Members of the Cathedral community and parish are invited to send their comments either by email to cathedralgovernance@southwark.anglican.org or by post to

Marie Tims
Southwark Cathedral
London Bridge
London SE1 9DA

Responses should be received by 5pm on 8 May.

All comments and representations will be considered and responded to, as is required under the Cathedrals Measure.

What happens then?

Following the Consultation the Chapter will inform the Church Commissioners and UK Charity Commission of any changes it wishes make to the C&S and then seek final approval from those bodies so that the new C&S can be brought into effect.

We anticipate that the Cathedral will be registered as a charity with the Charity Commission, the new C&S in place and new Chapter and committees formed by September this year.

Thank you for your participation in this important consultation about our future.

Andrew Nunn
Dean