



# **ST ALBANS CATHEDRAL**



## **Our purpose**

Our purpose is at the heart of everything we do...

“St Albans Cathedral exists to glorify God and,  
inspired by the witness of Alban,  
proclaim Christ’s message of love.”

## **Our mission**

The Cathedral’s mission expresses how we fulfil our purpose each and every day, shaping our values

- A community that reflects Jesus’ teaching
- Sharing the faith and growing in faith
- Deepening our unity with fellow Christians
- Standing with St Alban for truth and justice
- Offering a warm welcome to all
- Serving the Bishop and Diocese of St Albans as their Cathedral Church
- Enhancing, conserving and developing this holy place

## **St Albans Cathedral**

St Albans Cathedral stands over the place where Alban, Britain’s first Christian saint, was buried after giving his life for his faith over 1700 years ago. It is the oldest site of continuous Christian worship in Britain and home to two medieval shrines, several world-class medieval wall paintings and an amazing mix of architectural styles that bear witness to many centuries of its life, first as a monastic Abbey and now as a Cathedral.

The core of the existing building dates over 900 years and is a major site of Christian pilgrimage to this day. The Cathedral is committed to remaining a place of free entry and attracted 400,000 visitors in 2019 from the United Kingdom and abroad. The Cathedral is open daily from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

St Albans Cathedral is home to a vibrant and active Christian community, made up of people of all ages and from many different backgrounds, including our worshipping congregations, youth groups, volunteers, staff and many other individuals. The Cathedral is a parish church cathedral, meaning that as well as being a cathedral for the Diocese of St Albans, it also serves a geographical parish and local community. We have around 1000 worshippers attending services every week and a community of over 600 volunteers. It is a place for large civic, county and diocesan events but also hosts weddings, funerals, confirmations and baptisms for those who live in the parish and members of the congregation living further afield.

Here at St Albans Cathedral we have a rich and unique heritage, reaching over an unrivalled stretch of national history, very much alive and growing, and rooted in the faith of Alban, Britain’s first Christian saint. Our revealing of this story and all that Alban stands for is at the heart of our mission and values. In doing so we seek to communicate something of Alban and his faith, and to become a beacon of discovery and welcome, prayer and reflection, open to all.



## **The story of Alban, Britain's First Saint, and why it is important to us and what we do**

The story of Alban is a remarkable one. It not only takes us back to the beginning of the Christian faith in Britain and to a time when religious freedom was forbidden, but it is also an astonishing account of standing up for what you believe in. This is the story we want people to know and be inspired by when they visit.

Alban's welcome to a persecuted stranger is a powerful example of courage, compassion and hospitality. He is an inspiration to people of many faiths and none, and his story is commemorated annually by the city and Cathedral as part of the Alban Pilgrimage, which takes place annually close to St Albans Day on 22 June.

Alban is somebody everyone can identify with. His values of faith, hospitality, truth and justice are as important now as they ever were. As we often say he is 'an ordinary person who did an extraordinary thing'. Not a bishop or priest, nor a monarch, or a scholar, maybe not even baptised. Alban is a saint for all people.

## **The Alban, Britain's First Saint project**

2019 saw the Cathedral complete the main capital works of its Alban, Britain's First Saint project, opening a magnificent new welcome centre, new learning facilities and new interpretation throughout the Cathedral building. In early 2021 work on the restoration of the ruined medieval shrine of St Amphibalus was also completed. The project as a whole continues to run through to the end of 2021, with the continuation of funded visitor engagement activities and other learning opportunities. The project's legacy is a permanent one; the Dean is at the forefront of keeping this legacy both alive, refreshed and innovative.

The +£8m project reveals the story of a Cathedral with a rich and unique heritage, reaching over an unrivalled stretch of national history, very much alive and growing, and rooted in the faith of Alban, Britain's first Christian saint. Our new interpretation enables people to discover three main messages: A Welcome for All, Faith and Worship, and The Power of Pilgrimage. Films, audio visuals, interactive displays, innovative projection methods and a new exhibition area all tell the story of our living, working building and the rich history of this place. We can now offer a whole new range of learning and engagement, welcoming greater numbers and of greater diversity and inclusivity.

The project has enabled a refreshed programme of events and activities for all ages. 2020 was clearly curtailed through COVID-19, but our 2019 programme included a whole host of new and exciting activities. These included the Big Sing, which gave people an amazing opportunity to sing jazz, pop and soul in the magnificent setting of the Cathedral; the launch of the new St Alban Pilgrim Way from St Paul's Cathedral; a ten-day city-wide Roman Festival; an inter-generational cross-community project with the Young People's Puppet Theatre; the illumination of our nationally significant wall paintings through digital technology, now illustrated on our daily tours; and a spectacular space themed son-et-lumière over five evenings, illuminating both the inside and outside of the Cathedral and attracting over 20,000 people.

We plan to restart some activities through the second half of 2021, depending on COVID-19, and very much hope that it won't be long before the Cathedral once again will see the same level of activity that we were able to provide through 2019.



## **Our essence**

In the Cathedral's recent work on rebranding, the following statements were made which we believe encapsulate the essence of this place and how we communicate its identity.

- The place has open arms – it's famously inclusive
- It is alive – it embraces you
- It is warm and welcoming
- There is a genuine sense of community
- It is very much about the people – a living breathing space
- Alban stands through – he is a real, and iconic figure

## **Worship, outreach and ecumenical links**

In its liturgical tradition as well as its theological stance, St Albans Cathedral is very much in the inclusive, catholic tradition of the Church of England, but also welcoming of other traditions and denominations. From the intimate stillness of an early morning Eucharist at the Shrine of St Alban, to the vibrancy of the Parish Eucharist or the solemnity and beauty of the Choral Eucharist or Evensong, we seek to respond to the God who in Jesus Christ has already reached out to find us.

Weekday services include Morning Prayer, Eucharist (both early morning and at noon) and Evening Prayer or Evensong.

On Sundays we hold an early morning Eucharist, a widely-attended Parish Eucharist with children and young people's groups, a mid-morning Choral Eucharist and Choral Evensong.

Ecumenical links are strong with honorary chaplains from the Roman Catholic, Free Church, Lutheran and Russian Orthodox traditions regularly conducting weekly or monthly services at the Cathedral. There are also formal and informal links to Linköping Cathedral in Sweden, Loreto in Italy, and Hildesheim in Germany.

The Cathedral is also delighted to be working closely with Soul Survivor Watford.

St Albans Cathedral is renowned for the vibrancy of its congregational life. A well-resourced Pastoral Team coordinates pastoral care; an Eco-Team encourages the congregation to prioritise the environment, a Congregational Giving Team focuses on stewardship and charitable mission giving; and there are several House Groups. We have a dedicated Youth Chaplain to develop and grow the various groups for children and young people, seeking to provide spaces to worship God in a way that is fun, engaging and appropriate for their age.

Two recently formed groups which reflect the current priorities of the Cathedral are a Social Justice team and the Environmental Working Group, which is working towards achieving the Church of England's target of Net Zero Carbon by 2030.



## **Music**

Music is central to our worship and the life of the Cathedral. We have two of the finest cathedral choirs in the country, a magnificent organ, a busy programme of innovative musical events and concerts, and various voluntary choirs and music groups which add further dimension to the Cathedral's worship. We are privileged to be able to host the biennial International Organ Festival, the most prestigious organ competition in Europe.

The cathedral choirs sing at services six days a week throughout term time, rehearsing both before and after school. Their work is all the more remarkable because the choristers do not attend a special choir school, but come from a wide variety of backgrounds and attend a number of different local schools. In addition to the daily round of choral services and rehearsal, the choirs take part in concerts, tours, broadcasts and recordings.

## **Learning and education**

Learning is at the heart of human flourishing and Christian discipleship and so is core to both the history and mission of the Cathedral. Through its rich programme of learning for schools and adults, and its long tradition of study, the Cathedral has become a nationally renowned centre for heritage and theological learning. The Cathedral's award-winning school and adult learning programmes were both the first of their kind in the United Kingdom. They offer engaging learning experiences and opportunities to people of all ages, all levels of education, of all traditions and faiths, and none. The Cathedral's recent Alban, Britain's First Saint project has brought a whole host of new learning spaces to provide fantastic opportunities to more children, adults and families alike.

Our schools' team hosts visits from over 14,000 school children each year, using the Cathedral building as its classroom. The team's programme of trails and workshops complements the National Curriculum and gives children an opportunity to develop their skills in a variety of ways, as well as instilling a sense of wonder, discovery and fun. The schools team not only works with primary and secondary school children, but also with sixth form students and those at university.

The Cathedral is one of only a few cathedrals in the country to offer a full programme of adult learning events designed to explore faith, history and culture. These include talks, study days, café events, language courses and discussion groups, covering anything from theology, spiritual and biblical studies, politics and history, ancient languages, art and literature, and film and music. The Cathedral also offers a part-time theology course which allows students to explore the Christian faith and work towards the accredited St Albans Certificate in Theology.

The Cathedral also benefits from having a modern theological lending library containing books on a variety of subjects, along with an archives collection containing materials pertaining to the life and faith of the Cathedral over the course of history.

## **The Cathedral building**

The Cathedral's architecture is a blend of many different periods, with Anglo-Saxon features dating back to King Offa's church, founded on the site in 793. Work started on the current church building in 1077, with both the tower and nave built using Roman bricks salvaged from the ruins of Verulamium.

The Magna Carta began its journey here, back in 1213 when the abbey was the setting for the first meeting to discuss the creation of the document that was subsequently sealed in 1215.



When the monastery was dissolved in 1539 most of the buildings were destroyed. In 1553 the people of St Albans bought the church to become the parish church. Like today, the upkeep was expensive and by the 1830s the building was in a sorry state. The Victorians undertook a major restoration, including remodelling the west end, removing medieval features and replacing the statues in the high altar screen.

The building became a cathedral in 1877. It is in this dual role of a parish and cathedral church that it remains a centre of worship and mission with local and national profile. An extension to the cathedral building and named the Chapter House was added in 1982, which is built on the footprint of its Benedictine predecessor. The new welcome centre was opened in 2019.

### **Our vision for external landscaping**

The renewal of the exterior areas around the Cathedral building, and in particular the visitor approach to the Cathedral, is vital to draw people to us. Our long-term masterplan is a vision for the future which improves accessibility, maximises community use and enhances the setting of our beautiful building.

Work will necessarily be phased, first to enhance the area to the east of the Cathedral, then the wider Cathedral surrounds and around the Deanery, including the Abbey Orchard and North Churchyard. The landscape to the east of the Cathedral will be significantly redeveloped, creating beautiful gardens and much improved pedestrian access through a community space that can be enjoyed by all who visit. Not only will this increase the benefits of the new entrance in bringing new visitors to the Cathedral, it will strengthen the links between the Cathedral, the city and our wider community. We are very close to bringing this first stage of the project to life and anticipate it will start in the second half of 2021. The next phases bring an exciting opportunity for major fundraising and development.

### **Local partnerships**

Our various local partnerships are essential to our flourishing. We work closely with St Albans City & District Council and the local St Albans Museum+Gallery. The Cathedral recognises the importance of growing the local business economy to support both visitor growth and local residents' economic contribution to the city of St Albans. Our partnerships with St Albans Business Improvement District and Visit Herts help raise the profile of St Albans through the development of events and programmes across the city and surrounding region.

Every year we hold a Fireworks Spectacular at the local Verulamium Park. This amazing public display was started over 25 years ago in order to reduce firework accidents at home. As well as lighting up the skies for the local community, it raises money for local and national charities.

### **Fundraising**

Donations and legacies combined amounted to just under £1.5m in 2020, along with grants totalling £0.8m. This represents almost 80% of the Cathedral's total income from all sources. Fundraising activity in all its various forms is therefore essential to the Cathedral's ongoing financial viability.

Chapter has established the St Albans Cathedral Alban Foundation, a body under the governance of Chapter that draws on the skills and experience of individuals closely connected with fundraising and wider donor engagement. The foundation's current fundraising focus is the support of Chapter's landscaping vision for the Cathedral's surrounds and wider precincts.

The Cathedral is further supported by the fundraising activities of the St Albans Cathedral Music Trust, the St Albans Cathedral Education Trust and the Friends of St Albans Cathedral.



## **Finances**

It costs £5,000 a day to keep this magnificent Cathedral open. We are committed to offering free entry to all who worship and visit here.

Unlike many cathedrals, St Albans Cathedral does not have a significant endowment of land. The Cathedral's ongoing financial health is dependent on the continued diversification and growth of our income. Continued growth in visitors and our worshipping community is core to this.

The Cathedral's income comes from a wide range of sources, including our congregation, visitors, donors, grant-making bodies, fundraising events, fees, commercial trading and investments. Income for specific projects is kept separately from income required for core spend.

The Cathedral needs to generate sufficient income each year not just to meet its core spending needs, but also enough to grow and sustain the Cathedral of the future. It is Chapter's intention to deliver each year a balanced financial operating result; in other words to at least keep operating spend within available operating income.

COVID-19 curtailed large parts of the Cathedral's income streams through 2020, most notably visitor donations, shop and café income, venue hire, school visits, and event income. The Cathedral worked hard during the closure in the first half of 2020 to offer as wide a programme as possible online, with livestreamed and pre-recorded worship, music and adult learning events. The second half of 2020 saw the Cathedral open again, but with many restrictions still in place and no possibility for any significant venue hire or heritage-based activity.

The Cathedral, like all others, has drawn on Government support to mitigate financial risk, including furloughing staff and applying for business support grants. We have also received funding from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund.

The combination of careful financial management and the foundation of a committed congregation and generous donor base enabled the cathedral to break-even in 2020. When the Cathedral was able to be open, people came. It is that love and interest in this place that we hold on to as we go into 2021. It is of course too early to say what the future holds financially, with COVID-19 continuing to bring all sorts of economic, people, social and operational challenges. Chapter has budgeted for a possible £50,000 to £100,000 deficit in 2021.

Our financial reserves at the end of 2020 were £2.8m, providing both necessary financial resilience in the current climate and something of a cushion against the inevitability of financial liabilities that come with running and maintaining an ancient cathedral building. COVID-19 will no doubt continue to test our reserves, but they are at a level that should allow the Cathedral to continue to weather any near-term financial impact.

The second half of 2021 will hopefully start to see a degree of financial recovery. The Cathedral's constant focus on never over-relying on one income source has stood it well through the last difficult months and year; it is that strategy of continued income diversification and growth that we want to maintain.



## People

The work of the Cathedral is sustained by around 45 staff and some 600 volunteers. We have a number of part-time workers and encourage flexible working where it is appropriate. The full time Cathedral clergy comprise the Dean, Sub Dean, Canon Chancellor, Precentor and Youth Chaplain. Residentiary Canons also include the Diocesan Director of Mission and Ministry, and the Director of Vocations. The Cathedral also currently has a part time Assistant Curate under a joint arrangement with Soul Survivor Watford. In September 2020 we welcomed a new Ordinand in Training, currently studying through St Mellitus College, and there is a long-standing scheme of pastoral assistants who are exploring their vocations.

The Cathedral's Chief Operating Officer is new in role, having previously been the Cathedral's Head of Finance and Development for just over seven years. The Cathedral is starting to work through the new Cathedrals Measure, having already put in place a number of its recommendations, with the focus now on optimising governance structures and further improving the Cathedral's efficiency and ways of working.

Our volunteers give of their time and talents across a huge range of the Cathedral's activities, including services; education activities; the shop and café; day chaplaincy; choir support; visitor welcome; prayer; ecumenical chaplaincy; concert stewarding; cleaning; music; flower arranging; fundraising; bell ringing; guiding; cash counting; gardening; textile repair; maintenance; youth development; and parish work. Some are members of our congregation, others come from groups across the Diocese or locally from St Albans and surrounds. Our volunteers are integral to the Cathedral's work and mission. We would be seriously eroded without them and are enormously grateful for all they do.

## Looking Forward

**Our Vision 2019-2024** shapes our current priorities, reflecting the many opportunities arising from the realisation of the Cathedral's Alban, Britain's First Saint project.

### Our Vision 2019-2024

To be known internationally, nationally and locally as a beacon of inclusive welcome, spirituality and learning

To be a place where everyone feels that they can belong

To be a community growing in faith, numbers and gospel action



Chapter has discerned six key priorities to turn **Our Vision 2019-2024** into action and to underpin the Cathedral's activities, against which actions are set and monitored. These are reflected in what we have included in this profile.

- Congregational Growth
- Learning
- Social Justice & The Environment
- Visitor Growth & Welcome
- Caring For Our Buildings & Land
- Governance & People

### **The Alban Prayer**

Among the roses of the martyrs:  
brightly shines Saint Alban.

Almighty God,  
we thank you for this place  
built to your glory  
and in memory of Alban, our first martyr.

Following his example in the fellowship of the saints,  
may we worship and adore the true and living God,  
and be faithful witnesses to the Christ,  
who is alive and reigns,  
now and for ever.

Pray for us, Alban, pray for us all saints of God:  
that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.


**5 Year Key Financial Metrics**

	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Core financial measures</b>					
Total gross income	2,916	4,210	4,286	5,126	3,105
Total gross spend	2,560	4,943	4,847	3,475	2,418
Net income/(expenditure) on unrestricted funds before net investment gains	546	16	96	1,362	56
Core operating surplus/(deficit)	(2)	37	10	28	24
Additional net income from events	-	56	22	61	33
<b>Income (net of direct costs)</b>					
Donations and fundraising	856	919	990	897	884
Grant funding	694	264	283	479	311
Legacies	583	33	144	1,319	65
Charitable activities	78	157	149	168	171
Commercial trading	9	223	144	198	137
Investments	294	310	279	266	259
<i>Total income excl Alban, Britain's First Saint funding</i>	<i>2,514</i>	<i>1,906</i>	<i>1,989</i>	<i>3,327</i>	<i>1,827</i>
Alban, Britain's First Saint fundraising	30	368	444	350	806
Alban, Britain's First Saint grants	130	1,506	1,512	1,120	130
<b>Total income</b>	<b>2,674</b>	<b>3,780</b>	<b>3,945</b>	<b>4,797</b>	<b>2,763</b>
<b>Spend</b>					
Visitors and welcome	179	189	166	121	93
Ministry, music and mission	765	846	830	791	797
Fundraising	104	105	111	87	146
Major repairs and restoration	140	127	66	245	144
Upkeep	423	428	400	409	383
Education and learning	251	265	227	194	189
Outreach and charitable giving	79	79	90	124	90
<i>Total spend excl Alban, Britain's First Saint</i>	<i>1,941</i>	<i>2,039</i>	<i>1,890</i>	<i>1,971</i>	<i>1,842</i>
Alban, Britain's First Saint capital works	377	2,474	2,616	1,175	234
<b>Total spend</b>	<b>2,318</b>	<b>4,513</b>	<b>4,506</b>	<b>3,146</b>	<b>2,076</b>
<b>Funds</b>					
Total unrestricted funds	3,071	2,444	2,383	2,261	855
Total restricted funds	22,314	22,158	22,192	22,719	21,893
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>25,385</b>	<b>24,602</b>	<b>24,575</b>	<b>24,980</b>	<b>22,748</b>