

St Edmundsbury Cathedral: North Aisle Repairs (1 of 2 projects funded)

Awarded £300,000 in March 2015 towards a £544,000 project

The need

In 2013 the cathedral had repaired its mediaeval south aisle roof, but was unable to afford to address a similar situation on the north side. The 2011 Quinquennial Inspection had highlighted the advanced state of structural deterioration in the north aisle roof and of the clerestory windows, together with a number of areas needing urgent stonework repairs. Leaks, especially in the heavy downpours which were increasingly occurring, continued to be a problem, and temporary repairs did not offer an adequate long term solution. It was clear that the north aisle roof needed to be re-leaded, and extensive works were required to the clerestory, at a cost in excess of £500,000.



The north aisle: parapet and clerestory windows at top . Photo credit: The Whitworth Co-Partnership LLP.

Outcomes

The roof is now watertight and the cathedral is able to run services and events without having water leaking into the building. They have been able to hold the East of England Tourism Awards and graduation ceremonies which they would not have been able to do while the roof was leaking.

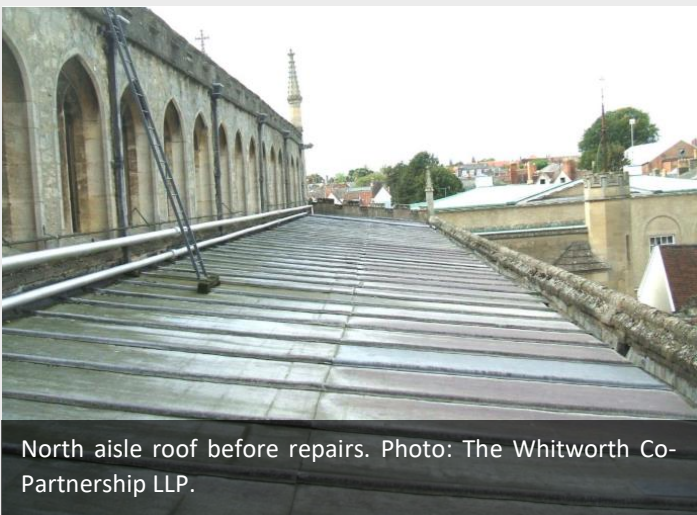
Economic and social impact

Had the funding not been available it would have taken a number of years to raise the funds needed for these repairs by which point the damage and associated costs would have been even more substantial. St Edmundsbury Cathedral has no historic endowments or capital. Therefore, funding and fundraising for these urgent works would have redirected resources away from its general mission work. For example, the cathedral has been involved in supporting prisons week, it has held a hate crime vigil, sea fun day and a First World War community event. The team feel they would not have had the staff capacity for this work in the absence of the fund.

Works completed and timescale

The north aisle was re-roofed and associated high-level repairs completed in 2015. They included the replacement of lead, improvement of joins and detailing, raising of the north aisle parapet, improvements to drainage and rainwater goods, and re-leading of the nave clerestory windows. Some additional high-level stonework repairs were carried out in agreement with the fund's Expert Panel, as once access was possible the Cathedral Architect found

more stonework that was in a poor state.



North aisle roof before repairs. Photo: The Whitworth Co-Partnership LLP.

The Cathedral

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, became a cathedral in 1913 and is on the site of the great Benedictine abbey of St Edmundsbury, founded in AD903. The original church has been much augmented in recent decades by extensive works designed by Stephen Dykes Bower, including a new tower, partial cloister, new transepts and an enlargement of the chancel.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral: Nave Clerestory, Cloister & Library Roof Repairs (2 of 2 projects funded)

Awarded £350,000 in November 2016 towards a £422,000 project

The need

The 2011 Quinquennial Inspection highlighted the advanced state of structural deterioration in the clerestory fenestration, repaired under the previous project, and the 1958 copper roofs of the cloister south range and Ancient Library. A long-term solution was required to avoid further damage to the interior and risk to the important collection of the Ancient Library resulting from water ingress. While scaffolding was in place for the clerestory windows work, funded by the previous grant, there was also a cost-effective opportunity to use it to access and conserve high areas of the nave walls. The south-west window, which contains the cathedral's only pre-19th century stained glass, also needed urgent conservation and repair.

Outcomes

Completion of the project has left the cathedral in a good state throughout: the main outcome is that the work funded by the two grants has made the building safe and watertight for another generation.

Economic and social impact

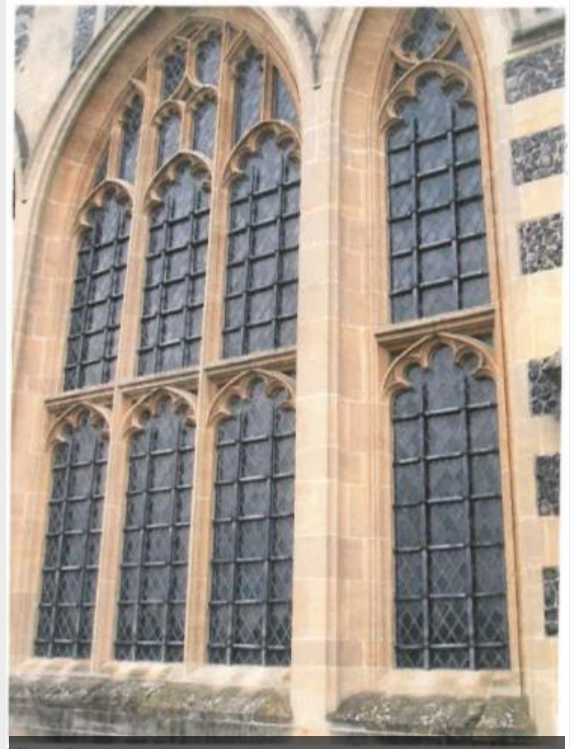
Had the funding not been available it would have taken a number of years to raise the funds needed for these repairs by which point the damage and associated costs would have been even more substantial. St Edmundsbury Cathedral has no historic endowments or capital. Therefore, funding and fundraising for these urgent works would have redirected resources away from its general mission work. For example, the cathedral has been involved in supporting prisons week, it has held a hate crime vigil, sea fun day and a First World War community event. The team feel they would not have had the staff capacity for this work in the absence of the fund.

Works completed and timescale

The work involved the conservation of the nave clerestory window, high level decoration of the nave, re-roofing of the cloister range south, re-roofing of the library, window cleaning and general repairs. The project began in 2017 and was due to finish in March 2018.

The Cathedral

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, became a cathedral in 1913 and is on the site of the great Benedictine abbey of St Edmundsbury, founded in AD903. The original church has been much augmented in recent decades by extensive works designed by Stephen Dykes Bower, including a new tower, partial cloister, new transepts and an enlargement of the chancel.



The south-west window. Photo credit: The Whitworth Co-Partnership LLP.