

**Project Update (3)  
November 26 November 2013**

**PROJECT TIMETABLE**

The on-site timetable currently looks like this:

Work	Timetable
High Altar Storage works	Installation – November
Wall paintings conservation period 1 (pre construction)	2 Sept 13 to 6 <sup>th</sup> December – as the main contract has been delayed, the conservators are able to do more in the first period.
Main build (library and crypt)	March to September 2014
Wall painting conservation period 2 (post main construction)	September 2014
Exhibition/library fit-out	September-October 2014
Client fit-out of library and exhibition	November 2014
Exhibition launch	November 2014

**CAPITAL WORKS**

**Enabling works** - The enabling works should be complete this week – the boiler is back in use and the new storage should be commissioned shortly. The Contractors compound will now be in the car park.

**High Altar storage** - High Altar Storage – due to be installed towards the end of this month but this will need to fit around the Cathedral diary.

**Main contract**- The main contract is due to go out to tender next week. The delays have been largely because of the need to ensure that all the various professionals documents (architect, structural engineer, mechanical and electrical engineering, lighting) are all properly integrated and that a detailed specification is available so that those tendering can give more accurate prices. There are six companies being invited to tender and these are: Bakers of Danbury, Coniston, Kingswood, Buxton, Roof, WW Martin. This list was chosen after a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire process following relevant national advertising.

**Wall painting conservation** - The conservators are taking the opportunity presented by the delay of the main contract to undertake the majority of the work now. This means that the only work they will have to do after the main contract is the final clean of the surfaces after the work. They are in discussion with the architects about the necessary working procedures to protect the paintings during the works. They have been trying a new laser treatment on some of the surfaces, as this is a non-contact method it is to be preferred where it works. There are certain pigments it cannot be used on but it has worked extremely well where it has been used. As there is, currently, a saving in the budget for this item, they have been asked to look at the fragment of painted Quire screen that is mounted near the library (behind damaged glass. This will require formal permission from the CFCE and so in the meantime we are exploring the possibility of de-mounting it before the main contract ready for conservation.



Other funding: Colyer-Fergusson Charitable Trust, Friends of Rochester Cathedral, Garfield Weston, Rochester Bridge Trust, Wolfson Foundation, Henry Smith Charity, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

## Hidden Treasures: *Fresh Expressions*

**Library Roof** – Dendrochronology - Now completed thanks to additional funding from a private donor. The report indicates that the wood was felled in the second half of the fourteenth century with construction likely to have occurred shortly after.

**Library decant** – has been successfully completed. The volunteers have been keen to continue and are currently working through a number of sermons in need of cataloguing and will be providing help with the inventory.

**Permissions:** It is a considerable relief to be able to report that CFCE have signed off the majority of the conditions following a detailed report and a site visit, the only exception is balustrade design (Kent steps). Whilst the balustrade does need to be addressed it will not prevent us from going out to tender.

### ACTIVITY PLAN

**Conservation and other tours** - Three lecture tours have been given by the wall painting conservators attended by 85 people in total.

Five more general tours have also been given for members of staff, volunteers and the congregation (total 33 people to date) and these will continue, they are proving a useful way to help people understand the full scope of the project.

**Community Consultation Forum** - Michelle Lees has been working hard to establish appropriate people for the Community Consultation Forum who will provide input to the exhibition(s), this includes representatives from a range of groups both within and outside the Cathedral.

**Exhibition development** - Michelle has initiated bi-weekly meetings for Education and Visits staff to develop the interpretive strategy and initial ideas for the first exhibition.

**Textus Roffensis** - The Textus (and a number of other documents) have been digitised by the Centre for Heritage Imaging and Collection Care (Manchester) on location in the Kent archives. A video of the process is being prepared and will include interviews with a number of experts including Michael Wood. We are currently in discussion with a specialist company about creating a “Turning the pages” electronic version that can be accessed both on-line and at the exhibition to enable people to explore the Textus Roffensis in more detail.

The British Library have asked to have the Textus Roffensis on loan as a key exhibit for their Magna Carta exhibition in 2015. If this goes ahead it will be great for raising the profile of the Textus and make it easier for us to encourage people to come and see it.

**Digitisation** - The Holbrook records have been digitised. These are an incredibly useful summary (by area and by date) of work undertaken on the Cathedral over the years and are frequently referred to by both the architect and the archaeologist.

*Dr Edwina E Bell*  
*edwina.bell@rochestercathedral.org*

*November 13*