

Project Update 13 - May 2015

Steady progress is now being made in most areas despite experiencing some further problems sorting out the service trenches in relation to the medieval foundations (basically the foundations do not exist!).

Grants - As well as further award of £326,700 from the HLF in March this year, the All Churches Trust has awarded the Cathedral a grant of £30k towards the works in the Ithamar Chapel.

Building Works - Excavation of the Pigeon Parlour is waiting the removal of the scaffolding to the library. Once removed archaeological diggings will commence. It is hoped that there will be no more unexpected finds! Completion date for the building works is end September following which the exhibition fit out will begin.

Exhibition Fit Out – Design development is progressing well with the final drawings for the exhibition having been issued for final sign off. A sample show case has also been received and installed in the cathedral so the ability to control the environmental conditions can now be tested. An object list has been drawn up and approved so the design of the objects lay out can progress as can some of the exhibition fit out fabrication. The Activity Table is also progressing and some of the proposed activities for inclusion in the Activity Table are brass rubbings, jigsaw and twist blocks (symbols and heraldry). The launch of the first exhibition remains as January 2016.

Activity Plan - March saw 6 tours of the Archaeological finds in the crypt before work progressed. Using Eventbrite the initial 5 tours got booked up within 12 hours. An additional 4 tours were arranged for Cathedral Congregation and Volunteers; these too were quickly booked up. One tour was arranged especially for the Friends of Rochester Cathedral and one was for Major Donors. In all 124 people participated in these tours over 3 days.

Plans for the Cathedral to host the Faversham's copy of the Magna Carta are now finalised and a high specification case has been designed to house the Textus Roffensis so it can be on display at the same time. There will be a family friendly launch of this on the afternoon of the 10th October. The exhibition will run for 10 weeks.

Following the loss of the Library Development Officer, and delays in the Capital works, a review of the Activity plan has led to a slight restructuring of activities. The Education Officers are now planning a series of new activities all of which will focus on engaging and encouraging the target audiences to participate. This includes two six week Story Trails for preschool children. One Story trail took place 23 April and a further one is planned to commence 30 July. The story of Noah is being used as the baseline.

Cataloguing of the library collection has commenced by the University of Kent following a formal agreement. This will provide for a full catalogue of our collection for the very first time.

Gilly Wilford and Edwina Bell
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