



**THE FRIENDS OF ARMAGH CATHEDRAL**  
*(The Cathedral Church of Saint Patrick, Armagh)*

**Trustees' Annual Report**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2024**

**Charities Number: NIC100129**

# THE FRIENDS OF ARMAGH CATHEDRAL

## Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024

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## THE FRIENDS OF ARMAGH CATHEDRAL

### References and administrative details

Charity Name: The Friends of Armagh Cathedral  
Charity Registration Number: NIC100129  
Contact Address: c/o Armagh Robinson Library  
43 Abbey Street  
ARMAGH  
BT61 7DY

### Trustees

The Very Revd Shane Forster (*Chairman*)  
Mrs Mary Caldwell (*Hon. Secretary*)  
Mr David Hamilton (*Hon. Treasurer*)  
Mr Brett Hannam (*Membership Secretary*)  
Dr Stephen Day (*Joint Editor of 'Cathedra'*)  
Mrs Carol Day (*Joint Editor of 'Cathedra'*)  
Lady Sheil (*representing the Cathedral Chapter*)  
Mrs Ann Cassidy  
Mr Andrew White  
Mrs Sylvia Phillips  
Mr Robert Somerville

### Principal Office-bearers

Chairman: The Very Revd Shane Forster, Dean of Armagh  
Hon. Secretary: Mrs Mary Caldwell  
Hon. Treasurer: Mr David Hamilton

### Independent Auditor

Arnold Courtney, FCA  
William Courtney & Co  
26 The Square  
Moy  
DUNGANNON  
Co Tyrone  
BT71 7SG

### Bankers

Primary Account:  
Bank of Ireland  
Beresford House  
11a Upper English Street  
ARMAGH  
BT61 7BH

## **Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024**

The trustees present the annual report for the year ended 31 December 2024

### **Objectives and Activities**

The Charity's objectives are:

- (i) the advancement of religion, and
- (ii) the advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science.

The purposes of the Friends of Armagh Cathedral are:

- (i) bringing together in a fellowship of loyalty and devotion all who care for the ancient foundation of the Cathedral Church of St Patrick, Armagh and its continuing witness to the glory of God, and
- (ii) assisting in the maintenance and preservation of the Cathedral.

### **Achievements, Performance & Public Benefit**

#### ***Activities in 2024***

On Sunday 26 May 2024, the Friends Annual Service took place in St Patrick's Cathedral at 3.15pm. The preacher was the Very Reverend Nigel Crossey, Dean of Kilmore.

On Thursday 30 May 2024, the Friends Annual General Meeting was held in Armagh Masonic Hall and was followed by a dinner. The Dean chaired the meeting and provided an overview of the past year in the life of the Cathedral.

The Autumn Event was held in the Armagh Masonic Hall, on Tuesday 8 October 2024. The Guest Speaker was Mr John Nicholson of Cranagael House, who told the story of how his great grandfather had imported the first Bramley seedling apple trees to Armagh in 1884.

The new editorial team of Dr Stephen and Mrs Carol Day produced the seventeenth issue of the Friends' magazine '*Cathedra*'. After reviews of the life of the Cathedral, of the work of the Friends, and of the music of the Cathedral, this issue contained a special article on the talented team of flower arrangers in the Cathedral. '*Cathedra*' was distributed free-of-charge to all members of the Friends. Copies of '*Cathedra*' were also made available at the Diocesan Synod and on the Cathedral website as well as being posted to members at a distance. '*Cathedra*' conveys to members of the Diocese and to all those who are interested in church life on the Hill of Armagh, something of the yearly services, events and activities in and associated with the Cathedral.

The Friends Christmas card this year featured a photograph of the Cathedral 'Nativity Window'. Cards were sold as part of a fundraising venture for the Cathedral.

The Cathedral Shop is operated by members of the Cathedral staff and volunteers. In 2024, the Friends provided stock for the shop, which made a gross profit of £2894.34.

Payments for admission to the Cathedral made through the shop's card reader were forwarded to the Cathedral Treasurer.

### **Benefits Provided**

In the course of the year, the Friends continued their usual support of the Cathedral. They paid for the Cathedral's Wi-Fi broadband account, a new dishwasher in the Music Hall and helped finance other small projects in the Cathedral. They also provided certain consumables, such as Advent and votive candles, candle oil and Communion wafers.

### **Going Concern**

The trustees have reviewed the resources for the year ahead and are satisfied that there are adequate funds in place to ensure that the organization can continue its activities and that the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 can be signed off as a going concern.

### **Governing Document and Constitution of the Charity**

The Friends of Armagh Cathedral are governed by their own governing document, known as the Constitution. It was revised at the Annual General Meeting on Thursday 30 May 2024, when the number of lay members to be elected at the AGM to the Management Committee each year was increased from three to six. The Management Committee shall then at its first meeting after the Annual General Meeting appoint from among its members an Honorary Secretary, an Honorary Treasurer, and a Membership Secretary.

### **Recruitment and Appointment of the Management Committee (Trustees)**

The Dean of Armagh, who is ex-officio Chairperson of the Committee, is appointed by the Archbishop of Armagh.

The Representative of the Cathedral Chapter is one of its members, appointed to the Chapter by the Archbishop of Armagh. The Chapter appoints its representative at one of its meetings, held approximately quarterly, when a vacancy occurs.

The Representative of the Cathedral Board is one of its members, usually but not necessarily one of its lay members, appointed at one of its meetings, held quarterly in the year.

The six lay members of the Friends, are elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Friends, and serve for the ensuing year.

The Editors of '*Cathedra*', being members of the Friends, are members of the committee by virtue of his or her office.

The new Constitution of the Friends also allows for the co-option of up to two people, to hold office until the next Annual General Meeting, and without prejudice to their being co-opted again.

### **Pay and remuneration**

No member of the Management Committee receives any remuneration for work on its behalf. Out-of-pocket expenses may be reclaimed on production of receipts, as arising.

### **Organisational Structure**

The management of the Friends of Armagh Cathedral is vested in its Management Committee, constituted as above. The Management Committee is chaired by the Dean. The Committee meets as required by the programme of activities.

### **Compliance with Public Benefit**

The Trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the organization's objectives and activities, as well as providing public benefit.

### **Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities**

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the statement of receipts and payments and statement of assets and liabilities in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland with income of less than £250,000 requires the trustees to prepare a statement of receipts and payments and a statement of assets and liabilities for each financial year.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the organization's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time its assets and liabilities. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the organization and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### **Signed on behalf of the Trustees**

**Trustee 1** .....*Shane Forster*.....

**Trustee 2** .....*David Hamilton*.....

**Date** .....27 October 2025.....