

**Visit to Peterborough Cathedral**

<b>Date/Time</b>	Wednesday 9 November 2022 12.45pm for 1.00pm start	<b>Price</b>	£35
<b>Venue</b>	Peterborough Cathedral (meet inside - West Door)	<b>Leader</b>	John McNeill

The former abbey of St Peter at Medeshamstede (Peterborough) is one of six monasteries saved from demolition by having been granted cathedral status by Henry VIII in 1542, hence the survival of parts of the cloister, infirmary and outer court. The medieval church survives almost complete, with a largely twelfth-century nave, choir and presbytery book-ended by an unparalleled thirteenth-century western porch and a fan-vaulted retrochoir. Notwithstanding the loss of most of Peterborough's medieval furnishings, the ceilings over the transepts and nave survive – the latter one of a handful of fully painted ceilings remaining in Europe. Celebrated for its adherence to a Romanesque proportional system as construction continued through the second half of the twelfth century, the western bays of Peterborough's nave were subject to a series of subtle changes which can be associated with the arrival of a former intimate (and biographer) of Thomas Becket from Canterbury - Abbot Benedict (1177-94) – ultimately paving the way for that most astonishing of designs – Peterborough's mighty western porch.

**Leader**

**John McNeill** lectures for the Department of Continuing Education at Oxford University. He is a Vice-President of London Art History Society for whom he has delivered numerous courses and led study tours and cathedral visits. He is the Honorary Secretary of the British Archaeological Association for whom he has edited and contributed to volumes on English medieval cloisters, chantries and Romanesque material culture.