



Headlines from a meeting of Chapter

The Cathedral Chapter met on the morning of Monday 1 Jun 2026.

- Lesley Ann Thompson (Director of Communications & Commerce) reported on **visitors, events, communications and Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd.** Challenges emerging in the UK tourism sector generally were outlined. Against this backdrop, Cathedral visitor numbers are holding up and around 40% of visitors are opting for a multi-media guide and the take-up of ground floor tours has increased by 23% compared to the previous year. A conscious shift is being undertaken away from tribute bands and silent discos towards a larger number of classical, choral and contemporary orchestral concerts. Chapter welcomed the work of Maddie Cox and Amy Davies in continuing to develop the Cathedral's social media presence. Paula Reynolds was congratulated on her management of the Cathedral Shop, and Chapter welcomed the conclusion of the first year of successful partnership with the Cambridge Dining Company, now running the Almonry Kitchen.
- Chapter received and discussed an update from the **Chapter Safeguarding Lead** And noted that the draft report from INEQE is now expected to be received around the end of June.
- Gemma O'Shea updated Chapter on progress in **fundraising for the Organ Project**. For the time being, fundraising remains in a private phase whilst we raise funds from trusts, foundations and major donors. A public appeal will be launched after this private phase has been completed.
- The Dean reported on **worship and ministry**, noting increases in attendance at Easter services and reporting a joyful service to bid Bishop Dagmar well in her future ministry as Bishop of Edinburgh. Chapter welcomed the appointment of the Revd Canon Robert Mackley as Canon Pastor, who will be installed in September 2026.
- The Chief Operating Officer reported on property, fabric, health & safety, legal and governance matters. An interim report from Project Narthex (a project commissioned by the central Church to examine in detail the **financial position of cathedrals**) reveals that the Cathedral is in a relatively strong financial position. A three-day long visit from the **Cathedral's insurers** found our fire and general safety arrangements to be in good shape. Chapter thanked Tracy Bennett-Tighe for her work in this important area.
- Chapter approved and welcomed the nomination by the Nominations Committee of **Gareth Bevens FCCA as the new Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee**, and was pleased to **reappoint Dr Roland B Harris as Cathedral Archaeologist**. The Nominations Committee reported to Chapter its plans to recruit an additional non-executive member of Chapter to take over in due course as Chair of the Finance Committee.
- The **Finance Committee** outlined recent financial performance and the outcome of its annual review of the Cathedral's borrowing arrangements.
- Chapter approved the assignment to Canon James Reveley of the Precentor's House from late July 2026 and agreed areas of focus for its away day later in the month.

The Cathedral Chapter plans to meet next on Monday 30 June 2026 (away day) and Monday 21 July 2026 (routine meeting).

Jonathan Bell
Chief Operating Officer & Chapter Clerk
8 June 2026