



ELY CATHEDRAL

Headlines from a meeting of Chapter

The Cathedral Chapter met on the morning of Monday 19 May 2025.

- **Canon Jenny Wright** was welcomed to her first meeting of Chapter.
- Lesley Ann Thompson (Director of Communications & Commerce) provided an update on **visitors** (the national context, numbers & financials, engagement, access and projects), **digital communications** (social media, website, graphic design, digital content, press & media), **events** (concerts, exhibitions, corporate hire, event resources) and **Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd** (the Cathedral Shop and the Almonry Kitchen's partnership with The Cambridge Dining Company).
- Canon James Reveley reported to Chapter on **safeguarding**. This included an update on **suicide prevention training** and participation in the national Church's development of a consistent national approach to **complaints handling**. Three candidates have been shortlisted for the role of **Chair of Ely Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group**. Chapter hopes to appoint a Chair by the end of May.
- Chapter reviewed figures and activities for **worship and mission**. Attendance compared with pre-pandemic levels seems to be better than national averages, but it is difficult to discern patterns.
- Chapter received updates on **staffing, fundraising, health & safety and environmental work**. New **terrorism legislation** has received royal assent, and we are being helped by counter-terrorism police to prepare for its implementation. **Fire crews conducted a familiarisation exercise** in April in case they ever need to rescue important items from the Cathedral.
- The **Finance Committee** recommended a new **financial reserves** policy, which Chapter approved.
- Alison Binstead (Chief Finance Officer) outlined **financial performance**, which is so far better than budget, but forecast to be worse than budget for 2025 as a whole. There has been pressure on cash flow in the three months of the year, but this has been appropriately managed.
- The **Audit & Risk Committee** reported its plans to oversee tests of the Cathedral's **cybersecurity**. The external audit had proceeded smoothly, with no issues raised requiring Chapter's attention. Chapter approved the **2024 annual report & financial statements**, which will soon be published.
- Chapter approved amendments to its statement of agreed responsibilities for providing and maintaining housing for clergy.
- Mark Bonney (the Dean) updated Chapter on work to develop a **new long-term vision for the Cathedral**. Chapter will soon be seeking views from members of the Cathedral congregations, staff, volunteers and visitors.
- **Bursary requests** to provide additional financial support for four choristers were approved.
- Chapter heard about plans for the Director of Central Secretariat of the Archbishops' Council to visit the Cathedral on 6 June as part of familiarisation work by the National Church Institutions ahead of developing a model for **independent safeguarding arrangements** across the Church.

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

Jonathan Bell
Chief Operating Officer & Chapter Clerk
20 May 2025