



Headlines from a meeting of Chapter

The Cathedral Chapter met on the morning of Monday 21 September 2026. Chapter was delighted to welcome the Bishop, who joined the meeting to get to know Chapter better.

- Chapter warmly **welcomed Canon Rob Mackley** to his first meeting of Chapter, on the first full day of his new ministry at the Cathedral, and congratulated him on his appointment.
- Phil Stevens (Director of Learning)) reported on **the work of the Learning Team**. Phil reflected on the strength of a revised vision and strategy developed earlier in the year with Canon Jenny Wright and Canon Sarah Burles. Learning provision and activities have become more focussed on four priority audiences. A closer connection has been drawn - across the range of the team's work – to the Cathedrals' Christian faith, heritage, history and community life. Chapter congratulated Phil and her team on the renewed energy and focus of their work.
- Chapter received and discussed an update from the **Chapter Safeguarding Lead**. The draft report from the INEQE safeguarding audit was received during the meeting. The report will now be fact-checked ahead of publication in a few weeks' time.
- Canon James Reveley reported on **worship and ministry**, noting medium-term steady growth in attendance at services. Chapter discussed the challenges of growing congregations without drawing people away from parishes.
- Jonathan Bell reported on **property, fabric, health & safety, legal and governance** matters. Recent staffing changes and new appointments were welcomed by Chapter, as was the notification of a significant donation from a private donor and an increase in visitor numbers over the summer, after a more challenging spring. Chapter approved modest changes to ventilation of a modern building near the Monastic Barn, requested by King's Ely.
- Chapter authorised management to explore a possible return of the **Black Oak Table** to the Cathedral after 2028.
- Alison (Chief Finance Officer) outlined recent **financial performance**. This was broadly in line with the revised forecast for the year, which was reported to Chapter in July. Financial performance remains worse than budgeted because of a combination of non-recurring factors. The position might improve a little with the autumn financial reforecast.
- Chapter **appointed Canon Jenny Wright to the Council of The Friends** of Ely Cathedral.
- Chapter approved an amended **schedule of Canons-in-Residence** for the rest of the year.
- Chapter received an update on the **process to appoint a new Dean of Ely**. Extensive consultations will be undertaken by Lambeth Palace on 5-7 October. A selection panel will be formed by mid-October. Elections to the panel by the Cathedral Chapter, the College of Canons and The Bishop's Council will shortly be underway.
- Chapter discussed with the Bishop the distinctive characteristics of the Cathedral and the **qualities that will be sought in the next Dean**. This discussion will inform statements (to be submitted in October by each of the Bishop and Chapter) to the selection panel.

The Cathedral Chapter plans to meet next on Monday 19 October 2026 (special annual meeting with the Bishop) and on Monday 23 November 2026 (routine meeting).

Jonathan Bell
Chief Operating Officer & Chapter Clerk
24 September 2026