



The Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity of Ely

# 2024 Report

and consolidated financial statements



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Ashely Darnell, Clive England & Keith Heppell.*

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Registered charity number 1202546

# Message from the Dean

In 2024 we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the ordination of women as priests in the Church of England. Our Cathedral and Diocese has played a significant role in the ordination of women over the past three decades and the Diocese of Ely now has more women holding office as vicars or rectors than any other diocese.

It was therefore a particular pleasure to commemorate this milestone at a special service presided over by Bishop Dagmar, assisted by the Revd Canon Fiona Brampton, who was one of the youngest of the cohort of women to be ordained as a priest in the Cathedral in May 1994.

The preacher at this service was Canon Jessica Martin. Jessica has been a superb colleague and friend since becoming a Residentiary Canon here in 2016. In 2024 we said farewell - and an enormous thank you - to Jessica, as she begins a new stage in her ministry as Dean of Chelmsford. We were delighted to welcome the Revd Dr Jenny Wright as a new Residentiary Canon in May 2025, joining us from her role as Chaplain to the Archbishop of York.

In 2024, we also celebrated being awarded A Rocha UK's Gold EcoChurch Award, becoming the third cathedral to achieve this. It is enormously gratifying that our care for God's creation has been recognised in this way. We particularly thank Robert Skelton and Rebecca Mundy who have done so much in a voluntary capacity to help us to achieve this.

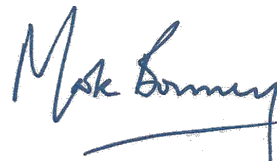
We played our role in the public square in June 2024, when we were pleased to welcome hundreds of members of the public to a hustings for the general election. All of the candidates standing for election in the constituency took part in a very lively evening, chaired by Lord Wilson of Dinton. I was very pleased that Lord Wilson accepted our invitation to become High Bailiff of the Cathedral in 2024, having served for many years as Chair of the Cathedral Council.

In October 2024, we learned of the death of Julian Litten, a member of our Fabric Advisory Committee and a great friend and supporter of cathedrals. Several of us attended his Requiem Mass at Norwich Cathedral, perfectly fitting for Julian, who was an acknowledged expert on funerary customs.

Our annual report for 2024 again rejoices in a wide range of achievements and milestones. At the heart of all of the activity that rightly comes with a busy cathedral, however, is the daily rhythm of prayer and worship which it has been my privilege to share with my many colleagues here.

I give thanks to God for sustaining our work and ministry at Ely Cathedral and for blessing us with the riches of a joyful community that proclaims the love of God in worship, outreach, welcome and care.

With my prayers and best wishes,



**The Very Reverend Mark Bonney DL**  
Dean of Ely

# Thanks

We are enormously grateful for the work of our four hundred or so volunteers, many of whom volunteer in more than one way. We thank all those who give their time and energy to support the Cathedral.

We are also grateful for our many unpaid officeholders. These include non-executive members of Chapter and its committees, trustees of Ely Cathedral Trust, members of the Fabric Advisory Committee and its Secretary, and our Cathedral Archivist.

We especially thank David Stazicker, who retired this year from his role as Secretary to the Fabric Advisory Committee, having served in this capacity since 2010.

We thank too the members of our working groups supporting our lighting project, planning for an overhaul of the Cathedral organ, and our environmental work - which resulted in a Gold EcoChurch Award in 2024.

We are hugely grateful for the ministry of our Day Chaplains, Priests Vicar and Ministers and the care they extend to those visiting and worshipping with us. We thank members of the College of Canons for their support to the Cathedral.

Many individuals and organisations have supported us financially in 2024, helping to pay for conservation and environmental work, our outstanding choral musical tradition, and the energetic work of our Learning Team. We particularly thank The Friends of Ely Cathedral, especially for their constant support for the lighting project in recent years.

Those who are content to be named are thanked overleaf, and we thank also those who wish their gift to remain private.

*Images overleaf, from top:*

*The effect of new, energy-efficient lighting on the vaulted ceiling of Bishop West's Chapel, funded by The Friends of Ely Cathedral.*

*A small selection of dozens of carved heads revealed by conservation work on chantry chapel screens, funded by The Headley Trust, the Stuart Heath Charitable Settlement and the Benefact Trust.*

*Volunteers planting a new garden along the East Lawn of the Cathedral, in honour of the Virgin Mary, funded in memory of the late Andrew Cowan and also by the Finnis Scott Foundation.*

**With thanks to:**

Benefact Trust

The late Mr Kenneth Case

Cheffins

The Church Commissioners for England

The Church of England Net Zero Demonstrator Fund

The late Mr Wilfrid Davey

Ecclesiastical

Ely Plumbing and Heating

The late Mr Duncan Ferguson

The Finnis Scott Foundation

The Friends of Ely Cathedral

The late Mrs Sheila Knox

The Headley Trust

The late Lord Hemingford

The Jack Patston Charitable Trust

Julia Rausing Trust

The late Mr Donald Lester

The Mandarin Trust

The late Miss Audrey Martin

The late Mr Michael McCook Weir

The late Mrs Patricia McCook Weir

McCorquodale Charitable Trust

Members of the Order of St Etheldreda

Metcalf Copeman & Pettefar LLP

The Patrick Rowland Foundation

Poets House

The Red Lion Soham

The late Mr Charles Rawlinson MBE

The late Mrs Sally Rowland

The Scops Arts Trust

Stuart Heath Charitable Settlement

The Wolfson Foundation

Our volunteers, clergy, staff and all who have supported the life and work of the Cathedral in 2024.





*The ordination of priests in June 2024.*

# About Ely Cathedral

## Our inheritance

Ely Cathedral has been a centre for Christian worship and service since the seventh century. St Etheldreda founded the first monastery at Ely in 673 and we continue to keep major festivals in her honour on 23 June and 17 October each year.

The abbey at Ely was raised to cathedral status in 1109. After being dissolved as a monastery in 1539 by Henry VIII, we were refounded as a cathedral in 1541 and dedicated to the Holy and Undivided Trinity. Since then we have been in continuous existence, constantly evolving to fulfil our fundamental purpose.

## Our mission and vision

We align ourselves with the vision statement of the Diocese of Ely, that *'we pray to be a generous and visible people of Jesus Christ'*.

Our mission

**To be a sustainable Christian community joyfully proclaiming the love of God in worship, outreach, welcome and care.**

Our vision

**To be a place where everyone – in all our diversity – may grow into the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ.**

## How we are funded

The Cathedral receives no routine state funding, nor do we receive funding from the parishes of the Diocese, nor from the Diocese of Ely.

The Church Commissioners pay the stipends of the Dean and two Residentiary Canons and provide some additional grant funding. This was equivalent to around 7% of our income in 2024.

Otherwise, the Cathedral generates all of the income we need through a combination of earning income from the assets and resources available to us, and through our own fundraising efforts and the kind support of many individuals and charitable bodies. More information is on p16 and pp27-30.

## Cathedral bodies

As well as the Cathedral itself, this annual report and the accompanying consolidated financial statements include the activities and finances of Ely Cathedral Trust and Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd.

**Ely Cathedral Trust** is a charitable foundation, registered with the Charity Commission. It acts as a fundraising arm for the Cathedral and manages significant financial investments for the long term benefit of the Cathedral.

**Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd** is a trading entity, registered in England and Wales and wholly owned by the Cathedral. Its directors are responsible for the performance of a shop and restaurant under the Cathedral's ultimate control.

To help readers understand the financial position of the Cathedral alone, as part of this annual report we review some key financial information relating to the Cathedral only (see pp27-30). We also publish a 'Cathedral only' version of the statement of financial activities (see p41) and balance sheet (see p43).

**The Friends of Ely Cathedral** are separately constituted as a charitable incorporated organisation. The charity is independent of the Cathedral (although the Dean is an ex officio trustee and Chapter appoints some of their trustees). As The Friends of Ely Cathedral exists wholly to benefit the Cathedral, summarised financial information is given on p67.

**The Stained Glass Museum** (which is located at the Cathedral) is entirely separate from - and independent of - the Cathedral. It publishes its own annual report and accounts.

# Our objectives & activities

## Our purposes

The Cathedral has two core purposes:

- being the seat of the Bishop of Ely and a centre for worship and mission; and
- providing a focus for the life and work of the Church of England in the Diocese of Ely.

## Our charitable objectives

Our objectives are:

- advancing the Christian religion in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church of England, in particular by furthering the mission of the Church of England, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical
- caring for and conserving the fabric and structure of the Cathedral Church building
- advancing any other charitable purposes which relate to the two objectives above.

## Our activities

The significant activities we undertake, and how these relate to our core purposes and our charitable objectives are set out in the table opposite.

## Our aims

The nature of our core purposes and charitable objectives means that our key aims are directed at maintaining, sustaining and enhancing the life and work of the Cathedral, directed towards our core purposes and charitable objectives. It also means securing our financial sustainability. Our approach to this is set out on pp27-30.

We hope that the difference we make is to enable a wide range of people - however they encounter us - to grow into the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Our overall approach to achieving this is to ensure that, across the full range of activities (as set out in the table opposite), we strive to be a sustainable Christian community, joyfully proclaiming the love of God in worship, outreach, welcome and care.

## Social investment

The Cathedral is not permitted (both by our own constitution and by the Cathedrals Measure 2021) to make use of the power conferred by section 292B of the Charities Act 2011 (social investment power).

## Grant-making

The Cathedral makes donations to certain charities each year as part of our Christian witness and which further our charitable purposes. These donations are made from collections at particular services and from a proportion of regular congregational giving in the form of stewardship.

Small grants are sometimes made, to further the Cathedral's charitable objects. Such grants are made under the Cathedral's grant-making policy, which conforms with Charity Commission guidance.

Ely Cathedral Trust makes very significant grants to the Cathedral each year. It does so under formal grant agreements. It does not make grants to any organisation other than Ely Cathedral.

## Volunteers

Volunteers make a hugely significant and highly valued contribution to the life of the Cathedral. At the end of 2024, we were supported by a total of 416 volunteers in 24 distinct roles. During the course of the year, we were joined by 51 new volunteers (2023: 52).

## Public benefit

The Cathedral Chapter confirms that in its direction and oversight of the administration of the affairs of the Cathedral it has had regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. In so doing, Chapter has ensured that the main activities undertaken by the Cathedral have furthered the Cathedral's purposes for the public benefit. These activities and their relationship to our purposes for the public benefit are outlined on p9.

Those activities shown in the blue and purple boxes directly further our purpose and objectives for the public benefit. Those activities shown in the red boxes do so indirectly.

<p><b>Core purposes</b></p> <p>Being the seat of the Bishop and a centre for worship and mission.</p> <p>Providing a focus for the life and work of the Church of England in the Diocese.</p>	<p><b>Activities:</b></p> <p><b>Celebrating services of baptism, confirmation, ordination, the licensing of lay ministers</b>, and the annual renewal of ordination vows at the Chrism Eucharist.</p> <p><b>Hosting Diocesan services</b> and events for those in the parishes of the Diocese with safeguarding responsibilities.</p> <p><b>Welcoming pupils from schools</b> in the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust to a special Christmas Carol Service.</p> <p><b>Celebrating special and civic events</b>, such as for General Election hustings and an annual justice service.</p> <p><b>Providing free entry to the Cathedral</b> year-round for all those who worship in the parishes of the Diocese and for all on major festivals.</p>
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<p><b>Charitable objectives</b></p> <p>Advancing the Christian religion in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church of England</p>	<p><b>Activities:</b></p> <p>Holding at least three <b>acts of worship</b> every day of the year, including <b>regular choral worship</b>, and <b>livestreaming</b> an average of five services each week.</p> <p>Providing <b>pastoral care</b> to our congregation, pilgrims and visitors.</p> <p>Maintaining a wide programme of <b>Christian education and formation</b> for adults, children and families.</p> <p>Engaging in a range of <b>social issues</b> through lecture series, discussions and preaching.</p> <p>Welcoming members of <b>other Christian denominations</b> as Etheldreda (Ecumenical) Canons of the Cathedral and providing hospitality to other Churches wishing to worship at the Cathedral.</p> <p><b>Caring for God’s created world</b> by reducing our carbon footprint and enhancing biodiversity on the land under our stewardship.</p> <p><b>Providing free entry to the Cathedral</b> year-round for local residents, care workers, children and Cambridgeshire students.</p>
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<p>Caring for and conserving the fabric and structure of the Cathedral Church building</p>	<p><b>Maintaining the Cathedral</b> Church building and the many ancient monastic buildings in the Cathedral precinct under our care.</p> <p>Commissioning and supervising <b>conservation work</b> to preserve the Cathedral for future generations.</p> <p>Undertaking <b>enhancements</b> to improve the appearance, useability, energy-efficiency, safety and ease of maintenance of the Cathedral.</p>
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<p>Advancing any other charitable purposes which relate to the two objectives above</p>	<p>Building on our excellent musical and artistic tradition by <b>acting as a regional venue for concerts, events and exhibitions</b>.</p> <p><b>Making our heritage accessible to the public</b>, supported by interpretation materials, guided tours and a range of information.</p>
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<p><b>Supporting &amp; enabling activities</b></p> <p>Activities which support and enable our core purposes and charitable objectives.</p>	<p><b>Securing resources</b> through fundraising, investment and property management, and the activities of ECEL’s shop and restaurant.</p> <p><b>Working safely and effectively</b> with support from colleagues specialising in safeguarding, health &amp; safety, governance, administration &amp; compliance, finance, technology, communications, and human resources.</p>
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# Our achievements & performance in 2024

On the following pages, we set out our performance in relation to our charitable activities, under these headings:

- **our core purposes**
- our charitable objects:
  - **promoting the Christian religion**
  - **care and conservation of the Cathedral**
  - **acting as a regional centre for the arts**
  - **making our heritage accessible to the public**
- **Supporting and enabling activities** (including finance, reserves, investments, trading operations and fundraising)

So much is achieved in our Cathedral over the course of a year that it is possible only to summarise and draw attention to highlights. Perhaps the most outstanding achievement, though, is in the day-to-day routine cycle of prayer, the provision of pastoral care, and the welcome extended to those who visit.

## **Our core purposes**

*Being the seat of the Bishop and a centre for worship and mission, and providing a focus for the life and work of the Church of England in the Diocese of Ely.*

In addition to our usual pattern of Diocesan services, we were delighted to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the ordination of women as priests in the Church of England.

We held a special service at the Cathedral in November to celebrate the contribution to the Church's ministry of the many women priests who serve - and have served - in the Diocese of Ely. Bishop Dagmar presided, assisted by the Revd Fiona Brampton, who was the youngest of the cohort of women ordained to the priesthood at the Cathedral in May 1994. During the service, the Revd Lynda Davies (Bishop's Advisor for Women's Ministry) interviewed the Revd Claire Brocklesby, who was one of the youngest of the cohort of the Deacons ordained at the Cathedral in July this year.

We were glad to welcome pupils from the family of schools forming the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust ('DEMAT') for their second DEMAT carol service during Advent. We hope that this will become established as a regular feature of Cathedral life.

We continued to offer free meeting space to the Diocese of Ely, particularly to provide facilities for the delivery of face-to-face safeguarding training.

We said farewell - and an enormous thank you - to Canon Jessica Martin, who left the Cathedral to take up her new role as Dean of Chelmsford on 5 January 2025. For much of 2024, Jessica was also acting as one of two theological advisors to the House of Bishops. We know that the national Church is very grateful for her work in this area.

We have been delighted to welcome the Revd Canon Jenny Wright (former Chaplain to the Archbishop of York), who was appointed in succession to Jessica, and was installed in May 2025.

Our place in the public square was underscored when we hosted a hustings in June for candidates in the July general election. 800 people attended, with a further 1,000+ views online, for which we provided British Sign Language interpretation. Former Cabinet Secretary, Lord Wilson chaired the event. He was appointed High Bailiff of the Cathedral on the Feast of St Etheldreda, in recognition of his former service as Chair of the Cathedral Council.

## **Promoting the Christian religion**

**The worship of God**, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is at the core of Cathedral life. Throughout 2024, we maintained our daily pattern of worship. This involved celebrating 1,378 regular services (2023: 1,188) during the year. Of these, 240 (2023: 257) were livestreamed.

Patterns in attendance are hard to discern. Attendance at all Christmas services (4,100) was up 21% compared with 2023, whilst attendance at all Easter services (1,300) was down 7%. Attendance of 14,200 at services during Advent and Holy Week was 16% higher compared with 2023.



*One of more than 25 pieces by renowned British sculptor Sean Henry on display in the Cathedral in the summer of 2024.*



*A service in September 2024 at which Paul Trepte was made Organist Emeritus after 29 years as Director of Music.*

The contribution of the Cathedral's musicians and choirs to our worshipping life cannot be overstated. Choral worship is at the heart of our worship, with over 250 sung services each year.

Our volunteer adult choir (Ely Cathedral Octagon Singers) and children's choir (the Ely Imps) are singing in larger numbers than ever, with over 200 people regularly singing in the Cathedral in 2024.

Our talented Assistant Director of Music, Glen Dempsey, sadly left us in 2024. We feel very fortunate to have been joined by Jeremy Lloyd, who is proving to be equally impressive in this role.

We devote very significant resources to maintaining our choral tradition. In 2024, we spent £593,000 (2023: £559,000) on the direct costs of this aspect of Cathedral life. We are very grateful to Ely Cathedral Trust for the very significant financial contribution it makes towards sustaining the Cathedral's music.

**Our work with children and families** forms a central part of our activities. In 2024, we added a new member of staff to the Learning Team to provide extra support to our successful *Little Gargoyles* and *Home Educators History Club*.

We created dedicated space and new resources, including sensory trails, to support children with special education needs and disabilities. This led to Philippa Stevens (our Director of Learning) being invited to share our expertise in this area at the annual conference of the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom.

In 2024, around 3,000 schoolchildren visited the Cathedral for tours and learning activities. There were a further 4,300 engagements recorded of children and families with regular events such as *Discovery Days*, *Secret Garden Stories*, *Lego Café* and *Boardroom Café*.

The Learning Team, with an incredible group of volunteers, created a new Mary Garden bordering the Cathedral's East Lawn. The garden is full of plants and flowers associated with the Virgin Mary through their colours, symbolic meaning or the legends and stories attached to them. 12,000 flowering bulbs were planted, all chosen as being friendly for pollinating insects.

Our autumn **programme of worship, prayer and Christian formation** in 2024 was on the theme of *Proclaim the Message: Preachers and Teachers*. It enabled our speakers to engage their expertise on politics, the environment and matters of justice.

We were pleased to welcome Sir Laurie Bristow, formerly HM Ambassador to Russia, to give Amnesty International's Ben Jupp Memorial Lecture on the subject of *Why did we fail in Afghanistan? And why does it matter?*.

**Our care for the environment** focuses on reducing our carbon dioxide emissions and increasing biodiversity on the land we care for.

We were delighted to be awarded A Rocha UK's Eco Church award at gold level in 2024. Ely was the third cathedral to achieve this, and we were very pleased to be joined in this group by Chichester Cathedral in November 2024. We are hugely grateful to the many volunteers who have helped us to reach this point, in particular Rebecca Mundy and Bob Skelton, as members both of the RENEW group and Chapter's Environment Working Group.

Building on the results of a survey carried out in 2022, we have continued to make good progress on planning our route to achieving net zero carbon emissions. JG Consulting worked with us in 2024 to identify how to reduce carbon dioxide emissions associated with energy use in the Almonry Kitchen (our restaurant), the Black Hostelry (one of our clergy residences), and the Deanery & Chapter House complex, each by around 80%. Our progress in reducing our carbon footprint since 2019 is set out on pp32-34).

In the autumn, we were pleased to secure funding from the Church of England Net Zero Demonstrator Fund and from Ely Cathedral Trust to put into action the detailed decarbonisation plans for the Almonry Kitchen. This work was undertaken in March 2025 (after the balance sheet date) and we will be able to report on its effects next year.

We held our second Environmental Memorial Lecture in 2024. This was set up in memory of the Revd Jenny Gage who was the Cathedral's Minister for Social Justice until her death in 2022. This second address was delivered by Canon Dr Peter Brotherton, Director of Science at Natural England, on the subject of *Climate Change and Nature loss: twin crises, shared solutions*.

We have continued to support biodiversity in the Cathedral precinct by maintaining a wildflower bed and planting the new Mary Garden on the East Lawn. We were pleased to receive permission in 2024 to plant local varieties of fruit trees on the Dean's Paddock. This was completed in January 2025, after the balance sheet date.

## Care and conservation of the Cathedral

In 2024, we continued to undertake significant repair and conservation works to the Cathedral and the monastic buildings in the precinct.

The replacement of all **interior lighting** in the Cathedral began in July 2022 and was completed in November 2024. This project has radically improving the lighting of the interior for worship, events and visitors whilst also reducing - by an estimated 80% - the use of electricity for lighting. The scheme has been shortlisted in the lighting design industry's *darc awards*.

Careful recording, conservation and repair work was undertaken on the intricately carved sixteenth century **stone screens of Bishop Alcock's and Bishop West's Chapels**. Detached mouldings from the door arch of Bishop West's Chapel were reinstated, along with other loose elements, and much polychrome was revealed and recorded.

Statues partially hidden behind the intricately carved canopies of Bishop Alcock's Chapel screen were recorded. These yielded new insights into the intended decorative scheme.

Following work undertaken in 2024, the cameras used for **live streaming services** are now mounted on custom-made brackets in key locations within the Octagon and Choir, enabling a more permanent and discreet presence for the system.

A significant programme of conservation and repair was undertaken in 2024 on the **Almonry Range**, thanks to funding from Ely Cathedral Trust. This was part of the original monastic college, dating back to the thirteenth or early fourteenth century. From this building, alms were given from the monastic community to the poor, in the form of food and money.

This phase of work focussed on the north and east elevations of the Almonry Range. The project involved significant repairs to the ancient façade by highly skilled contractors.

During the works we uncovered the carved mouldings of the Almonry's east lancet windows and discovered decorative medieval painted detail within the reveals. These are important surviving remnants of the Chapel of St. Martin which stood above the medieval Almonry.

The paint fragments were carefully recorded and conserved in situ before the openings were carefully packed out and lime-rendered to ensure their protection and conservation.

## Acting as a regional venue for concerts, events and exhibitions

The Cathedral hosted over 70 events in 2024 and welcomed around 70,000 people to enjoy a wide range of experiences including recitals, concerts, exhibitions, book launches, corporate dinners and lectures.

In February, we hosted *Crown & Coronation*, our first immersive light and sound show with Luxmuralis. Over 7,000 visitors experienced the show, featuring images on the theme of coronations and the reigns of our kings and queens.

Throughout the early spring, we displayed an exhibition in the Lady Chapel: *A Celebration of Bridal Gowns*. This exhibition was very successful with visitors and featured on regional television and the national press.

Alongside our more traditional programme of concerts and recitals, we welcomed around 13,000 visitors to a series of sell-out tribute band performances including Queen and Coldplay, as well as silent discos. These alternative music events have clearly supported us in attracting a more diverse range of people to enjoy the Cathedral as a venue.

Renowned British sculpture Sean Henry exhibited over 25 hand-painted bronze and terracotta sculptures in and around the Cathedral throughout the summer, under the title of *Am I my brother's keeper?*

The sculptures of human figures were strikingly realistic, but ranged in size from 30cm to 3m. Imaginative use was made of empty niches and plinths throughout the Cathedral, creating a striking effect for the 35,000 visitors to the Cathedral in the ten-week period of the exhibition.

As in every recent year, the Christmas Gift and Food Fair was our single biggest event. We again slightly reduced daily numbers to improve both safety and the enjoyment of visitors. Around 17,000 (2023: 18,000) people visited during the course of the fair, which generated a net financial contribution of around £120,000 towards the Cathedral's work and ministry.

### Making our heritage accessible to the public

Over the course of the year, we received around 110,000 visits from members of the public during normal opening hours (2023: 118,000).

As part of our public benefit, we continue to provide free access to large numbers of visitors. In 2024, around 33,900 or 31% (2023: 27%) of those visiting paid no entry fee. We continue to offer free entry to local residents, those who worship in the parish churches of the Diocese of Ely, Cambridgeshire students, children and care workers.

It is, of course, always free to come to pray or to attend any of the hundreds of acts of worship that take place here each year. On certain days of the year (including Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Harvest Festival and Christmas) admission is free to everybody who comes.

We were absolutely delighted to welcome around 3,000 local people to our inaugural open day in September. Clergy, staff and volunteers showcased some of what goes on at the Cathedral and answered questions about our work here.

In March 2024, we launched new multi-media digital guides, enabling visitors to experience a self-guided tour of the Cathedral at their own pace, offered in six different languages as well as British Sign Language and an audio descriptive tour. Visitors can choose from the *Main Tour*, a shorter *Highlights Tour* or a *Family Tour* with child-friendly content featuring an animated character from a figure carved in the Cathedral, Ember the Dragon.

As well as providing interactive content and an engaging tour of the Cathedral, these new handsets provide behind-the-scenes footage of areas not usually open to the public, along with interviews with clergy, staff and volunteers to help reveal to visitors the breadth of daily life in a busy cathedral.

We were assured by professional advisors that the introduction of digital media guides would increase, not decrease, the number of in-person guided tours requested by visitors. This proved to be right. In 2024, 14,000 visitors received an in-person guided tour of the Cathedral, up 10% from 12,700 the year before.

In 2024, we introduced a new *Hidden Heights Tour*, showcasing to visitors the Cathedral's magnificent roof spaces. This tour also enables visitors to walk the entire length of the nave, but at ceiling height.

### Supporting activities

During the course of 2024, we substantially completed a multi-year programme of investment in **technology** at the Cathedral, which increasingly underpins everything else that takes place here. This has involved the laying of around 500 metres of fibre optic cable, the overhaul of an ageing CCTV system, new print and telephony systems, improved cyber-security, new firewalls, much better wireless coverage, better resilience and improved fail-over and back-up arrangements.

In 2024, we introduced new software to communicate more effectively with our incredible team of 416 volunteers. We also began a project to improve how we can use the data we manage to communicate more effectively with those who are interested in the life and work of the Cathedral.

A wide range of colleagues is involved in supporting us to be the **safest place we can to worship, work, volunteer and visit**.

We are grateful to the fire service for their programme of familiarisation visits, which included in 2024 a practice rescue from the Cathedral roof - as well as checking that a new fire engine really can fit through the archway of the medieval Porta.

We are grateful too for the (almost wholly unseen) work of the Civil Contingencies Unit and Counter-Terrorism Police for their support behind the scenes, particularly as we prepare to implement new measures which will come into effect to make all venues safer if terrorists strike.

In 2024 we began a project to reduce, improve and make more accessible the **signage in and around the Cathedral**. This involves reviewing, removing and re-writing or replacing a very large number of signs across the Cathedral estate. We do not envisage completing this work until 2026, but it is already having a very positive impact for visitors of all kinds, and on the appearance of the Cathedral and its grounds.

We regularly light the Octagon Tower in various colours (with supporting social media content) to **highlight and support the work of national and regional charities**. Sixteen charities were supported by us in this way in 2024.

## Financial review

As outlined on p7, we are responsible for securing our own financial sustainability. We achieve this both by earning income from the assets and resources available to us, and through our own fundraising efforts - including the kind support of many individuals and charitable bodies.

In the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021, we protected the core functions of the Cathedral, undertook energetic fundraising and invested in major repairs and digital infrastructure. We emerged in decent financial shape, but with day-to-day costs that are higher than our regular income. We set out to address this challenge.

A period of high inflation in 2022-23 delayed us in our progress towards achieving a surplus of reliable income over routine expenditure. Nevertheless, in 2024, we continued our work to grow income faster than costs. We reduced our operating deficit from £371,000 (10% of income) in 2023 to £123,000 (3% of income) in 2024.

We also secured funding for a range of projects for conservation, development and mission.

## Income

We continued to grow income from visitors, events, our shop, restaurant and property portfolio, as investments and innovation over the last few years continue to take effect. Having grown by 10% from £1,124,000 in 2022 to £1,241,000 in 2023, this grew by a further 20% in 2024, to £1,483,000.

Donations include very significant sums from The Friends of Ely Cathedral and from Ely Cathedral Trust for projects and major works. As our major lighting project reached its final stages towards the end of 2024, so did the flow of funds to pay for this. This is the main reason for the fall in donations from £1,944,000 in 2023 to £1,261,000 in 2024.

## Expenditure

Expenditure on Cathedral and precincts upkeep decreased in 2024 by 18%, from £1,822,000 to £1,489,000. Much of this decrease is accounted for by the completion of projects outlined on p14, and is associated with lower income to fund those projects, as outlined above.

All other expenditure decreased by 1% from £2,419,000 to £2,394,000. Although underlying costs continued to increase because of rising pay and general inflation, a number of one-off items (including timing differences on income and expenditure relating to projects) more than offset this effect in the financial statements.

## The future

In 2025, we plan to complete the process of growing income faster than costs, so that the Cathedral's routine expenditure is met by regular and reliable income. We consider this to be essential to securing the Cathedral's long-term sustainability.

We have factored into our plans the need to pay an extra £65,000 each year in employer's national insurance costs. We are fortunate to be unaffected directly by the introduction of VAT on the school fees of our choristers and by a new cap on the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

Nevertheless, there are significant risks and uncertainties ahead, which has informed a recent review of our reserves policy. It is important to us that we have the financial resilience to meet future challenges with confidence.

## Reserves and investments

A detailed review of the Cathedral and group reserves position is set out on pp28-29. Investment performance is reviewed on p27.

## Trading operations

During 2024, our shop and restaurant were managed within Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd ('ECEL'). The company donates its profits to the Cathedral as well as paying rent and making an appropriate contribution to overheads on arm's-length terms.

In late 2024, we exchanged heads of terms with the Cambridge Dining Company Ltd (a local, independent catering and café business) to enter into a partnership to run the restaurant on our behalf.

The restaurant closed for refurbishment on 3 March 2025 (after the balance sheet date) and re-opened as planned on 8 April 2025. The existing staff team all transferred to the Cambridge Dining Company, and we look forward to working together in this new way.

## Fundraising

The focus of our fundraising efforts are:

- to secure funds from charitable trusts and foundations for project-related activity
- to make best use of opportunities to attract donations from the many people who visit the Cathedral, and
- to minimise reductions in planned and regular giving during a period of increased cost-of-living and reduced household means.

# Future plans

## Planned activities

We publish our plans for the future in *The Ministry of our Cathedral*, which is available on our website.

We describe the ministry of our Cathedral in four parts:

### Our purpose, objects, vision and mission

Our fundamental role in society, our aims, our day-to-day being and our hopes for the future.

### Our core challenge

This is our key priority for change. Our approach, and the specific actions we'll take.

### Responding to change in the world

Addressing climate change, meeting the needs of a digital future, and reforming ourselves to become more accountable and transparent.

### Delivering our core ministry

The heart of 'being Ely Cathedral'. These are our central, ongoing activities at the heart of what it is to be Ely Cathedral.

### Immediate aims & objectives

In relation to our **core purposes**, in 2025 we will continue to do all that is set out on p9 and - with external professional support - develop a new vision for the Cathedral's future.

When it met in 2024, the Crown Nominations Committee was not able to reach the level of consensus needed to nominate a new Bishop of Ely. We hope that the College of Canons will be asked to gather and elect the 70th Bishop of Ely at some point in 2025.

With regard to our **charitable purposes**, we plan to continue to build up the work of the learning team, extending our work with children and families and introduce a more diverse range of people to the worshipping life of the Cathedral.

Having secured funds in 2024 to pay for a post to widen participation in the musical life of the Cathedral, we plan to make an appointment to this post in 2025.

In relation to caring **for the Cathedral church building**, we expect to complete the development of a new space to house those archives which we keep on site. This will enable the transfer of the archives to this space in 2026.

Having completed exploratory conservation and cleaning work to the High Altar reredos in 2024, we plan to secure funding to undertake conservation work in 2025 on this important piece by Gilbert-Scott.

We will fundraise for conservation work to windows in the choir and St Etheldreda's Chapel and a major refurbishment of the Cathedral organ. We hope too to secure funds to undertake a metric survey of the Cathedral church building at multiple levels.

We plan to undertake repairs to the stone floors in the Cathedral, particularly in the nave aisles, the octagon and north choir aisle. We will also complete the refurbishing of St Catherine's Chapel.

In respect of the **environment**, we will share with other cathedrals learning from the installation of an air source heat pump in the Cathedral restaurant (the Almonry Kitchen) in early 2025 (after the balance sheet date).

We will complete in 2025 the development of detailed plans to reduce carbon dioxide emissions for each of our in-scope buildings. The exception is the Cathedral church building itself, which continues to present a seemingly insurmountable challenge.

We will continue to implement our land management plan in the Cathedral precinct.

Alongside plans to complete a multi-year programme of technology upgrades, we will (with external professional support) further develop our digital communications in 2025. Finally, we plan to complete the task of closing the gap between our routine expenditure and the regular, reliable income we receive, and perhaps even move to a small surplus.

# Structure, governance & management

## How we are constituted

Ely Cathedral is an ecclesiastical corporation with perpetual succession and a common seal.

The governing body of the Cathedral is Chapter.

Our governing document takes the form of a constitution and supporting statutes, adopted in their revised form on 31 October 2022. These comply with the Cathedrals Measure 2021 and are published on our website.

## Our relationship with the Bishop and Diocese

The Cathedral is the mother church of the Diocese of Ely, seat of the Bishop, and a focus for the life of the Church of England in the Diocese.

The Bishop has the principal seat and dignity in the Cathedral, holds visitatorial jurisdiction over us and regularly presides over and preaches at services.

We consult the Bishop annually, at a special meeting of Chapter, on the direction and mission of the Cathedral.

## The Church of England

The Cathedral is a Church of England body and is therefore subject to ecclesiastical law, including the canons of the Church of England. The Cathedral is a member of the Association of English Cathedrals, an unincorporated association representing the interests of English Anglican cathedrals.

## Recruitment and appointment of Chapter members (trustees)

Chapter consists of the Dean and three Residentiary Canons (being executive members) and a larger number (currently six) of non-executive members.

The Dean is appointed by His Majesty. The Residentiary Canons and one non-executive member of Chapter (thereby being the Senior Non-Executive Member) are appointed by the Bishop of Ely. The remaining non-executive members of Chapter are appointed by Chapter itself, on the advice of its Nominations Committee, a statutory committee of Chapter.

The members of Chapter are listed on p20.

## Decision-making

Chapter sets out in a scheme of delegation those matters it reserves to itself and those that are delegated to committees, the Senior Management Team, or senior officers.

The scheme of delegation sets out provisions for urgent decision making and the reporting of such decisions to Chapter.

The scheme of delegation is published on the Cathedral website.

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible to Chapter for drafting a governance calendar each year to ensure that Chapter considers in the course of the year all key areas of responsibility.

## Committees of Chapter

Members of Committees are listed on p20.

A **Finance Committee** advises Chapter on matters of finance, investment and reserves.

A **Nominations Committee** advises Chapter on governance appointments and advises on training, skills, knowledge & experience and diversity.

An **Audit & Risk Committee** oversees financial reporting, audit, risk-management, cyber and data security and whistleblowing.

Chapter is guided by a **Safeguarding Advisory Group**, with an independent chair.

## The College of Canons

The College of Canons consists of the Bishop of Huntingdon, the Dean and Residentiary Canons, the Archdeacons of the Diocese, up to 25 Honorary Canons (clergy) appointed by the Bishop and up to 14 Lay Canons appointed by the Bishop.

Canons join in our worship and act as ambassadors for the Cathedral. The College of Canons has the responsibility of formally electing the Bishop of Ely, after the Bishop has been nominated for election by The King. Since the implementation of the Cathedrals Measure 2021, the College of Canons does not form part of the corporate body of the Cathedral, nor has a role in our governance.

## Induction and training

New members of Chapter are provided with copies of the Cathedral's constitution and statutes, our most recent annual report and financial statements, minutes of recent Chapter meetings, and other relevant documents. New members of Chapter are provided with opportunities to meet fellow members of Chapter outside formal meetings and supported in meeting members of the Cathedral's senior employees as part of their induction.

All new members of Chapter are encouraged to participate in training provided by the Association of English Cathedrals to acquaint them with the role, function and responsibilities of Chapter.

Refresher training on charity governance was provided to Chapter members in October 2024 by the solicitors (Winckworth Sherwood) who supported us in implementing the Cathedrals Measure 2021, in October 2022.

## Governance code

The Cathedral has adopted the Cathedral Governance Code issued by the Association of English Cathedrals. Chapter periodically reviews its application of the code, which was re-issued in January 2021. Chapter undertook an assessment of progress in applying the code in August 2022.

## Remuneration of key management personnel

The stipends (pay) of the Dean and Residentiary Canons are regulated by the Central Stipends Authority of the Church of England, in line with the Central Stipends Authority Regulation 1998. Chapter determines the remuneration of the Chief Operating Officer, on the advice of the Dean. The remuneration of senior staff (the Chief Finance Officer and department directors) is determined by Chapter on the advice of the Chief Operating Officer. Pay is set with regard to the pay of equivalent roles in English cathedrals of similar standing and with regard to the relevant job market locally.

## Ely Cathedral Trust

Ely Cathedral Trust is an unincorporated charitable trust, registered with the Charity Commission under charity registration number 264803. The Trustees of Ely Cathedral Trust are the Dean and between six and nine others, appointed by Chapter and may include a further two members of Chapter. The Trustees are listed on p22.

## Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd

Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd is a private company limited by shares, registered with Companies House under company registration number 01988081. Ely Cathedral is the sole member (shareholder). The Directors of Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd are appointed by Chapter and by convention include the Dean, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Communications & Commerce. The Directors are listed on p22.

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## Auditors and professional advisors

The Cathedral and our related entities retained auditors and professional advisors throughout 2024 as set out below.

### Auditors

#### Price Bailey LLP

Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors  
6 High Street, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB7 4JU

### Solicitors

#### Howes Percival LLP

Terrington House, 13/15 Hills Road,  
Cambridge CB2 1NL

### Bankers

#### Barclays Bank Plc

1 Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

### Investment managers to Ely Cathedral

#### Quilter Cheviot Limited

One Kingsway, London WC2B 6AN

### Investment managers to Ely Cathedral Trust

#### CCLA Investment Management Limited

80 Cheapside, London EC2V 6DZ

### Property agents

#### Cheffins

1-2 Clifton Road, Cambridge CB1 7EA

### Health & safety advisor

#### Triquetra EHS Consultancy Ltd

48 College Road, Hoddesdon EN11 9DJ

# Office holders in 2024 and at the date of this report

## The Acting Bishop of Ely and Visitor of the Cathedral

The Right Reverend Dr Dagmar Winter, Bishop of Huntingdon

## The Dean of Ely

The Very Reverend Mark Bonney DL

## The Cathedral Chapter

### Executive members:

#### The Dean and Residentiary Canons

The Very Reverend Mark Bonney DL\*

The Reverend Canon James Garrard\*

The Reverend Canon Jessica Martin *(until 5 January 2025)*

The Reverend Canon James Reveley\*

The Reverend Canon Jenny Wright\* *(from 4 May 2025)*

### Non-Executive Members:

The Reverend Canon Tom Buchanan

Canon Francis Burkitt DL \*\*

Canon Sarah Burles

Canon Dr Felicity Cooke

Canon Sir Jonathan Jones KCB KC (hon)

Canon Tim Walters

*(until 28 June 2024 and from 11 July 2024)*

*By virtue of s 8(4) of the Cathedrals Measure 2021, the members of Chapter are the charity trustees for the purposes of the Charities Act 2011.*

*\*\* Canon Francis Burkitt DL is the Senior Non-Executive Member of Chapter, by virtue of his appointment by the Bishop of Ely.*

## Chief Officers

### Chief Operating Officer & Chapter Clerk

Jonathan Bell FCA DChA \*

### Chief Finance Officer

Alison Binstead FCA \*

### Director of Communications & Commerce

Lesley Ann Thompson \*

*\*Members of the Senior Management Group.*

## Committees of Chapter

### Finance Committee

Canon Tim Walters (Chair) *(until 28 June 2024 and from 11 July 2024)*

Canon Francis Burkitt DL

William Dastur FCA

Adrian Kyndt

George Lynn FCA

The Revd Canon Jessica Martin *(until 5 January 2025)*

Isobel Newport-Mangell

The Revd Canon James Reveley *(from 31 October 2024)*

### Audit & Risk Committee

George Lynn FCA (Chair)

Eleanor Ashenden-Field Chartered MCS1

Canon Sir Jonathan Jones KCB KC (hon)

The Revd Canon James Reveley *(until 30 October 2024)*

## Statutory office holders

### Director of Music

Edmund Aldhouse FRCO

### Surveyor to the Fabric

Clive England RIBA

### Cathedral Archaeologist

Dr Roland B Harris FSA MCIfA

## Safeguarding

### Independent Chair of Ely Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Group

Jon Chapman *(until 10 April 2025)*

### Chapter Safeguarding Lead

The Revd Canon James Reveley

### Nominations Committee

The Revd Canon Tom Buchanan (Chair)

The Very Revd Mark Bonney DL (Dean)

Canon Dr Felicity Cooke

Canon Paul Evans *(until 30 October 2024)*

Canon Simon Kershaw *(from 31 October 2024)*



*The Dean and Residentiary Canons, summer 2024.*

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## Trustees of Ely Cathedral Trust

David Green (Chair)  
The Very Revd Mark Bonney DL (Dean)  
Canon Paul Evans  
The Revd Canon James Garrard  
Peter Garside  
Jane Lewin-Smith DL JP  
Isobel Newport-Mangell  
Ian Pattinson  
The Revd Canon Sir Ralph Waller KBE

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## Fabric Advisory Committee

Richard Halsey FSA MBE (Chair)  
Hugh Richmond FSA  
Dr Julian Litten FSA FSAScot (*until 20 October 2024*)  
Prof Dr Claudia Marx  
Jeremy Musson FSA  
Dr Helen Lunnon FSA  
Scilla Latham  
The Rt Revd Stephen Platten FSA

### Secretary

David Stazicker BEM (*until 18 October 2024*)  
Rebecca Mundy (*from 18 October 2024*)

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## Ely Cathedral Enterprises Limited

### Company Secretary

Alison Binstead FCA (Chief Finance Officer) (*Chair*)

### Directors

The Very Revd Mark Bonney DL (Dean)  
Jonathan Bell FCA DChA (Chief Operating Officer)  
Adrian Kyndt  
Lesley Ann Thompson (Director of Communications & Commerce)



*Hustings for the July 2024 general election, chaired by Lord Wilson of Dinton.*

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## The College of Canons

*Members of the College at the date of this report are listed below.*

### Ex officio

The Rt Revd Dr Dagmar Winter  
 The Very Revd Mark Bonney DL  
 The Revd Canon James Garrard  
 The Revd Canon James Reveley  
 The Revd Canon Jenny Wright  
 The Ven Alex Hughes  
 The Ven Richard Harlow

### Honorary Canons

The Revd Canon James Blandford-Baker  
 The Revd Canon Nicki Bland  
 The Revd Canon Fiona Brampton  
 The Revd Canon Tom Buchanan  
 The Revd Canon Becky Dyball  
 The Revd Canon Philip Howson  
 The Revd Canon Alexander Jensen  
 The Revd Canon David Karoon  
 The Revd Canon Philipa King  
 The Revd Canon Sarah Gower  
 The Revd Canon Robert Mackley  
 The Revd Canon David Maher  
 The Revd Canon Nick Moir  
 The Revd Canon David Male  
 The Revd Canon Jeremy Morris  
 The Revd Canon Annette Read  
 The Revd Canon James Shakespeare  
 The Revd Canon Janice Smith  
 The Revd Canon Wendy Thomson  
 The Revd Canon Eleanor Williams

### Lay Canons

Canon John Attwater  
 Canon Francis Burkitt DL  
 Canon Sarah Burles  
 Canon Dr Felicity Cooke  
 Canon Alex Gullon  
 Canon Sir Jonathan Jones KCB KC (hon)  
 Canon Simon Kershaw  
 Canon Loretta Minghella  
 Canon Robert Needle  
 Canon Elizabeth Taylor  
 Canon Lisa Turner  
 Canon Tim Walters  
 Canon Catherine Watts




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## Etheldreda (ecumenical) Canons

*In addition to members of the College of Canons, the Bishop has appointed a number of Etheldreda Canons from the Catholic, Baptist and Methodist Churches.*

The Rt Revd Peter Collins, Bishop of East Anglia

The Revd Canon Gale Richards

The Revd Canon Sir Ralph Waller KBE

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## Cathedral dignitaries

### High Bailiff

The Rt Hon The Lord Wilson of Dinton GCB

# Safeguarding

## Statement of compliance

We confirm that we have complied with the duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

## Principles

Ely Cathedral:

- is committed to safeguarding all those who attend worship and other activities
- accepts the prime duty of care for children and vulnerable adults
- follows recommended safeguarding practice in recruiting, training and supporting our ordained and lay ministers, our employees and our volunteers.
- follows the advice, guidance, policy and practice of the Church of England in promoting a safer church. The Church of England safeguarding policy statement for children, young people and adults is available on our website.

## Roles & responsibilities

The Reverend Canon James Reveley is Chapter Safeguarding Lead, a role he holds on behalf of the Dean, who holds overall responsibility for safeguarding. The Residentiary Canons, the Chief Operating Officer and other departmental managers have safeguarding responsibilities.

Since 2023, the Revd Canon Tom Buchanan has held the role of non-executive safeguarding link. In this capacity, he acts as a point of communication between Chapter's non-executive members and safeguarding professionals on emerging safeguarding matters.

Every formal meeting of Chapter receives a safeguarding report. In 2018, Chapter introduced a new structure for safeguarding in line with guidance from the House of Bishops. In 2023, Chapter adopted an updated safeguarding strategy, reflecting revised national guidance. This is being implemented during the course of 2024-2026.

The Cathedral retains a qualified Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor who is managed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. Safeguarding administration is undertaken by the Cathedral's human resources team and Volunteer Manager.

The role of the Cathedral's Safeguarding Advisory Group is outlined overleaf.

## External audit and action plan

The Social Care Institute for Excellence audited the Cathedral's safeguarding arrangements and reported to Chapter in August 2019. A safeguarding action plan was produced to strengthen areas of our arrangements. The implementation of this plan was overseen by the Cathedral's Safeguarding Advisory Group and completed in 2023.

The Cathedral's safeguarding arrangement will next be externally audited, by INEQE, in February 2026.

## Information sharing agreements

The Cathedral is party to an information sharing framework agreement which enables safeguarding information to be shared appropriately between the Cathedral and other institutions of the Church of England and Church in Wales, as well as with the police forces of the United Kingdom.

We have also entered into an information sharing agreement with INEQE. INEQE has been appointed by the Archbishops' Council to audit the safeguarding arrangements of Church of England dioceses and cathedrals. This agreement facilitates the 2026 Cathedral safeguarding audit.

## Cathedral Safeguarding Handbook

Our handbook is reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Advisory Group. Chapter has the responsibility of approving recommended changes, which it generally undertakes in March each year.

### **Safer recruitment**

Our human resources team supports the embedding of consistent recruitment practice across the Cathedral.

During 2023, 45 Disclosure and Barring Service ('DBS') checks were processed by either the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, or by uCheck, for the Cathedral. We require enhanced DBS checks for those engaged in certain regulated activities, in line with Church of England guidance.

Any new employee and volunteer requiring an enhanced DBS check must also complete a confidential declaration, repeated every three years.

### **Training**

Safeguarding training is delivered under the House of Bishops' Learning and Development Framework 2021.

Some safeguarding training is delivered in-person and some is delivered online. Training is provided at different levels (basic awareness, foundation and leadership) and for particular areas (domestic abuse and safer recruitment).

Those who have been trained must repeat training at the most advanced level every three years.

In 2024, 58 training modules were delivered to members of staff and 95 to volunteers.

### **Safeguarding Advisory Group**

This group meets three times a year and has an independent chair. Membership consists of representatives from each Cathedral department, Diocesan Safeguarding Team members, a lay member with statutory safeguarding experience, the Head of King's Ely Junior School and the Designated Safeguarding Lead at King's Ely.

The group facilitates discussion of safeguarding issues, drawing on a wide range of professional experience and expertise. It also offers advice, support and guidance on safeguarding policy and practice.

We take this opportunity to thank Jon Chapman, who has chaired the Safeguarding Advisory Group since its inception, and stood down in 2025 (after the balance sheet date).

### **Cathedral Safeguarding Officers meeting**

This group is chaired by the Chapter Safeguarding Lead and attended by representatives from the Cathedral departments. Its chief purpose is to embed in practical terms safeguarding policies and practice, and provide a forum for raising challenges to practical implementation, which can be raised with the Safeguarding Advisory Group.

### **Cathedral Safeguarding Network**

This is a national group, established in August 2020. It is a forum in which Cathedrals can discuss matters relevant to safeguarding within a cathedral setting. The Chapter Safeguarding Lead and Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor attended meetings in 2024 on behalf of the Cathedral and we participated in the sub-group for Chapter Safeguarding Leads.

### **Risk assessments & safeguarding agreements**

We welcome everyone to participate in our worship and life as a Cathedral, including those who may pose a risk to other people. Therefore, the holistic assessment of risks and the development of effective approaches to manage them is central to all safeguarding work. Our risk assessments are often complex, requiring partnership work with agencies such as social care authorities, probation services and the police.

Safeguarding agreements are informed by the Church of England's standard risk analysis and assessment template.

### **Casework**

During 2024, eleven contacts for advice (six in 2023) were logged by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in relation to the Cathedral. None met the threshold for referral to a statutory agency. They related to concerns around adult behaviour (2), mental health and financial or domestic abuse (8), and advice for a survivor of historical abuse (1). None of these contacts related to concerns about the conduct of our clergy or staff.

These eleven concerns were managed in line with the approach set out in our safeguarding handbook. Seven were resolved and closed during 2024.

### **Casework management**

The Cathedral makes use of a national casework management system *MyConcern*, which was implemented in 2022. The system facilitates a standardised approach to recording, storing, accessing, sharing and managing information about safeguarding cases. This has involved the transfer of information from all paper records onto this system and the subsequent destruction of paper records.

### **Reporting**

As well as this public-facing report of our safeguarding arrangements and activities, Chapter submits a more detailed report annually to the Bishop.

Our 2024 safeguarding report was submitted to the Bishop on 31 March 2025 following its review and approval by Chapter earlier that day.

*The Cathedral Choristers in September 2024*



# Fundraising, finance & risk

## Fundraising standards

We raise funds from the public. We therefore report under s62 of the Charities Act 2011 as follows:

- We undertake fundraising making use of our own internal resources. In 2024 we did not commission any external professional fundraiser or commercial participator, nor did we engage in door-to-door, street, or telephone fundraising. We actively recruit supporters and aim to develop long-term relationships with them. We raise money from charitable trusts and foundations, grant-making organisations and businesses. We ask people to consider leaving a gift to Ely Cathedral Trust in their wills. We raise money by organising and hosting events.
- We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and have committed to follow the Fundraising Code of Practice. We use the code when training and supporting volunteer fundraisers.
- Chapter monitors our fundraising activities and no non-compliance was found in 2024.
- We received no complaints in 2024 about our fundraising activities.
- We have adopted the principles of data protection law and we have policies to protect the data of vulnerable people and other members of the public from (a) unreasonable intrusion on privacy; (b) unreasonable persistent approaches for the purpose of soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property on our behalf and (c) placing undue pressure on a person.

## Investments (Cathedral only)

We hold certain funds in line with our reserves policy and certain funds as permanent endowment. We therefore have funds available for investment. Our investment powers are set out in the Cathedrals Measure 2021. Chapter may invest the Cathedral's funds in: land; funds constituted under the Church Funds Investment Measure 1958;

investments which fall under general powers of investment in the Trustee Act 2000; and the improvement or development of our property.

Aside from (a) cash balances, which at the year-end were £89,000 (2023: £84,000) and (b) our investment property, our funds are held in an investment portfolio. Our investment policy is reviewed annually and performance is monitored by the Finance Committee and reported to Chapter.

Our overall investment objectives are to:

- create sufficient income to contribute adequately to our mission and the cost of maintaining our heritage buildings and
- maintain and, if possible, enhance the value of retained investment funds.

Unrestricted income and capital may be used at any time to further our aims.

## Performance compared to benchmarks

In 2024 the investment portfolio generated a positive total return of 11.7% (2023: 11.9%). We monitor three comparators and outperformed two of these in 2024:

- CPI inflation plus 3.5% = 6.2% (2023: 7.6%)
- A composite of market indices = 12.9% (2023: 11.1%)
- The steady growth charity index published by Asset Risk Consultants = 8.8% (2023: 7.5%)

## Risk appetite

Moderate-to-high risk profile (modified from 'moderate' risk profile in 2024).

## Ethical policy

We do not invest our funds in firms with significant income derived from arms, tar sands or thermal coal, alcohol, gambling, pornography, tobacco, high-interest lending or human embryonic cloning.

We also exclude investment in firms (a) with any significant income from fossil fuel extraction or (b) whose operations, knowingly or unintentionally, cause or contribute to the abuse of human rights.

### Long term financial perspective

Given the expectation that the Cathedral will exist in perpetuity, we adopt a long-term approach to the Cathedral’s finances.

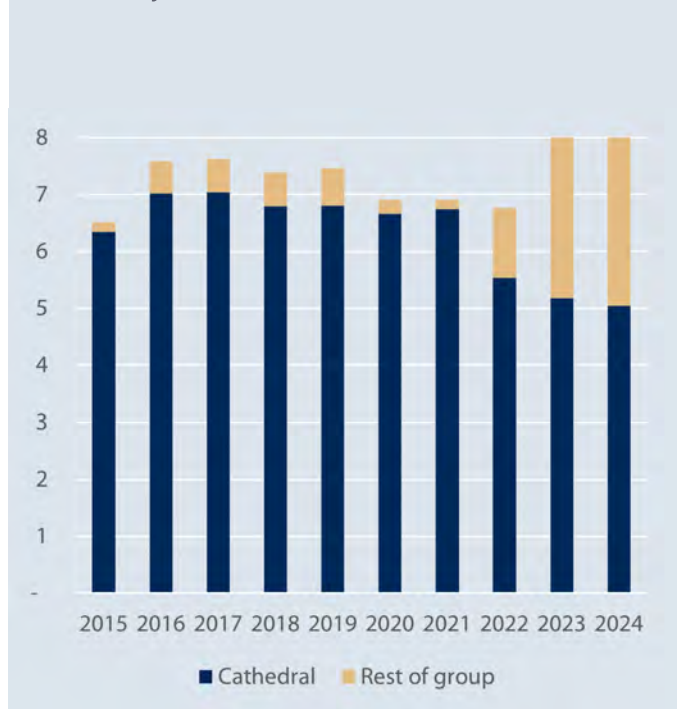
Amongst our guiding financial principles are these three:

- Our finances should serve the Cathedral by providing resilience and a secure foundation for our life and work.
- We must reliably secure the income we need to fund the ministry of the Cathedral and pay for its maintenance and repair.
- We must balance the demands of the present with future needs.

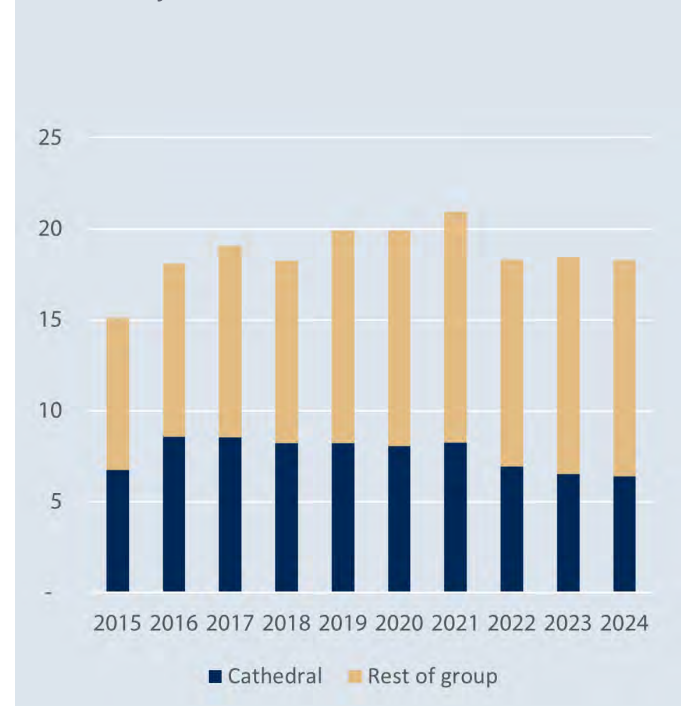
These financial principles lead us to aim for:

- **Enough regular income to cover day-to-day expenditure.** We have been focusing in recent years on eliminating our structural operating deficit. In 2024, the operating deficit (excluding investment movements) was £123,000, around 3% of total income (2023: £371,000, around 10% of income). We plan to achieve a balance of regular income and day-to-day expenditure in 2025 and have identified a number of specific actions to achieve this. The achievement of these actions is monitored by our Finance Committee and by Chapter.
- **Diverse sources of income.** We prefer a wide range of income, to maintain resilience - even at the cost of lower overall returns. This preference for a variety of income includes a balance between income given to us and income we generate ourselves. The diversity of the Cathedral’s income in 2024 is shown in the chart on p29.
- **A strong long-term reserves position** to meet future needs, including careful stewardship of financial windfalls and endowments. The long-term evolution of unrestricted and total funds is shown in the charts opposite. Our approach to investment is discussed in more detail on p27. More detail about our reserves position is provided on p30.

**Unrestricted funds at the end of each year**  
 £million, adjusted for CPI inflation



**Total funds at the end of each year**  
 £million, adjusted for CPI inflation



### The income of the Cathedral

The pandemic years demonstrated to us the importance of generating income from a wide range of sources. This approach supports financial resilience and spreads risk.

The chart below shows the variety of the Cathedral’s income in 2024, and the balance between income (a) generated by ourselves and (b) given to us (in the form of grants, donations and legacies).

Ely Cathedral Trust makes grants to the Cathedral from income generated from invested endowment funds, donations received from members of the Order of St Etheldreda, legacies received and other donations.

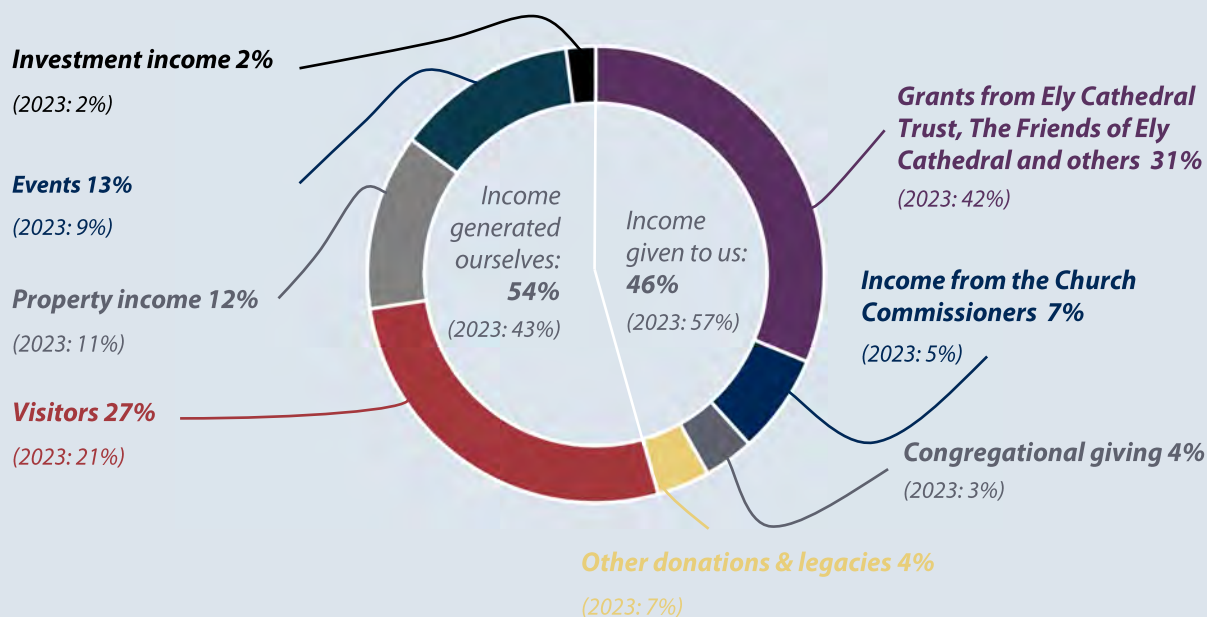
Very significant grant-making from The Friends of Ely Cathedral in 2024 (and in 2023) was made possible by legacies received by The Friends. Most of this grant-making relates to funding for a project replacing the Cathedral lighting. Otherwise, grants from The Friends are funded by membership subscriptions, fundraising events and donations received by them for the Cathedral’s benefit.

Income generated from retail activity and our restaurant (both operated by Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd during 2024) is included in the chart below under property income (relating to the rents paid to the Cathedral for space occupied) and grant income (relating to profits donated to the Cathedral under gift aid).

A summary of the finances of each of Ely Cathedral Trust, The Friends of Ely Cathedral and Ely Cathedral Enterprises Ltd is included in note 23 to the accounts.

#### In 2024 the Cathedral’s income totalled £3,760,000 and came from the following sources:

*(Equivalent figures for total income of £3,870,000 in 2023 shown in brackets.)*



### Reserves policy

Chapter’s reserves policy has been reviewed in light of revised Charity Commission guidance. Our full reserves policy is published on our website, a summary of which is outlined below.

Our policy has three aims:

- **Short term:** to hold enough **cash balances** across the Group to meet day-to-day operational cash needs.
- **Medium term:** to hold sufficient **unrestricted free reserves** to address identified uninsured risks we face.
- **Long term:** to hold appropriate **total funds** in Ely Cathedral Trust to generate income to fund the ministry of the Cathedral that cannot otherwise be secured by the Cathedral alone.

### Reserves compared with targets

Our target for **short term reserves** in the form of cash balances is between £365,000 and £610,000, with a central target of £485,000.

At 31 December 2024, Cathedral cash reserves were £89,000 (2023: £84,000), and group cash reserves were £403,000 (2023: £457,000). These were, therefore, **within our target range**.

Our target for **medium term reserves** in the form of unrestricted free reserves is £5.4m.

At 31 December 2024, the total unrestricted free reserves of the Group amounted to £4.2m. This is calculated as:

	£000
Total unrestricted general funds (excluding revaluation reserves etc)	7,125
Less: tangible fixed assets	(726)
Less: real property, within investments	(2,240)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,159</b>

These were, therefore, **22% below target**.

Our target for **long term reserves** in the form of total funds held by Ely Cathedral Trust is between £17.0m and £21.3m.

At 31 December 2024 Ely Cathedral Trust held total funds of £11.9m (2023: £11.6m). These were, therefore, **30%-43% below the target range**.

### Plans to build reserves

Our **short term reserves** in the form of cash balances are within our target range.

Our **medium term reserves** in the form of unrestricted free reserves are expected to reach the target level by 2029 by continuing to transfer excess investment returns from endowment funds into general funds at the rate of around £300,000 annually.

Our **long term reserves** in the form of total funds held by Ely Cathedral Trust are significantly below the target range.

Ely Cathedral Trust plans to increase the level of total funds over the next several years by (a) moderating the level of grants given to the Cathedral in the short term, (b) exercising careful stewardship of financial windfalls, (c) continuing to achieve a total return on invested funds in excess of the level required to fund the portfolio of annual grants and (d) fundraising.

This approach has enabled Ely Cathedral Trust to grow the value of total funds from £7.9m in 2018 to £11.9m in 2024. On this trajectory, we estimate reaching the target range for total funds at some point soon after 2030.

### Monitoring & reporting

Chapter’s Finance Committee monitors the reserves position and routinely reports to Chapter.

Chapter monitors the position as follows:

- **short term reserves**, by regularly forecasting group cash balances compared to the target range for at least 12 months ahead.
- **medium term reserves**, by periodically (at least annually) reviewing the unrestricted free reserves position across the group and comparing this to the target.
- **long-term reserves**, by reviewing with the Trustees of Ely Cathedral Trust their progress in meeting their own aims to grow the total funds under their stewardship to the targeted level.

The Cathedral Chapter, on the advice of the Finance Committee, monitors and reviews the reserves policy annually.

## Risk management

We regularly review the main risks faced by the Cathedral and the degree to which controls to monitor and manage those risks are capable of reducing the likely residual impact of those risks to an acceptable level. The Chief Operating Officer is principally responsible for overseeing the management of risk and periodically reporting this to the Audit & Risk Committee and to Chapter.

Our approach to scoring and recording risks is based on guidance published by the Charity Commission.

We briefly summarise here the top three risks we face and the approach we take to mitigating those risks.

Risks relating to (a) our continuing as a going concern and (b) our financial investments are set out separately in note 1 to the financial statements, on pages 45 to 47.

## Principal risks

## Approach to mitigating the risks

We become unable sustainably to generate sufficient operational income in the medium term to fund the day-to-day ministry of the Cathedral.

- Our level of reserves cushions us in the short term from the effects of becoming unable to generate sufficient operational income. We have expanded our fundraising team to maintain our capacity to attract grants from trusts and foundations.
- We regularly review the balance between our income streams (from real property, donations, grants, admissions, events and commercial activities) to avoid over-reliance on any single source of income.
- Regular financial forecasts for different scenarios are prepared and reviewed by the Finance Committee and by Chapter.
- Clear and detailed financial reporting is in place.
- Actions to increase operating income were identified and agreed in 2022 and 2023 as part of medium-term planning. The delivery of these actions is monitored by the Finance Committee and by Chapter.

Failures in compliance with health & safety legislation cause personal injury.

- We have an established health & safety forum to facilitate communication between management and colleagues on safety issues.
- Periodic external reviews of our safety arrangements are undertaken and reported to Chapter.
- A professional advisor for health & safety is retained by Chapter.
- Incident response plans have been developed.
- A dedicated Safety Co-ordinator joined the Cathedral on a part-time basis in spring 2022 to support a more consistent approach to safety across the Cathedral's range of activities.

Inadequate safeguarding policy or practice fails to prevent or address harm.

- Strong safeguarding governance arrangements are in place.
- The Cathedral's Safeguarding Advisory Group is independently chaired and meets regularly.
- Responsibilities are clearly assigned and periodically reviewed.
- Our safeguarding handbook is reviewed and updated annually.
- External reporting arrangements are in place and fulfilled (both in our annual report and separately to the Bishop).
- The completion of training by clergy, staff and volunteers is monitored.
- Our Safeguarding Advisor is highly experienced and shared with the Diocese.
- We periodically survey the Cathedral community to test the degree to which our safeguarding activities are having the intended impact.
- Self-assessment against national safeguarding standards began in 2023, in preparation for external audit in 2026.

# Decarbonisation

## What we publish and why

At present, we are not required by law or regulations to report on the Cathedral's energy use and associated greenhouse gas emissions.

Nevertheless, we have aligned ourselves with the Church of England's ambition to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to net zero by 2030. We have therefore opted voluntarily to publish:

- Our **annual UK energy** use in Megawatt hours ('MWh'), relating to gas and purchased electricity and associated **greenhouse gas emissions** in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e)
- The **methodologies** used to calculate the required information
- A narrative of **measures taken** to improve energy efficiency in the period of the report (or, if no measures have been taken, to state that this is the case)
- the prior year equivalent figures, for comparison.

This information (with the exception of an 'intensity ratio', comparing emissions data with another metric or indicator) means that we are reporting in a way that is consistent with the government's *Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting* policy as set out in regulations of 2018.

## What about buildings not in scope?

The Cathedral owns many buildings which are leased either to King's Ely, or to commercial or residential tenants.

We are required to ensure that buildings leased to commercial and residential tenants meet certain energy performance standards. Energy performance is certified by independent professional accreditors on a scale of A to G. The standard we must meet is gradually increasing over time and we continually work to ensure that all of these buildings meet or exceed minimum standards.

From 1 March 2023, all commercial properties must have a minimum energy performance standard of E. This is set out in the minimum energy efficiency standards, which were introduced in March 2015 by the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015, following the Energy Act 2011.

Despite the age and sensitivity of many of our buildings, we have succeeded in ensuring that all of our commercial properties meet or exceed this standard.

## Buildings in scope

We follow the Church of England's approach to determining which buildings are in scope for the 2030 net-zero target. This is set out in a plan of action called the *Routemap*, which was approved by General Synod in July 2022. This is available online and sets out in detail what is - and is not - in scope for the 2030 target.

Within the scope of the target are: (a) all buildings within the Cathedral precinct, excluding the energy use of tenants (b) church halls and ancillary buildings (c) clergy housing.

For us, the buildings therefore in scope are:

- The Cathedral Church building
- The Chapter Office & Deanery (the two buildings are integrated)
- The Cathedral Centre
- The Almonry Kitchen restaurant
- Clergy housing: The Precentor's House, The Black Hostelry and Powcher's Hall (which includes two large ground-floor meeting rooms in Cathedral use)

It is possible that, over time, buildings will fall in or out of scope as a result of changes in use. If so, we will rebase our figures and be transparent about this to ensure that comparison over time is fair.



ELY  
CATHEDRAL

## Wildflower Bed

And weeds that bloomed in summer hours  
I thought they should be reckoned flowers  
They made a garden free for all  
And so I loved them, great and small...

Nor could I pass the thistle by  
But pick it and thought it could not be a weed  
In nature's poesy.

*John Clare 1793-1864*

Native wildflowers have been sown in this area to provide a food source for pollinators. Pollinators are essential to grow much of our food. Every third mouthful we eat relies on pollination. However habitat loss in the UK means many pollinators are in decline. These wildflowers, along with the ones in the Physick and Almonry Gardens, will help support bees, hoverflies and other insects, and therefore our environment.

Please enjoy our wildflowers, but please don't walk on the flowerbed or touch the plants as some may be irritants or even toxic to some.

This area has been sown and maintained thanks to the generous voluntary work of members of the congregation and local community.

For more detailed information about our work to improve biodiversity, please see our website:  
[www.elycathedral.org](http://www.elycathedral.org)

### Measures taken in 2024 to improve energy efficiency

In 2024, energy-efficient lighting continued to be used to illuminate the lantern of the Cathedral. This lighting replaced less efficient metal-halide lamps in the summer of 2021.

Throughout 2024, we have continued to source all of our electricity on a green energy tariff.

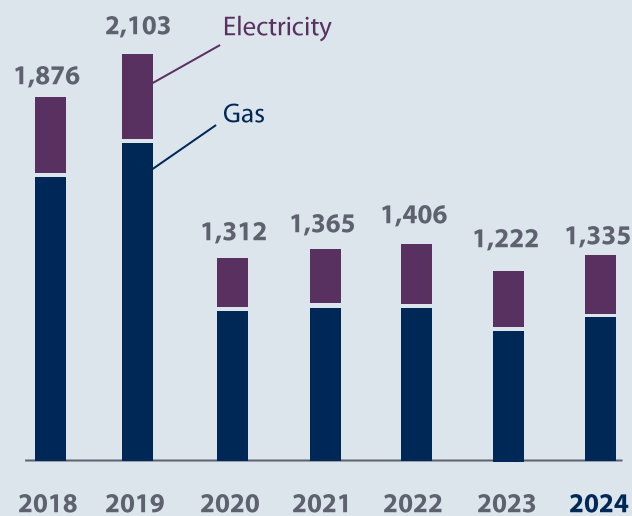
During the course of 2024, further detailed decarbonisation reports for our buildings were received from Joel Gustafsson Consulting, whose work with us is funded by Ely Cathedral Trust. These reports provide detailed proposals to reduce emissions created by heating the in-scope buildings. Having received a report this year for the Almonry Restaurant, we were pleased to secure funding from the Church of England Net Zero Demonstrator Fund and from Ely Cathedral Trust to replace an existing gas system with a system powered by an air source heat pump. This work was completed in March 2025 (after the balance sheet date). It is expected to result in a reduction of at least 80% in carbon dioxide emissions created by heating the building and contribute to a 14 tonne (five percentage point) reduction in our total carbon dioxide emissions from energy use.

In 2024, we completed a £1.5m project to replace all of the lighting inside the Cathedral Church building with a low-energy and sustainable alternative. We are hugely grateful to The Friends of Ely Cathedral for funding this work from bequests received.

In 2024 our energy use increased by around 9% and we are looking into the reasons for this. Even so, carbon emissions from our energy use remained stable, largely due to the continuing decarbonisation of the national electricity supply. Our relevant carbon emissions therefore remained at 44% below the peak in 2019.

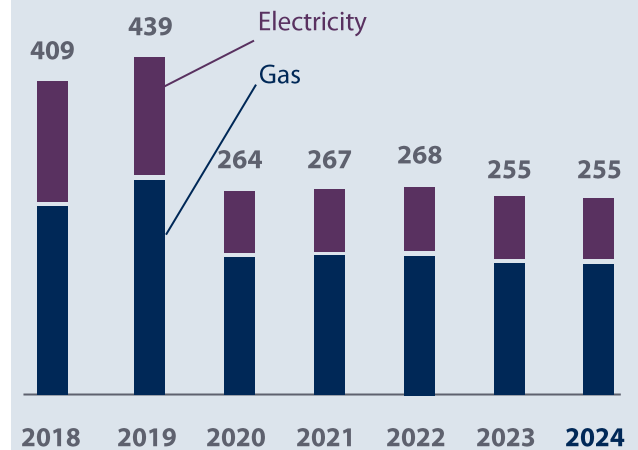
### Annual energy use (gas & purchased electricity) MWh

Annual energy use for all buildings within the scope of the 2030 net-zero target



### Annual carbon dioxide emissions from energy use Tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e

Carbon dioxide equivalent emissions associated with energy use for all buildings within the scope of the 2030 net-zero target



### Methodologies used to calculate energy use and carbon dioxide equivalent emissions

Energy use is calculated from metered readings provided by the Cathedral’s energy brokers and suppliers.

Carbon dioxide equivalent emissions are calculated by multiplying energy use by the relevant carbon factor (published by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy) for that year for the relevant energy source.

# The responsibilities of Chapter

Chapter is responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires Chapter to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Cathedral and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the Cathedral for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, Chapter is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Cathedral will continue in operation.

Chapter is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Cathedral and enable Chapter to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Cathedral constitution.

Chapter is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Cathedral and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**The 2024 report was approved by Chapter on 19 May 2025 and signed on its behalf by**



**The Very Reverend Mark Bonney DL**  
Dean of Ely



**Canon Francis Burkitt DL**  
Senior Non-Executive Member of Chapter



**Jonathan Bell FCA DChA**  
Chief Operating Officer



**Alison Binstead FCA**  
Chief Finance Officer