



For Immediate Release - 14 October 2025

The Very Revd Mark Bonney DL to retire as Dean of Ely.

The Very Reverend Mark Bonney, Dean of Ely, has announced plans to retire at the end of July 2026. He will have served as the spiritual and executive head of the Cathedral since 2012, and his retirement will mark the end of over 40 years of stipendiary ordained ministry, including 14 years at Ely.

Reflecting on his forthcoming retirement Mark says “It has been the most enormous privilege and joy to be the Dean of Ely for the past thirteen years. The Cathedral is a vibrant Christian community of which I have been proud to be a part. It has also been wonderful to share in the feast of activities that happen – wonderful exhibitions, concerts and fairs. Above all it is the people who worship, work and volunteer here that make it the very special place that it is, and who I will miss the most. I will be always grateful for the support of everyone through the years I have been here and there’s a particularly good team in place across the board at the moment.

It is the longest I have lived anywhere, so when July next year comes I will miss Ely enormously, but I am sure the time is right and I will watch from a relatively short distance as you continue ‘joyfully proclaiming the love of God, in worship, outreach, welcome and care’!”

In addition to guiding the Cathedral community through the pandemic, he has successfully overseen the complexity of a Dean’s responsibilities with a quiet skill and confidence. While mission and ministry have been at the very centre of his accomplishments, his openness to new ideas have significantly expanded the Cathedral’s arts and events programme and his support of environmental policies gained Ely the Gold A Rocha UK award. His encouragement to invest in technology and support of good financial management have all contributed to ensuring the Cathedral is in a much stronger position under his tenure and in an excellent state of repair.

The Rt Revd Dr Dagmar Winter, Bishop of Huntingdon and Acting Bishop of Ely, said "Mark has given many years of faithful and distinguished service to Ely Cathedral, Diocese and to the wider Church. His steady leadership, deep love for cathedral worship, stewardship of the amazing building and care

for its people have left a lasting legacy. He is an excellent colleague to me and I pray God's richest blessing on him and Katy during their last year in Ely as they prepare for their move."

Francis Burkitt, the Senior Non Executive Member of Chapter at Ely, praised the Dean's leadership. 'Mark has been an exceptional leader of the Cathedral, its congregation and its community for the past 14 years, and over that period has created and strengthened a first-class culture within all of the team who contribute to the much-loved 'Ship of the Fens'

The Dean's last day at the Cathedral will be Sunday 28 June with an official retirement date of 31 July 2026.

Image - The Very Reverend Mark Bonney, Dean of Ely – (Credit Keith Heppel)

About Ely Cathedral

Highly regarded by historians and architects from all over the world for its beauty and size, Ely Cathedral is widely acknowledged as 'one of the wonders of the Medieval world'. Visible for miles around, the

Cathedral is often referred to as 'The Ship of the Fens'.

The present building dates from 1081 and is a remarkable example of both Romanesque and Norman architecture. In addition to its unique Octagon Tower and magnificent Lady Chapel, Ely has the third longest nave of any UK Cathedral. The Cathedral's role today is not so far removed from its days as a Benedictine monastery and offers regular daily worship with a special emphasis on choral music.

As well as being a major visitor attraction, the Cathedral serves as a cultural focal point for East Anglia by providing a unique venue for the arts & music, for exhibitions, concerts and theatre. Most recently Ely has gained global recognition a prominent film location including *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, *Macbeth*, *The King's Speech*, *The Crown* and, more recently, *Maestro*.