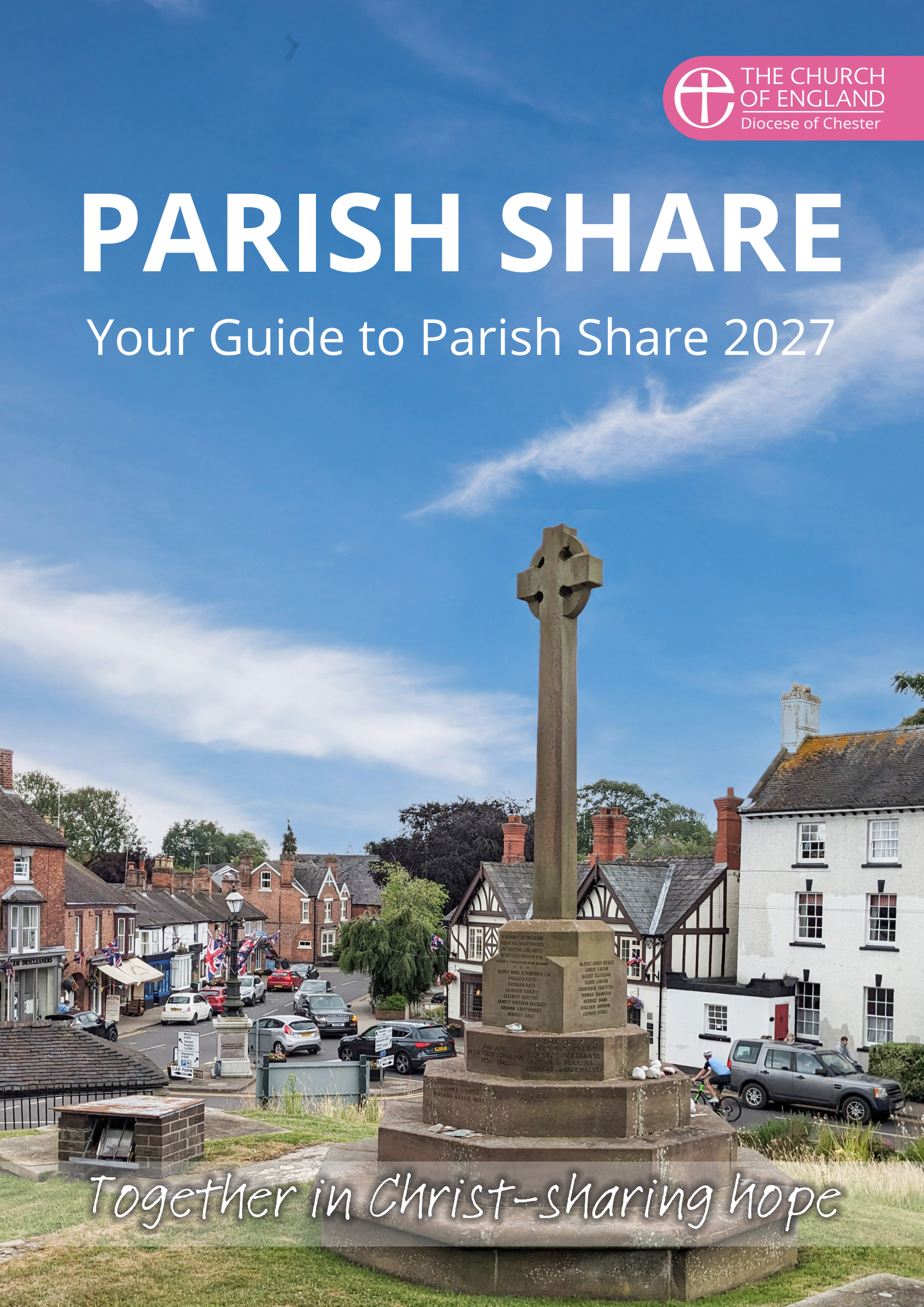
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

PARISH SHARE

Your Guide to Parish Share 2027



Together in Christ-sharing hope

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An Introduction from Bishop Mark

Thank you!

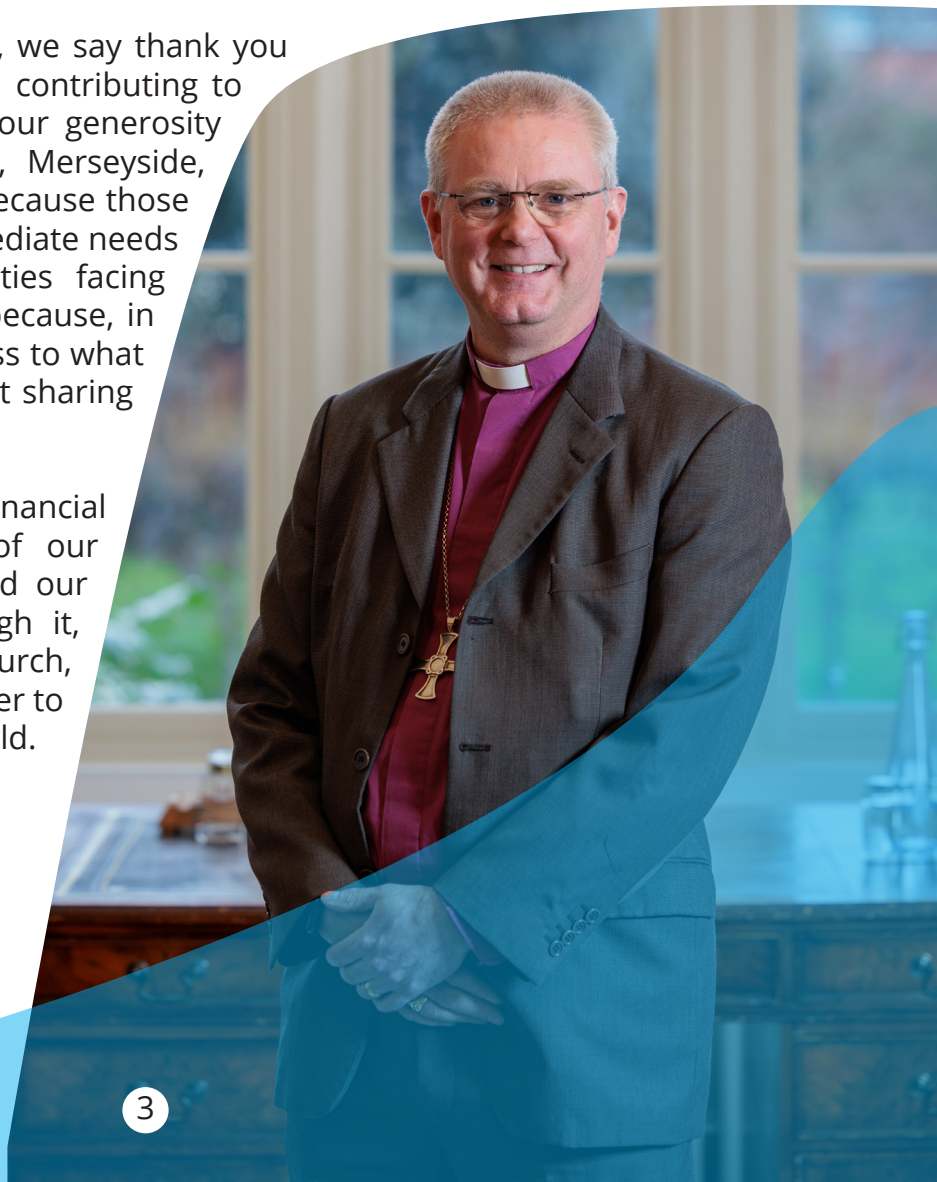
We know how challenging it can be to raise the funds needed to meet our parish share commitments. It is, though, an important part of the life of the Church of England, and we can be proud of it. The parish share system reflects something profound about who we are as the Body of Christ and I value it deeply.

The reality is that almost every parish receives more than it contributes. Those churches that have been blessed with greater material resources are able to give more, helping to sustain and strengthen ministry in other communities across our diocese. Parish share is not money sent away and lost; it is money shared. It is placed into a common fund and then distributed to support ministry locally, ensuring that the Church is present in every community we are called to serve.

Theologically, this is immensely important. The Lord blesses us not simply for our own benefit, but so that we may support one another as members of one family in Christ. Parish share is a practical expression of that truth. It enables us to support one another, to sustain ministry, and to continue the outreach and mission to which God calls us.

So, I am enormously grateful. And I hope I am grateful with you rather than simply grateful to you, because you are not giving money to me or to some distant institution. We are sharing the resources God has entrusted to us all. That is why it is called parish share.

Together, as the Diocese of Chester, we say thank you to every individual and every parish contributing to parish share. Thank you because your generosity changes lives throughout Cheshire, Merseyside, and South Manchester. Thank you because those who can give beyond their own immediate needs help sustain ministry in communities facing greater challenges. And thank you because, in doing so, you offer a powerful witness to what it means to belong together in Christ sharing hope.



Parish share is far more than a financial mechanism. It is an expression of our unity, our mutual responsibility, and our shared hope in the gospel. Through it, we demonstrate that we are one Church, serving one Lord, and seeking together to share the hope of Christ with the world.

Mark Tanner
Bishop of Chester

What is Parish Share?

Parish Share is the way churches across the Diocese of Chester work together financially to sustain and strengthen ministry in every community we serve.

By pooling our resources, Parish Share helps provide ministry and support across the Diocese, regardless of the socio-economic circumstances of our various communities. Through more than 300 churches, we are able to support the Church's mission of helping people encounter the love of God in Christ.

The contributions made through Parish Share help fund stipendiary clergy, clergy housing, ministerial training, and the wide range of support services that enable parish ministry to flourish. This includes areas such as safeguarding, children, youth and family work, vocations, and other forms of practical support for clergy and congregations.

Parish Share also ensures that support reaches those serving in our most deprived communities. It reflects our commitment to being one diocesan family, sharing resources so that ministry can thrive everywhere.
This approach is rooted in the New Testament, where Christians shared their resources with one another (Acts 2) and churches with greater means supported those facing hardship (2 Corinthians 8-9). Together, they gave according to their ability and responded according to need.

That is why it is called Parish Share. We share in God's mission together, supporting one another so that every parish can play its part in serving its community and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.



Maxine Southwick
HR Officer

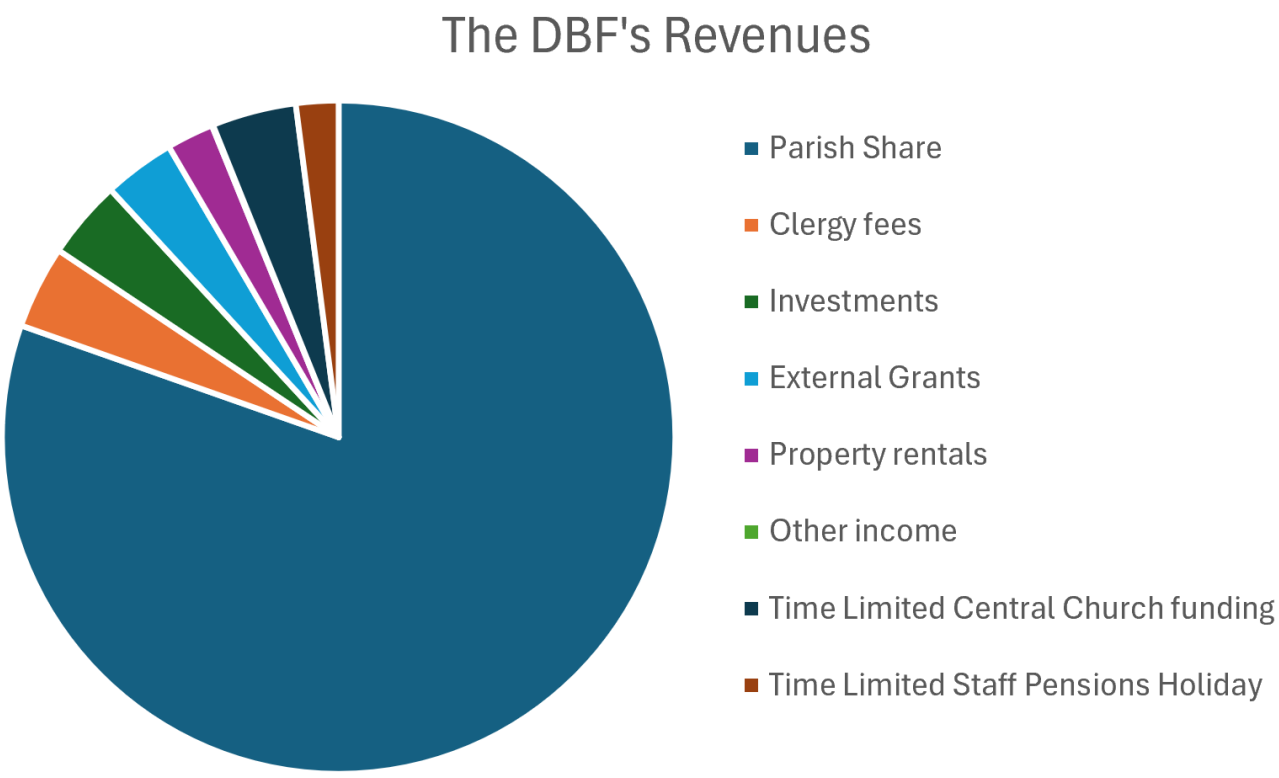
Where does the money go?

The ministry and mission of The Church of England is largely funded through the incredible generosity of those who give through their own parish church. The cash donations in the offertory and the regular payments that you make through your bank account impact the financial health of your parish church and are also linked to those of Chester Diocese.

Budget for 2027

Where does the DBF money come from?

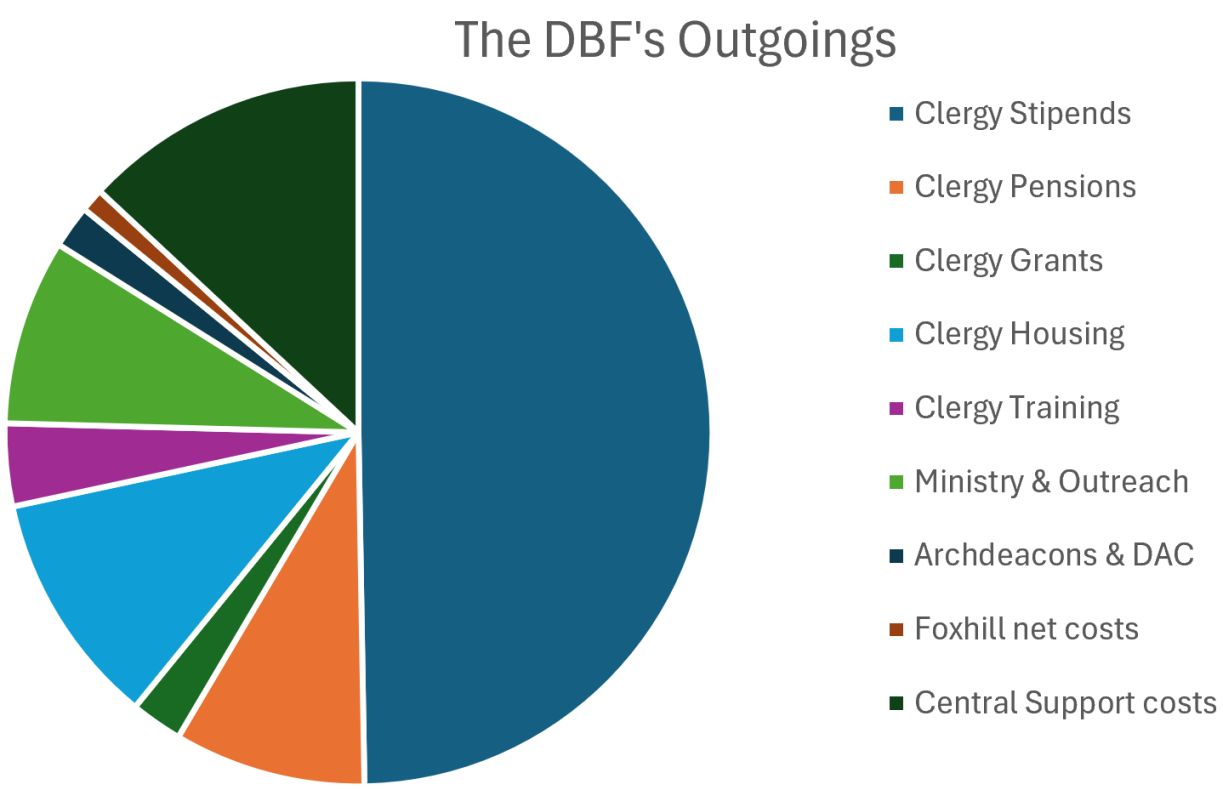
Parish Share income	£11,550,000
Clergy fees & other Parish income	£572,000
Investment income	£544,000
Grants towards our costs	£493,000
Property rental income	£326,000
Other income	£8,000
Recurring income	**£13,493,000**
Time Limited Central Church funding	£582,000
Time Limited Staff Pensions Holiday	£293,000
TOTAL INCOME	**£14,368,000**
Parish Share as a % of Recurring Income	86%



Where does the money go?

What does the DBF spend the money on?

Clergy Stipends	£7,055,000
Clergy Pensions	£1,244,000
Clergy Grants	£336,000
Clergy Housing	£1,527,000
Clergy Training	£536,000
Ministry & Outreach	£1,205,000
Archdeacons & DAC	£279,000
Support & Maintenance of Ministry	**£12,182,000**
Central Support costs	£2,175,000
Foxhill net costs	£152,000
TOTAL SPENT	**£14,509,000**
Support & Maintenance of Ministry % of Expenditure	84%



The National Giving Strategy

The Church of England's National Giving Strategy focuses on the following priorities:

1. Enabling more churches to be supported by diocesan giving advisers
2. Embedding digital giving within over 50% of parishes
3. Improving support, guidance and training for clergy, parishes and dioceses

Support for your Parish

Support for parishes comes in a number of ways, from Archdeacons and the Finance Department, from our Digital Giving Adviser and others in the Outreach team. In the future support will also come from a Parish Share Lead, a new role funded by the national church, helping to streamline communications around parish share and to address the questions and concerns that parishes have.

Wholehearted Magazine: Money and Discipleship

Talking about money as part of discipleship can feel challenging – but it matters. Parish Share isn't just the responsibility of the treasurer or the vicar; it's something we all share. Together, we need to understand why we give, what we give, and where the money goes.

That's why we launched Wholehearted – a quarterly magazine to help us talk about money in a more joyful and confident way, learning from Jesus and reminding one another that all things come from God. The publication includes honest conversations about Parish Share, personal money journeys, book reviews, reflections.

You can now order printed copies of the magazine and this booklet on the Parish Share section of the Chester Diocese website or by emailing parishshare@chester.anglican.org



Your Questions Answered

1

What does the Parish Share do for us?

Parish Share funds the core mission and ministry of the diocese, including:

- Clergy stipends, pensions, and housing
- Training and support for clergy and lay leaders
- Safeguarding, governance, and administration
- Mission initiatives and support for parishes

2

How is Parish Share calculated?

The Parish Share that you are asked to pay is calculated using a formula which considers whether your clergy are full-time or part-time, and where your parish is situated socio-economically using the 2021 census information. It also takes into account our shared responsibility to support parishes in areas of deprivation. There's more information about how this is calculated in the Parish Share section of the Chester Diocese website.

3

Why is the figure we need to pay linked to the socio-economic makeup of our whole parish not our congregation?

The Parish Share system aims to be fair by considering ability to contribute, not just attendance. Socio-economic data is used as a broad indicator of potential giving, even though it does not perfectly reflect actual church membership. If your parish is finding it difficult to meet its parish share, please talk to your archdeacon.

4

What happens if we don't pay?

Parish Share is a voluntary contribution, not a legal fee. However:

- Non-payment creates a shortfall that must be covered elsewhere
- It can impact the sustainability of ministry across the diocese
- Ongoing dialogue usually takes place to agree a realistic level of contribution

The aim is always partnership rather than enforcement.

5

When was it last reviewed to check the assessments are fairly calculated?

Individual assessments are checked each year to ensure that they are accurately calculated. The present scheme was introduced in 2005 and reviewed in 2012. The result of this was that an extra share band was introduced at the bottom end of the list.

6

Does anyone visit parishes to get a feel for the place to understand the issues and is there any understanding of the financial burden of old buildings and church yards?

Yes. Archdeacons, deanery leaders, and diocesan officers regularly visit parishes and are aware of:

- The costs of maintaining historic buildings and churchyards
- Local financial pressures

If your parish is finding it difficult to meet its parish share, please talk to your archdeacon.

7

Why does a percentage of wedding and funeral fees go back to the diocese?

Fees are set nationally, and a portion contributes to:

- Clergy stipends and pension provision
- Training and oversight
- Ensuring consistent ministry across all parishes

This reflects that ministry is part of the wider Church, not just the local parish.

8

When a church owns and sells land could that be shared with poorer parishes?

Proceeds from the sale of church land are normally restricted by law and held in trust for the parish or specific purposes. In some cases, dioceses may encourage or facilitate wider sharing, but this depends on legal constraints and the conditions attached to the asset.

9

Our parish has a very small congregation. Why are we being asked for the same amount as parishes twice the size?

Parish Share is based on the cost of deploying ministry in a particular place, after adjustment for socio-economic factors and whether the post is full-time or part-time, as described above. For that reason it does not take into account the size of population or size of the congregation. If your parish is finding it difficult to pay its Parish Share, please talk to your archdeacon.

10

Why do we pay Parish Share when we are in vacancy?

Parish Share supports the cost of ministry overall, not just the presence of a current priest. Even in vacancy:

- The diocese continues to provide oversight and support
- Costs such as training, pensions, and wider ministry remain

Were Parish Share to be reduced in vacancies, it would mean that Parish Share for all parishes would need to increase to make up the shortfall.

11

Our congregation has limited income and we cannot afford to increase our giving with other costs rising... how can we pay?

This is a real and recognised concern. Possible responses include:

- Encouraging broader participation in giving across the congregation
- Exploring stewardship teaching and planned giving schemes

Parish Share requests are not intended to place undue hardship on individuals.

You can download a copy of this booklet on the Chester Diocese website www.https://chesterdiocese.org/parishshare

If you would more printed copies of the booklet or would like to talk to someone about Parish Share please email parishshare@chester.anglican.org

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