



## *All about the* **PARISH SHARE SCHEME**



Year by year I am struck by the generosity of so many people and parishes that we see in their giving through the Parish Share. In these times of austerity to raise £19 million for it is immensely impressive – and that £19 million, of course, is only a part of the total given each year to maintain and develop the life of our churches in accordance with the principles of 'Living Faith'.

I also know that we need to ensure that the Parish Share Scheme is not only simple and transparent, but is also seen to be fair and I am immensely grateful for the work of the Share review group three years ago in producing the new scheme and to those who have refined it further since then.

This leaflet is intended to answer your immediate questions without overloading you with spreadsheets and figures. For more detail, please see the website or contact the finance team on 01865 208206.

Finally, I understand that the Share can raise all sorts of questions and be a challenging subject. What I hope for is mutual trust and accountability since our giving is part of our Christian discipleship.

*Yours in Christ,*

+ *Col Dovelester*



**DIOCESE OF OXFORD**  
Serving Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire

# LIVING FAITH FOR THE FUTURE



## Living Faith is a vision for the Diocese of Oxford.

It offers five priorities which resemble a palette of colours that everyone can use to create their own distinctive work of art. The central strands are **holistic mission** and **sustaining spirituality**.

Our **purpose** is to join with God in creating a caring, sustainable and growing Christian presence in every part of the Diocese of Oxford, enabling every Christian and Christian community to live and share the love of God, seen in the life of Jesus Christ. It's all about **transforming lives**.

For more about the **Living Faith** see [www.oxford.anglican.org](http://www.oxford.anglican.org)

The life of the Church in the Diocese of Oxford is lived out in the communities served by our 622 parishes and 815 churches. This happens through worship, preaching and teaching; pastoral care; evangelism; social action; and caring for our historic buildings.

The Diocese is here to support the life and work of the parishes and benefices. This means paying stipends, housing and training for clergy/curates; investing in the 'Church of the future' (e.g. fostering vocations, selecting and training for ministry); and supporting/resourcing local churches with expert advice.

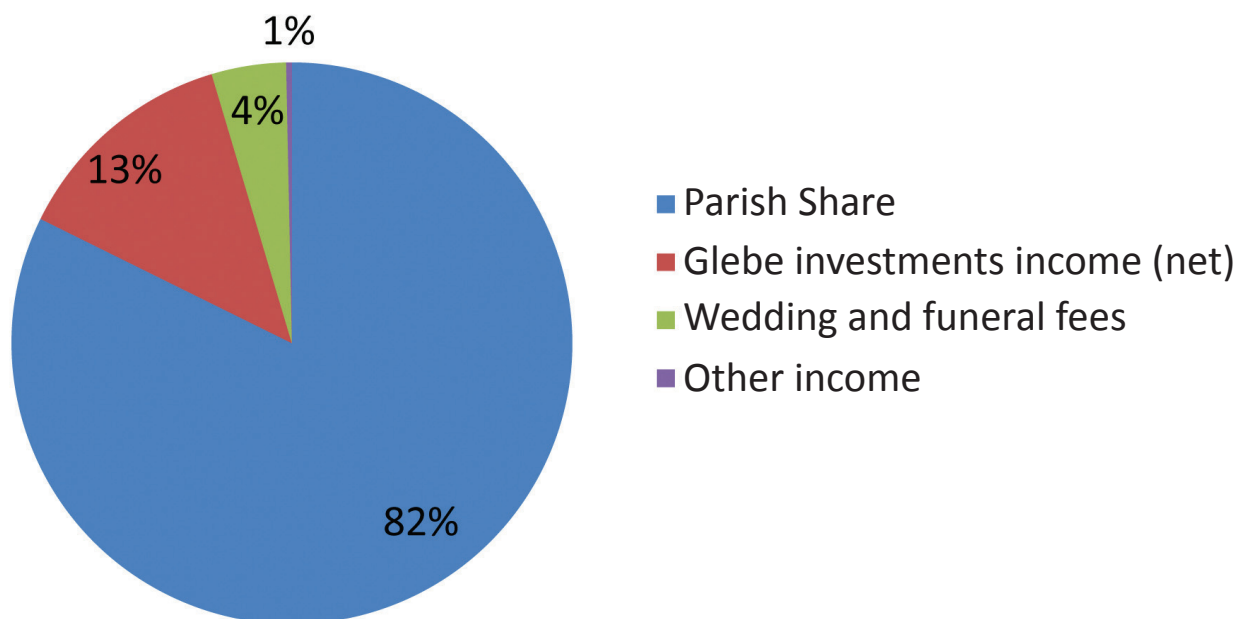
# What is the Parish Share?

The Parish Share is the amount of money that each parish is asked to contribute to support the mission and ministry of the Church in the Diocese of Oxford. The Diocese extends across Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

The total amount needed each year is divided between the 29 deaneries or groups of parishes/benefices by a formula that seeks to recognise the need of some churches to be supported by others. Parish Share is a vital part of enabling God's mission in our diocese. Without it, we would not be able to support our clergy.



## Where does the money to run the Church come from?

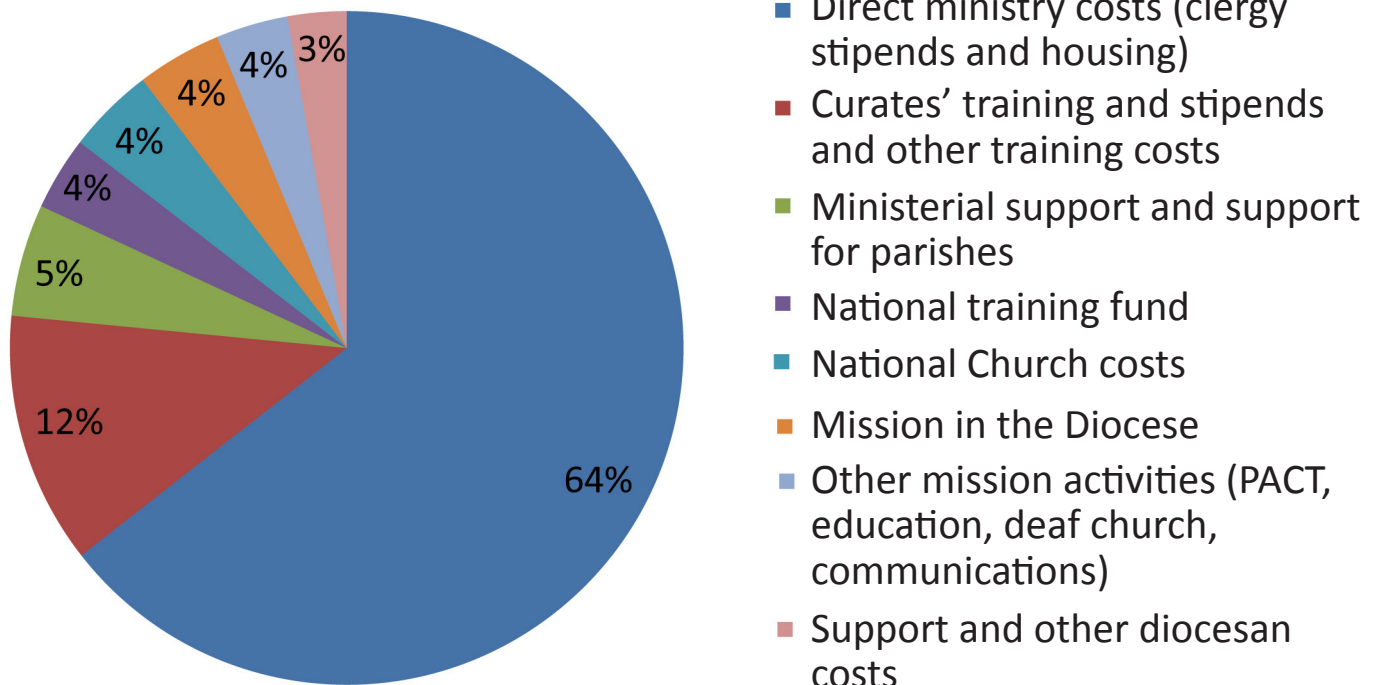


**2015 Synod approved budget: £23.6 million**

*'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also'*  
Matthew 6:21

# So how is the money spent?

## Expenditure - 2015



## This means ...

89p in every pound comes back to our parishes in:

- Clergy stipends, housing and ongoing training
- Curates: selection, training, stipends and some housing
- Support for Mission (e.g. vital safeguarding, work with children and young people, church schools, lay training, communications)
- Support for legal and trust matters.

11p in every pound goes to national church costs, the funding of initial ordination training at a national level, and other diocesan support costs. National costs include supporting churches in poorer parts of the country.

## How is Share calculated?

The basic principle is one of **Christian generosity** and **mutual support**. But it's always challenging to devise a scheme that works for everyone. During 2012 a Share review group, made up of parish and deanery representatives from across our three counties, worked hard to come up with a new formula that is as fair and transparent as possible. The new scheme came into effect in 2014, and has been revised for 2016 in the light of experience.

# So how does it work?

In summary, the Parish Share scheme is based on four elements:

1. **Actual ministry costs** for stipendiary clergy (i.e. stipends, pensions, National Insurance and housing).
2. A charge for the cost of **housing** for each 'House for Duty' post.
3. Supporting the '**Church of the future**' (i.e. fostering vocations, selecting and training for ministry).
4. Contribution to mission and support costs (diocesan and national).

Items 3 and 4 are **based on an assessment of the ability to contribute**, with relief for *rural areas and areas of deprivation*. This relief is paid for from historic assets known as 'glebe' (see below).

## Key features of the scheme:

- Only stipendiary and 'house for duty' clergy are now directly charged to deaneries, based on stipend and housing costs, recognising that self-supporting ministers and licensed lay ministers incur minimal ongoing costs.
- Curates in training are included in the training costs and allocated on overall deanery ability to contribute, rather than the parishes where they train.
- Parochial fees (charged for weddings and funerals) are allocated annually in arrears, back to the deaneries in which they arise.
- Significant investment and rental income (£3.1 million for 2015) derived from historic assets known as 'glebe' is apportioned to deaneries to mitigate clergy stipend costs, some allocated according to need.
- The ability to contribute is based on church membership and a community profile score using Mosaic data provided by Experian for the public sector.

## Core principles

The core principle of 'from each according to their means, to each according to their needs' remains at the heart of the scheme. Other important elements are:

- Two-step allocation from **diocese to deaneries**, then from **deaneries to parishes/benefices**, because this allows for decisions to be made and owned at a local level, in the light of knowledge of local circumstances.
- Changes in allocated Share to deaneries from year to year are capped.
- Rebates are given to deaneries who reach certain payment targets during the year. Discounts are given to parishes/benefices paying by direct debit and for full payment by 31 January for the year ahead.
- Diocesan Synod approves the level of Share with the budget in November.

# How are ministry costs calculated?

Ministry costs are the total **direct costs** of employing the clergy. Based on the figures for 2015, the costs for a stipendiary post (i.e. a clergy person who receives a stipend, as opposed to a 'self-supporting' minister) are as follows:

\*Stipend £25,000; National Insurance £2,000; pension £9,000; housing (includes maintenance, repairs, council tax, water charges and buildings insurance) £8,800. The allowance for a 'House for Duty' post (from 2016) will be £13,500.



## And the 'Church of the future'?

It is essential that we nurture those who will lead the mission and ministry of the Church in the future – and there is a cost attached to this. The Diocese of Oxford contributes towards ordination selection and training nationally (we will pay \*£837,000 of a £13.1m national total in 2015) as well as at diocesan level (\*£2.9 million in 2015). Within the diocese, this work includes supporting vocations, training for ordination, including grants and support while at college, the direct costs of deploying curates in training and the important on-going training and development of the clergy and lay ministers throughout their ministry.

*\*NB Figures are rounded, for illustration*

## Why should we pay?

It's hard to find the money when we are looking after ancient buildings. But mission and ministry cost, too. As a Church we are committed to **mutual support**. That means:

- Sometimes supporting other parishes in your deanery.
- Supporting less well off deaneries in our diocese.
- Enabling the allocation of ministry on the basis of **need**, not **wealth**.
- Contributing to the mission of the Church of England in poorer parts of our country.

*'All things come from you, and of your own do we give you'*  
1 Chronicles 29.14

# What if we don't pay?

Holding back your Parish Share **has consequences** for everyone. It is harder to attract a priest to a vacancy where a benefice is known not to pay its way. It is a source of **embarrassment** to clergy - knowing that they are being paid when their benefice is not contributing fully. And **other parishioners in the deanery and diocese have to pay more to cover for you.**

# Can we be confident that the budget is properly managed?

Diocesan finances are managed by a charitable company called the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance (ODBF), the directors of which are the members of Bishop's Council. Each year the budget is drawn up, in consultation with the Bishop's Council, and presented to Diocesan Synod in June and November for amendment and approval. The annual report and accounts are also scrutinised by the Audit committee and external auditors and must be approved by Diocesan Synod. Recent benchmarking with other dioceses showed that our central structures are relatively lean, thanks to economies of scale.

# What about the Church Commissioners?

Contrary to popular belief, the Church of England is not funded by the state, nor by the Church Commissioners. Commissioners' funds help pay clergy pensions, support the Church in deprived areas, help foster mission and growth, and pay for cathedrals and bishops. See [www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/churchcommissioners.aspx](http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/churchcommissioners.aspx)

*'For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life' John 3.16*

**More information about the Share scheme available by Email:  
[finance@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:finance@oxford.anglican.org) Tel: 01865 208206  
website [www.oxford.anglican.org](http://www.oxford.anglican.org)**

# Help with giving and fundraising

Raising the money to meet the Parish Share as well as supporting local mission, looking after our buildings and giving to charity can feel a struggle. There are resources to help on our website and elsewhere:

[www.oxford.anglican.org/giving](http://www.oxford.anglican.org/giving)

[www.parishresources.org.uk/givingforlife](http://www.parishresources.org.uk/givingforlife)

[www.givinginrace.org](http://www.givinginrace.org)

**‘We are the Body of Christ, part of one church family’**

*This booklet is printed on recycled paper at a cost of 6p per copy.  
For more copies or for a large print version please contact  
Diocesan Church House on 01865 208200*

Produced in-house August 2015

