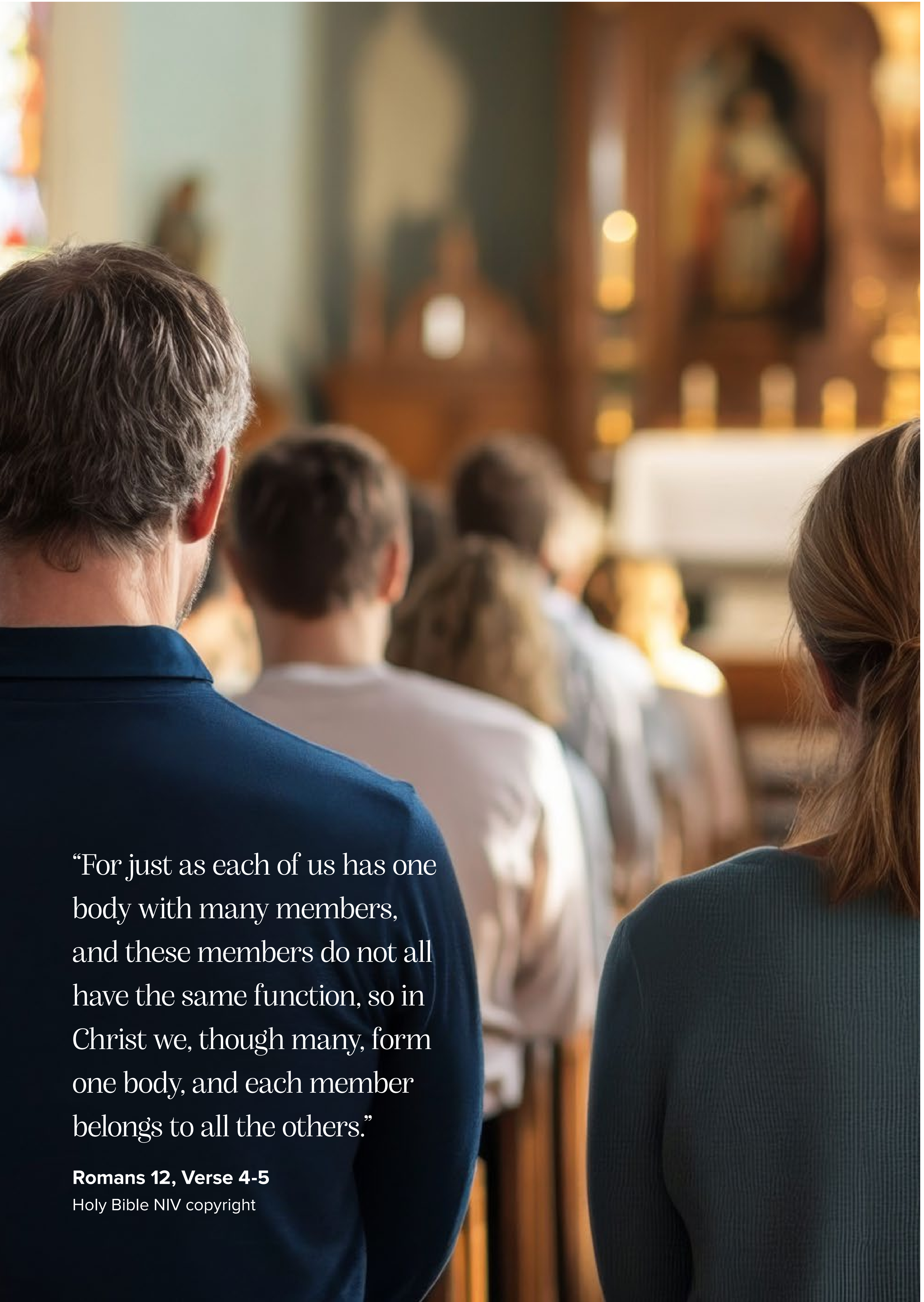
The Church of England
in Essex and East London
Diocese of Chelmsford

PARISH SHARE 2027

Frequently Asked Questions

Resourcing and supporting local parish ministry
in the Diocese of Chelmsford



"For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

Romans 12, Verse 4-5

Holy Bible NIV copyright

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An introduction from Bishop Guli

Thank you!

I want to begin by expressing my profound gratitude to everyone in our church communities whose generosity enables us to fund local parish ministry through Parish Share.

People are sometimes surprised to discover that the vast majority of funds contributed through Parish Share are used to support local parish ministry, particularly the stipends and housing costs of our parish clergy. It is only because of your generosity that we are able to meet these costs.

I know this generosity often means significant personal sacrifice, especially during these financially challenging times. I want to reassure you that we are continually focused on using the diocese's assets and investments wisely, and on scrutinising our expenditure, to help keep Parish Share as low as possible. As a result, once again this year we are able to budget to spend more on the direct costs of local parish ministry than we are asking to receive through Parish Share.

As I travel around the diocese, meeting and spending time with people in our church communities, I am often left heartened and in awe at the wonderful things I see taking place, and by the commitment, skill, energy and faithfulness of our church leaders and volunteers.

I also know that the demands and strains on church leaders are not only financial. We face the challenges of diminishing numbers of volunteers and people discerning a call to ministry, of caring for the wellbeing of those who are currently serving, and of the costs and work needed to look after our church buildings. These issues are at the heart of the Travelling Well Together – Sustaining Ministry conversation now taking place across our diocese, as we discern how we can be an enduring missional presence in Essex and East London in the times and context in which God has placed us. I want to take this opportunity to invite your church community to participate in that conversation. More information can be **found on the diocesan website.**

Finally, I hope you will find this booklet helpful. Together with the accompanying resources on the diocesan website, it has been prepared to explain how the Parish Share Scheme operates in our diocese and to support you in sharing that information with others in your church community. It also highlights resources to help with fundraising, encouraging generosity and managing parish finances, which I hope will be useful to you.

+ Guli Chelmsford

The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani Bishop of Chelmsford

01

What will our parish share contribution pay for in 2027?

Each year each parish is asked to make a parish share contribution over the course of the year. The size of that contribution is based on a formula which takes into account factors such as how many ministers serve in the parish, congregation size, local deprivation levels and geographical size of the parish.

But what is that money used for?

Key facts

- Parish share is our major source of income as a diocese. If all parishes meet their 2027 share contributions, Parish Share will fund 75% of the diocesan general fund budget.
- Most of the general fund budget is spent funding ministers and ministers' houses in parishes. 81% of the diocesan general fund budget will be spent on paying these sorts of direct costs of parish ministry including the costs of training, housing and supporting future ministers such as curates.
- The Diocese budgets to spend more on the direct costs of parish ministry such as clergy stipends, national insurance costs, housing and training of future ministers than it receives in parish share. For 2027 the diocese has budgeted to spend £17.9 million on these local parish ministry costs, while requesting £16.6 million in parish share.
- As well as resourcing the direct costs of parish ministry, the diocesan general fund budget also pays for services to support parishes. These costs are much less, but we will continue to scrutinise them to ensure that they are focused on supporting parishes well.
See FAQ 2.
- In July 2025, General Synod agreed a Triennium Funding proposal to significantly increase the recommended benchmark for clergy stipends.

  This proposal was adopted by Trustees of the Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Finance and stipends increased from April 2026.

  The Diocese will receive additional grant funding from the national church for a limited period to help cover the costs of increasing stipends over the coming years, but these costs will eventually have to be met in full by the Diocese, primarily through Parish Share.

In 2027

Diocesan spend on local parish ministry = **£17.9 million**

Total Requested in parish share = **£16.6 million**

Budgeted figures for 2027. Actual expenditure and requested share will depend on actual ministerial deployment in 2027.

What does our parish share pay for?

The table below sets out the General Fund Budget for the Diocese for 2027*

Parish Ministry 1 & 2

The stipends, national insurance, pension, council tax, water rates, insurance, housing management costs, DBS checks and training costs for our clergy and licensed ministers.

How much will this cost across the Diocese in 2027?

£14,723,000 66.2% of budget

Parish Ministry 3

The stipends, national insurance, pension, council tax, water rates, insurance, housing costs, DBS checks and training for curates. Training for new lay ministry is also included in this cost.

How much will this cost across the Diocese in 2027?

£3,182,000 14.3% of budget

Parish Support 1 (services to parishes)

Parish Support 1 (services to parishes)	How much will this cost across the Diocese in 2027?	
The Barking, Bradwell and Colchester Area teams' staff and expenses	£285,000	1.3% of budget
Archdeacons, Archeacons' PAs, administrative support and expenses and Area Bishop's Houses**	£757,000	3.4% of budget
Area Deans and other parish support	£111,000	0.5% of budget
Parish legal and church building services	£158,000	0.7% of budget
Education (net cost)	£102,000	0.5% of budget
Children and youth work	£133,000	0.6% of budget
Diocesan Advisory Committee	£304,000	1.4% of budget
Parish finance support	£121,000	0.5% of budget
Safeguarding services to parishes	£506,000	2.3% of budget
Diocesan and Bishops Advisors	£172,000	0.8% of budget
Chaplaincy and Partnerships	£141,000	0.6% of budget
Total cost of Parish Support 1	**£2,790,000**	**12.5% of budget**

Parish Support 2 (other costs)

Parish Support 2 (other costs)	How much will this cost across the Diocese in 2027?	
Diocesan services	£825,000	3.7% of budget
Communications	£209,000	0.9% of budget
Finance and governance costs	£249,000	1.1% of budget
Diocesan Office running costs	£230,000	1.0% of budget
Contingency	£31,000	0.1% of budget
Total cost of Parish Support 2	**£1,544,000**	**6.9% of budget**

Total amount that must be raised across the diocese £22,238,000 100% of budget

*The Budget above is the General Fund budget. The Diocese does receive other income, such as Diocesan Investment Programme Funding from the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board, which is ringfenced. Your Parish Share does not contribute to these other budgets, but nor can these other budgets be used to fund the direct costs of parish ministry or the other areas in the General Fund Budget. ** Our Area Bishops, their staff and expenses are paid for by the National Church. The Diocese does pay for their housing costs. Our Diocesan Bishop, her staff, expenses and housing costs are paid for by the National Church.

02 How is parish share being kept down by scrutinising diocesan expenditure and raising other income?

These continue to be challenging times for household and parish finances. Understandably people question whether it is necessary for parishes to be asked to contribute so much in parish share.

We are continuing to work hard to keep the amount parishes are asked to contribute down, by bringing in income from elsewhere, carefully scrutinising expenditure and making savings wherever possible.

However, given that the vast majority of our diocesan budget is focused on resourcing and supporting local parish ministry, there are no major spending reductions that can be made that wouldn't have a direct impact on our ability to fund clergy, clergy housing, ministerial training or essential parish support functions such as safeguarding.

What's more, there are simply no other major sources of sustainable income that the Diocese is able to utilise to fund local parish ministry.

So regrettably we cannot address the challenge of funding local parish ministry simply by reprioritising the resources we have. If we could, we would. The reality is that unless we plan to further reduce the amount we collectively spend on local parish ministry, we will need to ask parishes to continue to contribute at this level.

Of course, some parishes are better able to contribute than others and the 2022 parish share consultation that led to us developing a new approach to parish share, gave us a clear steer that parishes are in favour of mutuality: parishes that are better able to contribute, supporting those that are less able to contribute.

This is integral to the parish share scheme (see question 5).

> We will continue to work hard to keep the amount parishes are asked to contribute down, by carefully scrutinising expenditure and making savings wherever possible.

Keeping parish share down by raising other income and scrutinising parish support costs

By raising other income and continually scrutinising parish support costs, we are able to keep parish share contributions down as much as possible. At the same time it's important to recognise that many parishes expect, use and depend upon services from the Diocesan Office and our Area Teams. In scrutinising costs, it is important that we don't undermine any support that parishes need and value.

Raising additional income

There are several ways we have been able to raise additional income in recent years:

- **Increased investment returns through the use of Total Return Accounting.** This increases the amount of investment return that can be withdrawn from the Stipends Endowment fund to help pay stipend costs.
- **Funding from City Churches Fund (CCF)** restricted grant from the Trust for London. This money is available to parishes in the five London boroughs which form part of the London over the Border area. From 2024, following consultation, it was also made available to parishes that are outside the five London Boroughs but which are within the CCF area. These funds have been allocated using the same approach as the Low Income Communities (LinC) grant. All parishes, (both inside and outside the five London Boroughs) continue to receive support from the Low Income Communities Grant.

Scrutinising expenditure on parish support

Quite rightly there is a call for our diocese to focus our resources on local parish ministry. As you can see from the rest of this document, the Diocese budgets to spend more on the direct costs of local parish ministry such as clergy stipends, housing and training than it requests in parish share.

But what about our spending to support parish ministry? Our parishes rightly expect to receive professional support when it is needed; support that would be impossible or much more expensive to obtain from elsewhere. For example:

Safeguarding: Clergy and parish officers require professional training to ensure that their churches and worshipping communities are managing safeguarding and to provide support where incidents happen or risks are reported.

Our Mission and Ministry team provide essential training for our clergy and lay ministers and ensure that there are trained clergy and lay ministers for our parishes in the future.

They also provide professional support for those who lead children and young people's ministry in our parishes.

Our education team support the work of our church schools which are attended by more than 29,000 children. They also work with 12 Multi-Academy Trusts and our own diocesan Vine Schools Academy Trust holds 23 schools. Our 140 church schools are at the heart of our ministry in many parishes.

Property: Our clergy and others who live in church houses are supported by our property team who provide and maintain good housing. The diocesan property team manage 377 houses across Essex and East London.

Finance: Our finance team support the process of the payment of our clergy stipends, manage our investments, property portfolio and £22 million diocesan budget.

Doing this work efficiently and effectively maximises our ability to resource local parish ministry. Put simply our mission and ministry is better resourced because we manage our finances collectively as a diocesan family.

Diocesan Advisory Committee: When a parish needs to make changes to its church building, the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) team help them to navigate the complex legal processes. The DAC brings together a considerable number of experts and church architects to offer advice to the Diocesan Chancellor and to parishes with no charge at the point of use.

Communications: Each year, many churches and church schools find themselves at the centre of often unwanted media or social media attention and call on the professional support of our communications team for help and assistance.

The communications team also shares important news and information with parishes and supports and enables parishes to use digital communications which is increasingly important in our mission and ministry.

44% of Diocesan Staff costs are paid for from funds outside of the General Fund Budget. Some are funded by income earned by the departments themselves e.g. through the Diocesan Print Unit, the Parish Accounts Service or the Diocesan House of Retreat and some are funded through restricted funds, which are only given to the Diocese for specific purposes, such as education or from the national church Diocesan Investment Programme.

Parish Support Conversation & Sustaining Ministry

Last year we began a diocese wide conversation to help understand the needs of parishes and how they are best supported by the diocesan office, our area teams, networks and each other. The first part of the conversation has been focusing on how we support those who care for our church buildings. You can find out more on the diocesan website.

We have recently begun a conversation about how we can be an enduring missional presence in the communities we serve across the Diocese.

How does Chelmsford compare to other dioceses?

There are 3.28 million people living in Chelmsford Diocese which makes us second only to London Diocese in terms of population. The Barking Episcopal Area alone is bigger than most Church of England dioceses.

It is therefore important when comparing parish support costs and staffing to make comparisons with similarly sized dioceses.

In any organisation having management structures in place is vital to support, enable and empower people to do their job well – or in our case to exercise their ministry well. In our Diocese, the clergy and leaders in nearly 500 parishes are supported by our 6 Archdeacons and 4 Bishops.

Area Deans play a key role supporting parish clergy whilst ministering as parish clergy themselves. Our numbers of Archdeacons and Bishops are similar to the other dioceses in the top five by population size.

Rank by population size	Diocese	Total number of Bishops, Archdeacons or equivalents
1	London	12
2	Chelmsford	10
3	Southwark	10
4	Leeds	11
5	Oxford	12

03 How does the parish share scheme work?

So how does the parish share scheme work, and what are the key features?

Empowering local decision making - the role of deaneries

Perhaps the most significant change to the Parish Share scheme since it was redesigned for 2023 is to the role of deaneries.

Previously, each parish, benefice or share paying unit was sent a parish share request by the Diocesan Office. This request used a formula to calculate how much each parish was being asked to contribute. The formula would take into account factors such as the number and type of ministers serving that parish, attendance at church services and whether the parish was in an area of high deprivation.

During the the 2021/ 2022 diocesan consultation there were discussions about whether more local agency could be provided so that local factors could be taken into account that could not be picked up in any diocesan formula. Factors such as one off expensive building costs. Some participants also wanted the opportunity to support other parishes in their local area.

A number of options were discussed to help achieve this local agency. One option was to completely devolve decision making about parish share contributions to deaneries. The Diocesan Office would issue a deanery request and then the constituent parishes in each deanery would agree how much each would contribute.

Some were nervous of this approach, suggesting that it could lead to a break down in relationships in deaneries or some parishes being treated unfairly.

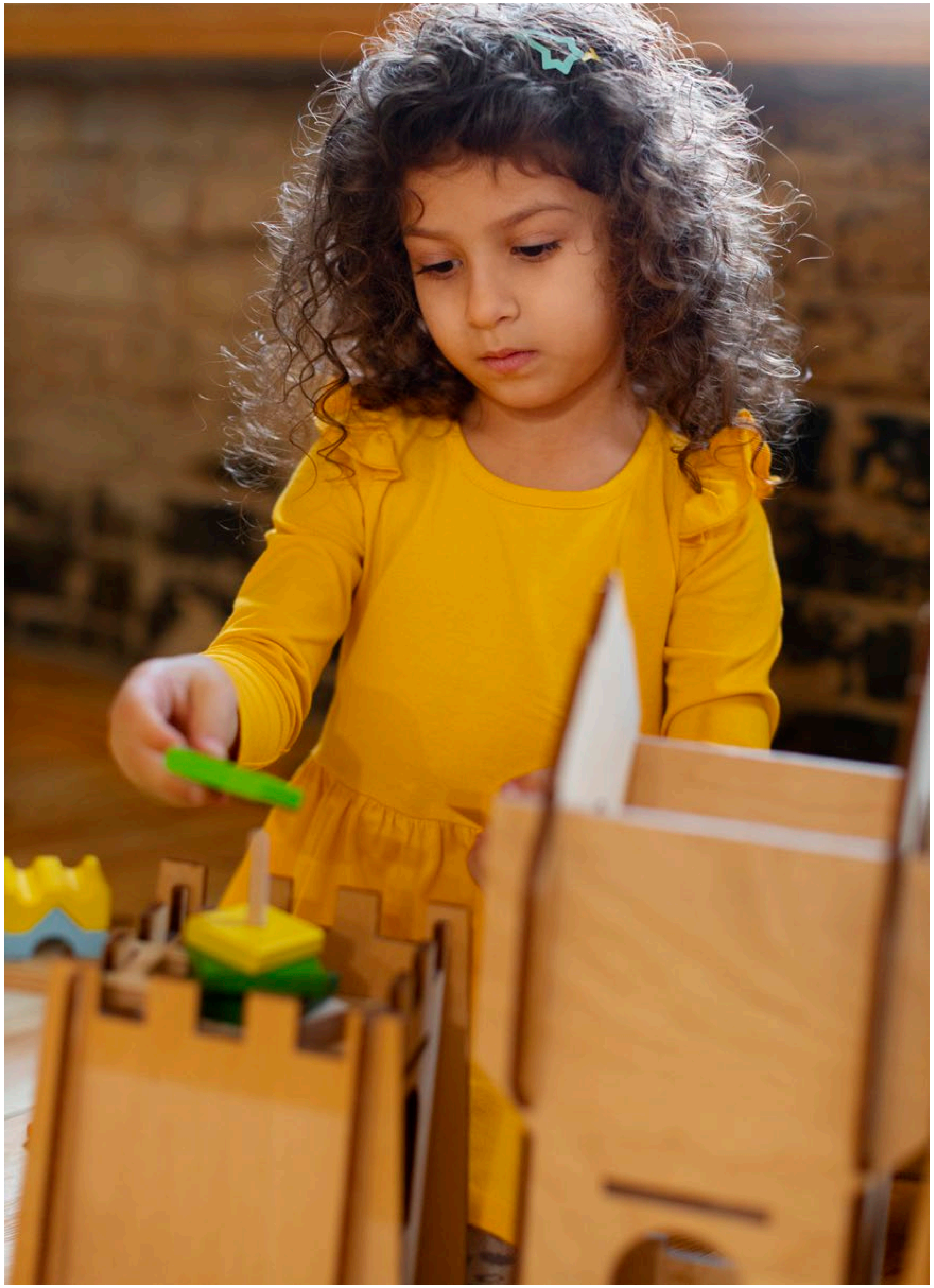
Instead a hybrid approach was proposed which was the most popular by a significant margin. In the hybrid approach, the Diocesan Office continues to issue a share calculation for each parish, benefice or Mission and Ministry Unit as a starting point. Parishes in deaneries can then choose to meet (if they want to) in order to discuss changes to those calculated contributions, provided the overall amount requested of all parishes in the deanery is allocated in full.

The Hybrid approach has a distinct advantage over the model where all decision making is devolved to the deanery.

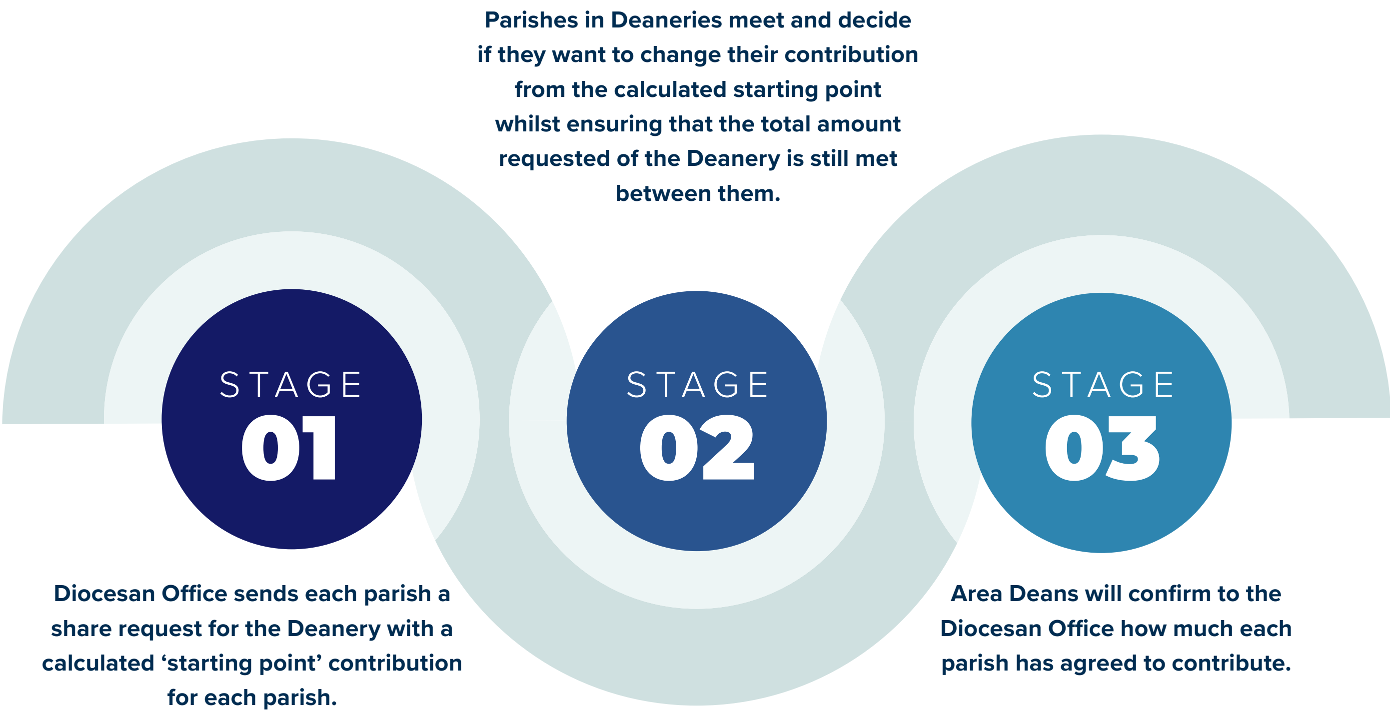
If parishes in a deanery can't or don't want to discuss changing their share contribution, they don't have to, they can simply opt out of the Deanery discussion and continue to contribute according to the individual parish calculation distributed by the Diocesan Office.

This helps protect parishes from a potential breakdown of relationships and from feeling pressured into contributing more than they are able to or want to. Parishes in a multi-Parish benefice sharing an incumbent may still want to adjust the proportion of the Benefice total between themselves and inform their Area Dean of the agreed percentages.

With this safeguard in place, parishes in deaneries can continue to enjoy the benefits of supporting each other mutually and making decisions locally.



How the Parish Share Scheme works:



STAGE 01 — Diocesan Office sends each parish a share request for the Deanery with a calculated 'starting point' contribution for each parish

In September 2026, every parish or benefice in a deanery will receive a share request for the whole deanery. There will also be a breakdown of calculated 'starting point' contributions by parish.

> So how does the Diocesan Office calculate how much each deanery and parish is asked to contribute in the new parish share scheme?
>
> This is answered in the next question.

STAGE 02 — Parishes in deaneries meet and decide if they want to change the contributions, provided the total amount requested of the deanery is still met

- Between September and November 2026, Area Deans will invite PCCs to send representatives to deanery discussions about whether the parishes in their deanery wish to make changes to the individual suggested 'starting point' contribution for each parish, or benefice.

Once those discussions are complete, they will need to ensure that the total contribution from the Deanery matches the amount requested by the Diocesan Office. So if one parish wishes to contribute more, another parish may contribute less and the requested deanery contribution will still be met. This is an opportunity for parishes to support each other where there is a need or desire to do so, for example to address factors which are not reflected in the formula such as an expensive building cost in one of the parishes.

- Each deanery will also be given the opportunity to discuss and bid for a small amount of additional funding from a Mission Opportunity Fund in order to support missional work across parish boundaries in the deanery.

- Any parish that does not wish to take part in deanery discussions is not obliged to do so and can simply contribute the amount that has been calculated by the Diocesan Office. If at any point during discussions, a parish wants to withdraw, they can do so. Where this happens, parishes that remain in discussions can continue to discuss how they will collectively contribute the amount requested from the Deanery, excluding the amount the Diocesan Office has calculated for the parishes that have withdrawn. However, our hope is that parishes will only opt out of discussions as a last resort.

An example

Parish A, B and C are all in the same deanery. Each of the parishes receive an assessed Parish Share request of £80,000.

When the Deanery meets to discuss the assessed share requests, Parish A expresses concern that they cannot afford to pay the full £80,000 request as they have major repairs required in their church, and as such they can only afford £60,000.

Parish B have a budget surplus and would like to provide additional mutual support, and offer to pay an additional £20,000 to cover Parish A's reduced contribution.

Parish C is comfortable with their allocation and choose not to offer any additional mutual support to other parishes in the Deanery.

Parish B then take their offer of additional mutual support to their PCC for agreement. Once agreement is approved by the PCC the Area Dean is informed and they in turn inform the Diocesan office of the change.

Confirmation of the new share amounts will be sent to Parish Treasurers in order to adjust direct debit and standing order arrangements, with Parish A being asked to contribute just £60,000, Parish B increasing to £100,000 and Parish C remaining at £80,000.

If a mutual support arrangement cannot be agreed in the Deanery then the Parish, Area Dean and Lay Chair may together ask for advice from the Archdeacon who may then suggest the Deanery return to further discussion.

STAGE 03 — Area Deans let the Diocesan Office know how much each parish will contribute

At the end of November 2026, once discussions are complete, the Area Dean will notify the Diocesan Office of the Parish Share contributions for each individual parish in their deanery, including those that have not participated in discussions and are contributing the amount calculated by the Diocesan Office via the Deanery Return Form.

Where a parish has agreed to contribute more than has been calculated by the Diocesan Office, they will indicate that the necessary authorisation has been received from the PCCs concerned again using the Deanery Return Form.

In December and early January, the Diocesan Office will contact parishes to perform any administration such as setting up payment arrangements with parishes for the collection of 2027 parish share.

04 How has our parish share contribution been calculated?

A formula is used to calculate a starting point contribution for each parish. The sum of calculated share contributions for parishes in a deanery will equal the total amount requested from the deanery*.

Parish Ministry

Your contribution to parish ministry costs across the diocese

Contributes to:

- Funding ministers (clergy, lay ministers)
- Training future ministers

Based on:

- Current ministry provision in your parish/ benefice

+

Parish Support

Your contribution to supporting parishes across the diocese

Contributes to:

- Services to parishes
- National church grants
- Other diocesan costs

Based on:

- Monthly members in your parish calculated from the statistics for mission return.**

+

Contribution to Mutual Support

Your contribution to the Mutual Support Fund

Contributes to:

- Mutually supporting other parishes

Based on:

- 20% of the total costs of parish ministry and parish support for each parish

–

Contribution from Mutual Support

Your contribution from the Mutual Support Fund

Based on:

- Low income communities data for each parish, so that areas of higher economic deprivation receive greater support
- Geographical area, so that longer travel distances are reflected in greater support
- Across the diocese, parishes collectively contribute £4.25 million to the fund and receive £9.85 million from the fund

* Except in 2 deaneries, where there are Share Paying Units that cross deanery boundaries.
Where this is the case an explanatory note has been provided in the detailed Parish Share assessment.

Parish Ministry Contribution

The largest part of the shared costs we meet as a diocese are the costs of ministry in parishes. This means the money we pay to cover the stipends, national insurance, pension, council tax, water rates, insurance, housing management costs, DBS checks, and training costs for our clergy and licensed lay ministers, including our curates and ordinands.

Based on feedback from the diocesan Parish Share consultation, the data used to determine suggested individual parish contributions to the Parish Ministry Contribution is based on current ministry provision in your parish.

Every parish with a Stipendiary, House for Duty or Self Supporting Minister in Charge makes a separate contribution towards diocesan future ministry costs which funds training and support of future ministers across the Diocese, including curates. The amount each parish contributes is not determined by where curates are currently serving.

See question 1 for a breakdown of Parish Ministry costs.

See question 6 for details of how the costs of funding different types of ministers have been calculated.

Parish Support Contribution

This part of the contribution helps to pay for the following:

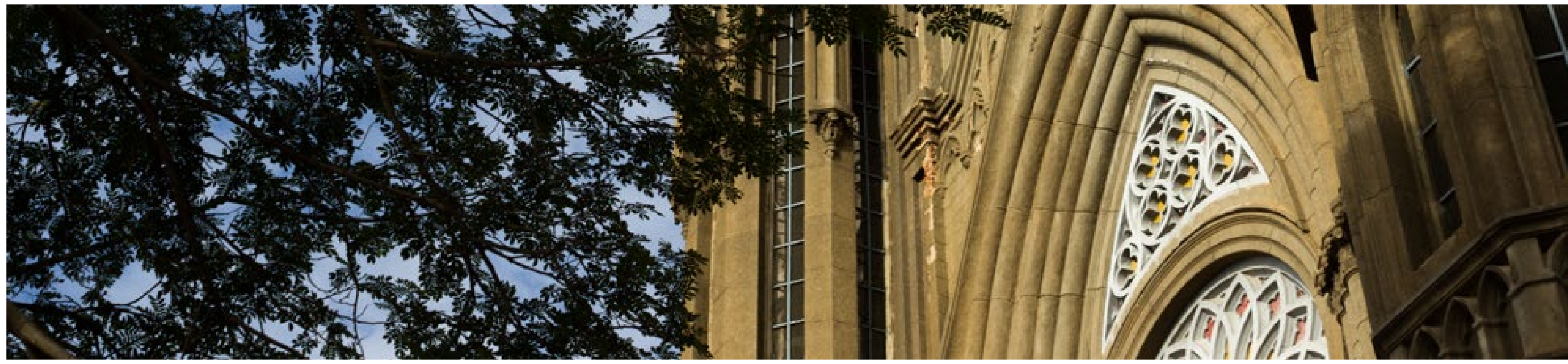
Services to parishes: This includes: area teams staff and expenses, Archdeacons and their support staff, housing and building costs for our Area Bishops and Archdeacons, parish legal and church building services, education, children and youth work, the DAC, parish finance support, safeguarding services to parishes, diocesan and bishops' advisors, chaplaincy and partnerships.

Other costs: This includes: professional fees (e.g. audit and legal fees), communications, finance and governance costs, contingency funds and diocesan office running costs.

Based on feedback from the diocesan consultation, we have continued to use attendance figures to calculate the share of this cost each parish is asked to contribute.

Click here to read a detailed explanation of how data is used to calculate parish support costs

See question 1 for a breakdown of Parish Support Costs.



The Mutual Support Fund

Each suggested parish share contribution will include a contribution to the mutual support fund of 20% of parish ministry and parish support costs.

This is one of the main mechanisms through which the parish share scheme enables parishes that are better able to contribute to support those who are less able to contribute.

Whilst every parish will be asked to contribute 20%, the vast majority of parishes will receive more from the fund than they contribute.

This is because mutual support contributions from parishes will be supplemented by funding available from national church, diocesan investments, vacancy cost savings and parochial fees.

Some parishes receive an additional grant from the City Churches Fund.

The amount each parish receives from the Mutual Support Fund is determined by:

- How economically deprived the parish is, using data from the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- How geographically large the parish is (to reflect the particular challenges of rural ministry)

Additional funding of £16,600 per deanery per year has been included in the budget to create a Deanery Mission Opportunities Fund. How this contribution is used will be for each deanery to discuss and decide.

If a deanery decides that it would like to make a contribution to parish ministry in another part of the diocese, they will be able to make an additional contribution to the diocesan Mutual Support Fund. Click here for a detailed explanation of how data is used to distribute the Mutual Support Fund.

05

How does the parish share scheme enable and encourage mutual support?

The parish share consultation gave clear support for the principle of mutual support. Those Parishes that are able to contribute more, should be enabled and encouraged to support those who are less able to contribute.

3 ways mutual support is enabled and encouraged through the parish share scheme

1 The parish share calculation enables mutual support through the Mutual Support Fund.

All parishes pay into the fund and those in areas of greatest deprivation or serving larger geographical areas (reflecting some of the additional costs of rural ministry), receive the most from the fund.

You can read more about the Mutual Support Fund in question 5.

2 Mutual support is encouraged and enabled at a deanery level. Parishes can choose to support each other by adjusting their share contributions whilst ensuring that the overall share request for the deanery is met.

This means that factors which no data or formula could easily identify such as a significant and unexpected building repair, or a parish receiving a large legacy, can be recognised in parish share contributions

3 Deaneries that are capable of contributing more than the amount calculated by the diocesan office can also contribute to parishes in greater need by making additional contributions into the Diocesan Mutual Support Fund, or by directly supporting another deanery.

Why are deprivation and geography included in the mutual support fund calculation when other criteria such as maintaining historic church buildings aren't?

Deprivation and geography were the two criteria that were most popular in the consultation. Other criteria, including criteria that can't be easily measured and used in a formula, such as the cost of maintaining historic buildings can be addressed by mutual support within a deanery and through support from other grant making bodies outside of the share scheme.

We continue to develop and look for other ways to help parishes with the particular challenges of maintaining church buildings.

Is my parish a net contributor or recipient of mutual support?

The vast majority of parishes are net recipients of mutual support. This is because the mutual support fund contains not only contributions from parishes but other diocesan funds.

A breakdown at deanery, parish and benefice level is included in the detailed deanery assessment.

06

How are the costs of funding clergy calculated in the new share scheme?

Parish share is mostly spent on funding clergy in parishes. The amount each parish is asked to contribute is largely determined by ministry provision in each parish.

Calculating stipend and housing costs

The costs of stipend and the costs of housing for clergy deployed in each parish are separately calculated.

This means that:

- one full time stipendiary post is allocated the costs of 100% stipend plus 100% house
- a half stipend post is allocated the costs of 50% stipend plus 100% house
- a house for duty post is allocated the costs of 0% stipend plus 100% house
- Two parishes sharing one full time stipendiary post are each allocated the costs of 50% stipend plus 50% house
- Clergy couples sharing a house are each allocated the costs of their own stipend plus 50% house

Why is the cost of resourcing a minister so much higher than the cost of a stipend?

In Chelmsford Diocese we are blessed with an outstanding team of clergy and lay ministers in our parishes.

The table opposite shows the budgeted costs of funding a full time stipendiary minister in 2027. As you can see the total cost is significantly higher than the stipend cost alone.

Curates

Every parish with a Stipendiary, House for Duty or Self Supporting Minister in Charge makes a separate contribution towards diocesan future ministry costs which funds training and support of future ministers across the Diocese, including curates. The amount each parish contributes is not determined by where curates are currently serving.

From 2027, parishes with full time stipendiary clergy will contribute a higher proportion towards future ministry costs than those with part-time stipendiary, self supporting or house for duty clergy.

Here's how it breaks down for a full time stipendiary minister:

Stipend	£35,867
Expenses and other clergy support costs	£350
National Insurance (employers contribution)	£4,317
Pension	£7,004
DBS checks	£120
In service training	£373
Housing (management/ repairs/ improvements)	£11,981
Council Tax	£3,369
Water rates	£719
Insurance	£1,014
Total	**£65,114**

07

What should we do if we can't afford our Parish Share contribution?

When the new Parish Share Scheme was introduced in 2023 some parishes received significantly different share assessments compared to previous years.

The formula used to calculate parish share has not changed significantly since and so such dramatic changes are less likely.

If you have received a significantly different share calculation compared to previous years it is likely to be because the circumstances of your parish have changed, for example there may have been a permanent change to ministry provision.

There may of course be other reasons why a parish might struggle to meet their parish share contributions and we remain committed to working with and supporting all parishes who may struggle. If this is the case, please:

1) Raise your concerns with your Area Dean and in deanery discussions in the first instance to see if other parishes in the deanery may be able to help, by adjusting the contributions in the deanery.

2) If the situation cannot be fully resolved in your deanery, speak with your Area Dean and Archdeacon about a plan.

That plan could be multi-faceted, aiming to increase the amount contributed and/or bring down the amount suggested through the parish share formula.

For example a plan might include:

1. Stewardship, giving and fundraising. We have two parish Giving Advisers at the Diocesan Office who are funded by the national church to support parishes.

2. Expenditure– identifying opportunities to reduce costs, including the amount requested in share, by discussing and reviewing ministerial deployment across the wider deanery.

As we work to support parishes in these situations we recognise that it may take several years to achieve full share payment.

However, as we have stated elsewhere in this booklet, parish share is the only way in which the diocese can sustainably fund local parish ministry and most of that funding is spent on parish clergy.

If there is a significant shortfall in share contributions across our diocese in the long term, the result will inevitably be a reduction in the number of clergy we can afford.

08 What happens if a member of clergy leaves their post during the year?

Given that the most significant factor determining the amount of money each parish contributes in parish share is ministry provision in a parish, people understandably ask, what happens to parish share when a member of clergy leaves post part way through a year.

When this happens there are usually one of two scenarios:

1. A post becomes vacant during the year and the intention is that there will be a like for like replacement

Parish Share continues. The budget assumes there will be vacancies and the cost savings have already been returned to the Mutual Support Fund.

Since January 2024, if a vacancy has continued for more than 2 years, a share reduction of up to 50% is available until the post is appointed.

2. A member of clergy leaves and the plan is that ministry provision for that parish will change

Once the change in ministry provision has been agreed by the PCC, the Area Dean and the Archdeacon and confirmed in writing, the share calculations will be amended, and the relevant parish contacted to confirm the change.

09 How does the scheme work for parishes in Mission and Ministry Units?

Whilst the new parish share scheme puts additional emphasis on enabling and encouraging mutual support between parishes, mutual support is not new in our diocese.

In the pre-2023 Parish Share scheme, there was the ability for the member benefices of Mission and Ministry Units (MMUs) to agree a different apportionment of the total share calculated for the MMU, from that set by the Diocesan Office.

When the new Parish Share Scheme was introduced in 2023, this autonomy was given to the Deanery, which means that there were two similar processes running side by side.

We have noticed that since the new share scheme was introduced, the MMU reapportionment has been used less and less, and therefore it was proposed that it should be removed from the documentation and that any reapportionment within a MMU should be done via the Deanery Process. This change was supported in consultation with Area Deans and MMU leaders and so was introduced for 2025, hopefully simplifying the documentation and process for deaneries that contain MMUs.

10 What if we don't want to agree parish share contributions with others in our deanery?

Our hope is that the new parish share scheme is an important part of our diocese's journey towards greater co-operation and mutual support.

However, we recognise that this is a journey that will require time and patience. We understand that for some, meeting with colleagues in neighbouring parishes about financial arrangements could undermine already difficult or fragile relationships.

That's why, after careful consideration and as a last resort, any parish can remove itself from deanery discussions at any time and simply contribute the amount calculated by the Diocesan Office. Indeed an entire deanery may choose not to meet at this stage, but just contribute the amount requested by the Diocesan Office.

11 What support is available to help implement and communicate about Parish Share in my deanery and parish?

There are two key areas of support that are available to deaneries and parishes to help them implement and communicate about the Parish Share Scheme:

Support for deaneries in holding discussions about parish share contributions

To support Area Deans, Lay Chairs, Deanery Treasurers and others in holding and hosting deanery discussions, there are:

- Guidance documents on hosting and holding discussions – available at chelmsford.anglican.org/support-for-parishes/finance-and-giving/parish-share-2026
- An option to request facilitation support, usually beginning with a conversation with their archdeacon
- The following data on request from statistics@chelmsford.anglican.org:
    - Monthly members
    - Population
    - Index of Multiple Deprivation rank
    - Parish level statistical attendance and finance information.

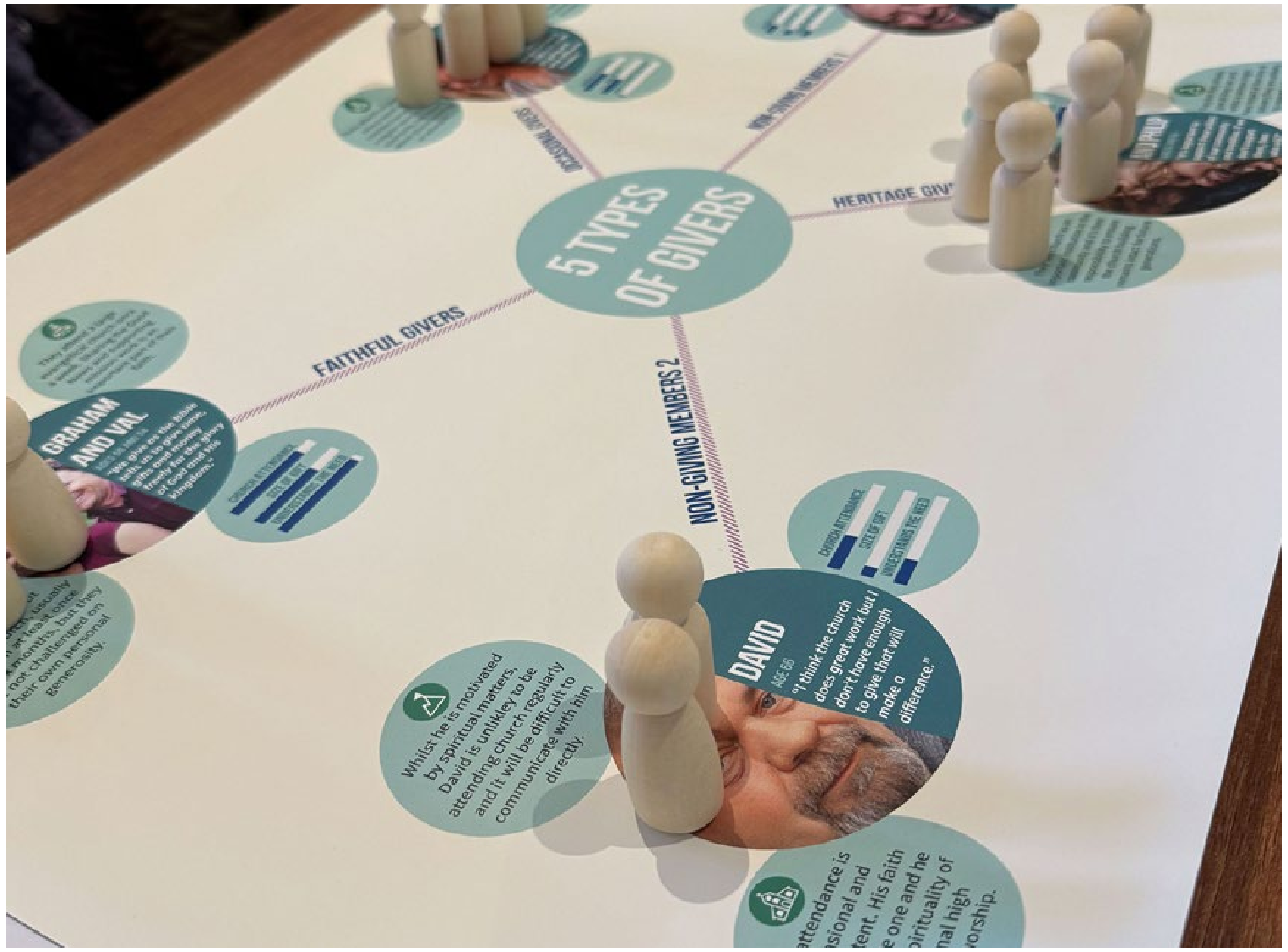
Support for parishes in communicating about parish share with their wider church communities.

Parish share is by far the most significant financial outlay for many parishes and it is important those who give generously in church communities are aware of what parish share is and how it is used to resource and support local parish ministry.

Our church leaders are best placed to communicate about parish share with their own church communities and are able to do so in a way that the diocesan office can't.

Most people who attend our churches are much more likely to follow their church on social media or subscribe to their church newsletter than they are to the diocesan equivalents.

So if we are to build trust and confidence in the parish share scheme and encourage generosity in order to fund parish ministry across our diocese, our church leaders will need to be equipped to communicate well about these issues.



Parish Share Online Resource Hub

Our Parish Share 2027 Resources Hub Page is designed to help parishes communicate about Parish Share.

At present the web page contains:

- This booklet
- A short and simple video explaining parish share, which can be shared with people in your church community.
- Links to more detailed resources about diocesan finance
- Links to stewardship and giving resources

Free leaflet for parishes

Parishes can order a free leaflet for distribution with their church community. The leaflet explains the new parish share scheme, its underpinning values and how essential it is to supporting local parish mission and ministry in our diocese.

The flyer also contains links to online resources.

The first 100 copies of the leaflet are free for each parish, with a small cost for additional copies.

Click here to order your leaflets or use the QR code.

Further help and information

- Parish Share online resource hub
  www.chelmsford.anglican.org/parish-share-2027
- Finance and giving resources for parishes
  www.chelmsford.anglican.org/support-for-parishes/finance-and-giving
- Parish Resources Website
  www.parishresources.org.uk

Diocesan Office

The Diocese of Chelmsford

The Diocesan Office, 53 New Street,

Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1AT

www.chelmsford.anglican.org

@chelmsdio chelmsdio chelmsdio

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