

## Understanding Parish Share

This leaflet outlines the Parish Share process, explaining how your contributions are vital to growing and maintaining the Church of England's presence across our diocese.

Parish Share is the collective way individual parish donations fund the essential work of the Church across our diocese. These funds are received by the Gloucester Diocesan Board of Finance (GDBF) and then distributed to support ministry in every corner of our diocese, including our most deprived communities.

Our Parish Share process is built on core values of fairness and transparency. It considers each local context and ability to contribute, fostering open dialogue between Archdeacons, the Finance Team, and deanery teams.

### The cost of mission and ministry

In 2025, the total cost to provide mission and ministry across our diocese is £11.6 million.

The largest portion of these funds directly supports our clergy, covering their stipends, housing, pensions, and ongoing training and development.

Beyond clergy support, these funds enable a wide range of services that support, enable and equip our worshipping communities to live out our 'LIFE Together' vision. These services include: safeguarding, HR, finance, advice on maintaining church buildings (DAC), legal representation, communications and overseeing Church of England schools. The GDBF also contributes to the national Church.

### Funding our mission and ministry: How your support makes a difference

We want to thank every person who financially supports the life and ministry of the Church of England in and around Gloucestershire.

Here's how these £11.6 million costs for mission and ministry are covered:

- **Parish Share donations:** We anticipate that £6.8 million will be covered by your invaluable personal donations through Parish Share in 2025. Thank you.
- **GDBF generated income:** £2.3 million is generated through diligent management of investments, property rentals, and grants by GDBF staff and trustees.
- **Reserve funds:** The remaining £2.5 million deficit is currently met by the GDBF using restricted funds specifically designated for clergy stipends, pensions, and housing. While we are incredibly fortunate to have these reserves, they will not last forever.

This highlights why personal donations through Parish Share are absolutely vital. Your contributions are needed to sustain the presence of the Church of England in our diocese.

## How Parish Share commitments are agreed

The process for agreeing Parish Share commitments is collaborative and transparent. It involves ongoing conversations between Archdeacons, the Chief Financial Officer, the Chair of the GDBF, and deanery teams, which include representatives from each benefice.

These discussions focus on understanding the specific costs of clergy ministry within each benefice and the financial commitments (donations) each benefice is realistically able to make.

The goal is to ensure a clear understanding of the requested Parish Share and a commitment from each benefice to meet these requests as fully as possible.

## Parish Share costs and commitments: The new process

To make discussions about Parish Share easier and more consistent, a new banding system based on benefice costs has been introduced, as shown in the table below.

This system ensures fairness by:

- Dividing up the total cost of ministry across the diocese based on the number of stipendiary or 'House for Duty' clergy each benefice has.
- Calculating the percentage of the cost each benefice commits to pay. These percentages are then grouped into 'bands'.

During deanery conversations, through shared understanding and discussion, it will become clear which benefices fall into each band and why.

Band	%	%	From	To	Mid
A	145%	160%	125,897	138,921	132,409
B	130%	145%	112,873	125,897	119,385
C	110%	130%	95,508	112,873	104,191
D	90%	110%	78,143	95,508	86,825
E	70%	90%	60,778	78,143	69,460
F	50%	70%	43,413	60,778	52,095
G	35%	50%	30,389	43,413	36,901
H	15%	35%	13,024	30,389	21,706

**Important note:** These percentages and bands do not judge generosity. A parish that is less financially well-off, contributing a lower percentage of Parish Share, is not less generous than a wealthier one contributing a higher percentage. In fact, their generosity might be even greater.

This approach to Parish Share aims to enhance clarity, transparency, and confidence in generous giving. It also provides a shared understanding of which benefices particularly need financial support, enabling benefices with financial capacity to support ministry in areas that need it the most.

While conversations about Parish Share are ongoing, a more in-depth review of bandings and commitments will occur every three years.