

Our Common Fund consultation

Ministry, and how it is paid for, and deployed, is a pivotal challenge for our diocese.

Ministry in our diocese

- While the old model of one vicar per parish as a default is long gone, we are still supporting ministry in all our parishes.
- Today, every benefice has an incumbent (almost always stipendiary) overseeing the spiritual and pastoral welfare of their parishes.
- That incumbent is called to support and encourage the ministry of all God's people.
- This model of shared local ministry means every parish can have ministry that is genuinely local, well supported and resourced. www.bathandwells.org.uk/slm



Our financial situation remains critical. In 2023, another £1.6m deficit was incurred (before sale of capital assets). We need to act together to return to financial stability.

The majority of parishes (around 80%) are not contributing enough into the Common Fund to meet the needs of mission and ministry locally and across the diocese.

The Common Fund is the most significant source of income for our diocese and allows us to pay for, and support, ministry and mission across our diocese.



The proposed new methodology seeks to address our challenges in line with our current model of ministry. Its foundational principles are:

Mutual support & generosity

Transparency

Use of independent data

Awareness of local context



Proposal at a glance

1 Every benefice will receive a request to contribute an amount into our Common Fund.

2 They will be given a breakdown of how that share might be apportioned between each parish in the benefice, based on attendance.

3 The final decision of how it will be apportioned will be left to the benefice.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”

2 Corinthians 8-9

It is proposed the amount requested be calculated based on the new Common Fund methodology which is made up of:

A Direct ministry cost

This includes:

- Stipend
- Housing
- Training and support
- Pension

B A proportion of diocesan-wide support costs

- Based on number of worshippers in benefice
- Includes costs for curates, archdeacons, ordinands, and support services.
- Common Fund pays for 47% of these costs, the remainder is paid from additional income.

C Mutual support & generosity contribution

- A 20% contribution to be applied to the A+B figure for all benefices to help create a ‘generosity pot’.
- This will not be achievable for all.

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