

All about the Parish Share Scheme

January 2021

On behalf of the Diocese, thank you for your gift of parish share. Every single gift helps us to become a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world.

My thanks this year for all you have continued to be and to do throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Did you know that 94.4% of Parish Share was received in 2020? This is an incredible achievement and testament to the hard work and dedication of so many to maintain giving. You have sustained the finances of parishes and of the Diocese and your efforts are deeply, deeply appreciated. Thank you.



We are very aware that 2021 will be at least as difficult. We will continue to work closely in partnership with deaneries on finance and deployment issues.

This leaflet about the current Parish Share Scheme is an updated version of an earlier publication. We're making it available ahead of a review of the scheme, due to start later this year.

Look out for more news about the review in the Autumn. For now, I hope that this provides useful information and helps to answer any questions your congregation may have about the scheme, especially during these difficult times.

Should you need further information, help with giving and fundraising ideas or want to discuss the challenges you're facing in your parishes, then please get in touch with us. The finance team and generous giving team at Church House Oxford are there to support you.

Steven Croft

The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft
Bishop of Oxford

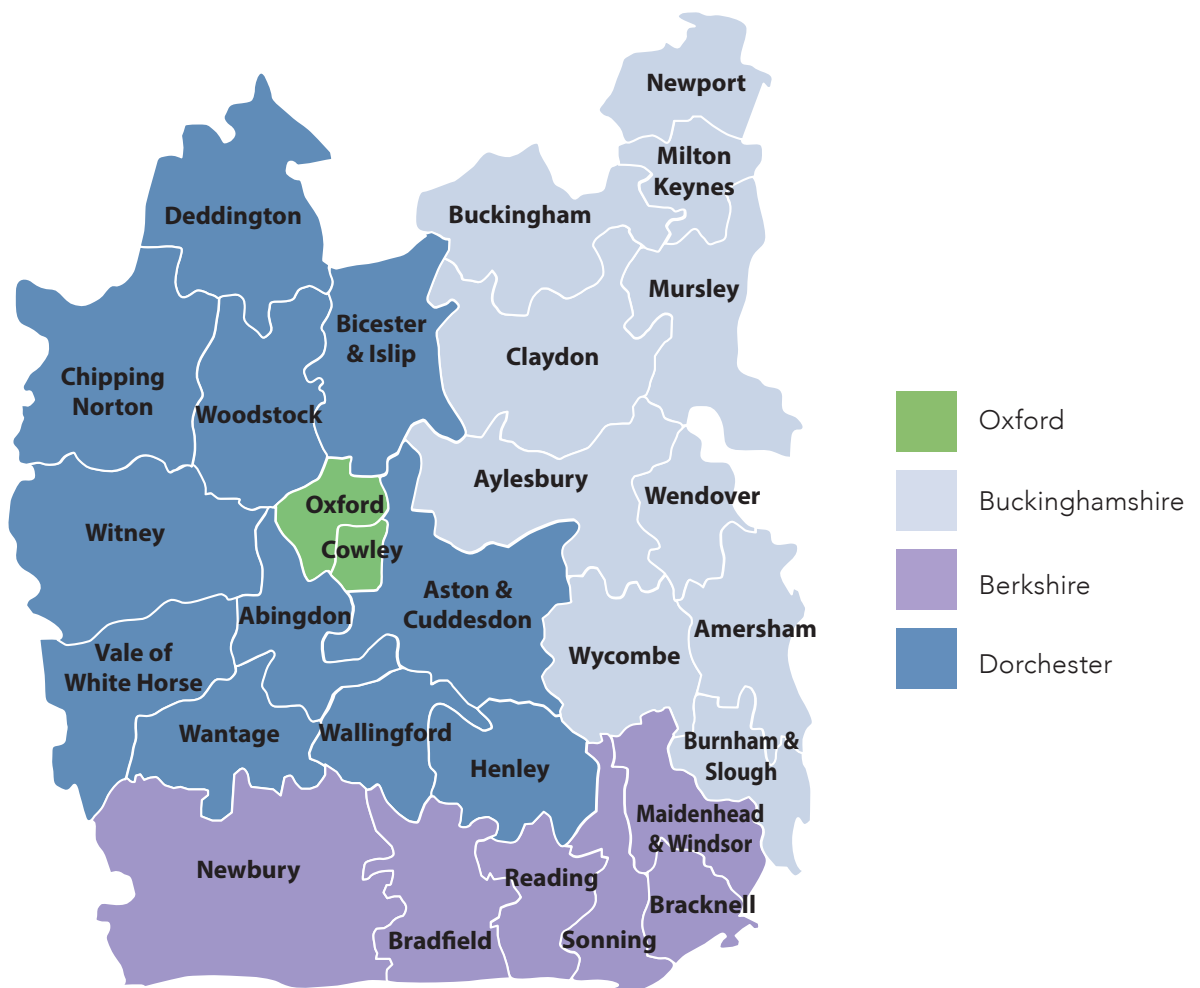
Together we are the Church

The Diocese of Oxford is the Church of England in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Together, we are the Church, called and sent by God as disciples of Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. We are a living, growing network of more than a thousand congregations, chaplaincies and schools, working with God and with others for the common good in every place in one of the great crossroads of the world.

Together, we are called to become a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world. You can find out more about our common vision at oxford.anglican.org/commonvision

There are 812 churches, 626 parishes, and 29 deaneries in the Diocese of Oxford



What is the Parish Share?

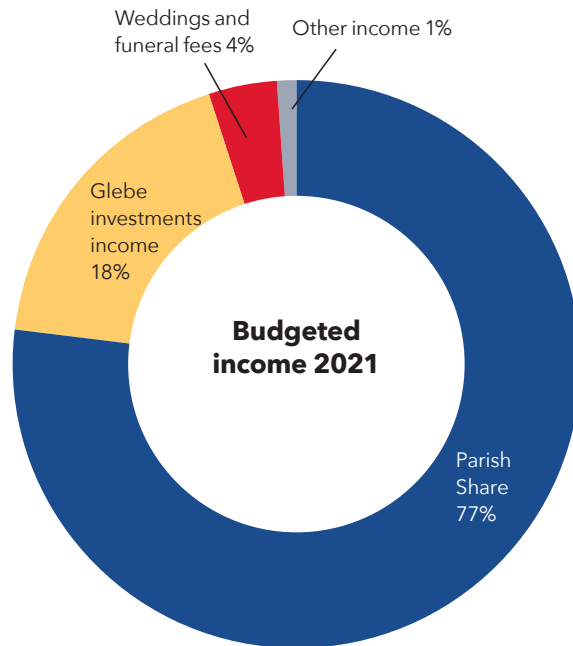
The Parish Share is the amount of money that each parish is asked to contribute to support the provision of mission and ministry of the Church in the Diocese of Oxford.

The total amount of money needed by the Diocese each year is divided between the 29 deaneries using

a formula that seeks to recognise the need of some churches to be supported by others.

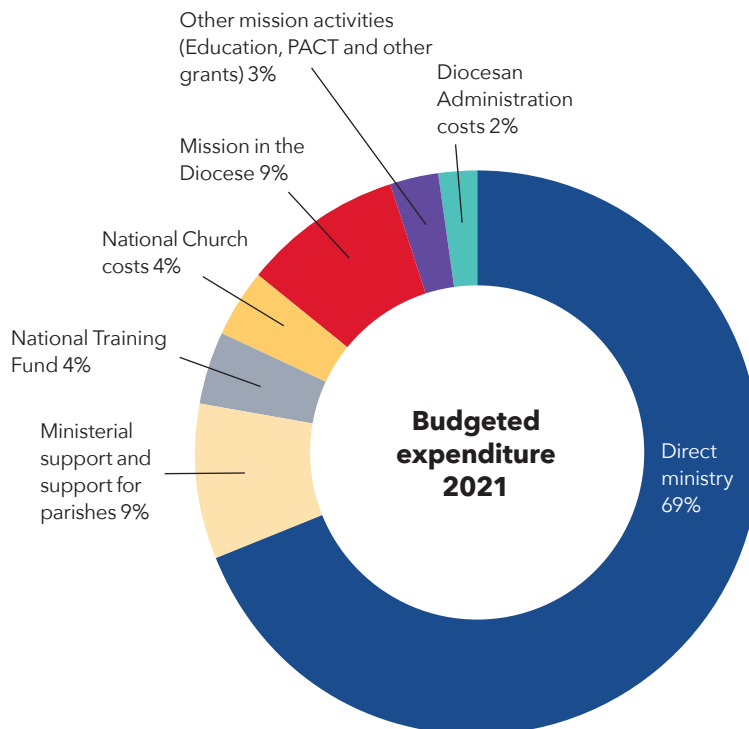
Parish Share is a vital part of enabling God's mission in our Diocese. Without it, we would not be able to support and pay for our clergy.

Where does the money to run the Church in the Diocese of Oxford come from?




So how is the money spent?

All diocesan expenditure supports, directly or indirectly, the mission of the Church.




This means ...

90 pence in every pound comes back to our parishes in

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- **Clergy** - stipends, pension contributions, housing and ongoing training
 - **Curates** - selection, training, stipends, pension contributions and some housing
 - **Support for Ministers and Mission** including: safeguarding, work with children and young people, parish development advisors, church schools, lay training, communications.

10 pence in every pound goes to

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- **National Church costs**, including support to churches in poorer parts of the country
 - Our contribution towards the funding of **initial ordination training** at a national level
 - Other diocesan **support and administration** costs.

For further information about Diocesan finances and how Church House staff support the work of our parishes, visit oxford.anglican.org/finance

How is Parish Share calculated?

The basic principle of the Parish Share Scheme is one of Christian generosity and mutual support. The current scheme was devised by a group of parish and deanery representatives from across the Diocese with the aim of producing a formula that is fair and transparent.

Given it is now some years since the scheme was last reviewed, we plan to review the current scheme again later in 2021. It's likely that any changes to the scheme will not take effect until the 2023 budget year.

The current scheme is based on four elements:

1. Actual ministry costs for stipendiary clergy (i.e. Stipends, Pensions, National Insurance and costs of 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.

Key features of the Parish Share scheme:

- Stipendiary and house for duty clergy are directly charged to deaneries, based on stipend and housing costs.
- Curates in training are included in the training costs and allocated on overall deanery ability to contribute basis, rather than directly allocated to 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 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, using attendance and Electoral Roll numbers, and a Community Profile Score using data provided by Experian for the public sector.

Guiding principles

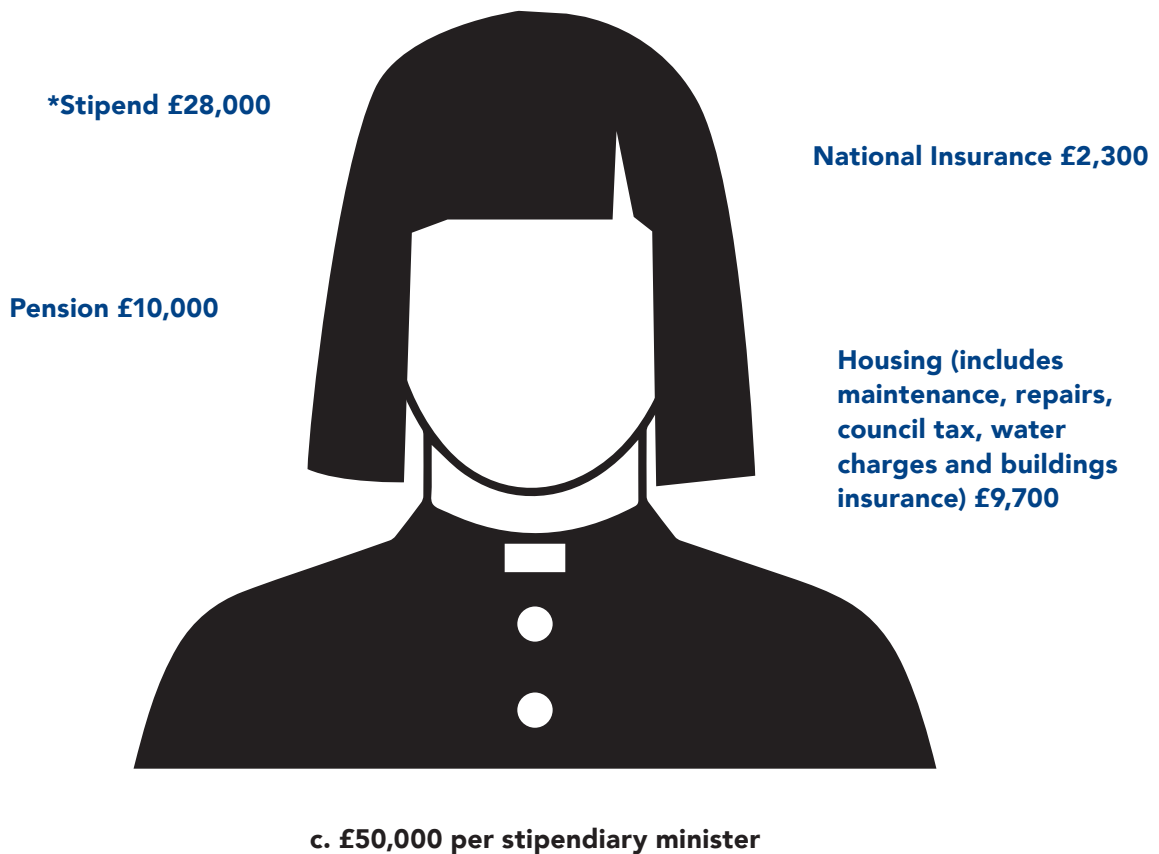
A core principle of 'from each according to their means, to each according to their needs' is at the heart of the Parish Share Scheme.

The other important elements to note are:

- Two-step allocation from Diocese to deaneries, then from deaneries to parishes/benefices. 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 to allow for certainty and remove large fluctuations in allocation.
- Rebates are given to deaneries who reach certain contribution targets during the year, plus a discount is given to parishes/benefices contributing by direct debit.
- Diocesan Synod approves the level of Parish Share, along with the budget, in November each year.

How are ministry costs calculated?

Ministry costs are the total direct costs of employing the clergy. Based on the budgeted figures for 2021, the costs for a stipendiary post (i.e. a clergy person who receives a stipend, as opposed to a self-supporting minister) are:



Note: the allowance for House for Duty ministers who live in their own houses is £13,500, which includes a contribution to mortgage costs.

*Figures are rounded, for illustration

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 *£919,000 to the National Church Central Fund for training in 2021 as well as at diocesan level, *budgeted £3.6 million in 2021.

Within the Diocese, this investment 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.

Why should we pay?

We know that even in normal times it can be hard to find the money for Parish Share when you are looking after ancient buildings. But mission and ministry cost, too, and we're committed to mutual support.

Put simply, this means:

- Sometimes supporting other parishes in your deanery
- Supporting less wealthy 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.

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.

To find out more about the work of the Church Commissioners, visit churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/church-commissioners

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.

Given the size of the Diocese of Oxford, economies of scale mean that our central structures are relatively lean compared to others.

What if we don't pay?

It is harder to attract a priest to a vacancy where a benefice is known not to pay its way. It is also a source of embarrassment to clergy - knowing that they are being paid when their benefice is not contributing fully.

Most importantly, other parishioners in the deanery and Diocese will have to contribute more to cover for the shortfall in your contribution.

Holding back your Parish Share contribution has consequences for everyone. If you feel unable to contribute towards your Parish Share allocation, please contact finance@oxford.anglican.org so that we can look together at possible ways to help you increase your income.

*Figures are rounded, for illustration

Growing giving at your church

Growing the giving at your church to support a sustainable future for your ministry, mission and building can feel like a daunting task. Visit the website for advice, support and resources on the technology and theology of offering and generosity.

oxford.anglican.org/giving

And they came, everyone whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and brought the Lord's offering to be used for the tabernacle and for all its service.

Exodus 35.21

