

THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER'S COMMON FUND

A quick guide to how we are funded, and how that money helps our churches grow and thrive.



Diocese of *Rochester*
called together

What is the Common Fund?

The Common Fund is the common pot of money paid into by congregations across the Diocese.

Supporting each other in this way is a demonstration of the shared sense of responsibility we have to everyone in our Church family, so that all can flourish.

The good news is that the money parishes contribute comes back to them in one form or another as ministry, mission or support services.

All part of the bigger picture

The ministry, mission, and services provided by the Common Fund are channelled in a purposeful way thanks to our shared Called Together vision. This vision means we have a roadmap for how we seek to bring about the Kingdom of God, and ensure we are a Christian presence now and into the future.

How the money is used to support parishes

Ministry

The majority of the money is spent on parish ministry, and allows a vicar to be placed in nearly every parish, no matter what a parish's setting or financial situation.

It pays for things like stipends (clergy pay), pensions, clergy housing and training for those already in post, as well as training future clergy.

Mission

The money is also used to support local mission and outreach through helping facilitate initiatives such as community projects, work with children and young people, and training for lay ministry.

This ensures a parish can serve its community and enable encounters with God whether the church is large or small, wealthy or poor, more rural or urban.

“

I am so grateful for all that parishes give through the Common Fund. This money helps keep the ministries of our churches running and supports the big picture for the mission of the Church across Medway, north and west Kent, and the London boroughs of Bromley and Bexley.

Bishop Jonathan Gibbs,
Bishop of Rochester

”

Support services

Money from the Common Fund pays for the central services provided by the support teams at the Diocesan Office.

Whether it is support with safeguarding, HR or communications, advice on the care and development of church buildings, guidance on fundraising and giving, or bringing in external funding for projects, Diocesan Office colleagues help parishes maintain and grow their presence in the community, as well as meet their statutory responsibilities.

How a parish's indicative offer is calculated

Each parish's ability to contribute is different.

To help, parishes are provided with an Indicative Offer, to act as a helpful guide.

There are three elements:

- Cost of direct ministry - based on the number of full-time equivalent clergy in the parish
- A share of central costs; for 2024 this is £11,503
- A contribution to wider diocesan mission, calculated as 10% of unrestricted income

Parishes are encouraged to be realistic but generous, as every contribution makes a difference.

'In the climate of a cost-of-living crisis, riding in on the back of a pandemic, communities such as ours have been hit terribly hard. We seek to serve as best we can. This is only possible because the Diocese has the bigger picture and because the Common Fund exists to support our mission and outreach.'

The Rev Mandy Young,
Priest-in-Charge,
St Alban and St Edmund, Dartford

Busting some myths

The government funds the Church

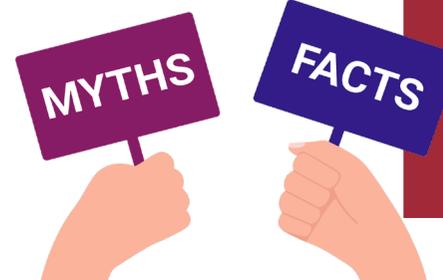
We are the established Church, so many people think that the government pays for our church buildings. But it does not. We get no direct funding from the government. The responsibility for funding parish ministry and caring for buildings rests with us. We must support existing ministry, and also invest for the future.

The National Church can afford to fund us

The Church Commissioners pay for the ministry of the archbishops, bishops and a proportion of cathedrals ministry. Parishes do benefit from grants made to dioceses, such as through the Strategic Development Fund, but the income of the Commissioners cannot cover parish costs. The cost of our three archdeaconries and the diocesan office teams must be met by the diocese family.

There is too much resource at the 'centre' of the Diocesan support structure

The Diocesan Office is responsible for supporting parishes with their mission and ministry across a diverse range of areas which includes statutory responsibilities. The fact that these are managed by the modest level of staffing within the Diocesan Support Team, a level that has remained consistent since 2019, even with the increasing costs of statutory and safeguarding responsibilities, is a testament to the quality of the people employed and the amount of effort which they put into their roles every day.



Did you know?

- Parish share income accounts for just over **68%** of expenditure from our core budget
- Clergy stipends are by far the biggest expenditure at around **£6.8M** each year
- Our support costs in 2022 are just over **£1.7M** of total expenditure
- The Diocesan Property team take care of **185** parsonages

GOT A QUESTION OR NEED SOME HELP?

Please don't hesitate to get in contact with one of the Finance Team. We are here to support you.

Email: finance@rochester.anglican.org

For more detailed information about the Common Fund visit: www.rochester.anglican.org/about-us/howwearefunded/



Diocese of *Rochester*
called together

“All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions and gave to everyone in need.”