



12 December 2023

Dear Treasurer,

Cc Incumbents, Deanery Organisers, Rural Deans and Lay Chairs

Parish Share update / Year End Letter from the Finance Team

Within this letter you will find the following:

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1. Parish Share 2023

Thank you so much for all your efforts so far this year in raising parish share in what we all know has been a challenging time. As at 8th December, we have received £5.479m which is 74.6% of the original target. This amount was at a similar level to the same time last year, and we recognise what an achievement this is and the efforts so many of you had made to reach this. We appreciate how hard our parishes are working towards paying as much as they can, in particular with additional challenges around rising costs. **Our accounts will remain open until 31 January 2024 to receive payments towards the 2023 parish share targets.**

We are still some £1.063m short of the budgeted target (net of any shortfall allowance) and so are grateful for your ongoing efforts to continue to contribute towards 2023 parish share.

We continue to send out statements on a monthly basis and you should have received a statement (via email) as at 3rd December 2023 and so your next statement is due on 3rd January 2024. If you haven't already done so, please do check that payments you have made have been received and allocated to you correctly.

For this year due to the timing of bank holidays, and office closure, we know that a higher volume of cheques sent in the post during this time won't be cashed until after 2nd January and so may not appear on the December statement which is automatically sent out on the 3rd of each month. Please be assured these will be allocated to your 2023 account and we will send out regular reports during January so that you are able to track any payments made.

If you are in any doubt of your parish share target for this year, please contact your Deanery Organiser who can advise. Alternatively we produce a monthly share report which provides the targets and current balances and can be found on the website at [Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich | Parish share \(cofesuffolk.org\)](https://www.cofesuffolk.org)



Please note that we will close our books for receiving payments which relate to parish share in 2023 on 31 January 2024. Payments received after that date, unless we know about them in advance, will be treated as 2024 parish share.

Any cheques must be received at the office by 31 January 2024 to be included in your 2023 Parish Share figures. Cheques received after this date will only be accounted for in your 2023 figures if you have told us by 31 January to expect the cheque so that we can accrue for it, allowing us to finalise our own accounts. **We are closing our accounts early in February so please do let us know as early as possible.**

2. Parish Share 2024 allocation

The Diocesan Synod approved the parish share allocation for 2024, and we have been working via Rural Deans, Lay Chairs and Deanery Organisers to share the deanery breakdowns with benefices over the last few weeks.

As in previous years the share has been allocated at a benefice level and it is for each benefice, working with the Deanery Organiser, to apportion the allocation amount to the parishes both in your benefice and across the whole deanery. Some deaneries and benefices have already done this and returned their allocations, but if you have not as yet done so, please contact your Deanery Organiser (or if there is no Deanery Organiser, the Rural Dean and/or Lay Chair) to do so. We need to be able to allocate at this level in order set up the reporting processes for 2024. We do accept that this may take a little more time than normal, but please do try to submit parish allocations as soon as practicable. At the very latest, we would appreciate receiving these by 31st January 2024 for us to begin reporting parish share payments.

We have attached a benefice proforma which you may find useful for when you provide a breakdown of share. Where your Deanery Organiser has sent in or intends to send in a breakdown for the whole Deanery, then there is no need to return this information.

As far as possible, we need all the allocations back regarding 2024 share by Wednesday 31st January 2024.

3. Financial Support

We recognise that some benefices and parishes may struggle to meet their parish share in 2024, and we would encourage parishes to put into place measures to help encourage giving and generosity and the *Parish Resources Team* are happy to work with you. For parishes that are still struggling they can request financial support for a limited period of time (up to three years), via their benefice, whilst working with Mission & Ministry, the Parish Resources Team and other Diocesan staff in order to find a way to improve their financial sustainability. There is a formal process to follow, and approval is needed by the Finance & Investment Committee with applications being accepted over £10,000.

More details and the Financial Action Plan Form can be found [here](#), and, after having discussed with your deanery leadership team, you should inform your Deanery Organiser and Archdeacon and/or Julie Podd as soon as possible if you believe you will need financial support during 2024. If you are able to assist the poorest parishes



to meet their share, please contact your Deanery Organiser (or Lay Chair/Rural Dean) in the first instance. For those benefices requesting support the Diocesan staff look forward to working with you so that we can fulfil our calling to, 'Growing in God'.

For our forward planning and budgeting, communication is key. Please keep us informed of any issues which may arise which inhibit your ability to pay your share.

4. Standing Orders and Remittance Advices

Please find enclosed a standing order form and some remittance advices. Further copies will be available on the diocesan website under Parish Share in the "For Parishes" section (<https://www.cofesuffolk.org/parish-finance/parish-share>).

Please consider paying your parish share by direct bank transfer where this is possible through on-line banking. This helps us to process payments more efficiently and directly.

If you do wish to pay all or part of your 2024 parish share by standing order, please complete the form as soon as possible and either return to your own bank or to us in the office, and we will do this for you. Please ensure that any references you use for this include your parish name (this can be a shortened version to save space) and "Share 24", this helps us to ensure that it is allocated to the correct parish and year.

If you are paying by BACS, please ensure that any references are the same as above, with your parish name and "Share 24". Please email us to let us know that the payment is coming and what it is for to the following email address remittance@cofesuffolk.org.

The remittance advice is for those parishes who are still paying by cheque. Please ensure you include some paperwork which clearly states the name of the parish and what the payment is for.

5. Payments made in January 2024

Please ensure that all payments in January 2024 are clearly marked to show which parish and year they are for. If you make a payment in January which doesn't show the year and your parish still has a balance outstanding for 2023 the team will try to contact you to check which year you are paying, **however if this is not possible, they will automatically allocate the payment to 2023. Please help us by being clear which year you are paying for!**

6. Online Share Information

A monthly share report is produced for the diocese and can be found on the diocesan website <https://www.cofesuffolk.org/parish-finance/parish-share>

This is emailed to Deanery Organisers, Rural Deans, Lay Chairs, and Incumbents every month.



7. Parish Trusts

For those parishes for which we hold trusts, we endeavour to send out the accounts (although we are reliant on external information), by the end of January 2024. I appreciate that everyone is busy trying to collect information for their accounts, but please do not ring us to chase the trust figures until early February as this can delay the process for everyone.

8. Parish Resources

Help and advice for treasurers can be found on the Archbishop's Council website at <http://www.parishresources.org.uk/> or through ACAT

This includes detailed guidance on how to claim gift aid small donation relief at - <http://www.parishresources.org.uk/giftaid/smalldonations/>

For any queries or advice on stewardship, giving including the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), contactless devices, online donations and QR codes, and gifts in wills resources, please contact Julie Podd, who is happy to support you. Further details are available - [Parish resources - Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich \(cofesuffolk.org\)](http://www.cofesuffolk.org/parish-resources)

If you would like advice and help around funding and grants, including access to Church Grants please contact Emma Denton. Further details can be found at - [Grants and fundraising for your parish - Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich \(cofesuffolk.org\)](http://www.cofesuffolk.org/grants-and-fundraising-for-your-parish)

9. Parochial Fees for 2024

The fees table for 2024 is now available on the diocesan website on the parochial fees page: <http://www.cofesuffolk.org/parish-finance/parochial-fees>

As per the last four years, we intend to continue to account for funeral services at a crematorium where there is no service in a church by attributing a £34 fee to the PCC and the remainder being payable to the DBF. The 2024 table of fees reflects the continuation of this practice.

As a reminder, the fee for the funeral should be received by the PCC of the Incumbent who takes the funeral, irrespective of the parish from which the deceased came, and this should be clearly reflected when submitting the PF1 form.

If you have any queries in relation to completing PF1 forms, please contact Frances Blakeway in the finance team at fees@cofesuffolk.org.

10. Diocesan Office Christmas

The Diocesan Office will be closed for routine matters from Friday 22nd December to Tuesday 2nd January 2024.

Again, our thanks for your commitment and efforts throughout a challenging year! We look forward to working with you and supporting you in your parishes in 2024 and may we take



this opportunity to wish you and your church members a merry Christmas and happy new year!

Thank you,
Yours sincerely,

Philip Codling
Interim Finance Director

Attachments:

- Parish Share 2024 Benefice breakdown Proforma
- Standing Order Form
- Remittance advice slips

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