



August 2014

Martin Bishop
Financial Secretary

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Dear Treasurer,

Enclosed (Paper version only):

[For letters sent by conventional post]: Provisional 2015 Parish Share figures

Previous Newsletters can be found on the Diocesan website at:<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/finance/letters-to-treasurers/>**Annual Budget Presentations to Treasurers, Incumbents and Churchwardens**

You should have also received, this week, an invitation to this event from the Archdeacons, with fuller details, including a copy of the draft budget for 2015 and accompanying notes. If you are unable to attend the meeting in your own Archdeaconry, then you are very welcome to attend one of the other two meetings. In which case you might like to make a note of the dates and venues of all three meetings.

<u>Archdeaconry</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Venue</u>
Bedford	Monday 6 th October 2014	St Mary the Virgin, Goldington , [MK41 0AP]
St Albans	Thursday 9 th October 2014	St Albans, St Stephen [AL1 2PT]
Hertford	Thursday 16 th October 2014	Hertford, All Saints [SG13 8AE]

Each meeting will start at **7:45pm**. Light refreshment will be provided, during the course of the evening, and we aim to close the meetings by approximately 9:30pm.

The meeting will give you an opportunity to ask questions of David Nye and to share the financial concerns of your Parochial Church Councils.

Our guest presentation this year is provided by Buzzacott and Co, the DBF's Accountants. The subject will be Gift Aid. This will cover some general principles and also some specific areas of concern including the recently introduced method of claiming online, and also features of the Small Donations Scheme. There will be an opportunity to ask questions after this presentation, however if there are specific matters which you might like to have covered, then please let me know (mbishop@stalbans.anglican.org)

I hope that you will find both parts of the evening informative and practical.

Parish Share Scheme changes

I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of some recent modifications to the parish share scheme which took effect from the beginning of this year, and one further one that will take effect from 2015.

Stipend contribution during a Vacancy Period

A proportionate reduction is made to the Stipend Contribution during a vacancy period.

Applicable to vacancy periods **starting on or after** 1st January 2014, a reduction in stipend contribution is limited to 10% throughout the entire vacancy period.

(As an interim measure for ongoing vacancies, the calculation of the stipend contribution which started before 1st January 2014, will follow the previous basis:

- 20% reduction of the standard stipend contribution, during the first nine months of the vacancy, and
- 60% reduction for any extended period beyond that until the vacancy is filled).

First-Post Curates

For curate in training posts starting after 1st January 2014, there will no longer be a Stipend Contribution request. Instead the stipend costs will be shared by all parishes as part of the Ministry Support Contribution. The parish share request for parishes with curates in training will however be subject to an adjustment as a contribution towards housing costs.

From 1st January 2014, where a parish provides a house, a credit rental sum will be given according to the 'wealth' of a parish based on their number of shares. If the DBF provides the house, the parish would be charged a notional rent based on the number of shares as follows:

	PCC Owned	DBF Owned
	Credit	Charge
Shares:		
0- 99	100%	0%
100-199	75%	25%
200-299	50%	50%
300-399	25%	75%
400+	0%	100%

For curacies starting during 2014, the percentages in the above table will be applied to a *notional* figure of **£12,000** per annum.

For curacies starting on or after 1st January 2015, the percentage contribution payable by the PCC or the DBF will be based on the **actual rent paid** or, where the property is already owned, on the **estimated market rent**. It is anticipated that any adjustment for housing provision be agreed with the PCC at an early stage, and included in notices of appointment.

Parish Share 2015 provisional figures

General comments

A table of parish share calculations for your parish and deanery can be downloaded from:

<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/finance/finance/parish-share-deanery/>

These provisional figures **do not currently include any Pastoral Aid Support grants**, except for those multi-year grants which have already been agreed in an earlier year. Most of the grants for 2015 will not be finally confirmed until the meeting of the Diocesan Parish Shares Committee,

scheduled for 3rd December, where recommendations from Deaneries will be considered.

Stipend Contributions

Please note that these estimates are based on the **current level of staffing**, unless future appointments/retirements have already announced. Confirmed figures for 2015, with updated stipend contributions, will be sent out in early December, once the latest staffing changes for 2015 are known, and also once Pastoral Aid Support grants (see below) have been allocated.

In the meantime, the following information may be of help when considering parish budgets for next year.

Standard 2015 Stipend contribution per incumbent (in post): £30,043 per annum

New vacancies

(For vacancy periods that **started on or after** 1st January 2014): £27,039 per annum i.e. £30,043 x 90%). Under the new rules, the reduction during vacancy is 10% throughout the entire vacancy period.

Existing vacancies

(for vacancy periods that **started prior to** 1st January 2014):
£24,034 per annum for the first 9 months of the vacancy, (£30,043 x 80%) and then £12,017 per annum (£30,043 x 40%) for the remaining period of the vacancy.

First-post curates stipend contribution

For curacies that started after 1st January 2014, there is no longer a stipend charge, as mentioned elsewhere in this letter.

The following information is *only* relevant to those parishes with a curate-in- training *where the appointment started last year or earlier*.

The contribution rate is based on the following table by reference to the number of shares as shown below:

<u>Shares</u>	Proportion of full annual cost	<u>Additional Stipend Contribution</u>
0-99	15%	£ 4,716
100-199	20%	£ 6,288
200-299	25%	£ 7,860
300-399	30%	£ 9,431
400 or higher	50%	£ 15,719
(Total Annual Cost (@100%)		£ 31,438)

Ministry Support Contribution

I would be grateful if you could, in particular, review the Usual Sunday Attendance and Electoral Roll figures shown for your parish. These are taken from data provided to us, usually by your parish priest. To date just over 92% of the Mission Statistics (membership) forms for 2013 have been returned. **If you feel that the figures, which are used in the Church Membership calculation, do not properly reflect the size and composition of your**

congregation, then please let, my colleague, Tony Boon know as soon as possible, as there is a small window of opportunity to correct that data before next year's parish share figures are finalised.

Pastoral Aid Support grants

Parishes seeking financial assistance with their parish share, by applying for a PAS grant, should do so by contacting their Deanery Standing Committee as soon as possible. The Deanery Committee, if they decide to recommend such a grant, will then need to forward your application to the Diocesan Office no later than Friday 7th November, for consideration by the Diocesan Parish Shares Committee at their meeting on Wednesday 3rd December.

Application forms and guidance notes will be available from your Deanery and can also be downloaded from the Diocesan website at:

<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/finance/finance-forms/>

Applications will only be considered if this form is duly completed and also if the latest set of annual Accounts, annual Return of Parish Finance, and Mission Statistics form accompany the application, or have already been submitted to the Diocesan Office. Please also note that this form, after completion by the parish, should in the first instance, be forwarded to the relevant Deanery Committee for their recommendations.

As part of this process, Deaneries may also receive requests from parishes to "write-off" parish share amounts ("shortfalls") which remain outstanding after three years or longer. For example, this Autumn the parish shares committee will consider applications, forwarded through the Deanery, to write-off parish share shortfalls relating to 2011 and/or earlier.

You may be interested to know that the Diocesan Parish Shares Committee are asking Deaneries to adopt a modified approach when considering these grants in the future.

- Deaneries will be sent details of grants and shortfalls over recent years with giving per CMF figures also included.
- Archdeacons will have conversations with Rural Deans and Deanery Lay Chairs, concerning applicants for aid, specifically to establish whether difficulties in meeting the parish share are considered to be short-term or ongoing.
- A distinction will now be drawn as between two categories of grant:
 - 'mission-aided' - for parishes receiving longer term support. This would be reviewed after three years or when a vacancy occurs, whichever the sooner.
 - 'temporary support grants' - for parishes requiring only short-term support. This category of awarded grant is not expected to continue for more than two years.
- Parishes in receipt of grants would be expected to demonstrate their commitment to Mission Action planning and stewardship.

Survey request from ACAT (Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers)

Our diocese has a block membership of ACAT, which includes the following benefits:

- A Handbook, currently with some 25 chapters covering everything a Treasurer might need from Book-keeping, to Fundraising, via Health & Safety.
- Quarterly Newsletter keeping members informed of all the recent changes in legislation; an annual Treasurer's Guide, detailing current tax rates plus access to our team of expert advisers via the Advice Line.
- Training courses run at many locations across the UK. These are continually updated and adapted so as to address current issues,
- Conference in London with specialist Keynote speakers. This is a great opportunity to meet and learn from other Treasurers.

I have been asked to encourage you, as end-users of the services which ACAT provides, to complete a very short survey. ACAT are particularly interested in the views of those Treasurers who are less familiar with the internet as they do not want to skew the delivery of their services inappropriately. The survey does not request any information that could be used to identify a respondent.

You can complete the survey by:

- Telephoning 01246 888903 and leaving address details – ACAT will post out a copy of the survey with an SAE for easy return or,
- Online at: <http://danracat.poll daddy.com/s/acat-member-survey-2014>

If you have any questions, then please contact, Dan Russell, the ACAT Administrative Co-ordinator directly:

dan@acat.uk.com 07908 132791

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