



February 2014

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Dear Treasurer,

Enclosed (paper version only):

1. Statement of Parish Share Account / SEE Round Account as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014
2. Direct debit and standing order forms (2 pages)
3. Annual Return of Parish Finance (1 page) and guidance notes (3 pages)
4. Third sector article "Four 'double-defaulting' charities released from Charity Commission inquiry"
5. Stipends letter
6. Note from Parish Buying about the "Energy Basket" collective buying scheme
7. ACAT Newsletter January 2014

Items for potential or immediate action, are indicated by side lines

**Parish Shares Account and See Round**

Please find enclosed updated statement for your parish, showing the position as at Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. This includes all remittances received up to this date and also a debit in respect of the first quarter's parish share for 2014. A copy of the See Round Statement account is also enclosed where applicable.

**Parish Share 2014 - Monthly Payment of Parish Share**

Regular payment to us of parish share by either Standing Order or Direct Debit helps us in turn to meet our monthly commitments, in particular the monthly clergy stipend and pension payments.

For PCCs who have previously been paying the Parish Share by Direct Debit, you will have received a separate letter, last month, giving details of the planned collections for the coming year. If you would like to *start* paying parish share by Direct Debit, then please use the enclosed Direct Debit Mandate (<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/finance/finance-forms/>) This should be returned to the Diocesan Office in the first instance. We will then write to you to let you know when the collections will start and confirm the amounts concerned.

If, however, you would like to pay some of the Parish Share in regular monthly amounts by Standing Order instruction to your PCC's bank, then please use the enclosed Banker's Order form (<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/finance/finance-forms/>)

It would help us, when choosing the transaction date for your Standing Order, if you could avoid a period of 2-3 days at either end of the month. In some cases it can take up to 3 working days after the debit date on your statement for the funds to reach the DBF account. This may lead, at the year-end especially, to misunderstandings as to which accounting period a particular standing order payment was intended for.

## Annual Return of Parish Finance for 2013 and Annual Reporting

For those of you with internet access this return can be filed online at  
at [www.stalbans.anglican.org/statistics](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/statistics)

We would like to encourage Treasurers to file returns online as:

- Using this new facility will give you an alternative, postage-free way to send in your return.
- The information entered through the online portal will be automatically transferred to the diocesan database, so that it can be shared more easily with the Bishops, Archdeacons and other diocesan officers. From there, the information will also be passed electronically to colleagues at the National Church (who devised the returns). Our aim is to build up a clearer, and more up to date, view of the state of the diocese's financial and missional health at the individual parish level.

For those who do not have access to the internet, and therefore receiving this letter in the post, please find enclosed proforma for the annual Return of Parish Finance and accompanying guidance notes.

In addition to the annual return, please make sure that your independently examined/audited accounts are submitted within four weeks after the date of your APCM, and in any case no later than **Friday 30th May**.

A useful guide for PCC Treasurers, "PCC Accountability: The Charities Act 2011 and the PCC - 4th Edition", has recently been published by Church House. This book provides essential and up to date guidance for all PCCs in the preparation and scrutiny of their annual financial statements and reports. This new edition is fully updated with regard to the Charities Act 2011 and the Charity SORP's Regulations.

It includes guidance on:

- Technical compliance issues for larger PCCs aligned with current best practice
- Correlation with the current annual Return of Parish Finance
- Restructuring to clarify in clear and accessible language what smaller PCCs need to know

Additional features include:

- A complete guide to Receipts and Payment accounting
- Reworked specimen Annual Report & Accounts for small and large PCCs.

The Diocesan Office has pre-ordered a limited quantity of the new edition at a discounted price of £5.50. If you would like to purchase a copy, then please write to me at the Diocesan Office, enclosing your cheque, payable to St Albans DBF, for £7.00 per book (£5.50 + £1.50 to cover postage and admin)

For those of you who prefer online reference material, the parish resources website also contains guidance on annual reporting at:

<http://www.parishresources.org.uk/resources-for-treasurers/accounting-and-reporting/>

### Registration with the Charity Commission

If your parish has crossed the £100,000 threshold in terms of income last year, you're reminded that you'll now need to register with the Charity Commission. The Archbishops' Council have

produced a guide on how to do this, which has been updated this month.

<http://www.parishresources.org.uk/pccs/registration/>

If your PCC parish has registered with the Charity Commission, it is important that the contact details for the “registered correspondent” are kept up to date and that the annual returns to the Charity Commission are also up to date.

For an example of the sort of thing which the Church Commissioners are clearly concerned about, please see this article:

[http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/bulletin/third\\_sector\\_daily\\_bulletin/article/1228537/four-double-defaulting-charities-released-charity-commission-inquiry/?DCMP=EMC-CONThirdSectorDaily](http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/bulletin/third_sector_daily_bulletin/article/1228537/four-double-defaulting-charities-released-charity-commission-inquiry/?DCMP=EMC-CONThirdSectorDaily)

### **Stipends Letter**

Please find enclosed a copy of the annual letter from the Diocesan Secretary that was sent in a recent “bundle” to Stipendiary and Clergy and Lay Ministers

(Electronic version available at: <http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/stipends-letter> )

### **Recent message from the National Procurement Officer**

*concerning the Parish Buying – Energy Basket*

If you are already a member of the scheme you should already have received this. For those of you who are not yet part of the scheme, you may like to see a copy of this announcement.

Further details from Russell Stables ([energy@parishbuying.org.uk](mailto:energy@parishbuying.org.uk) ) on 0800 368 0887 or

[http://www.parishbuying.org.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=4813&Itemid=276](http://www.parishbuying.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4813&Itemid=276)

### **ACAT** (Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers)

I enclose a copy of the latest newsletter. Earlier newsletters and other help and guidance on the Treasurer’s role can be found on the ACAT website:

<http://www.acat.uk.com/>

Our diocese has a block subscription covering all Parish Treasurers. For access into the members’ section of this website, please contact me, by email, for the current login details.