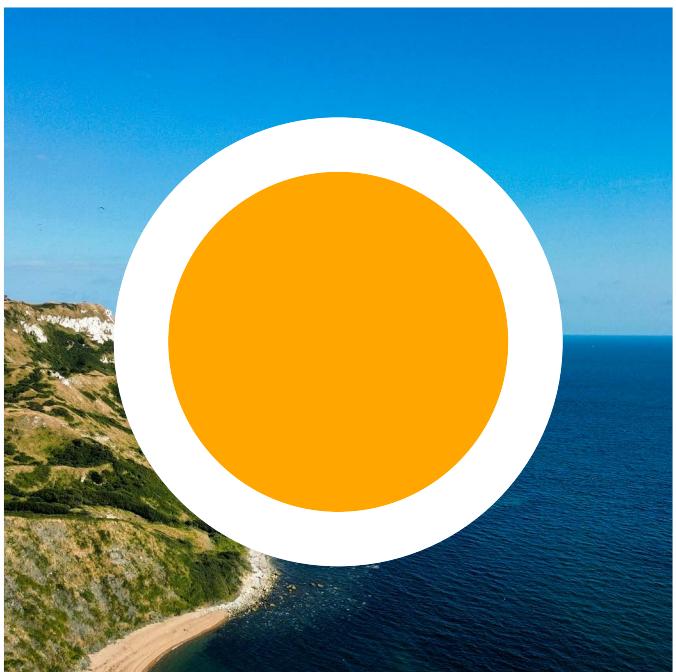




**Diocese
of Salisbury**
Making
Jesus Known

Annual Impact Review 2025



Bishop's introduction

When we reflect on our impact across the diocese, our first thoughts are with the many Christians who witness and serve faithfully in their communities.

It is this lived, local faith, expressed in prayer and service that Bishops Karen, Andrew and I see day by day, and for which we are deeply thankful.

We are clear that this is not, in the end, our work. It is God's work. God is already at work in every place and invites us to share in what he is doing, making Jesus known in every place.

We give thanks for clergy and lay ministers who continue to serve with courage and compassion in challenging times, sustaining the life and witness of the Church across this diocese.

Alongside them, we are grateful for the small and dedicated staff team who support and help to co-ordinate mission and ministry across this large geography.

The title Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) may not sound inspiring, but it represents those who serve our parishes, schools and communities in practical and often unseen ways. This year, DBF staff prepared a Strategic Mission



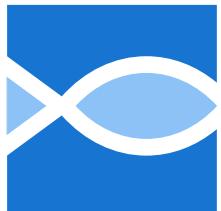
Investment application for £5 million, a significant piece of work with the potential for lasting and shared impact. Focussed on particular areas, it is a call to partnership and to working across boundaries. Salisbury has not always been at the forefront of such external investment, but that is now changing.

This summer reminded us how vital this support can be when things go wrong. The data breach, originating outside the diocese, was deeply painful for volunteers and clergy alike. DBF staff worked long hours to offer advice, reassurance and practical support, and for this we are grateful.

A commitment to outreach among marginalised communities led to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller conference, of national significance and warmly welcomed by our largest ethnic minority community. Recognising the selfless contribution of volunteers also led to our summer celebration events, sharing God's generosity and love with those whose faithful witness ensures a Christian presence in every community. There is much for which to give thanks.

Rt Revd Stephen Lake
Bishop of Salisbury

Year in numbers



155

volunteers celebrated with certificates and events

19

churches newly registered on Eco Church website



9

curates trained in and licensed to roles across the diocese

5 people admitted to Licensed Lay Ministry,
11 currently training

3
12

churches awarded Silver Eco Church
awarded Bronze

791

Learning Hub users



80

published courses

756

course bookings

106

faculties and

170

List B completed

104

churches now on green energy tariffs

68%

of churches submitted 2024 energy data for the Energy Footprint Tool, significant increase on previous year's **32%**

1,125,816 views on social media accounts and **17,700** total followers

497

confirmations, a 26% increase on 2024

EPC surveys now complete on **81%** of clergy houses

General enquiries to Parish Support:

1,000+

calls and

3,500+

emails

16

training sessions for parishes/clergy

100

clergy and parish officers attended four in-person Money Matters events



150

people attended three diocesan finance briefings

3,000+

parish officer roles reviewed and updated

£779,828

Total digital giving in parishes (contactless + online)



Creative partnerships in local mission

Creative partnerships in local mission are at the heart of our vision: resourcing and supporting ministry teams to build resilient communities which make Jesus known.

National funding

This year, hard work from a small team of staff and missional leaders across the diocese ensured our application for national funding was approved by the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board. This recognised our commitment to investing in 13 Mission Hubs within the wider diocesan vision and strategy. In total the diocese received £5.1 million, most of which will go directly to Mission Hubs, alongside their own local funds.

The first mission designs for the hubs – which will partner and support surrounding churches – were approved in 2025, with work continuing to finalise remaining plans in early 26.

While each hub reflects its local context, all share a commitment to deepening discipleship and engaging more children and young people.

Through external funding, we have supported the launch of The Light Church in Royal Wootton Bassett, establishing a new church plant for families previously travelling out of the diocese to worship (see case study below).

Growing Younger

Our partnership with Growing Faith, a national movement working at the intersection of church, school and household, continues to shape our work with children, young people, their families and those often

The Light Church

The Light Church formally launched on Easter Sunday 2025, based in Royal Wootton Bassett and operating under a Bishop's Mission Order covering all of Calne Deanery. Planted by Pattern Church in Swindon, the core team consisted of local Christians who previously travelled into Swindon to worship.

The new congregation has seen steady growth over 2025, largely from people coming back to church after some years away but also from those exploring faith for the first time.

One woman recently reaffirmed her baptismal vows after giving up being a medium. During the pandemic she knew she had to renounce giving spiritual readings if she was to follow Jesus, and began searching for a church. Another came back to faith after her son found faith at university. Building relationships with local schools, starting a Christian toddler group at MOD Lyneham, running worship nights and lots and lots of praying – it's been a very encouraging start!

Revd Tom Morgan



Easter baptisms at The Light Church.



Creative partnerships in local mission

described as the 'missing generation' (ages 25 – 50).

Over the last year, five local leaders (lay and ordained) participated in the Growing Faith Strategic Leaders Programme, with a further six clergy joining a new National Incumbents Programme to equip churches to connect more effectively with children and young people.

Find out more about the focus for the different Mission Hubs in the video below.

Flourish

National funding is enabling us to join a network of 12 dioceses piloting new worshipping communities within an educational setting. Building on the partnership between church, school and home, this work is currently being piloted in:

- All Saints School, Weymouth
- Shaftesbury High School
- St Laurence's, Bradford Upon Avon
- St Mary's Primary, Bridport

Christian social enterprise

In a unique pilot project, the DBF is supporting a Christian social enterprise in Lyme Regis focussed on connection, reducing isolation and supporting families. Waffle Lyme, launched in 2025, runs community groups and provides individual support through participating in social prescribing. It works with local schools to foster intergenerational connection and has recruited volunteers from local churches to support its activities. Plans are also in place to offer a money budgeting course through Christians Against Poverty in 2026.

Introducing Mission Hubs

Starting with 13 locations, Mission Hubs have been launched across the Diocese to help grow and transform the local Church. Funding from the Church of England is assisting these places and the surrounding areas to grow in their ministry and mission.





Creative partnerships in local mission

Buildings for Mission

As part of a two-year Buildings for Mission project exploring sustainable futures for church buildings, Toni Bush has worked with twenty-five churches and two deaneries. In response to challenges around volunteer capacity and finances, churches have been introduced to an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, focussing on mobilising local strengths to enable meaningful change.

ABCD reframes engagement from doing things to and for communities towards working with them. Toni is leading pilot transformation projects in four churches, developing shared missional visions for church buildings alongside local partners. The impact is clear: stronger relationships, co-created events and more creative, diverse use of buildings. Churches are becoming more active, connected and resilient at the heart of their communities.



Waffle House Lyme Regis is building networks of volunteers to strengthen community cohesion.

'Perceptions are shifting': church aids community flourishing

A community conversation with a headteacher marked the first step for the project group at St Philip and St James' Church, Chapmanslade.

The discussion sparked new energy, inviting reflection on how the church building could support the school's development. A week later, the church was asked to host a children's exercise group that the school could no longer accommodate due to growing wraparound care demands. The school promoted the church's Community Harvest Celebration.

Families from the exercise group attended the event co-created with the history group and local farming families. A Facebook post inviting memories of "harvest assembly bangers" generated song ideas and shared stories.

As word spread, the local Police Community Support Officer requested to hold surgeries in the church, and a young woman volunteered to help with Gen Z-focussed communications.

Perceptions are shifting, with the church increasingly seen as a catalyst for connection and community flourishing, not just a place of worship.



Children from Chapmanslade school took part in community conversations, reflecting on how the church building can support the school.



Courageous Christian leadership

The Diocesan Board of Finance works to resource and support courageous Christian leadership — ordained, lay and volunteer.

Celebrating our amazing volunteers

Volunteers and lay leaders are essential to the worshipping and missional life of our churches. Many have been faithfully working to serve their local church for decades. To affirm and celebrate volunteering and serving, the DBF organised three celebration events and asked PCCs to nominate two volunteers for an award and an evening with one of the three bishops.

More than 200 nominations were received, and people came together to celebrate in Marlborough with Bishop Andrew, in Salisbury with Bishop Stephen and in Lyme Regis with Bishop Karen.

“It was a lovely event, and we were honoured to be included... we have done what we have done for the Church and part of our faith in Jesus Christ.”

— Christopher and Evelyn Grant

Volunteers' Week falls in June each year and we hope to build on this year's events with further celebrations, resources and support for the wonderful Christians who keep our churches and wider communities living and thriving.

Volunteer Support Officer pilot

With the ever-increasing workload of clergy and a shortage of volunteers, 2025 saw the start of a three-year pilot role to understand how we can better support and resource volunteers and free up time for mission. Based in the Pewsey Deanery, the role undertaken by Emily Heaver provides direct assistance to parish and benefice teams, while identifying gaps in structure and provision. This valuable ground level experience is informing the agenda of a working group involving churchwardens, area offices and DBF staff which will set out ways forward to support existing volunteers and aid recruitment of new volunteers.

Ministry Formation

The Ministry Formation team develops and trains lay and ordained leaders to support the mission and ministry of local churches across the diocese.

In 2025 this included:

• An increase in those entering training for ordained ministry. Eleven new ordinands began formation training in September 2025. Around 20 people are currently discerning a vocation to ordained ministry, many of whom are expected to begin training in 2026.

• Two candidates among the first cohort of the Elizabeth Pathway. This pathway enables older candidates to complete discernment and ordination training in under two years and to serve in ordained ministry more quickly.

• Nine curates trained in this diocese licensed to benefices. A total of nine curates has been, or will be by Easter 2026, licensed to benefices, helping to ease vacancy pressures across the diocese.

• A continued increase in candidates training for Licensed Lay Ministry.

In 2025, five people were admitted to this ministry, with a further eleven currently in training.

• Local lay training delivered across the diocese. Twenty-five courses in leading worship and pastoral skills resulted in 116 people being commissioned as Licensed Pastoral Assistants or Licensed Worship Leaders.



Courageous Christian leadership

We are deeply grateful for the many volunteers who serve as Vocations Advisers and Associate Directors of Ordinands. Finding and forming candidates who can become effective leaders in mission is skilled and time-consuming work, and their commitment and wisdom make this ministry possible.

Growing confident young Christians online

A group of young people from churches in the diocese launched a diocesan TikTok channel in 2025 which grew rapidly, gaining more than 1200 followers. Mentored by members of the DBF comms team, the group meets up to create content to encourage

other young Christians in their faith and engagement with the world. It is open to any new young Christians who love to create good content! The group is now moving to partner with a number of churches, where those who engage online can be directed to in-person fellowship and worship.



Bishop Karen thanks volunteers in Lyme Regis.





Working for justice

"Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God". The prophet Micah tells us what God requires of us, and this theme of our vision calls us to put our resources – spiritual, material, intellectual – to use in fulfilling this command and living full and flourishing lives.

The DBF's work in promoting safe and flourishing communities through its safeguarding team, the encouragement to reflection and local action through the Justice Network, and awareness raising, training and campaigns rooted in a commitment to racial justice are all areas supported and progressed in 2025.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding continued to be a priority across the Diocese of Salisbury during the year, as we seek to create environments where people feel and are safe. The Diocesan Safeguarding team focussed on supporting parishes to effectively carry out their safeguarding responsibilities by providing online tools, advice and support. This included a monthly online session attended by up to 70 Parish Safeguarding Officers to share learning and good practice.



In the summer a data breach from our Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) provider had a significant impact on many individuals and parishes. By this point we were already underway with a DBS Transition Project to introduce a new online safeguarding hub and change DBS provider. Around 75% of parishes have now signed up to the hub which allows them to record and monitor DBS and safeguarding training information for their

"Racial justice is not an area I know a huge amount about, or feel confident talking about, so it was great to spend a day with like-minded people and be told – yes you can and should be an ally."

volunteers and staff. The Diocesan Safeguarding team is rolling out training for using the new systems.

Seeing Differently: a Justice Network

The network began in 2025 out of a conversation between two people motivated to encourage learning and sharing about how we seek justice in our communities. It meets online bimonthly and offers in-person training twice a year. It has grown to more than 30 participants. Rosemarie Davidson, national minority ethnic vocations officer, offered allyship training to 15 participants, and the Wiltshire Deaf Association provided introductory training in British Sign Language. The network also offered two webinars exploring the conflict between Gaza and Israel, including a range of speakers from the Christian and Jewish faiths, and from across the UK.



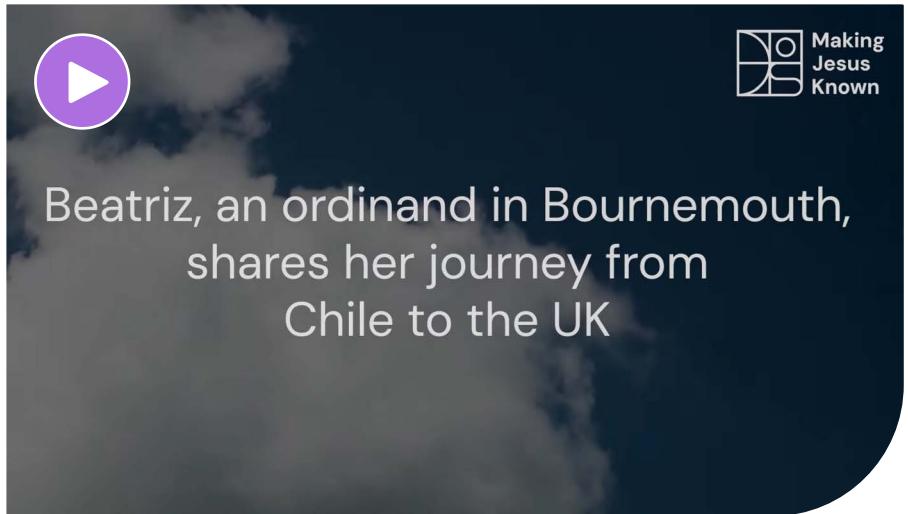
Working for justice

Collaborating with partners

DBF staff worked with Salisbury Cathedral to offer an in-person event with Professor Nick Maynard, consultant surgeon at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, sharing what he has seen during his years of voluntary work as a surgeon in Gaza, including since the latest conflict began. Around 350 people attended.

Racial justice

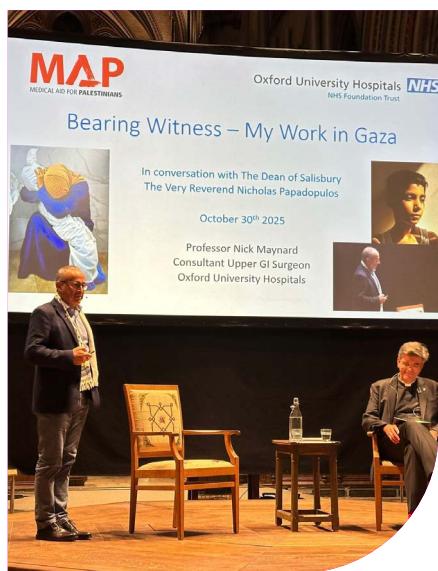
Supported by a grant from the national church, the racial justice working group partnered with Gypsy Roma Traveller Friendly Churches, Salisbury Cathedral and Sarum College to hold Sanctuary Roads, a conference seeking to deepen the relationship between communities and the Church, and encourage the Church to do more to stand up to racism and discrimination. The conference heard from speakers, including Revd Steven Horne, and others working in the



A series of videos shared on our social media channels in October 2025 explored what it means to belong and featured people from across the diocese. Above is Beatriz's story.

fields of building relationships and combatting racism. More than 50 per cent of the participants were from the community. A follow-up event is planned for 2026 to build momentum for change.

"I attended Salisbury Cathedral today and heard some amazing changes being done by the Church of England to stamp out prejudice, and work with organisations and diverse communities, specifically to support GRT communities"



"Theologically rich and emotionally powerful."

Left: The safeguarding team support Jersey clergy and lay leaders.

Right: Prof Nick Maynard in Salisbury Cathedral.



Climate action

We are stewards of a creation that is beautiful, fragile and entrusted to our care. To conserve it is not a burden, but a blessing and a discipleship journey.

2025 saw the creation of the Climate Action Group, bringing together colleagues from both the DBF and DBE to drive forward the Care for Creation and Net Zero plan. As part of our commitment to climate action and a reflection of our shared priority across the diocese, a Bishop's Advisor on Climate Justice was appointed.

Nineteen churches newly registered with the Eco Church programme during the year. This momentum translated into tangible progress, with twelve churches achieving the Bronze Eco Church Award and three reaching Silver, reflecting sustained commitment to practical climate action.

Collaboration has been central to our progress. Alongside our work with external partners, pilot Eco Deanery Days connected more than 50 local leads, stimulating new registrations and award progress. Our new Young Eco Church Champion pilot project – aiming to empower young people to take eco leadership – got underway with four parishes; our pioneering practice from this project is

being shared with two other dioceses and national church. Preparations are underway to roll out accredited Carbon Literacy training to equip congregations with the confidence and knowledge to act locally.

We equipped parishes with accessible, high-quality resources to support both action and reflection. The relaunch of our Eco Echo newsletter strengthened communication and peer learning among our 168 parish eco leads, with one experienced eco lead describing it as "invaluable".



Above: Revd Dr Mike Perry, Bishop's Adviser for Creation Care and Climate Justice, at Wiltshire COP 25.

Left: A view into the churchyard at Atworth, Wilts.



Climate action



Jellyfish craft at St John's West Bay's Come and Sea event for Creation Season.

Work with schools delivered significant impact. The DBE supported Woodford Valley Academy in securing Department for Education funding to install air source heat pumps. This provided the school with a sustainable heating system and its village with additional three phase electricity capacity, extending the benefits well beyond the school community. In partnership with Let's Go Zero, we hosted online training to help schools develop Climate Action Plans, with further sessions planned for 2026.

Eco Church peer learning in action

The most effective climate action happens through peer-to-peer learning and networking. In 2025, this was exemplified by a diocesan-backed initiative led by Revd Dr Nigel Dilkes, a former research scientist and experienced local minister with PTO in the Weymouth and Portland deanery.

He convened more than 20 church leaders for the first of a four-part Care for Creation course combining prayer, biblical reflection, climate science and practical Eco Church guidance. The programme included input and capsule training from diocesan buildings, net zero and children, family and young

people advisers, creating a holistic, locally grounded learning experience.

Participants shared practical solutions, from accessing decarbonisation funding and installing solar batteries to churchyard biodiversity projects and family engagement. This peer-to-peer model has directly supported Eco Church progress, equipping families and young people especially to play their part in the Eco Church journey, and is now shaping our approach to rolling out parish-led Climate Literacy training.

Revd Lorna Johnson



Revd Dr Nigel Dilkes and course attendees at Weymouth and Lyme Bay Deanery.



Financing the future sustainably

A future where our finances are secure and sustainable is inseparable from the missional health of our parishes.

In 2025, DBF staff and trustees faced this truth honestly and took decisive steps to change how we fund, plan and talk about our common life, recognising that financial sustainability is essential to long-term mission.

Parish Share

At the heart of the diocesan economy is Parish Share: the faithful and generous giving of people in our parishes that funds ministry, training and support across the diocese.

For many years, Parish Share has not fully met the true cost of this work, creating a structural deficit managed through the sale of surplus clergy housing. This is no longer a sustainable solution.

2025 marked the first year of the new Parish Share scheme. Significant effort went into supporting its introduction through tailored resources, webinars and visits to most deanery synods. Clergy and parish officers were supported to understand both the changes and their wider implications. Parish Share income was broadly maintained at 2024 levels. While this was pleasing given we are in a period of transition, it is important to note the 2025

total contribution represents a drop in real terms when taking inflation into account.

We also prioritised transparency and understanding. Three virtual finance briefings strengthened confidence and enabled more informed local conversations about diocesan finances. Alongside this, four in-person Money Matters events helped parishes think differently about money, focussing on 'planning to thrive, not just survive'.

External funding

We are making good progress in diversifying income. External funding increased by almost 50% from 2024 to 2025 and is set to more than double in 2026, reducing dependency

Digital giving support reaps reward for churches

From Lyme Regis in the west, to Pitton in the east, Broad Town in the north, and St Katherines by the Sea in Holworth in the south, in 2025 I visited a huge variety of churches across the diocese to offer technical support with giving. Some required help with existing contactless giving devices but many were beginning new journeys, seeking advice and support on contactless giving and WIFI connections. St John's in the picturesque seaside harbour of West Bay had to cope with a storm-damaged roof and no online giving solution for those who wanted to donate. We helped

the church get connected and install a CollecTin contactless giving device, a project the church describes as "very successful", though in reality church members only needed a little support to lead the way themselves!

Lack of technical know-how and digital skills, and lack of connectivity, are real issues for many and we are happy to help problem solve. And for all of the churches I visited face to face, there are many more we support remotely in their journey to encourage and enable online giving.



Harry Neary
Digital Giving Officer



Financing the future sustainably

on Parish Share while enabling strategic investment. Trustees have also approved a clear five-year financial plan and asset management strategy, ensuring our assets work harder – funding transition, reducing the deficit and safeguarding resources for future generations. The challenge remains significant, but there is hope. We are taking the steps needed now to secure a sustainable future for our shared mission.

Digital giving

In 2025, the number of parishes with digital giving enabled passed the halfway mark, with 55% now able to take either contactless or online/QR code donations. Collectively the parishes raised £779,828 this way, passing the

2024 total of £527,406 by the end of September. Whether this is 'new' money or simply replaces the cash donations that we used to receive in the plate or the wall safe, is hard to know. But the fact is, with fewer people carrying cash, and cheques almost completely phased out, we believe it is essential for all churches to offer digital giving, or donation income will continue to be impacted, particularly at life and festival events, and from heritage visitors.

Parish Giving Scheme

Raising funds for mission and ministry continues to be our priority, and we encourage all parishes to join the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), so that donations can be linked to inflation and maintain their

value. Last year, 25 new parishes registered for PGS bringing the total number of participating churches to 267, collectively raising £3,211,614 including Gift Aid.

Crucially, this is unrestricted income that directly supports the local church mission. PCCs are encouraged to set a target of raising the cost of ministry through planned giving and Gift Aid alone – St Michael's Colehill and St Nicholas Winsley are just two examples where this goal has been reached.

Church fundraising in action, Anna Hardy working with Winsley volunteers.



Looking into the year ahead

Our focus in 2026 is clear. In a time of great global change we are confident to step into the future with an openness to where God is leading.

We know that creative local partnerships in mission connect the church with communities, demonstrating love in action and the value and dignity of all people. Shaping a missionally healthy and sustainable church will involve careful decisions about people, money and buildings.

This requires courageous Christian leadership and for the DBF to focus its resources in the areas that will most effectively support the agreed diocesan strategy. For the first time we have set out a 'plan on a page' which determines the priorities for all staff teams and individuals.

Our newly initiated Mission Hubs bring a focus to our missional energy and the potential for partnership, co-creation and shared learning with others. A locally led approach in mission includes listening to the voices which are not yet heard, including younger people. We will take the next steps in working for justice and climate action.

After over 25 years of selling houses to balance the budget, the diocese needs to change its approach. In 2026 the DBF will be taking steps to close the financial gap between expenditure and income. We need to plan creatively for the changing pattern of ministry with the national decline in the number of stipendiary clergy available. The Trustees have agreed to release some assets to help manage the challenges of the present, as we intentionally invest in the vision and strategy to deliver change and sustainable ministry for the future.

All of our plans for 2026 locally and collectively as a diocese depend on people responding to God. The DBF will be strengthening the way we support those who volunteer their time including in safeguarding, as wardens and treasurers, youth workers and worship leaders. It is the impact of the local church which will inspire people to give generously, and supporting parishes in fundraising is central to our plans.

During the year we are launching safeguarding hubs as a simpler online resource for everyone working to ensure we are a safe church. We will be seeking to make things simpler and more accessible in light of the review undertaken on the work of the DAC/Church Buildings team.



In our relationship and conversation with you we welcome the opportunity to learn together and ensure that through our shared response to these changing times we are Making Jesus Known.

Canon David Pain
CEO & Diocesan Secretary

Financial data 2025

The pre-audit position shows an operating deficit of around £1.3m, driven by continued underperformance in investments and a decrease in Parish Share income to £10.3m, down from £10.4m in 2024, failing for the first time to keep pace with inflation.

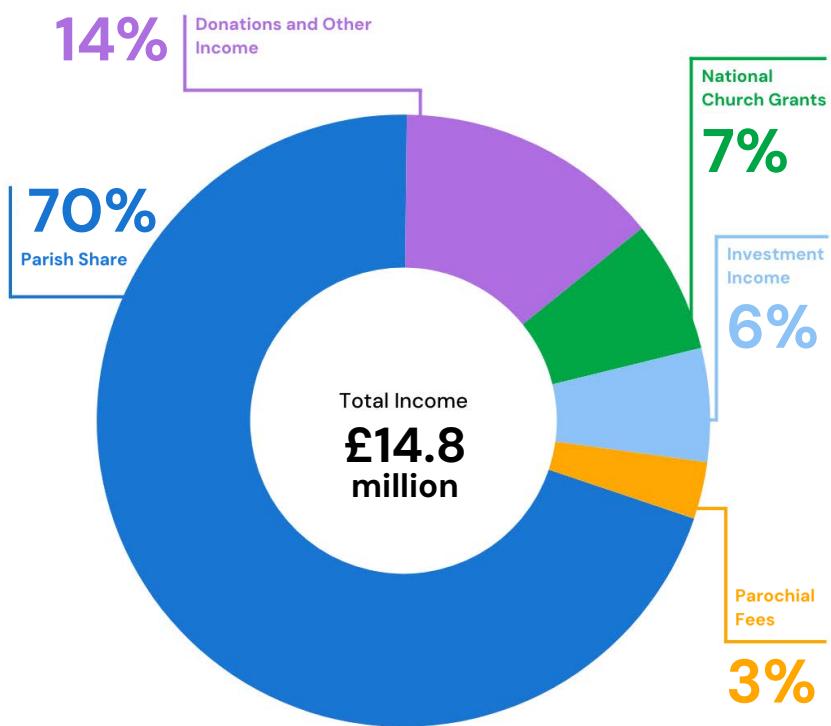
While stipend costs were lower than expected due to ongoing vacancies, these savings were offset by a substantial rise in maintaining clergy homes.

Overall, expenditure and cashflow requirements continue to exceed income by £200k each month. In response, we are implementing the trustee-approved financial plan at pace, taking decisive action considering the scale of the financial challenge.

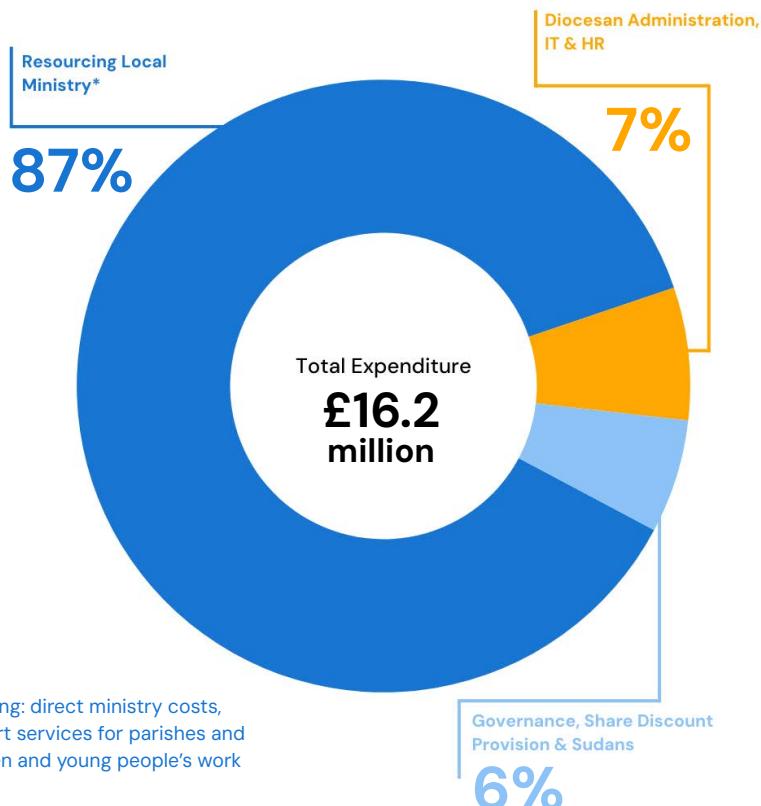
Full financial data will be published in the Annual Report.

Please note, these are unaudited figures.

Total Income



Total Expenditure



*Including: direct ministry costs, support services for parishes and children and young people's work



**Diocese
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