

# Common Mission Fund Guidance



DIOCESE of  
WINCHESTER

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***Generous giving to parish ministry will enable  
God's church to grow and flourish,  
now and in the future.***

## ■ The Common Mission Fund

Contributions to the Common Mission Fund are gifts; a gift from each individual parish to support and grow ministry and mission across all our parishes, enabling the love of Christ to be shared.

We are blessed to live in an affluent part of the country – the 6<sup>th</sup> most affluent Diocese in the Church of England. Within our diocesan community, however, there is huge variation of affluence and deprivation. We have some of the most affluent parishes in the entire country but also some of the least.

It is only by sharing our resources together that we can ensure ministry can be provided where it is needed, not just where it can be afforded.

It is about every parish seeing itself as part of the Diocesan Community; giving generously and sacrificially to the mission of the church both locally and further afield. Through your parish's contribution, wherever you live or worship, you help fund places where people contribute in amazing ways, but do not necessarily have the financial resources that others have.

*The Common Mission Fund asks all parishes to give according to their potential, so that all may receive according to their need.*

## How are Common Mission Fund requests calculated?

The Common Mission Fund model looks to ensure all requests are reached in a consistent and objective manner. All calculations are based on the same two pieces of information for every Parish – the size of your ‘Community of Worshippers’ and your relative ‘Affluence Band’.

*The Common Mission Fund is often characterised as a contract between each parish and the ‘Diocesan Office’. It is more accurate to see it as an agreement between each parish and every other parish, where the actions taken by one will impact on all.*

We ask all parishes to review and confirm that we have accurate data for this process.

### Calculating Your Community of Worshippers

All parishes are asked to calculate the size of their Community of Worshippers. To assist you in this task a [Community of Worshippers Calculation Form](#) is provided on the diocesan website with detailed guidance notes.

*For the purposes of calculating your request, a member of your Community of Worshippers is any person, aged 18 or over, who attends your church regularly, or would do so if not prevented by illness, infirmity, or temporary absence.*

### Larger Worshipping Communities

For parishes with a larger Community of Worshippers (over 200), a discount on their request is offered in recognition of the increased local costs associated with growing and supporting a larger congregation.

Members	Discount	How many members are counted in the assessment?
Up to 200	0%	We count everyone
201-300	30%	We count everyone up to 200 and then 70% of the members over 200.
301-400	40%	We take the total for 300 members which is 270, and then add 60% of the members over 300
401+	50%	We take the total for 400 members which is 330, and then add 50% of the members over 400

Applying the table above, a church with an actual membership of 300 would be asked to contribute for 270 members.

### Understanding your Relative Affluence

The Common Mission Fund model places every parish into one of seven affluence bands (as set out below). These bands are calculated by using an external, objective source of data – Mosaic data from Experian.

<b>BAND</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>BAND A:</b> Most unfavourably placed	<b>0.63</b>
<b>BAND B:</b> Unfavourably placed	<b>0.74</b>
<b>BAND C:</b> Evenly to unfavourably placed	<b>0.86</b>
<b>BAND D:</b> Evenly placed	<b>1.00</b>
<b>BAND E:</b> Favourably to evenly placed	<b>1.16</b>
<b>BAND F:</b> Favourably placed	<b>1.35</b>
<b>BAND G:</b> Most favourably placed	<b>1.58</b>

Due to the affluent nature of much of our diocese, the average affluent band for our parishes is a high E.

Those parishes in E, F and G bands are judged to be able to pay relatively more per head into the Common Mission Fund than those in bands A, B and C.

The weightings of each Band have been designed so that:

- > the amount of Common Mission Fund per head will increase by approximately 16% as you move up from one affluence Band to the next
- > those in the highest Band, G, will be asked to contribute two and a half times as much per head as those in the lowest Band, A ( $0.63 \times 2.5 = 1.58$ )

As the data we use looks at the whole population of each parish and not just the Community of Worshippers, it is possible that the band assigned to your parish may be lower or higher than that of your Community of Worshippers. Every parish therefore can request a review of their band.

*Further information on calculating relative affluence and how to request a change of band is set out in the document entitled [Understanding Relative Affluence](#) available from the Diocesan Website.*

## Calculating Requests

Once the Community of Worshipers figures and Affluence Bands have been confirmed, the Diocesan Team will calculate requests for every parish.

This is done as follows:

1. The 5-year rolling average 'Community of Worshipers' figure for each parish is multiplied by its Affluence Band weighting – giving a number of 'units'. The results for all parishes are then aggregated.
2. The Common Mission Fund target is divided by this aggregated number, giving a monetary value for each 'unit' = £U.
3. The request for a given parish is their number of units x £U.

*The table below illustrates how this might look, in a scenario where £U equals £400.*

*Please note that we will not know the unit value until all Parish Data has been collated. £400 is therefore only used as an example to illustrate the principle.*

£U = £400		Relative Affluence							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
		0.63	0.74	0.85	1	1.16	1.35	1.58	
Worshipping Community	50	£ 12,600	£ 14,800	£ 17,200	£ 20,000	£ 23,200	£ 27,000	£ 31,600	
	100	£ 25,200	£ 29,600	£ 34,400	£ 40,000	£ 46,400	£ 54,000	£ 63,200	
	150	£ 37,800	£ 44,400	£ 51,600	£ 60,000	£ 69,600	£ 81,000	£ 94,800	
	200	£ 50,400	£ 59,200	£ 68,800	£ 80,000	£ 92,800	£ 108,000	£ 126,400	
	250	£ 63,000	£ 74,000	£ 86,000	£ 100,000	£ 116,000	£ 135,000	£ 158,000	
	300	£ 75,600	£ 88,800	£ 103,200	£ 120,000	£ 139,200	£ 162,000	£ 189,600	
	350	£ 88,200	£ 103,600	£ 120,400	£ 140,000	£ 162,400	£ 189,000	£ 221,200	
	400	£ 100,800	£ 118,400	£ 137,600	£ 160,000	£ 185,600	£ 216,000	£ 252,800	

## ■ What if we anticipate having difficulty meeting our Common Mission Fund Contributions?

There are several things that you could do if you anticipate having difficulty meeting your contributions to the Common Mission Fund.

### Meet with your Suffragan Bishop and the Diocesan CMF team

Bishop Debbie and Bishop David view the Common Mission Fund as fundamental to supporting the mission and ministry of the Diocese. As leaders of Mission in their archdeaconries, they are committed to supporting any parishes with financial challenges. If you have concerns, please contact the Diocesan Team to arrange a meeting.

Email: [cathy.laird@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:cathy.laird@winchester.anglican.org)

Telephone: 01962 737 307

### Resources available from the Diocesan Stewardship and Resources Advisor

A range of resources are available from Luke Maundrell, Stewardship and Resources Advisor. Luke works with parishes to review giving practice and processes, including support with encouraging regular and one off giving.

Email: [luke.maudrell@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:luke.maudrell@winchester.anglican.org)

Telephone: 07384 259 421

### Talk to your Deanery Finance Chair

Your Deanery Finance Chair will be available to speak through any concerns you may have about meeting CMF payments. It may be possible for other parishes within the deanery to offer financial support in the short term to ensure that the overall deanery contribution to the Common Mission Fund meets its target.

### Make an application for special consideration

Where a parish is facing substantial challenges in meeting its requested contribution, the PCC may apply for special consideration to receive a one-off reduction.

Applications for special consideration will be reviewed by a small panel including the Archdeacon and Suffragan Bishops. In some cases, a 'flight path' may be agreed which will map out an agreed course of action to enable you to meet your full request over a number of years – this will be done in conversation with Deanery Officers.

A reduction of this nature represents an investment in that parish by the wider Diocesan Community. In considering applications, the Panel will seek assurances that the parish in question is doing all that it can to play its part in the Diocesan Community and is following best practice with regards to stewardship, governance and financial management.

*A form is available for any parish that wishes to apply for Special Consideration. Please note this must go to your Deanery Officers who will then pass it to the Diocesan Team.*

**[Special Considerations Form](#)**

## What is the role of the deanery?

The 13 deaneries in the Diocese of Winchester play a key role in helping parishes to meet their contributions. The deaneries will be involved at every step of the process. In particular:



### 1. Consultation and Feedback

Deanery Finance Chairs will meet with the Diocesan Team throughout the year to review the model and timetable, highlighting areas for improvement and concern.

### 2. Parish Data Confirmation

Deanery finance committees will review the Parish Data Confirmation from the parishes in their deaneries highlighting any queries or issues.

### 3. Communication

Deanery Officers will work as a conduit for communication, circulating request figures to parishes, and feeding back to the Diocesan Team any concerns or suggested changes.

### 4. Support and Special Consideration Applications

Once initial calculations have been made, the deaneries will work with any parishes which feel they may be unable to meet the contribution requested. If possible, any 'shortfalls' will be met by asking other parishes within the deanery to contribute more than requested. If a parish needs to make an application for special consideration this must be supported by the deanery.

### 5. Monitoring Collection & Ongoing Support

Deanery Finance Chairs will monitor collection levels and keep the Diocesan Team updated. They will also help to ensure support and guidance can be focused where it is needed most.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Increases

#### Request for next year

- Q. Our request for next year is significantly higher than the amount we have been asked for last year. Why is this?**
- R. The requests for each parish will vary depending on their relative affluence and size of their Community of Worshippers in relation to the total for the whole diocese.**

If your Community of Worshippers has increased whilst the total across all parishes has reduced, then you will be asked for a greater share of the total

If you are struggling to understand the amount requested of your parish, please contact [cathy.laird@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:cathy.laird@winchester.anglican.org)

### Community of Worshippers

- Q. Why is our Community of Worshippers number different from the one we submitted?**
- R. We use a five-year rolling average of Community of Worshippers numbers to help smooth any major increases and decreases in attendance.**

### Support

#### Special Consideration Applications

- Q. We are concerned that we will not be able to meet our requested amount for next year. What can we do?**
- R. There are two sources of support for parishes concerned about meeting their Common Mission Fund request. The first is to seek help through their deanery, exploring if the parish allocations can be redistributed between other parishes and benefices.**

If this is not possible, parishes can apply for **Special Consideration** and seek for their request to be reduced. The budget for these reductions is limited so we can only afford to help those with the greatest need. *An application form for such requests must be completed and returned to the Deanery Finance Chair.*

In those cases where we agree to reduce the request, we will normally require the parish to meet certain conditions to ensure they are following best practice in terms of stewardship, governance and financial management. If we are to have a culture of mutual support, we must also have a culture of mutual responsibility.

### Visit from the Suffragan Bishop

**Q. In our data confirmation submission, we requested a visit from the Suffragan Bishop. When will this happen?**

**R. On average, our Suffragan Bishops meet with around 60 parishes to discuss the Common Mission Fund and the wider diocesan mission strategy. These conversations are generally positive, helping us to grow our understanding of local challenges and concerns.**

Those parishes that have requested a visit will be contacted soon to make arrangements. Whilst we prioritise these visits, our bishops' diaries do get booked up well advance; we will therefore do all we can to fit in meetings in a reasonable time.

### Interregnums & Clergy Vacancies

**Q. Our vicar has recently left and we are now in interregnum. Are we able to receive a reduction in our CMF request during this period?**

**R. We do not offer parishes in vacancy/interregnum a reduction in the CMF contributions. There are two reasons for this:**

- a. The Common Mission Fund asks all parishes to 'give according to their potential', not just 'pay for their own vicar'. We ask all our parishes to help fund the shared mission and ministry of our whole diocesan community. Reducing requests because a parish is in vacancy would go against the fundamental theological principles of the Common Mission Fund.
- b. The total diocesan budget is calculated on the assumption that we will have a number of clergy vacancies each year and the budget reduced accordingly. This means that the amount of CMF we ask for is already reduced (for all parishes) every year.

Those principles aside, we do recognise that an interregnum (along with many other factors) can lead parishes to struggle financially. If this is the case, then your PCC may wish to apply for a reduction under Special Consideration (see above).

### Affluence Bands & Affordability

#### Elderly Congregation

**Q. The majority of our Community of Worshippers are retired but our parish population is not. Why has this not been accepted as a valid reason to reduce our affluence band?**

**R. 46% of people in the Church of England are now 65 or over. In our diocese, this figure is more like 50% which, unlike our Community of Worshippers figures, also includes the children who attend our churches. We can therefore assume that the average age of our Worshipping Communities is even higher still. Having a high percentage of pensioners in a church is therefore not unusual or exceptional.**

We must also remember that 'pensioner' does not automatically equal 'poverty'. We cannot assume that one section or age group in a community will automatically be more or less affluent than others. Some churches have argued that their challenge is having too many young families (with mortgages, child-care costs and frozen salaries).

### Experian Data

**Q. We believe that Experian data is flawed, and that other statistical information should be used in the case of our parish.**

**R. Different sets of statistical information will give different perspectives for each parish. We cannot run a model where each parish chooses the set of statistics that gives them the 'best' result.**

We have agreed, through Diocesan Synod, that we will use the Experian affluence data. This is used and applied consistently in every parish to ensure we are considering all our Worshipping Communities against the same information.

### Affordability

**Q. We are expecting a very difficult year financially due to an interregnum/major repairs or loss of key givers etc. can our affluence band be reduced?**

**R. There is a difference between affluence and affordability. A parish may be struggling financially but that does not mean that their affluence band is incorrect. If there are specific issues that need to be considered, these should be raised through the Special Consideration Applications, and not the affluence bands.**

### Affluence Review

**Q. Despite what we have read we still believe that the affluence band for our Community of Worshippers is wrong. How do we review the band?**

**R. The Bishop's Council & Standing Committee have agreed a review process for affluence band reductions. Any Parish wishing to do so will need to submit a full and complete list of postcodes (but not names or addresses) of all members of their Community of Worshippers, to [cathy.laird@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:cathy.laird@winchester.anglican.org) These will be reviewed against the data we hold from Experian so that we can provide the exact average affluence of the Community of Worshippers.**

Our experience of the last few years has shown that where parishes have asked for a review, the results in most cases have shown that they are in the correct affluence band already.

In those cases where the results show the band is too high, we have reduced it accordingly. However, PCC should also be aware that if the review shows the band is too low (as has happened in one case) we may need to increase your affluence band.