

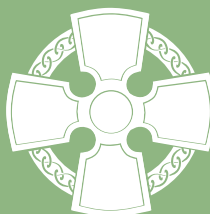
# The Church in Wales

## Membership and Finances

### 2017

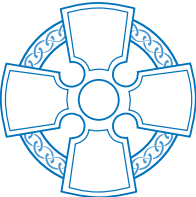


YR EGLWYS  
YNG NGHYMRU



THE CHURCH  
IN WALES

Y R E G L W Y S  
Y N G N G H Y M R U



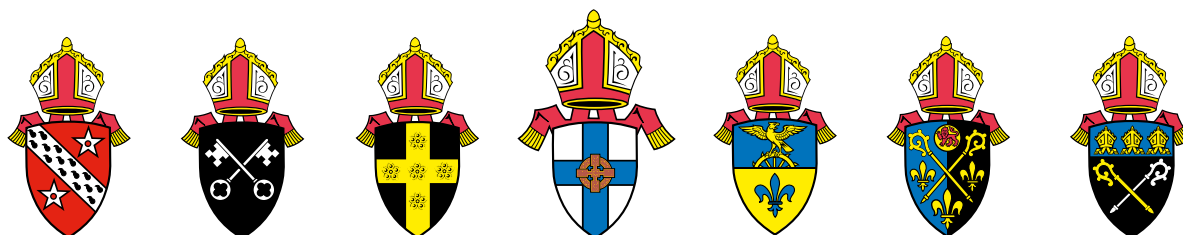
THE CHURCH  
IN WALES

Welcome to the Church in Wales Membership and Finances report for 2017, which is intended to help inform the Governing Body's discussion about evangelism, pioneer ministry and church growth. This year's report is slightly shorter than in previous years, as we look ahead to a complete revamp of the way in which we present statistics about Welsh church life next year.

The statistics this year are based upon an 89% return from Church in Wales ministry areas, mission areas and parishes. An improved online facility has encouraged over a third of parishes to make their returns online, and we will continue to refine this option to make it more accessible and attractive to parishes. It is hoped in time to move away from paper and postage costs completely. Thank you to clergy and volunteers, and diocesan staff, for working so hard to ensure that we receive returns in good time for the production of this report for the Governing Body.

One major change this year is that, at the request of the diocese, data in the diocese of St Asaph has been collected by church, rather than by mission area. The results of that exercise will not affect the headline figures contained in this report, but will significantly improve the diocese's ability to analyse the detail of mission area life.

Whilst we can be satisfied with the consistently high level of parish returns which underpin this report, and pleased with the way in which we have been able to develop and improve the Membership and Finance process to meet new demands in line with emerging technology, we are aware that this report remains painfully inadequate in representing the breadth of church life in Wales. For this reason, with the support of staff from St Padarn's Institute, we are looking to gather stories from across the Church in Wales for inclusion in future reports. Further details are set out on page 4. We are hopeful that, with your help, next year's report will be a much more interesting document!



## Membership

**Table I: Participation in Parish Life for 2017 and 2016**

		2017	2016	2017 - 2016	%
Communicants	<i>Easter</i>	<b>48,540</b>	48,112	428	1
	<i>Pentecost</i>	<b>27,138</b>	28,432	-1,294	-5
	<i>Christmas</i>	<b>47,857</b>	50,458	-2,601	-5
	<i>Trinity III</i>	<b>26,037</b>	26,348	-311	-1
Average Attendance - over 18	<i>Sundays</i>	<b>27,359</b>	28,185	-826	-3
	<i>Weekdays only</i>	<b>5,104</b>	4,090	1,014	25
Average Attendance - under 18		<b>5,474</b>	5,906	-432	-7
Electoral Roll		<b>44,574</b>	45,727	-1,153	-3
Baptisms		<b>5,487</b>	6,115	-628	-10
Confirmations		<b>559</b>	871	-312	-36
Weddings		<b>2,478</b>	2,692	-214	-8
Funerals		<b>6,096</b>	6,163	-67	-1

There is no single definition of “membership” in the Church in Wales, and so we have traditionally provided a range of figures to demonstrate different kinds of engagement with church life. The number of Easter communicants has traditionally been the high point of attendance figures, with average Sunday attendance providing a more reliable guide to regular levels of participation. In addition, Electoral Roll figures have been used to record the number in each community with a demonstrable connection to the work of the parish.

### The Picture for 2017 compared with 2016

**Table I** provides a comparison of key attendance figures for 2017 and 2016.

The headlines here are:

- The rate of decline in average adult Sunday attendance between 2016 and 2017 is in line with the general annual trend since 2010;
- The figure for weekday only attendance is the highest since 2009 and, when combined with the Sunday figure, results in an increase in total average weekly attendance;
- The number of baptisms and, in particular, confirmations has fallen sharply for a second year.

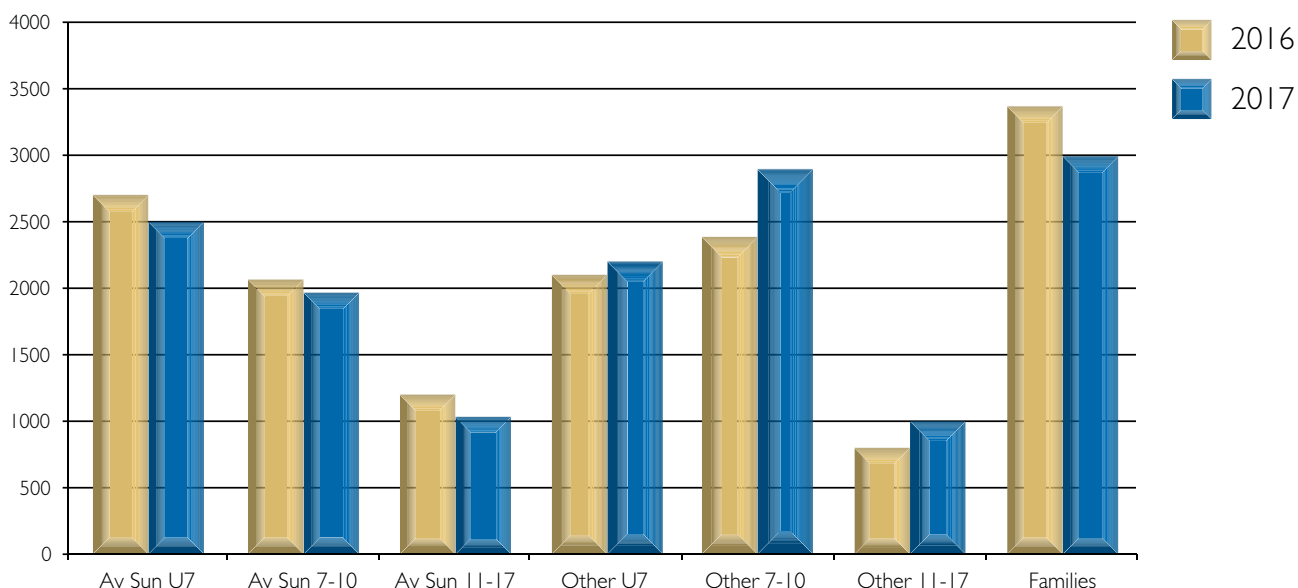
## The Broader Picture

In recent years we have also collected statistics from other areas of church life.

**Figure 2** sets out data relating to our work with young people and families. Last year's report was able to show an increase in attendance figures in all fields; this year's figures are more of a mixed bag. There is evidence of marked (and sustained) growth in the Church's work with young people in all age groups outside regular Sunday activities, but figures for Sunday attendance are slightly down on 2016. These figures have fluctuated from one year to the next since their introduction, with no clear trend emerging. It may be that parishes may sometimes struggle to keep track of the number of young people with whom they are involved in one way or another.

In addition, parishes recorded 210,000 people attending other types of traditional worship, which might include civic services, family services, Remembrance, Carol and Christingle services. It is also estimated that some 23,000 people took part in some form of regular non-traditional worship in 2017.

**Figure 2: Analysis of Attendance by Young People and Families**



## Using Stories to Bring the Statistics to Life

These figures are the results of our efforts in recent years to develop a broader picture of what is happening in parishes over and above the traditional measures of "membership" collected via the parish return. First introduced as new questions in 2011, it is becoming clear that these are still not sufficient to provide that more detailed picture of parish life which might be more interesting and useful for members.

Over the next year we will be working with staff from St Padarn's Institute to identify, visit and document activities and projects across the Church in Wales. These stories will then form part of next year's report and, we hope, provide an interesting counterpoint to the statistics themselves. To be able to do this well we will need your help.

If you have ever felt frustrated that the annual parish questionnaire does not provide an opportunity to tell the whole story about your parish's work, or are aware of something exciting that should be shared more widely in another parish - please do let us know: [information@churcheinwales.org.uk](mailto:information@churcheinwales.org.uk)

# Finances

**Table 3: Provincial Summary of Parish Finances for 2017 and 2016**

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
	2017 £k	2016 £k		2017 £k	2016 £k
Planned Giving	10,904	11,117	Parish Share	16,456	16,577
Loose Collections	2,887	2,780	Clerics' Expenses	1,126	1,132
Donations	3,199	3,151	Other Ministry Support	299	333
For Mission	549	479	Maintenance of Services	1,583	1,494
Tax Refunds	3,203	3,142	General Parish Expenses	2,011	1,873
Legacy Gifts Received	1,779	1,668	Maintenance of Churches	6,103	6,061
Grants	4,887	4,569	Maintenance of Property	2,576	2,301
Money Raising	5,096	4,766	Exceptional Property Expenditure	6,067	4,677
Fees	2,533	2,634	Parish Grants	668	578
Investments	1,768	2,151	Home/World Grants	984	944
Other Incoming Resources	4,479	3,937	Capital Payments	1,197	1,149
			Cost of Money Raising	626	726
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>41,284</b>	<b>40,394</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>39,696</b>	<b>37,845</b>

**Table 3** provides data on total parish income and expenditure for 2017, with comparisons to 2016. Further illustrations on giving and parish finance are set out in **figures 4 and 5** overleaf. Some headlines:

- Total parish income continues to exceed total parish expenditure. However, these provincial totals may hide the financial hardship being experienced by some parishes;
- Planned giving has fallen for the seventh consecutive year, despite individual members continuing to give sacrificially. **Figure 4** shows that average giving per Sunday attender in 2017 (£9.65 per week) has never been higher;
- Parishes are working hard to recover tax. Good use is being made of the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme (with some £423,000 recovered via this route in 2017), with a further c£40,000 being reclaimed each month via the Gift Direct scheme operated on behalf of parishes by the Representative Body;
- For a second year grant income has risen sharply, with a corresponding rise in expenditure on property. Grant income is at its highest level since 2011; the level of expenditure on property is the highest since we started collecting statistics annually in 1990;
- The level of parish expenditure on ministry is lower than at any point since 2009. However, **Figure 5** demonstrates that ministry costs still account for the lion's share of parish expenditure.

Figure 4: Weekly Direct Giving per Sunday Attender

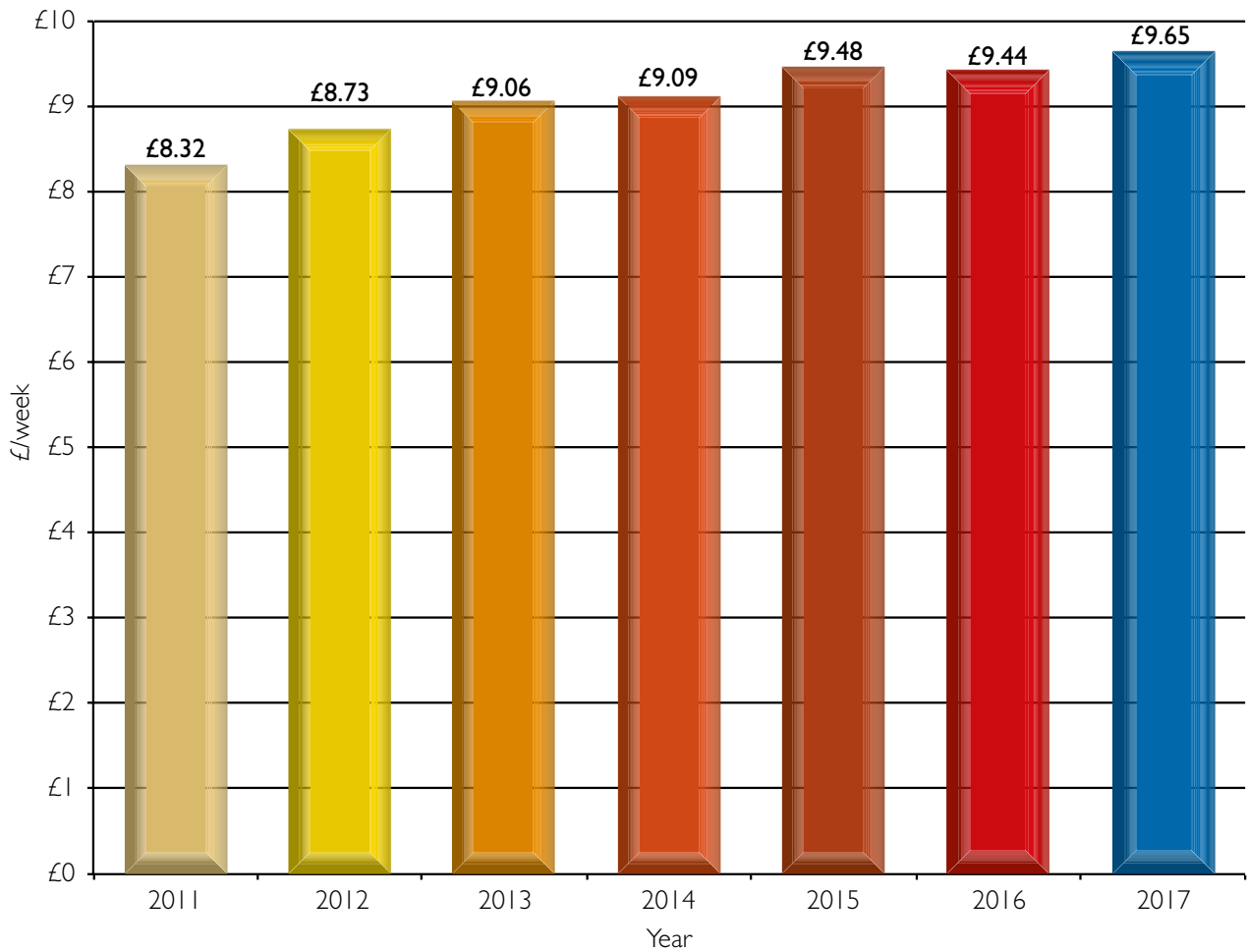
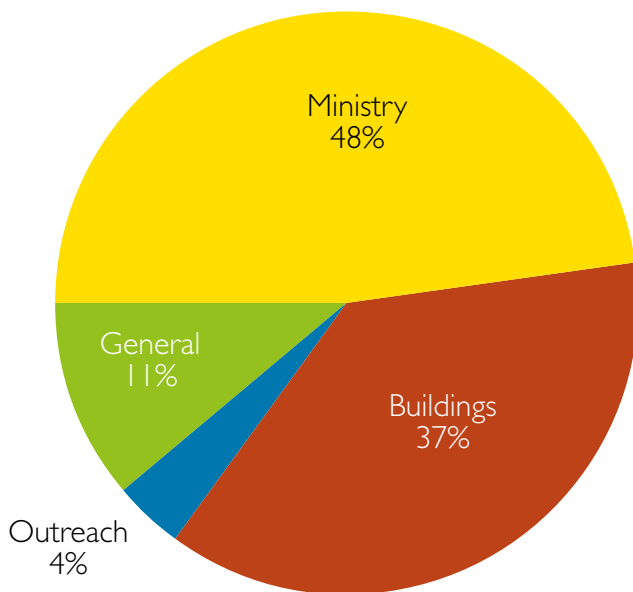


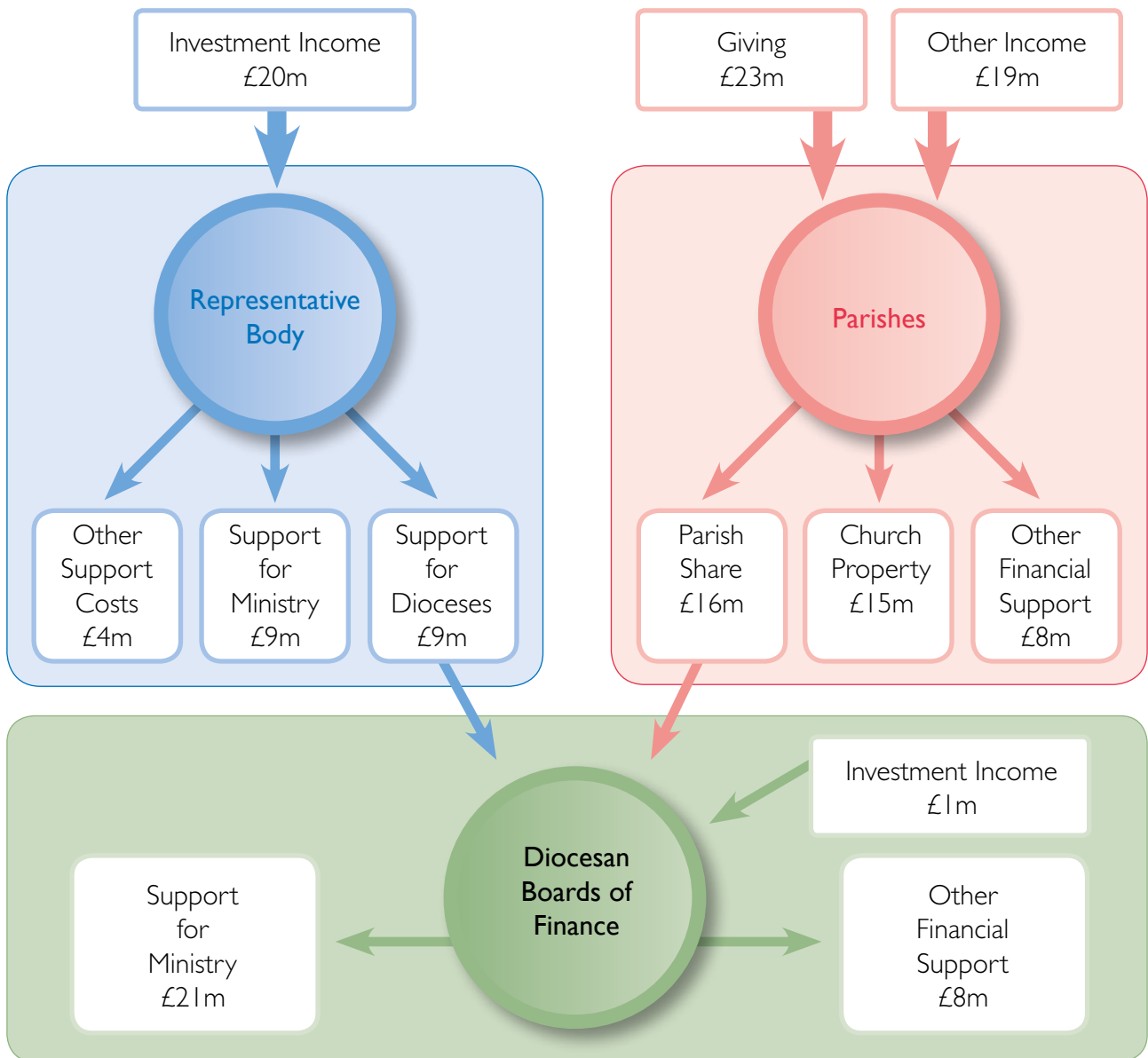
Figure 5: Parish Expenditure 2017



**Figure 5** provides a breakdown of parish expenditure in 2017.

The proportion of expenditure on buildings rose from 34% in 2016 to 37% in 2017, with a correspondent fall of 3% in the proportion of expenditure on ministry over the same period.

**Figure 6: How the Church in Wales is Funded 2017**



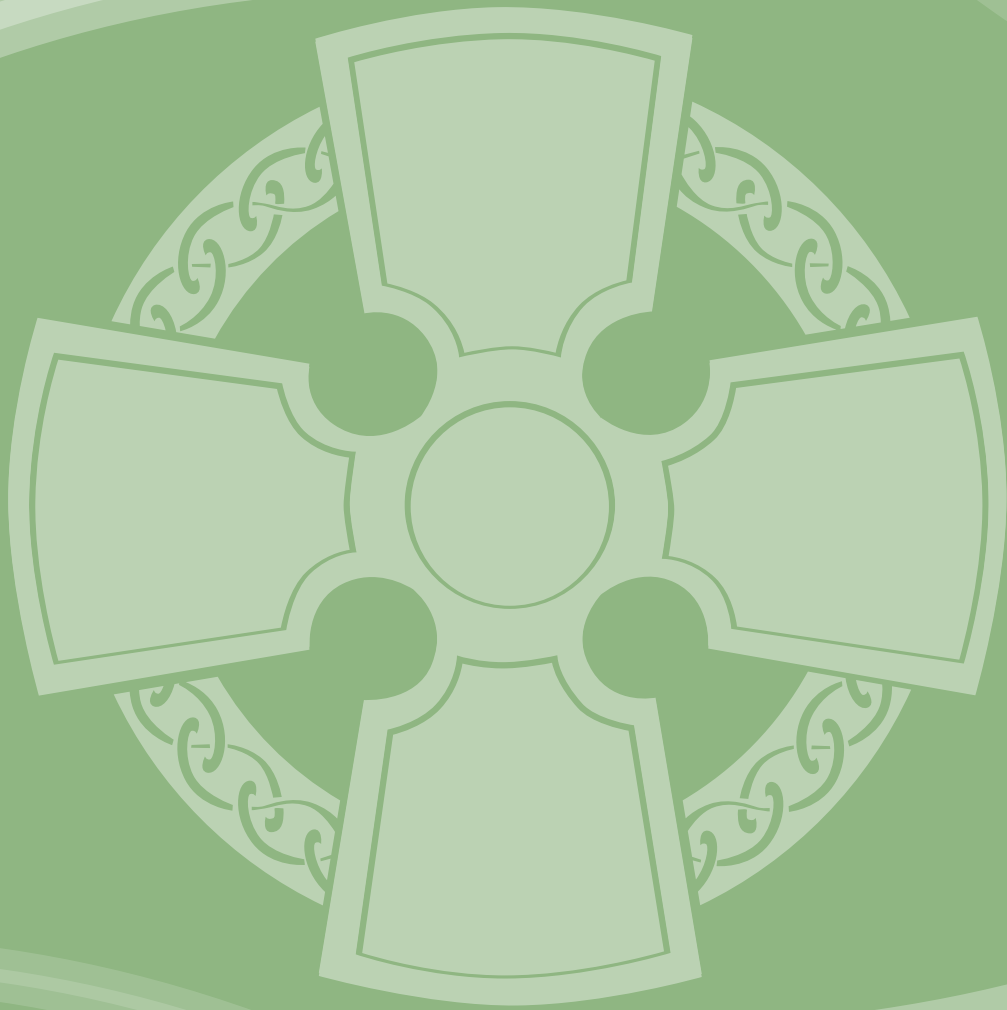
### How is the Church in Wales funded?

Parishes play a major role in helping to meet the cost of running the Church in Wales. However, it is important to remind ourselves periodically of how the parishes' contribution fits into the broader provincial picture.

**Figure 6** is a diagrammatic representation of the way in which the Church in Wales was funded in 2017. Dioceses are responsible for meeting the cost of clergy stipends. To help them to do so dioceses receive funds from both the parishes (via parish share) and the Representative Body (the Block Grant).

Members will note that both the Representative Body and (overall) the dioceses are currently distributing more annually than they receive in income.

The parishes, dioceses and the RB have other areas of major expenditure also. The main component in the Representative Body's "Other Support of Ministry" is the past-service element of the Clergy Pension Scheme. "Other Finance Support" by parishes includes support for ministry (eg clergy expenses and the cost of services) not included in parish share.



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