

30 January 2020

Dear Churchwardens

2020 Survey of Regular Worshippers (formerly members) and Category for 2021 Share

We would like to begin by expressing our heartfelt thanks for everything you do so faithfully to serve and support your parish church and local community. We pray that your parish, in partnership with others, continues to be an effective channel for God's love to be expressed and known.

Our Common Fund (www.bathandwells.org.uk/common-fund) enables generous giving in support of parish ministry. It is called Common Fund because every parish gives, and every parish receives. We achieve so much more as one body working together than we could ever do alone. We give thanks to God that many benefices are 'supported', and many others are able to support others. This ensures that we continue to provide a Church of England presence and ministry in every community.

There are some notes to be aware of below when filling in your survey form:

Regular Worshippers

This year the terminology for the survey count has been changed to reflect that the intention is to count people who regularly worship within your parish.

Parish Guidance Booklet

As you come to declare your Regular Worshippers and Category on the survey form, please ensure that all members of your PCC read the accompanying booklet, so that you can come collectively to an informed, accurate and prayerful decision. Once the form has been completed and signed, please return it directly to the Finance Team at the address shown on the form by **30 April 2020**, keeping a copy for your own parish files. As before, each form will be presented to and considered by our Archdeacons and their Review Committees.

Common Fund 2021

In 2020 the Common Fund was increased by 0.5%, being the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation 2% adjusted by 1.5% funding from DBF reserves; from 2021 to 2022 it is planned to keep Common Fund increases at, or below, CPI inflation. Continuing investment in ministry and mission in parishes is essential as we all seek to live and tell the story of Jesus.

We do recognise that, with a reduction in declared adult regular worshippers, some parishes are struggling financially. During 2020 a full review of clergy and lay ministerial deployment together with a revised methodology for 2022 Parish Share will aim to help better align diocesan resources for ministry and mission. Further information on any changes will be shared with you as soon as possible.

Benefice Ministry Allowance (BMA)

We are pleased to advise that BMA will be offered for a fourth year in 2021 for benefices where there are more than 150 regular worshippers per stipendiary minister (and at least 100 regular worshippers). It recognises the additional local staff costs required in support of the stipendiary clergy. If your parish / benefice qualifies, please tick the relevant box on the enclosed Survey Form and you will be sent a simple application form.

With our sincere thanks and prayers for you and our continued partnership in the Gospel

+ Peter Bath and Wells

A. T. M. F.

Bishop Peter, Bath & Wells

Harry Musselwhite
Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance

Cc: Incumbent / Priest-in-Charge

Encs.

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