



# Treasurers' Newsletter

Diocese of Gloucester

February 2007

## New Newsletter

### – How you can help us to help you

Dear Colleague,

This month the Finance Department has relaunched its Newsletter to Treasurers. The newsletter will be published quarterly in February, May, August and November and is intended to keep you up-to-date with the operations of the Diocese and to keep you abreast of any changes to the Charities Acts or Statements of Recommended Practice (SORP), so that you can perform your duties with as little difficulty as possible.

This first newsletter has been sent to you all as a paper copy, as it also includes the 2006 Finance Return which we distribute each year. From the next issue, we are intending to email it to as many Treasurers as possible so to keep costs to a minimum. If you would like this emailed to you, but are unsure of whether we have your correct email details, please contact me and I will either update or add you to our mailing list.

As mentioned above, this newsletter is intended to help you, so I would welcome any suggestions you have about what content should be in it. Please either email or write to me with your suggestions and I will try to include them in the next issue.

Many thanks for all your hard work

Matt Brunt

Finance Officer

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## **Year-end 2006: Parish Accounts**

By now you should either have completed or be well on your way to completing your PCC's year-end accounts for 2006. The changes which came about due to the SORP 2005 revisions to the Charities Act 1993 will not affect the majority of PCCs in this Diocese. By using the Parish Accounting summary update which was sent out late last year, you should be able to see whether your PCC's accounts do need to be adjusted to reflect the SORP's changes. If you are unsure about whether your PCC is affected or not by these changes, please contact the Finance department and we will be happy to guide you.

To make this process easier, the Finance department has produced a series of pro-forma's which are available to be emailed out to yourselves or the PCC Secretary.

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## **Year-end 2006: Diocesan Accounts and Parish Share**

We are currently in the process of producing the Diocesan Accounts for the year-ended 2006, and early signs are that the Diocese has had a very successful year, making a surplus in the region of £750k (an 83% increase on 2005). 62% of the total income received in 2006 came from Parish Share (£5.2m), and as per the Mutual Support commitment, this helped to fund the £5.4m spent on Licensed Ministries (a total of 70% of the Diocesan expenditure for the year). A more detailed summary of the Diocesan Accounts will be shown in the May newsletter, once the accounts have been finalised and audited.

I would like to congratulate and say thank you to all who contributed this year towards the 2006 Parish Share, making it one of the most successful years in recent times. I'm very pleased to say that for the majority of places, the Mutual Support system worked very well, leading the Diocese to have its lowest shortfall against the amount allocated for many years (2.65%). Since the end of the year a further £45k has been received reducing this shortfall further, to just 1.78% or £106k.

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## **2006 Finance Return**

Enclosed is a Finance Return which needs to be completed and returned to Church House by the **11<sup>th</sup> May**. This needs to be completed from the Accounts which are approved by the PCC at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). Please return this as promptly and as accurately as possible as it needs to be forwarded by us to the Archbishop's Council, so that the national statistics can be calculated. If you have any questions about how the form needs to be completed, please contact the Finance department and we will be happy to help.

## **Diocesan Cashbook**

At the Treasurer Workshops, held at the end of last year, the Diocesan Cashbook was launched. This is an Excel spreadsheet designed to allow Treasurers to keep accurate records of their PCC's transactions. It also automatically populates a Receipts and Payments sheet, and a Finance Return, so to save Treasurer's time at the end of each year.

The Cashbook is designed to help Treasurers, and we appreciate that many of you have your own systems in place which work just as well as anything the Diocese can produce, but if you are interested in receiving a copy of the Cashbook please contact the Finance department and one will be despatched to you. This is available to be emailed, although we are only advising that Treasurers with Broadband receive a copy in this way.

For those of you who are already using the Cashbook, any comments or suggestions would be gratefully received. We are planning to hold a discussion group for those Treasurers who are using the Cashbook, on the **4<sup>th</sup> April** in the Committee Room at Church House. This is intended to be a chance for Treasurers to share thoughts and ideas about the Cashbook, and improvements to be made. If you would like to attend this meeting, or for more details, please contact Matt Brunt.

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## **Fees**

Our records show that we have not received the statutory fees from a large number of clergy who have assigned their fees to the Diocese for the period up to the end of December. Please can you check your own records and make sure that if the fees come through you, which your Parish has passed all fees to us which are due to the Diocese. If fees do not come from you but are sent by your clergyperson directly, please check that they have passed on the correct amount to the Diocese. If you are unsure as to whether your parish is up to date, please contact the Finance department, and we can confirm the position with you.

By now you should have all received the updated Table of Parochial fees for 2007. If you still do not have this, either talk to your clergyperson or contact the Finance department for additional copies to be sent to you.

## Parish Share 2007

Those of you who make Parish Share contributions monthly by Direct Debit will have seen your first two amounts come out of your accounts already, and I'm pleased to report that the number of parishes opting to use Direct Debit as the method of making contributions has increased from previous years. Obviously this is the preferred method of the Diocese for receiving contributions, but in most cases it also benefits your PCC. Direct Debits offer the Diocese a more even monthly cashflow throughout the year; something which you'll appreciate is vital when paying for your clergy's monthly stipend. Direct Debit offers the PCC a guarantee, unlike a standing order, which makes solving problems with payments much simpler and hassle free. Obviously some Parishes are unable to pledge one twelfth of their total commitment each month, but in these cases we ask that these Parishes make a smaller monthly contribution which can be topped up as funds become available.

Unfortunately we still haven't received allocation figures from Forest North Deanery, which obviously affects Direct Debits. If your Parish is within this Deanery, and you wish to contribute by Direct Debit, please contact Jessica Ahern and inform her of your PCC's allocation for the year. You can then come to an agreement with her about how much each Direct Debit will come to, and when contributions will be taken from your PCC's bank account. Even if you do not use Direct Debits, but your PCC falls within this Deanery, it would be very useful if you could contact the Finance Department to inform us of your PCC's allocation, so that we can update our records.

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## Small Charitable Trusts

The Charities Act 2006 confers wider powers to trustees in relation to small charitable trusts, including transfer of property to other charities, and power to modify purposes and procedures and to spend capital.

These provisions are expected to come into force at different dates between early 2007 and early 2008, and we will keep you informed as we receive further information.

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