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THE CHURCH
IN WALES

THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CHURCH IN WALES

Membership and Finance 2018



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Front cover photographs:

top left: St Michael's Church, Ammanford.

bottom left: Children's outreach club, St Martin's Church, Llay.

middle: Café Church, St Dunwyd's Church, Welsh St Donat's.

top right: Anglesey Synod joint service.

middle right: The After School's Club, Llandiloes church hall.

bottom right: Carol service with real donkeys at St Thomas' Church.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2018 Membership and Finances report for the Church in Wales.

This year, we are excited to be able to share stories from across Wales to complement the usual digest of statistics. For some years we had become aware that the statistical report, whilst a useful indicator of the state of the Church year by year, was an inadequate guide to the richness of church life across the province. We hope that this year's new format report goes some way to redressing that imbalance.

In 2018, the Governing Body committed the Church in Wales to evangelism and growth as its twin priorities. The parish data for 2018, which may be found from page 8 on, illustrates the urgency of that imperative. In summary, the figures show:

- Continued decline in most measures of participation in parish life (Information table 1, page 8);
- Unusual and unexplained variations from the 2017 figures in some fields (-19% in adult weekday attendance, +30% in the number of confirmations);
- Linked to the fall in attendances, a decline in total giving across a range of categories (Information table 2, page 9), despite an increase in average giving per attender (Information figure 3, page 10).
- That the fall in parish income is matched by continued decline in expenditure, as parishes cut their cloth to suit their purse.

It must be remembered that these figures are provincial totals, and so mask the variations (positive and negative) among our ministry and mission areas, and parishes.

It is also possible to drill down into the attendance categories to find grounds for hope. For example:

- Sunday attendance increased between 2017 and 2018 in a number of important fields: under 7s; 7 to 10s; 11 to 17s; and families.
- In addition, the number attending “non-traditional acts of worship” increased from 21,984 per month in 2017 to 41,155 per month in 2018. We will be asking new questions in next year's membership return to gather more detailed information on what is happening on the ground in this key area.

But the greatest reason to be cheerful lies in the stories we have included in this year's report, which have been drawn together from a wider research project undertaken by St Padarn's Institute. These case studies represent just a small cross-section of the wide range of exciting new initiatives taking shape across Wales, but provide examples of what can be achieved by making imaginative but achievable changes within your church community, whatever the size, resources or context of your parish. We hope they prompt you to consider what might be achieved in your own parish or ministry area, and inspire you to action. A full report on these studies, with analysis of the lessons which might be drawn from each experience, will be published by St Padarn's in due course, so do please look out for that.

Finally, we must thank clergy, parish officers and diocesan staff for ensuring that such a high proportion of parish returns are completed and submitted on time each year. We recognise that this exercise places additional administrative strain on already busy people, and we continue to work on means to make that task easier via the online portal. But the data you provide is invaluable in ensuring that our planning for the Church's future – in terms of ministry, structures and finance – is based on solid evidence. We hope to introduce new facilities in the coming year to help parishes and ministry areas to make better use of your data too.

PENTECOST JOINT SERVICE IN ANGLESEY

June 9th, as the sun shines down on Anglesey Showground, car after car arrives. We are greeted by a lady in a fluorescent coat who informs us that she can't quite remember putting her name down for car park duty, but she is enjoying it nonetheless. Inside what is often used as the cattle shed there are already hundreds of people gathering. This is the Anglesey Synod joint service.

The service is introduced, and we are reminded that this is Pentecost where the disciples were "all together in one place." It is the backdrop for this joint gathering. Further instructions are given on safety, the way we will take communion and where and when it will be possible to come forward for prayer ministry. All delivered in Welsh and English. And then well over 300 people stand to sing the first hymn, "Emyn Agoriadol"

Liturgically this is a traditional bi-lingual service, but it is also intergenerational. Children mull around reasonably, at the children's area they are making flames of fire headbands, or flame streamers, sometimes singing, sometimes sat with parents. But no segregation here, children and young people are not sent out to separate groups. This is not just about all people coming together in one place, it is also about all ages.

Confession and absolution are followed by another song, "Bless the Lord oh my soul." The number of Welsh voices together are lifting the roof of this cattle shed. The band comprises guitars, keyboard, drums, violin and trumpet. Then we sing "Shout to the Lord all the Earth let us sing." The trumpet resounding triumphant on this celebration of Pentecost when God poured out his Spirit on all. All ages, all walks of life, all socio-economic groupings, Welsh and English. I'm not sure all the earth can hear, but certainly all who are attending the car boot sale nearby can hear. I know because during the reading of the gospel several people wander in from the car boot and ask can they join the service. Evangelism made easy!

The Archdeacon of Anglesey preaches, masterfully weaving Welsh and English together, and the resounding message:

On the day of Pentecost less people than are here today gathered together and prayed. And the Spirit came. And thousands became followers of Jesus that day. What would it look like this morning if we were filled with the Spirit and ventured back out across Anglesey? This is not a time to be afraid or anxious this is a time to be together and to allow the Holy Spirit to renew and revive His Church.

Communion soon follows and after taking bread and wine many gather to be prayed for to receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. To be filled.

Next week these people may again worship in much smaller congregations, but for now they have a glorious reminder that the Anglican Church is very much alive on Anglesey.



UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS @ ST THOMAS

It's an early December evening. It's a cold and wet evening in one of the less affluent areas of Swansea. It's close to the nearby shop, and half a dozen teenagers hang around outside. St Stephens church is in the middle of this busy street. Vicar and wife (both ordained) have been running this ministry for the past five years. The church is decorated with Christmas lights and a Christmas tree. To the joy of all present, the heating is making the church warm and cosy. There are chairs in the main body of the church occupied by 30 children or so, they are aged 5 to 8. This is the younger group.

The session begins with an Ice Breaker. They have to match their cards with someone else. After that they are sent to the back of the church where they will be making Christmas cards. Glue, card, glitter, colouring pens are in abundance. The vicar is keen to state that these children know that God loves them. For the last year he has taught them to look in the mirror before they go to bed and say the words, "I am loved." They would normally move to a devotional time at this point, but tonight they will talk about Christmas and specifically what they will get for Christmas. "A poop emoji!", "A slush maker", "a dolls bunk bed", there is lots of laughter and lots of discussion.

But alongside the laughter there are some challenges. As I sit at the back I see a parent who after dropping her child off has asked for food because she doesn't have anything at home. She asks for toilet roll too, that is a luxury they cannot afford. One of the girls attending has a sister aged 14 who recently tried to commit suicide. These are the challenges faced by this team. But this warm building is their haven. Peace in what is a chaotic world. A parent has come early to collect his daughter, but doesn't leave quickly. He is made to feel welcome and looks comfortable in the building.

When the laughter dies down, the group is sent to the back of the church and they are soon decorating cookies. Christmas carols fill the air, the children are clearly enjoying themselves.

Some final announcements: "Thursday evening we will have our Christingle service that you can all come to and next Sunday we have our carol service with real donkeys."

There is a final prayer, where the vicar gives thanks for all the children, their families and for God's blessing on all their Christmas activity. And before we can go home there are some birthdays that need to be celebrated, in Welsh and English of course. And after collecting their wonderfully decorated cards they make their way out and St Stephens is quiet again.

This is Boy's Brigade, well officially Boys Brigade & Girls Association. It runs here every Wednesday from 6pm to 9pm with various age groups. But Boys Brigade & Girl's Association are just the tip of the community engagement focused on a large population in a small area. The vicar can't walk through the local shops without people shaking his hand or children insisting on giving him a high five. Through the last five years the Sunday congregation has grown from 11 to 40. But in a typical week this church now presents the love of God to over 1200 people. That figure rises even further for special events such as Christmas, Easter and summer holidays.

This is exciting. But what would happen across Wales if all our Churches did this?



PIONEERING IN LLANIDLOES

3:30pm on a Friday evening in a church hall in Llanidloes. Over 20 children come straight from school for After School activities – making structures out of wood, colouring in and cutting out, all accompanied with exciting sounds.



There are some significant pioneer ventures in Llanidloes: Sanctuary – a new missional community; a chaplaincy ministry to the farmers market; the Happiness Lab; and a whole range of wonderfully creative initiatives. But the focus here is on Friday night. The After School's Club illustrates the importance of working with what already exists, alongside the creation of a whole host of new things. Eight years ago, a few parents decided to set up holiday club for their own children, the presence of a pioneer priest a few years later gave the impetus to make the activity into a weekly event.

At 4pm snacks are served and the noise of happy conversations fills the room. Mainly around the subject of who won the Eisteddfod in school today – it seems it was the Blue Team. Some of the older members of the group take their food downstairs in the basement. That is their special privilege as a gentle way of forming a new group to make the join between youth group and children's group. Transitions are always important, and it is encouraging to see the transitional process in development. Thirty minutes later it's time to gather on the floor for a brief recap on last week's instalment of "Rocky's Plaice" a Scripture Union video resource.

"Raise your hands if you can tell me what happened last week.", asks one of the leaders.

"There was a special fire that was to do with the Holy Spirit who helped Jesus' disciples to talk about God.", volunteers one of the children.

The fish they cut out at the start had the words ICTHUS and the significance of that word is explained at this point. And then the lights are switched off and it is time for the next instalment. We all sit and watch the adventures of the Chip Shop Church where we hear the story of Peter and John healing the man at the gate beautiful. And finally we gather together as the story is told again from the Bible this time. The children listen so well. They are asked how the man felt before he encountered God's power and what he felt like afterwards. They are then asked if they know anyone



who needs to encounter God. Lots of ideas are given, and the children sit in a circle and prayers are said. Several of the children pray out loud for people they know. By 5:15pm all is done and parents collect their children, an opportunity to give out invites to other activities and to engage in conversation with parents/guardians. Parents are clearly relaxed and although there are few church attendees, they are all comfortable. This is the first connection with church for many of these parents. But the journey to Jesus has to start somewhere.

At the same time the After Schools Club was taking place, on the other side of the high street, near the Town Hall, above the church office a youth group is taking place. It's a traditional youth group, ice breakers, bible study, this week was the last part of "God's amazing love" – a life of love, 1 Corinthians 13 and Matthew 5. 43-48. But all in an atmosphere of fun – there are drama skits. And

the evening ends with a game of Quirk! A rather unusual but clearly well enjoyed card game.

At the end the leader mentions camping out over Easter – an Easter Eve Vigil. And later in the year they will be attending a Young Life camp. At the end all are encouraged to write in an envelope themes they would like to discuss in the future. This is quite a small group – eight young people – two of the eight are regular church attendees. The leader points out that most of the group started off with a clear statement that there is no God and now have moved quite significantly to exploring what God is like.

And it's that time of year, so the evening ends with the unplanned but predictable discussion on the Wales v Ireland match from last week.

There are some initiatives in Llanidloes that probably couldn't have happened without a pioneer priest – that's why the Church in Wales is committed to this ministry. But the Friday night activities are activities that every church could run. They are making a significant difference in the lives of the children and young people who attend, and of course the lives of their parents, this is discipleship.

SHOPPERS COMMUNION IN AMMANFORD

It's a cold and wet Wednesday morning. The sky over Ammanford is grey but weather is not dampening the spirits of the 30 people who have gathered at St Michael's, just off the High street. This is midweek communion. The average age is 60+. They are not looking for a contemporary service. A simple 2004 Eucharistic Service with no real sung element.

It would be tempting to say that it has been kept going through the interregnum by one of the Licensed Lay Ministers. But that would not accurately communicate the role the LLM and congregation took during the interregnum. The service developed in the interregnum and grew throughout the interregnum, kicking into touch the idea that churches stall while waiting for their next vicar.

Half this congregation can't get to Sunday services. There's no public transport. So Wednesday is their place and time for corporate worship. A traditional, midweek service that really doesn't take a lot of effort – and as the congregation proved, it didn't need a priest to grow it. But this is a popular service – the largest service to take place in St Michael's each week. And those who attend have learnt

to make a day of it. Communion in the morning, a time to catch up with friends after the service, coffee together at the 'Cwtch' after that and then on to the pensioners afternoon in the local pub. There is nothing overly innovative here. The strength is in recognising the community and accommodating it.



CAFÉ CHURCH @ WELSH ST DONATS

St Dunwyd Church sits in the picturesque village of Welsh St Donat's. It's population is around 500. It runs fairly conventional services for most of the month. Its attendance is relatively low and the age profile is relatively high. And then once a month, the first Sunday, it's numbers and demographic change radically.

In the words of the Warden, Siân Evans:

“ *The future of the Church in Welsh St Donats was very much dependent on developing links with the school and children and adults from the local village community. So, we started Café church to develop those links and encourage and develop intergenerational working with the existing older members of the regular worshipping community and beyond.* ”

So Café Church replaced the usual monthly lay led Sunday morning service that was taking place every second Sunday of the month. Recently the service has been led by a curate and ordinands from St Padarn's, but it retains the flexibility that it can be lay led without causing difficulty.



Café Church is an opportunity for intergenerational worship and provides the children with the opportunity to become active instead of passive participants in the service. Café Church includes opportunities for prayer and reading, reflecting and talking about the scripture readings. The team (Clergy, Church Children's Officer and Warden) meet prior to the service to plan.

Cafe Church sessions are of a thematic nature based on the Gospel reading for the day or a particular festival (examples of these include Harvest (October), Remembrance (November), Christingle and Christmas (December), Palm Sunday (April) and includes practical activities in which all the congregation can work together on activities that always involves the writing of prayers (which encourages reflection): age appropriate worksheets, craft activities relating to the theme, chatting together over refreshments and hymn singing (usually those with which the children are familiar).



As could be imagined, the service has had mixed reviews from the older members of the worshipping community, but they too knew that some reinvention was needed to connect with younger generations. And it is working, there is a clear influx of children and young families in general to the second Sunday.

But there is nothing difficult about what Welsh St Dunwyd's do. It could happen in every rural context throughout Wales. People sat around tables rather than in rows facing the front so they can talk to each other, higher levels of interaction, a more informal environment, and this is intergenerational. What it did need is compromise on the part of the 'regulars'. But through it all there was a commitment to seeing all ages worship together. It would have been the easiest thing in the world to move it to an afternoon slot, but by not taking the 'easy way out' the knock on effect is that children and younger families are beginning to make their way to the third Sunday family communion as well. Numbers are rising for all services.

NEW CURATE IN LLAY

An e-mail from a new curate:

Encouraged by the training on how to start a children's outreach club at our last Newly Licensed Minister residential, I pitched a very ambitious idea to one of the churches I'm serving my curacy in – St Martin's Llay.

They have really struggled in their ministry to children and have had no real engagement with children for several years. Anyway, we decided to be bold, and put on a whole day of story telling, activities, crafts and a shared lunch to explore the story of Easter.

We did lots of advertising and prayed that God would raise up volunteers. In answer, a woman turned up at our "Start" Course, who had run the play schemes for Norfolk council until last year! She's become a committed Christian and made today possible, along with 12 other volunteers.

We had over 50 children and several adults for the whole day, and a few older ones drifted in and out. It was incredible! I feel like we've dusted the cobwebs off St Martin's!

As a result the church have now gone on to run several similar activities and will eventually run a regular children's event. Sometimes the slightest push is enough.



STATISTICAL SUMMARY 2018

Membership

Information Table 1: Participation in Parish Life for 2018 and 2017.

		2018	2017	% change
Communicants	<i>Easter</i>	46,163	48,986	-6
	<i>Penecost</i>	25,576	27,099	-6
	<i>Christmas</i>	46,052	48,186	-4
	<i>Trinity III</i>	24,982	26,362	-5
Average Attendance - over 18	<i>Sundays</i>	26,110	27,448	-5
	<i>Weekdays only</i>	4,243	5,234	-19
Average Attendance - under 18		5,385	5,420	-1
Electoral Roll		42,441	44,875	-5
Baptisms		4,996	5,351	-7
Confirmations		712	546	30
Weddings		2,223	2,466	-10
Funerals		6,097	6,188	-1

STATISTICAL SUMMARY 2018

Finances

Information Table 2: Provincial Summary of Parish Finances for 2018 and 2017.

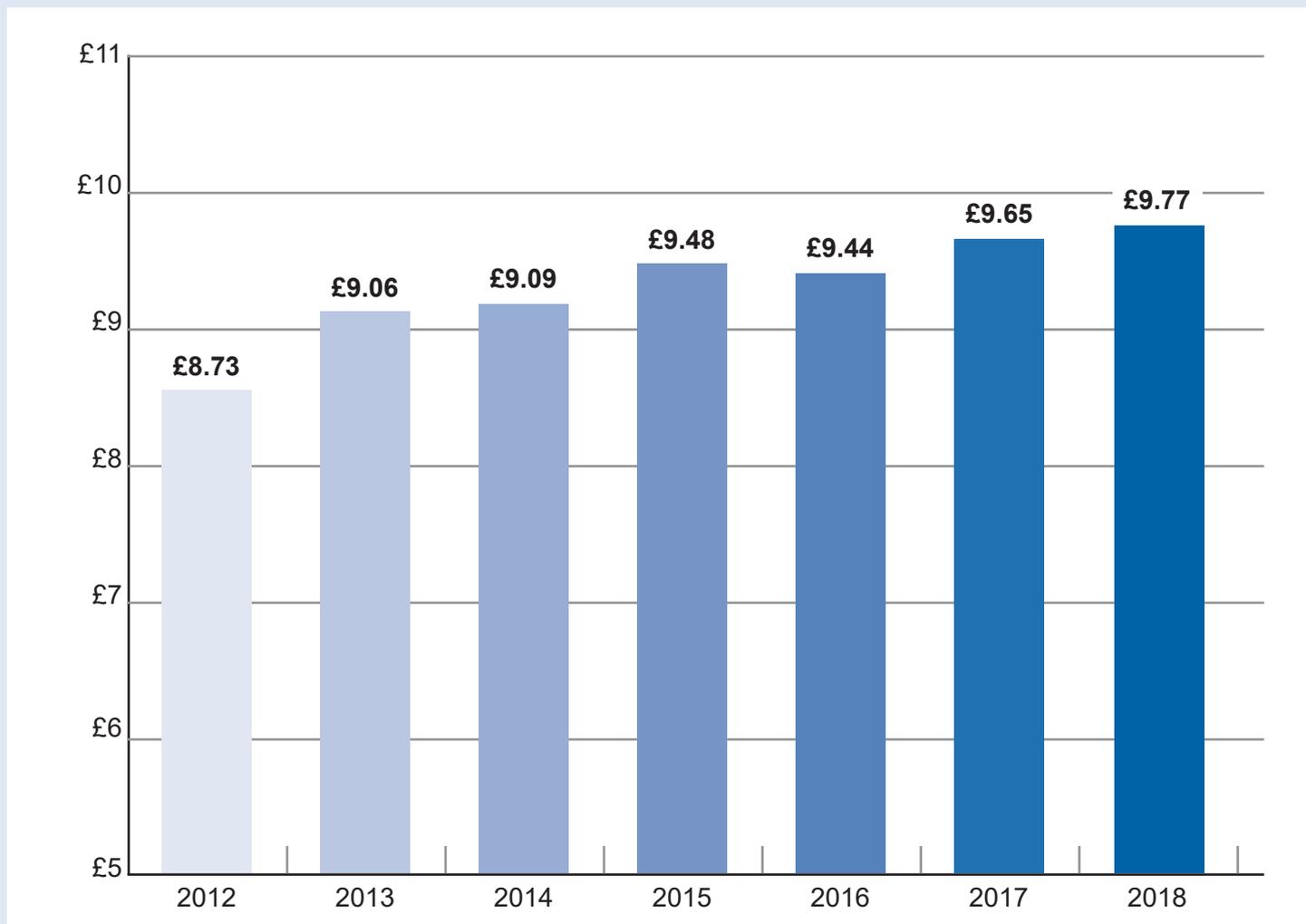
Income	2018 £k	2017 £k
Planned Giving	10,487	10,905
Loose Collections	2,829	2,903
Donations	3,061	3,200
For Mission	574	563
Tax Refunds	2,724	2,814
Legacy Gifts Received	2,490	1,804
Grants	3,736	5,046
Money Raising	5,014	5,127
Fees	2,507	2,487
Investments	1,947	1,731
Other Incoming Resources	3,234	4,469
Total Income	38,606	41,045

Expenditure	2018 £k	2017 £k
Parish Share	16,395	16,533
Clerics' Expenses	1,124	1,129
Other Ministry Support	288	301
Maintenance of Services	1,505	1,537
General Parish Expenses	2,122	2,016
Maintenance of Churches	5,395	6,054
Maintenance of Property	2,551	2,641
Exceptional Property Expenditure	4,523	6,216
Parish Grants	814	663
Home/World Grants	943	982
Capital Payments	992	1,217
Cost of Money Raising	817	612
Total Expenditure	37,474	39,907

STATISTICAL SUMMARY 2018

Finances

Information Figure 3: Weekly Direct Giving per Sunday Attender.



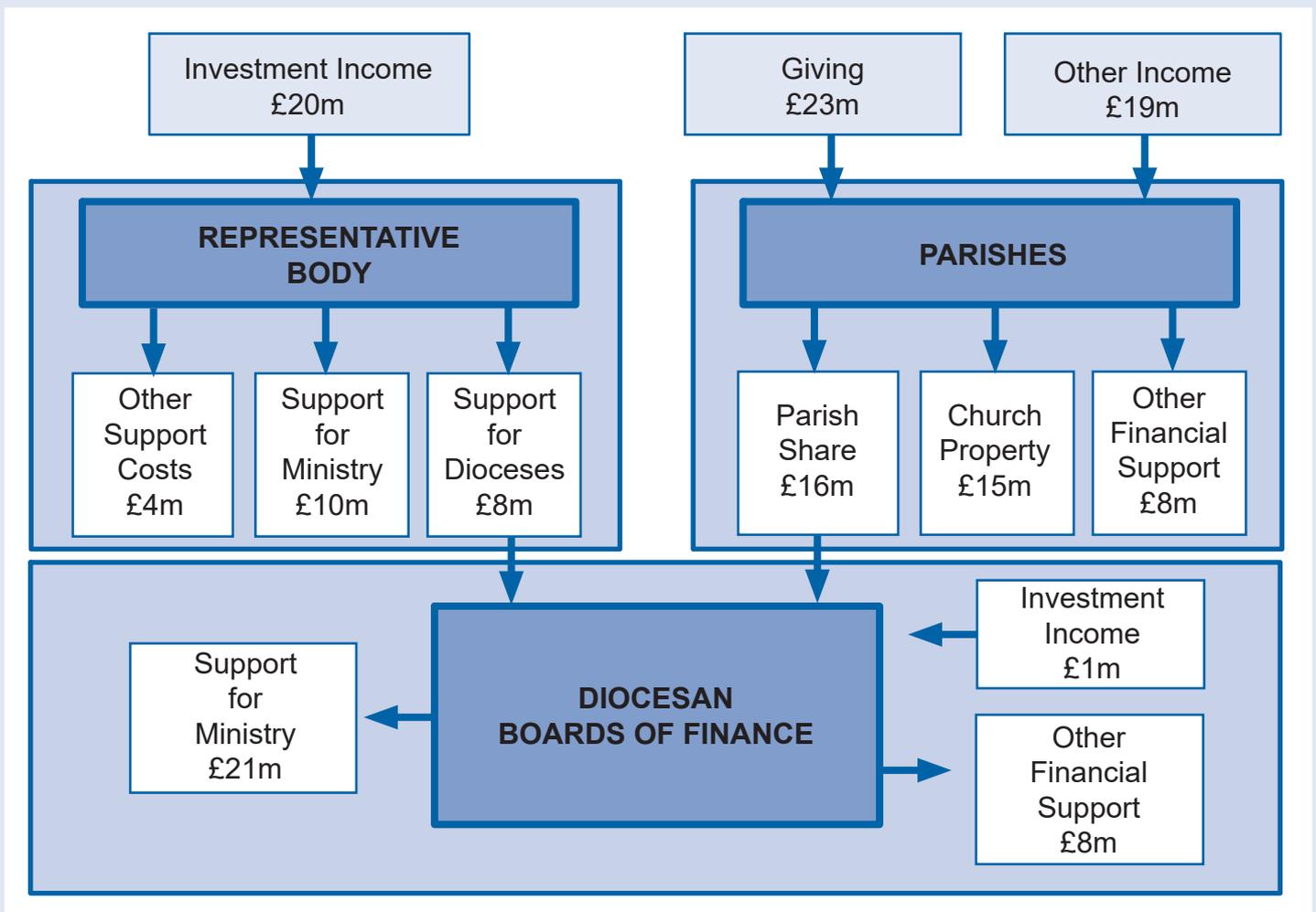
Information Figure 4: Parish Expenditure 2018.



STATISTICAL SUMMARY 2018

How is the Church in Wales funded?

Information Figure 5: How the Church in Wales is Funded 2018.



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.

Information Figure 5 is a diagrammatic representation of the way in which the Church in Wales was funded in 2018. 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.

