

Parochial Fees Policy

If we are to be worthy of the respect and trust of the communities with which we work, we must behave in a way that is beyond reproach. As parochial fees are legally payable (both to the PCC and the Diocesan Board of Finance) it is extremely important that we are able to demonstrate that we are exercising good stewardship when dealing with all parochial fees. The following document outlines the Diocesan Policy on Parochial fees:

1. Parochial fees are legally the property of PCCs and the DBF (although in some cases - see below - the DBF allows some of its fees to be allocated differently). The level of fees is set by the Church of England nationally and changes each year. The statutory fees for the given year can be found here: www.trurodiocese.org.uk/resource-collection/parochial-fees/. A very small number of clergy who have retained their freehold may also have opted to retain their fees (and their future stipend will be adjusted accordingly). For any other party to be in receipt of parochial fees (except in the case (2) below) is tantamount to theft.
2. In 2012 the (then) Diocesan Executive (now 'Bishop's Diocesan Council') made the decision that from 1st January 2013 any minister conducting a wedding or funeral (ordained or reader), who is not in receipt of a stipend, is entitled to receive 80% of the fee payable to the DBF. The DBF should receive the remaining 20% of the DBF portion of the fee, and the PCC should receive the full PCC fee.
3. All those who receive fees as described in (2) above, have the responsibility to declare this income to HM Revenue & Customs themselves.
4. We recommend that the PCC Treasurer, or the Churchwardens, collect the fees and send them to the DBF (and any non-stipended minister) on behalf of the PCC. This should be done via the main PCC bank account or a separate account for this purpose. It is strongly not recommended for fees to be received in cash, so that an audit trail is in place.
5. There is a 'parochial fees form' which should be submitted to the DBF quarterly by the PCC treasurer, together with the relevant fees. This can be found via the web address above (1), and the form will even do the maths for you (make sure you are using the current year's version so that the correct level of fees is indicated). The forms and fees may be submitted by post (with a cheque) or via email (plus direct debit or bank transfer).
6. You will recall having received communication from the Bishop's Office on 30th November 2016 regarding crematorium funerals. Please continue to note that it is not legally possible for a Church of England minister to operate on what amounts to a freelance basis. (See 'Crematorium funerals and parochial fees' on the website (1)).

Should you require any further assistance or clarification on the above please call Agatha Hodges at the Church House finance team on 01872 360043 in the first instance.