

# WHAT IS GLEBE?

In essence, glebe is land, property or investments owned by the Church of England in Cornwall to provide income that helps to pay the stipends (similar to salaries) of our clergy.

Glebe in Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly and our two parishes in Devon, is held technically by the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance, which is frequently referred to as the Diocese of Truro.

The Glebe Committee of the Diocese of Truro was formed in 1962. At that time, glebe was the property of the vicar or rector, and the committee's role was to give commercial advice to them before negotiating or committing to tenancy agreements.

Following the passing by Parliament of the Endowments and Glebe Measure 1976, the ownership of all glebe throughout the country was subsequently vested in the relevant diocese. The formerly advisory glebe committee was repurposed as the Diocesan Glebe Management Committee, and its remit was to manage the glebe portfolio for the benefit of the Diocesan Stipends Fund. This fund contributes money towards the cost of the stipends of parish priests.

**Since its formation, the glebe management committee has held agricultural land in the long term and has tended to sell only parcels of land where planning permission for an alternative use gives an enhanced capital value – which, in turn, can result in increased income when reinvested. Any capital receipts must be invested in a ring-fenced account that contributes to clergy stipends.**

In 1986, the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance approved the principle of the glebe committee buying shops, offices and commercial property investments.

## WHAT IS GLEBE?

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The Diocese of Truro has creatively and proactively managed its glebe to comply with statute but to also help with:

### Alleviating the Housing Crisis

- **Homelessness** – working in partnership with Cornwall Council the diocese is offering glebe land in certain areas to assist with the delivery of short term accommodation ‘pods’ to provide secure accommodation to local people who are being housed in unsuitable lets, hotel rooms, or out-of-county property;
- **Affordable housing** - glebe land has delivered 197 affordable homes in Cornwall since 2011, with more hoped to come under option agreements with Coastline Housing, Cornwall Community Land Trust, Gilbert & Goode and other partners;
- **Open market housing** (barn conversions, land allocations in NDPs) - The diocese has pro-actively engaged in the forward planning process in neighbourhood development plans across the county, putting forward areas of glebe for inclusion in consideration for future housing (open market led and affordable), renewable technology allocation, and matters surrounding the environment.

**Some of this has resulted in allocations for future housing in Looe and Menheniot where the plan has been consulted on and voted in by local people and in some areas the land has been excluded.**

### Attaining Net Zero

To assist in the commitment to Net Zero 2030, the diocese works with its tenants to agree land management options to encourage carbon capture.

### Environment and bio-diversity

With the agreement and consultation of the diocese, many of the glebe farm tenants have entered their land in to countryside stewardship schemes aimed at enhancing the environment (soil improvements, flood alleviation) and bio-diversity.

**GLEBE LOCATIONS**  
Some Glebe land is located outside of the diocese’s borders.

## WHAT IS GLEBE WORTH?

In 2021, glebe was valued at £16.6 million.

### Renewables

We continue to work towards developing renewable energy sources on glebe land.

### Charitable & socially proactive use

Although the statutory requirements of the Church Property Measure and Charity Act can be a challenge, through careful planning and negotiation, glebe has been used for things like land for school grounds, village/church car parks, scout facilities, playing fields, play parks, even a seal hospital.

### Finances

The capital generated from sales of glebe is reinvested in helping to minimise the Mission and Ministry Fund contributions required.

### Better clergy homes

Glebe is sometimes used to provide new net zero clergy homes.

## WHAT IS GLEBE USED FOR?

Agricultural land, school grounds, village car parks, village and town allotments, playing fields, cricket pitches, rugby pitches, pony paddocks, public access, student lets, long leasehold residential properties...



# WHAT IS THE DIOCESE'S APPROACH TO GLEBE LAND?

The Truro Diocesan Board of Finance is a registered charity and, as such, its directors/trustees are obliged to ensure that they make best use of the resources at its disposal and obtain best value from its glebe land: most transactions are subject to the Charities Act regulations and approval. Any income derived from glebe can only be used to pay clergy stipends.

This can sometimes involve selling parcels of land for development if the market conditions are right.

If and when the glebe management committee looks at any potential development on glebe land, it will consider the parochial and pastoral aspects of any proposal, and also make it a priority to engage with the local community.

It may not always be obvious, but over the years the glebe committee has been able to support many parishes by providing land for various purposes and has also made land available to enable parishes to hold community events.

## What glebe does the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance hold?

The Diocese of Truro owns 2,000 acres of glebe land in 246 parcels, ranging from car parks and play areas to gardens, commercial property, and agricultural land.

## What is revenue generated by glebe used for?

Revenue generated by glebe is used to contribute towards the clergy stipends across the diocese and so effectively reduces the amount that each parish needs to find to contribute towards the cost of its clergy.

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## GET IN CONTACT

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**DIOCESE OF TRURO**  
DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM  
GROWING THE CHURCH