



— Diocese of —
Hereford

Proclaiming Christ ✦ Growing Disciples



Impact Report 2022/23



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What does Hereford Diocese do?

Our shared diocesan strategy launched in Autumn 2022 seeks to unite our diversity around a common vision to proclaim Christ and grow disciples in communities marked by our behaviours towards one another and outwardly to others in our communities – We are called to partner with a generous God so that lives are changed by an encounter with Christ and this overflows into families, homes and communities which will be changed for the better.

We have set some ambitious goals for our strategy, these are:

- ◆ Minimum 3% of the population attending a regular act of worship (A focus on increasing medium congregations i.e. 50+ worshippers in every rural benefice and 100+ worshippers in every market town benefice in our diocese).
- ◆ Breakeven budget/sustainable benefices.
- ◆ A sustainable clear future for every church.



- ◆ Establishing intergenerational church as a way to grow younger and increasing the number of young people and children engaged with worshipping communities.

200



- ◆ 200 new voluntary or lay leaders.

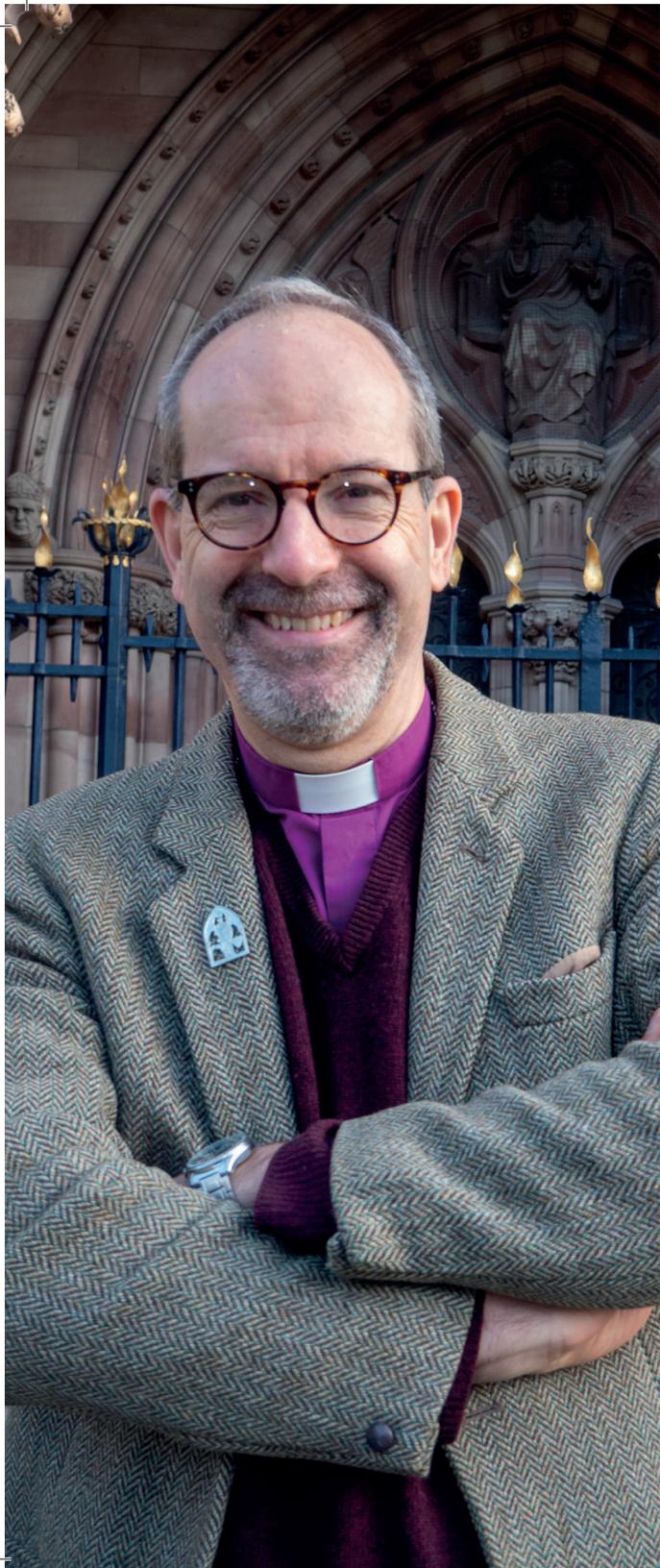
We face an increasingly challenging environment with over 400 churches across 86 benefices (344 parishes), including the Cathedral. There are only seventeen churches that usually get a congregation of over 50 on Sundays whilst 250 churches have fewer than 20 people attending. Only ten benefices currently cover the cost of their vicar, and 29 benefices cover less than half. The sparsely populated geography of the diocese includes a number of contradictions, including that the least populated 180 parishes covers a population the same size as South Wye, Hereford with approximately 22,000 people.



Please visit www.hereford.anglican.org and follow us on social media to read more about our work.



Diocese of
Hereford



Welcome from our Bishop

Welcome to our 2022 Impact Report. It has felt like this last year may be the first when we can use the phrase 'post COVID' and mean it. Although the odd outbreak still rears its head, and a number are still anxious, for most people, we've resumed many of our old patterns of life.

It has been a time to take stock and frame our activities going forward as we seek to faithfully proclaim Christ and grow disciples. That last phrase, the strapline from the last 5 year diocesan strategy, remains our purpose statement. We seek to order our life, not simply to get more people to come to church, but to encourage more people to follow Jesus. Seeking to grow the Church is not about institutional survival but faithfulness. Numbers are not everything, but they are not nothing either. Each person

in our diocese is precious to God and He longs for all to come into a relationship with him through Jesus Christ.

The revision of our diocesan strategy recognises that central dictat is unlikely to achieve that end. We want to harness the energy, imagination and commitment of the local church to be the best they can possibly be in their setting in living out that call. The consultations and discernment over the last few years have led to a commitment to form our communities around three common values. These are prayerfulness, Christlikeness and engagement. The central resources of our diocesan family are there to support and encourage the expression of those values, both in churches and schools.

The ownership of the mission and ministry of the Church by the whole people of God will be vital to our thriving over the next few years. There is a renewed mobilisation of lay ministry happening. We licenced a number of new lay worship leaders a few weeks ago – we hope they will lead the first of many more authorised ministries which will include worship, pastoral care and teaching. We have resources to help parishes think through their own mission strategies, with vision days and personal accompaniment of clergy.

We recognise that there are strong headwinds in our ministry. Finances continue to be very difficult. We already receive substantial funds from the Church Commissioners, so its unlikely we will be able to extract more, given that we have

the largest number of clergy per head of population in the country (by some margin), and nearly the lowest per capita giving. As I write this the fallout from the recent Synod vote to offer services of blessing to same sex couples rumbles on. Although this diocese seems to have escaped much of the savage dissent elsewhere, people on both sides of the argument are hurting. We will need to be tender with one another.

Recognising our complete dependence on God to address these issues, we set aside 2023 as a year of prayer. I want to pay tribute to the team led by Elizabeth Wild who have put together a substantial, rich and diverse programme. Already it has raised energy and generated significant engagement. There is great precedent in the scriptures for God's

people, fearful of the challenges they face, turning to God in wholehearted prayer and seeing extraordinary things happen. I hope our year of Prayer will set such a tone for our common life in the future.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and will thank God with me for all the good things going on. A huge thank you to all of you for your prayer, love and support of our common mission.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'The Bishop of Exeter', written in a cursive style.

Successes and achievements in 2022/23

As we entered 2022 our path towards a new diocesan strategy was still emerging. Following a series of conversations during 2021 we heard feedback from a number of churches and communities across the diocese. The strategy emerged from a desire to unite our diversity around our common vision marked by Christlikeness, prayerfulness and outward facing engagement into the wider communities in which we live and worship as the Church of England in Hereford Diocese.

This year, we have seen a number of successes in various aspects of our work, from the conclusion of our five year Intergenerational Mission project to the key appointment of our first school chaplain in Hereford to our schools communities emerge stronger and help become more connected.

Our key achievements:



Providing

regular services, Alpha and discipleship courses, Messy Church, Synods, Conferences and many other church-led activities using a hybrid in person / online approach;



Serving

our local communities;



Responding

to need, providing support and delivering Faith New Deal Project in partnership



Supporting

local food banks through parish volunteers in order to meet increased demand.



Church schools (Education)

- ◆ Introducing a clear strategy for helping schools to consider becoming academies. 30% of our Church of England schools are already academies while 70% remain as schools maintained by one of our 4 local authorities.
- ◆ Overseeing the highest take up of the Schools Partnership Agreement, since it was established several years ago. The partnership ensures the closest possible relationship with our schools of all types and enables access to a wide range of training and support from our experienced education officers.
- ◆ Continuing to support schools to improve their governance arrangements, head teacher appointments, assist with managing buildings management (especially around net zero carbon) and in maintaining their Christian distinctiveness.



78

None in special measures in our diocese (since summer 2021)

Over
3000
pupils



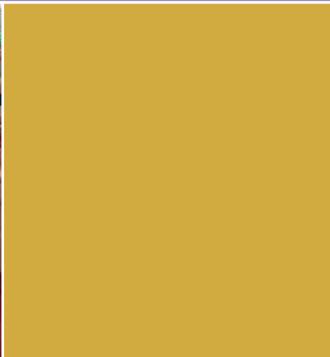
Our diocesan academy trust is expecting to welcome 5 more Church of England schools in the autumn term. It has thirteen CE schools including two community schools currently. It has a strong track record of school improvement, OfSTED and SIAMS inspections in recent years. It now has over 3000 pupils and includes schools from across diocese.

Successfully supporting schools through

13

positive SIAMS inspections

this year. Although one was judged to require improvement, eight were good and 4 were excellent under the current inspection framework.



Intergenerational mission

The five year funded Intergenerational Mission (IM) Project came to an end in December 2022. The final phase drew together all the learning and provided an opportunity for reflection for the IMs. A copy of the report and video are available to read or watch on our website.

The Intergenerational Mission Project has:

- ◆ reached over 2000 unchurched people, with the Gospel, with over 60% of these being under 35.
- ◆ led to the formation of 16 new worshipping communities, meeting at least monthly.
- ◆ seen 245 people become disciples, over 40% of whom are under 35.
- ◆ attracted many new Pioneers, Evangelists, Missioners, Youth Leaders and Families Workers - lay and ordained, who continue to hear and respond to God's call in their communities.



Over **100**
volunteers

have given time to mission in their communities and we have 22 new leaders in Intergenerational Mission.

Leadership and ministry

- ◆ appointed 8 clergy to lead benefices that have been in vacancy over the last 12 months;
- ◆ extended the 'Growing Leaders' course inviting lay leaders to join;
- ◆ supported innovative deanery pastoral plan approaches and cross-working within deaneries;

12

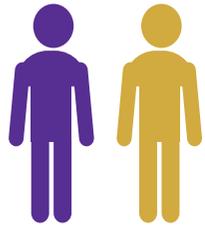
clergy have taken part in the servants and stewards training programme



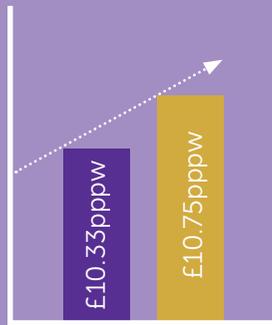
equipping incumbents to lead, and also nurture their own discipleship and vocation.



Generosity in our parishes



Our 2 Parish Giving Advisers visited all **403 church** in the diocese in 2022.



Overall planned giving increased slightly from £10.33 per person per week to £10.75 pppw. [This is still the lowest in the Church of England - The weighted national average is £18.78 pppw].

70%



9 churches signed up for the Parish Giving Scheme. We have signed up 269 church accounts across the whole of the diocese of Hereford – that's nearly 70% of our churches.



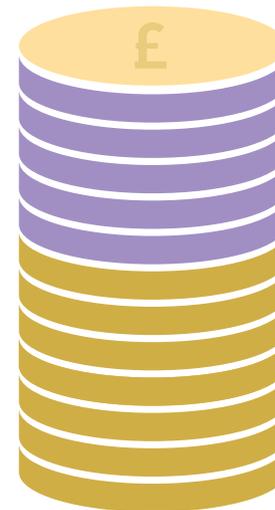
120 churches were directly supported to improve signage and set up online or contactless giving.

How we **spend** our money:

2022 income and expenditure before one-off gains & losses (from published accounts):

2022 income £6.12m

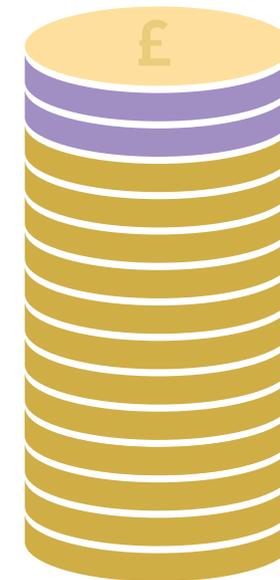
(Deficit £0.75m)



Other income
£2.83m

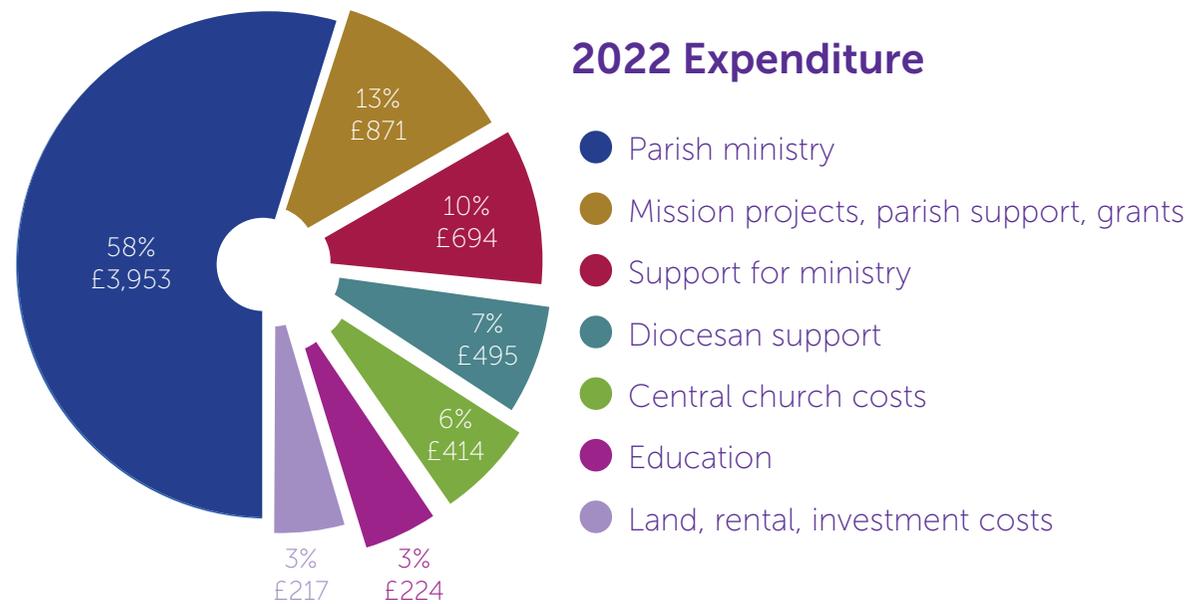
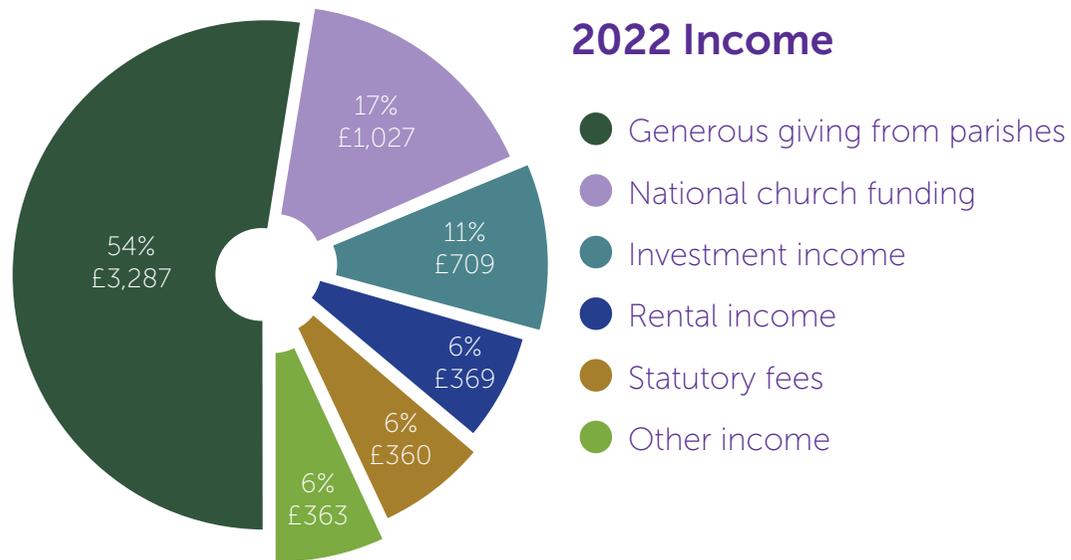
Parish Offer
£3.29m
(54%)

2022 expenditure £6.87m



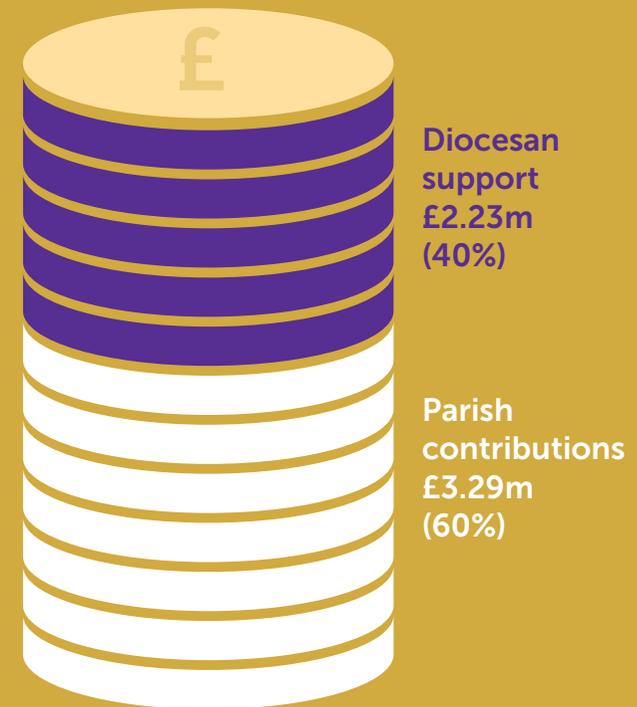
Other exp.
£1.35m

Parish ministry, mission projects, parish support
£5.52m
(80%)



How did we fund parish ministry in 2022?

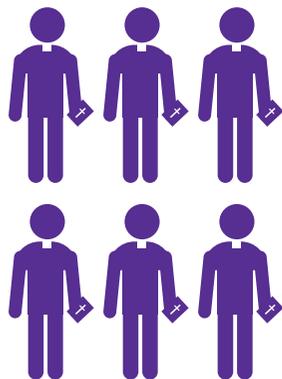
Parish ministry, mission and support £5.52m



In 2022, there were one-off gains of £1.3m from glebe disposals which, alongside other net gains of £1.7m, resulted in a net increase in funds of £2.2m in the year.

2022 Total movement in funds (£million)





We deployed an average of

78

Stipendiary Clergy

(incl. 16 curates) in 2022.



117

Properties
Maintained

Renting out those
not used by Clergy

Resourcing the local church through the Parish Giving Scheme:



253 churches

received donations via the Parish Giving
Scheme (PGS) during the year

£10.75

The average PGS donation per person,
per week before Gift Aid



2,510 donors gave

£1.71m (+15%)

including Gift Aid through PGS
to their local parishes in 2022

Mission and Ministry

The work of the Mission and Ministry Team has grown over the course of 2022 and there have been a number of staff changes and new appointments. The team is expected to reach full capacity by mid 2023. Covering vocations and training for lay and ordained ministry as well as mission in all areas including: ministry, leadership, families, children, older people, environment and community outreach, the team is starting to shape and implement the strategic plan.

- ◆ Multiple deaneries and parishes offering flexible training in leading worship, pastoral care and working with children and young people
- ◆ Appointing a Diocesan Mission Enabler who started in September 2022, benefitting from national church funding as appointing, two other ½ time Mission Enablers appointed in March to replace two full time roles

- ◆ Working with a wider group to plan events and resources for the Year of Prayer 2023
- ◆ Supporting individual clergy and deaneries in developing their mission and ministry
- ◆ Developing a new diocesan pioneer learning community to identify new ways of being/doing church

Established the new one-year
Introduction to Christian Ministry Course

14 

people starting training in September 2022

Began to follow the

**Net Zero
Carbon Route
map**

as a diocese



Developing the new local ministry roles launched by Bishop Richard in June 2022 and beginning to commission people into these roles:

1 Local
Minister

13 Local
Worship
Leaders

4 Local
Pastoral
Visitors

many more people expected to step into these roles in the year to come (there are more than 50 people in the process already).



Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains an important aspect of all church activity throughout the diocese and the team continue to assist and advise parishes providing training, supporting casework and promoting policy.



975

people completed foundation, leadership training and safer recruitment.



159 parishes signed up to Parish Dashboards - This is an online safeguarding tool which also includes a feature to support safer recruitment processes. We aim to have every parish fully signed up to this new system by the end of 2024.



The diocese facilitated 554 DBS checks in 2022 supporting the appointment and retention processes.

Caring for our buildings and church communities



80 Quinquennial Inspection Reports undertaken – These are statutory inspections of church buildings required for every church in the diocese under the direction of the diocesan advisory committee. They help to make sure our buildings are kept in good repair and provide a report to Churchwardens with recommendations for any repairs that are needed.

Church Buildings Support Officer has provided advice and assistance to 82 churches, including 22 on the Heritage at Risk Register and she has contributed to securing grant funding totalling £121,110 to 24 churches during 2022.



24 quinquennial surveys undertaken on Hereford Diocese Clergy houses and support offered to neighbouring diocese.

First Carbon neutral new-build Vicarage close to completion - equipped with an air source heat pump and solar panels as part of a social housing project in Wyesham, south Herefordshire.



A number of building plots and properties sold for development raising over £1.5m and supporting the development of new affordable housing in Herefordshire.

Further 14 parcels of land submitted for potential development to local county council.





Supporting and engaging our communities

The diocese made an emergency response to the war in Ukraine in 2022 and has supported the integration of guests into our local community, we have partnered with the local authority and Citizens UK.



Securing £120k of external funding to resource activities and recruit 3 dedicated staff for the Supporting Homes for Ukraine project in 2022.



Direct case work with 35 Ukrainian families supporting them with visas, transport, English classes, medical appointments, housing opportunities and access to work.



We are working with:

265
Ukrainians

134
adults

111
children

and are supporting

134 hosts

working through a network of volunteer hub co-ordinators across the Diocese.



THANK YOU

Without the generous giving of all our parishes, we would not be able to meet the practical needs of and share hope with individuals and communities across our diocese.

The communities and churches of our diocese are full of people who give generously of their time, skills, and money, and we are hugely grateful for this support.

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