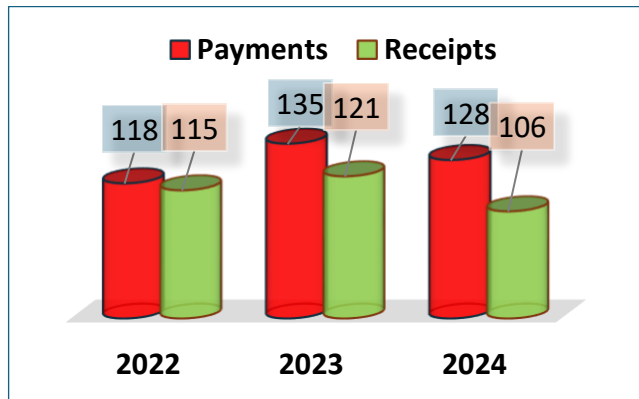
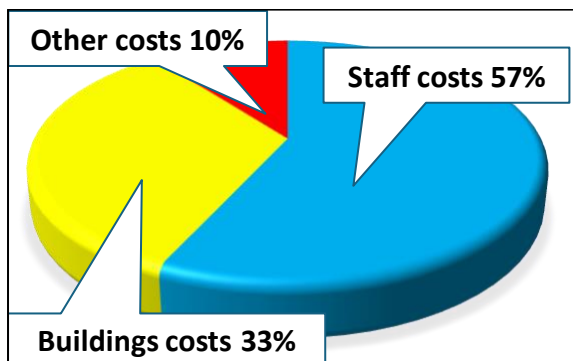


Here is a comparison between income and expenditure for the last few years in £000s. You can see we spend more than we get and so we need to act!



And here is how we spent our money in 2023. (Staff costs include Diocese share which goes towards paying for the clergy)



If you don't give because no one's ever asked you, I'm asking you now. If you don't give regularly because you've never got round to it, I'm saying today's the day. If you don't give much because you think Shirley Parish doesn't need it, I'm telling you that we do. If you don't give a lot because you don't have a lot, I'm saying your giving something is an example to everyone else. If you don't give more because no one's ever said thank you, I'm thanking you right now. If you already give until the pips squeak, I'm saying that's wonderful, and please can you nudge the person next to you to do the same!

many thanks, Rev Paul Day



Let's be honest about money

We don't often speak about money in church – but this leaflet makes no excuses. Here we **will** talk about money – how much it costs us as a Parish to do what we do, how much money we receive from your generous donations, and how much more we could do if everyone gave just a bit more.

But first – thank you for all your generous donations which enable us to do all the things we do!

And that brings us to the bit that hurts. How much more could you give to the work of the churches in the Parish?

If everyone on our electoral roll (our membership list) gave just £1 more per week we would have another £10,000 a year – this would just about balance the books! If everyone gave £2 more, then we would have an extra £20,000. £2 is far less than the cost of a cup of coffee!

If we had an extra £20,000 per year we could (for example)

- Balance our books – currently we spend more than we receive
- Support and befriend residents in local care homes
- Organise some further support for bereaved families
- Do more in our schools and with the families we are in touch with

But first, let's tackle some of those awkward questions.

Isn't the church rich?

Well the Central Church of England does have a lot of investments and the income from these is used to support the church's work across the country. But it would make no longterm financial sense to sell of the family silver!

But surely Shirley Parish and St James has plenty of money

We have some reserves which could be used for emergencies (eg major repairs like the roof), but like any organisation we aim to balance our day to day spending against our day to day income. Currently we spend more than we receive.

How has that happened?

A mixture of things – rising costs, regular generous givers moving away or dying, the church taking the lead in more activities to reach out to the community.

What about the Diocese?

Birmingham Diocese is currently running at a deficit of around £1 million a year. That is a big figure. The Diocese depends on Parishes like us to pay our way – ie pay for our clergy and other costs. Currently we only pay the bare minimum they ask for which does not cover the costs. In effect we are adding to the Diocese's deficit.

Doesn't the Government help?

We get no funding whatsoever from the Government (apart from the gift aid rebate on individual donations that all charities get). In this country the church is NOT state funded.

But why should I give in the first place?

We give as a response to what God has done for us, stemming out of our love for God and our relationship with him. We give because the church and what it stands for and does is important.

The Bible teaches us that everything we have comes from God, and that all we do when we give is return to him what is his anyway. Throughout the Bible there is teaching about giving the "first fruits" of the Harvest to God – not just the bits left over at the end, after we have taken what we "need".

The Church of England suggest that Christians should consider giving away 5% of their income – best to be done before all the other expenses get in the way! This could be to your local church and/or to other charities or causes.

Could you consider this?

Ways to give

The simplest way for you and for the Parish is to use the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS). You commit yourself to a regular sum to be paid from your bank to ours. The PGS claim back any gift aid due (saving us a huge task) and pay that to us with your donation. You can find the information on our website www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk or phone 0333 002 1271 and quote

020 602 220 for Christ the King

020 602 173 for St James

or 020 602 174 for St John's

You can also make a regular donation by bank standing order or you can use the weekly envelopes or you can make online gifts whenever it suits you.

Have a word with Ian (our Treasurer) or Emily in the office

You might like to think about leaving a legacy to the Parish in your will. Talk to Ian our Treasurer about how to do that.