Parish Finance and Maintenance • Executive Summary 2025

The parish priest serves as the legal and canonical administrator of parish property and finances, supported by executive leads (Treasurer, Gift Aid Officer, and Maintenance Lead) and advised by a Parish Finance Council. Civilly, the parish operates under the broader diocesan charity structure in England and Wales, yet maintains autonomy under canon law.

Financial Overview (2024)

In 2024, the parish generated £101,768.98 in unrestricted income, primarily from regular giving (£51,636.83 = £26,316.37 standing orders + £19,395.31 plate + £5,925.15 in gift-aided donations), Gift Aid refund (£10,248.80), property rentals, fundraising, and legacies. Total expenditure was £79,657.26, yielding a surplus of £20,762.73. The parish maintains two bank accounts (£34,000 and £31,000) and an investment portfolio (£133,000). A 38% diocesan income tax applies to offertory income, and 40% on property sale profits.

Cost of Clergy Support

Parish expenses for maintaining a priest totalled £15,851 in 2024, covering stipend, mileage, food, pension, national insurance, and presbytery maintenance. East Anglia offers among the lowest priest stipends nationally. Additional earnings from stipends and offerings are retained by the parish.

Projected 2025 Budget

The parish anticipates an unrestricted income of £125,324 and expenditure of £137,620, resulting in a projected deficit of £12,296 that will be drawn from existing capital, which would leave us with a significant reduction in the bank (about £40,000 in total, and which excludes the investment portfolio). This is driven by urgent maintenance needs exceeding £39,000, with a broader long-term repair estimate of up to £700,000. Key projects include roof and heating repairs, bathroom and boiler replacements, and restoration of the listed presbytery and church windows.

Maintenance Strategy and Constraints

A 2024 property survey highlighted extensive restoration needs. Civil charity status restricts external grant eligibility, and diocesan priorities limit support. The parish must seek targeted fundraising, legacy promotion, and income from its cemetery to bridge the financial gap.

Conclusion

While the parish remains financially stable in the short term, significant challenges lie ahead due to escalating maintenance costs and limited funding options. A proactive fundraising and property management strategy is essential to preserve parish assets and ensure long-term sustainability.