



# Our programme for 2026-28

**Clergy Support Trust exists to serve those who serve others.**

**We are the largest, oldest charity helping Anglican clergy and their families, offering a wide programme of grants, services and resources focused on financial, mental and physical health.**

**In 2024, we helped over 2,800 households, including 1 in 5 of all serving clergy in the Church of England.**

For 370 years, Clergy Support Trust has offered a lifeline to clergy households struggling with the pressure of water engulfing them, whether related to financial, mental or physical health challenges. In 2025, we began more deliberately travelling upstream, to analyse the root causes behind those challenges. In our 2026-28 Strategy – which we are delighted to introduce here for our applicants, supporters and stakeholders – we plan to continue this journey, advocating with applicants as well as supporting them.

As part of our 2022-25 Strategic period, we invested in understanding our own data. That analysis revealed that around one third of our annual spend – almost £2m in 2024 – was on the basic essentials of ministry and daily life, which in many vocations or professions would not be the responsibility of an independent charity, but rather would be provided by the employer, or affordable on an acceptable level of income.

Recognising this significant need, we campaigned for improvements to the basic clergy stipend, including through building a coalition of likeminded Church leaders, and our own data-driven reports demonstrating that clergy should be paid more. We were delighted that Church proposals then followed, not only raising the nationally recommended stipend from April 2026, but linking it to inflation.

As a transitional arrangement before that stipend shift, the Trust gratefully received a grant of £2m from the Church of England – the first in our 370-year history – to cover the growing cost of support for serving clergy households.

We will always seek to support households in times of need, but believe that clergy (the majority of our applicants) should be better-paid in the first place.

**“There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.”**

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

As the stipend increases and we monitor its impact, we plan carefully to change the nature and availability of some of our grants. This is not purely for financial reasons – although we cannot continue to run the operational deficits we have in recent years – but ethical, missional ones too.

Whilst supporting clergy households is a privilege, we have in recent years done some things which should arguably be covered instead by the Church itself – or which should be affordable on the stipend – and many applicants, and others within the Church, agree with this.

Going forward, therefore, we will re-focus our work on those facing the most significant challenges, while ensuring a substantial level of support is available to many households. Of course, we will continue to support the families and former partners of clergy, and retired clergy. In all of this, we will advocate as well as act, to improve Church culture around care and wellbeing, especially for its hardworking clergy.

Alongside this commitment, our 2026-28 Strategy includes an ambitious commitment to self-service support. Applicant feedback suggests that, for many, this would be a welcome step before applying for a grant, or offering tools and advice to help prevent problems becoming more serious. In this sense, too, we plan to “go upstream”, offering more support before problems escalate, as well as standing with people in times of need.

We are investing heavily in a new online space, building on the resources available through our website. These services will be designed in partnership with applicants and other organisations, ensuring that we continue to address the needs and concerns of clergy households, and that we continue to offer applicants choice and agency through a broader programme.

We hope this exciting new programme represents a fresh way of achieving our charitable objects, and of reimagining the Trust’s historical mission within the landscape of a twenty-first century, post-Covid Church. Like every idea, success will rely on partnership with our applicants and others, as we continue to learn, and to reflect on the work we are so privileged to do.

The Church of England, which represents over 85% of the Trust’s work, has faced dark and difficult days over the past few years. Throughout those, we have witnessed many of our applicants remain resilient in their faith, their desire to serve despite the obstacles, and their willingness to invite us alongside them.

We are grateful for the extraordinary people we serve, and we are eager to try to support them in new ways, as well as with our centuries-old commitment to financial support and wellbeing. In doing so, we are grateful for the love and grace God continues to show us, not least through the faces and stories of those who seek our support.



Pictured: The Revd Byung Jun Kim and his family, who received a Wellbeing grant from the Trust.

# Becca's story

**The Revd Rebecca Henney is a curate at St Laurence's Church, Foleshill, and lives in Coventry with her husband, James, and three children, Theo, Matilda and Agatha.**

When Matilda and Agatha both began to struggle at school, Becca was concerned, and thought her daughters may be neurodivergent. Through the NHS, the family faced a five-year waiting list for an assessment and diagnosis. If they went private, it would only be a two-month wait, but could cost upwards of £600 for an appointment.

We were privileged to be able to help, by providing a Health grant towards a child ADHD assessment, as well as an Occupational Therapy assessment to see how they could be best supported, through our service partner, The OT Practice. Our Visiting Caseworker Manager, Lindsay was also on-hand to provide guidance along the way.

Our Visiting Caseworker Service helps households with more complex needs to make grant applications, while also working with them to access support from local authorities and other organisations, including Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments. Households are referred to the Service following assessment by our Charitable Services Team.

“We felt like there was a grown up in the room who knew what was happening, which is invaluable when you're a bit at sea and you're trying to do the best for your children, but you're not sure how to get there.”

“Agatha in particular was really struggling with school, and the school just weren't equipped to deal with it. They didn't have any resource, or anything they could do for her. They just kept asking me what the nice lady at Clergy Support Trust was recommending. Having Lindsay's expertise, calming and reassuring us, helping us to navigate the SEN (Special Educational Needs) system, a system that was completely alien to us, was just so helpful.”

“At first, I felt guilty about receiving support. I felt like we were getting a lot, and I didn't want another family to miss out on a grant because we were getting lots. Lindsay reassured us that another family wasn't going to be denied help, just because we needed that helping hand.”

Read more stories from our applicants

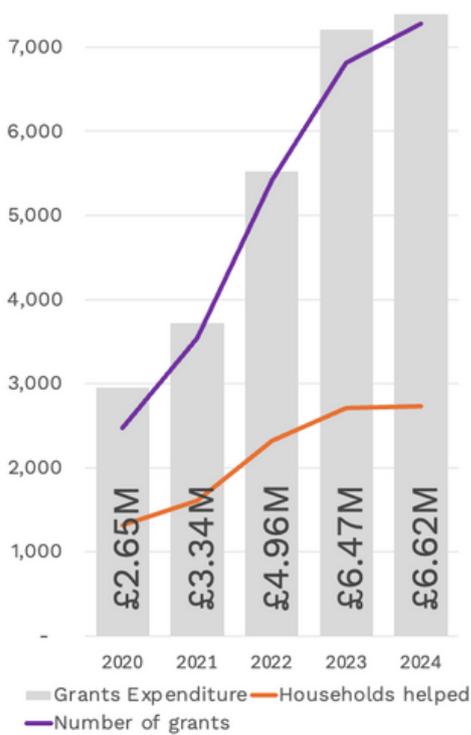


# Our impact in 2024

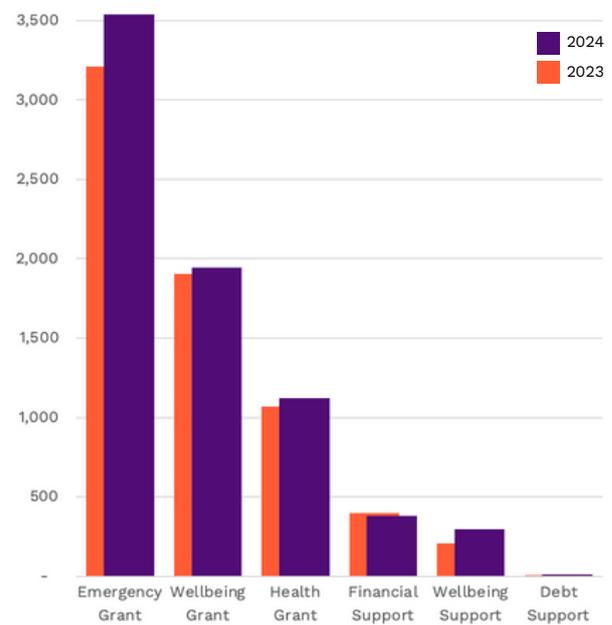
During our last Strategic period (2022-25), we saw enormous growth in the number of households supported, and grants given.

We are now walking alongside clergy in every one of the sixty-six dioceses we cover, and have introduced new grant categories in response to applicant feedback. The graphs below show some of our impact last year, and you can find out more in our 2024 Annual Report. You can request a printed copy from our team, or visit our website.

Spend, year on year



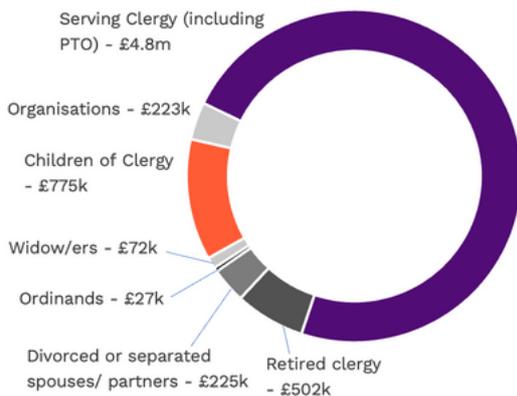
Grants provided, by type



Grants provided, by nation



Spend, by beneficiary type



# Our strategic objectives

## 1. We will re-focus our work on the households in greatest need.

The Trust was founded to help those in need, particularly with their finances or health. In recent years, too many clergy have been “in need” because of the stipend’s inability to keep pace with inflation. Thanks in part to the Trust’s advocacy, the stipend is set to improve, meaning that the Trust going forward will focus much of its efforts alongside those in the greatest need – whether relating to finances, ill health or challenging life events (such as bereavement, separation and new diagnoses). We will do so through a holistic and bespoke service, including grants, the Visiting Caseworker service, and a range of specialist support.

## 2. We will continue to support those who face unforeseen health, financial and wellbeing challenges.

Since our beginnings in the seventeenth century, grant-giving has been the heart of our offer, and will continue to be. Going forward, however, this will be part of a broader programme, including services and resources, to ensure that help is available throughout the “ministerial journey”, and in new ways. As a charity, we will refine our grant-giving in light of the improved clergy stipend and pensions in the Church of England, while continuing to offer independent, confidential support.

## 3. We will invest significantly in new self-service support, accessed through a new online platform.

Applicants have long told us that they would like more self-service support, covering a range of subjects, including personal development, dealing with difficult relationships, financial planning and mental health. The next three years will see a major expansion in this area, including courses and webinars, with a dedicated team building a free-to-all ‘Clergy Support Portal’ on our website, not least seeking to reach those who may not have come to the Trust before. Building on our existing Wellbeing Workshops, this will form part of a reinvigorated programme, enabling clergy to access the personal support they need, when they need it.

## 4. We will expand our research programme.

Building on recent projects on clergy wellbeing, we will invest further in research, with an initial focus during 2026 on clergy family life. We will partner with exceptional academics, charities and others to ensure that, as well as supporting individuals and families, we are investigating and addressing the root causes of the challenges they too often face.

## **5. We will continue to develop a strong, clear and compelling voice to advocate for those we serve.**

The Trust's data and advocacy were instrumental in bringing about changes to the clergy stipend, and the focus on clergy wellbeing in the 2026-28 Triennium Funding plans from the Church of England. We are proud of that contribution, and will build on it over coming years, ensuring that applicant voices are amplified. As part of this, we hope to develop our focus on retired clergy wellbeing in 2026, in partnership with other organisations. We will aim to bring systemic, sustained change to the Church's care of clergy and their families.

## **6. We will continue to professionalise and modernise our systems and structures.**

Our amazing staff are our greatest asset. In 2025, we launched new staff training provision, which we will expand over the coming years, ensuring that Clergy Support Trust continues to support its team, as well as the thousands of households applying for support. We will continue to ensure that our systems are fit-for-purpose and value-for-money, offering the best possible user experience. We will invest in the development of our exceptional team and workplace.

## **7. We will substantially change and develop our financial models.**

This will allow for growth and prudent stewardship with a new "total returns" accounting approach, the establishment of a notional Permanent Endowment, and the genesis of new income streams, through partnerships and conventional fundraising.

The Trust is fortunate to have significant financial assets, managed well and carefully over many centuries, which meant we were able to support clergy through the recent challenges of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and a low stipend. Whilst we will continue supporting those in need today, we want also to ensure that the charity is here for future generations, and we seek to achieve "balanced budgets" going forward, after many years of significant operational overspends.

Much work has gone into developing new financial structures to maximise our income for the 2026-28 Strategic period, while still investing securely for the future, and providing opportunities for our supporters today to be that lifeline for the clergy of tomorrow in times of need.

# Paul's story

**The Revd Paul Taylor and his wife, Jo live in Southport, Merseyside. The couple are long-standing applicants to Clergy Support Trust, receiving support during Paul's training, ministry and now retirement.**

Paul retired early due to mental health challenges, and later received a diagnosis of bipolar, a disorder which can cause extreme switches between high and low moods.

As well as supporting them with the common challenges that they share with many clergy families - including covering those unexpected car repair bills, and enabling them to take a cherished family holiday - we were privileged to help fund his stay at The Sheldon Retreat Centre.

A Christian community offering retreats to clergy and/or their spouses/partners, especially at times of stress, crisis, burnout or breakdown, we've provided Sheldon with over £200,000 in funding over the past four years, to enable over 400 week-long residential visits and one-to-one support sessions.

"If it hadn't been for the Trust, with the various grants that we've had from them, I'm not sure how we would have coped over the vast number of years. We're so grateful."

"When I retired and I was struggling, I was recommended Sheldon. I knew that I'd really benefit from it, but it was a lot of money, and unfortunately, the diocese couldn't pay for it. It can feel like you're writing a begging letter when you're approaching someone for financial support. Clergy Support Trust was different."

"It was only after a couple of years that I'd been retired that a psychiatrist and mental health team actually identified that what I was experiencing was bipolar. I thought 'Oh my goodness. That explains the past thirty odd years!'. Clergy Support Trust helped to fund my visit to Sheldon, and I really benefitted from it. The retreat was a great help in my coming-to-recovery phase, which was slow. It was really, really helpful. I just couldn't have done it without that grant."

Read more stories from our applicants



# Engaging with applicants and supporters

**During our 2022-25 Strategic period, the Trust visited most dioceses in England, where staff and trustees enjoyed fruitful, valuable conversations at clergy conferences, Bishops' leadership teams, and other key meetings. We also visited dioceses in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Those conversations helped us to shape our programme, to ensure we truly serve those in need in the best ways possible.**

We have worked hard to improve our online engagement, with a growing social media presence, improved applicant experience, and an easy-to-use website – which, from 2026, will also be home to our new self-service resources. Our calendar of events has grown too, with our first Christmas Carol Service taking place in 2024, and other events for supporters in the pipeline.

During our 2026-28 Strategic period, we want to engage better than ever before with all those with an interest in our work – existing applicants, new online users, supporters, stakeholders, the national Churches and dioceses. We hope to introduce new methods of accountability, to ensure that we are held to account by those our work impacts, and so our programme is led by that feedback.

## Share your feedback

We welcome feedback from our applicants, supporters and all those who engage with our work. If you'd like to tell us what you think, you can:

- Call us on 020 7799 3696
- Email us at [hello@clergysupport.org.uk](mailto:hello@clergysupport.org.uk)
- Write to us at 1 Dean Trench Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 3HB

Being able to share the stories of our applicants as case studies, like those of Becca and Paul in this Strategy Booklet, is invaluable. It helps us to add a human face to our work, and makes reaching out to the Trust for support much easier for first-time applicants. If you've received a grant or service from the Trust, and would like to volunteer to share your story with us for our website, print materials or in the media, please get in touch.



Pictured: The Revd Matt Way, his wife, Esther and their children, who received Adult and Young Carer Support from the Trust.

## 2026-28 Strategy: Going Upstream

# Support our work

**With your help, we can ensure that clergy households live well, serve boldly, and build flourishing communities — free from financial worry, ill health or isolation.**

For more than 350 years, supporters like you have enabled Clergy Support Trust to make a lasting difference in the lives of clergy and their families. Together, we can continue this remarkable heritage of care and impact.

Your gift, whatever its size, can make a real and immediate difference:

- **£10** could help provide school essentials for a family settling into a new parish
- **£20** could help cover an urgent car repair, keeping parish life running smoothly
- **£50** could fund wellbeing support, helping with recovery and a return to ministry
- **£100** could help a child with additional needs to thrive with specialist equipment



To give online, scan the QR code or visit [www.clergysupport.org.uk/donate](http://www.clergysupport.org.uk/donate)

## Major gifts

**The story of Clergy Support Trust is, at its heart, one of generosity. For centuries, philanthropists and partners have stood alongside clergy families, offering help when it was most needed — building the foundation of care that sustains our work today.**

By making a major gift, you can help write the next chapter of that story, ensuring clergy and their families continue to receive the grants, services and support they need to flourish. Whether you wish to fund a specific project, contribute to a campaign, or give unrestricted support, we'll work with you to ensure your gift reflects your values and creates lasting impact.

To explore a major gift partnership, please contact our fundraising team at [giving@clergysupport.org.uk](mailto:giving@clergysupport.org.uk)

**Holy God, in your Son, our great High Priest, you fashion a people for your own and bind us together as one body, one church.**

**We thank you for all who respond to your call to serve the Church, praying especially for all bishops, priests, deacons, and ordinands in training. May they be strengthened and empowered to administer the gifts of grace and to proclaim the word of life after the example of Jesus Christ.**

# Our Festival

**Clergy Support Trust host the oldest choral music event of its kind in the world, each year at St Paul's Cathedral, and we'll be celebrating 371 years of our Festival in 2026.**

We will welcome three cathedral choirs to perform together under the magnificent dome of the iconic church, as well as an engaging speaker to give the sermon. In recent years, these have included the Bishop of Chelmsford, Guli Francis-Dehqani, and the Bishop of Gloucester, Rachel Treweek.

The Service – which is free to attend – is followed by our Festival Dinner at Plaisterers' Hall, a chance for us to celebrate our achievements, to share our hopes for the future and to welcome our supporters under one roof, including many Masters, Clerks, Chaplains and other Members from the City of London's Livery community.

**Please save the date in your diary: Tuesday 12 May 2026**

The Service will begin at 5pm, and the Dinner will begin at 7pm. Tickets will be available from January. If you'd like to be among the first to hear when booking opens, join our Mailing List at [www.clergysupport.org.uk/email-me](http://www.clergysupport.org.uk/email-me)



# Clergy Support Trust

## Ways to access support

We are independent, inclusive and impartial. If you need us, we are here to help you and your family, with the challenges and joys of life and ministry.



0800 389 5192



[grants@clergysupport.org.uk](mailto:grants@clergysupport.org.uk)



[www.clergysupport.org.uk](http://www.clergysupport.org.uk)