

Funding Clergy Housing and Curates

The current housing policy sets out the agreed formula for supporting housing for clergy. For the first time St Matthew's is going to be having a curate and we may have two curates in the team for a maximum of one year. In addition, we are in the process of a major building project to provide two new clergy houses.

In this paper I am aiming both to outline how we will pay for housing curates and how we will manage the costs and liabilities associated with clergy housing. The current policy does not require any consultation of Church Committees with regard to the cost of clergy housing directly, but this is done through the agreement of the Parish Budget towards the end of the financial year.

I would like to add to the current policy by agreeing a principle around the funding of housing for curates. I would like to propose that we continue to divide up the cost of housing on the same basis, but that in future we agree that applications for the appointment of a curate should be agreed at least 12 months before a curate has been appointed so that the cost can be researched and the Church Committees can make an informed decision about the parish budget.

However, as we already agreed in principle to St Matthew's having a curate from June 2020, this paper outlines what will happen in the current circumstances, if the Bishop decides to place a parish curate at St Matthews while the curate placed at St Mary's is still in place.

The underlying principle behind this is that parish curates are parish assets and parish liabilities.

Current Risks and Liabilities

The Curacy of the Revd Yunghee Koh can finish any time between Easter 2020 and July 2021. We could therefore need to pay for the additional accommodation of a curate from June 2020 to July 2021 when the new team curate at St Matthews is appointed. The curate at St Matthew's will live with his family in the old Caretaker's House, within the grounds of St Matthew's CofE Primary School. The rent for this property is £1600 pcm. There is a possibility of the diocese providing some assistance with the housing costs (up to a maximum of £400 pcm), but this is not guaranteed, and now looks increasingly unlikely given the difficult financial position of the diocese following a reduction of £35,000 in the parish pledge from the Wimbledon Team.

After July 2021, we would rent out 9 Thornton Road and use the income to pay for the rent of the Caretaker's House at St Matthews School. The market rental value of 9 Thornton Road is higher than this (£1,760 pcm net when we were renting in 2016). This means that the maximum additional liability for a maximum of 13 months is £20,800. Per church this would be an additional £5,200 in total, £2,800 in 2020 and £2,400 in 2021. It will be less than this if the Revd Yunghee Koh moves before July 2021.

Impact of the Parish Housing Project

At the same time as this the Parish Housing Project will mean that if we decide to go ahead we will have to rent accommodation for the Associate Vicar of St Mary's. The cost of this is included in the budget for the Housing Project. If 9 Thornton Road becomes vacant before

we need to find alternative accommodation for the Associate Vicar of St Mary's, this would be the best option for housing him and his family until the new property is built. The money allocated for rent could then be used to pay for the rent for the Team Curate at St Matthew's. If, however, we needed to rent a property before 9 Thornton Road was available we would be able to rent out 9 Thornton Road at a commercial rate.

After the first year it will be cheaper to house a curate at St Matthew's than at 9 Thornton Road and so the costs for each of the churches will be lower.