

Income Survey: Explanatory notes

1. WHY do we conduct an Income Survey?

The income survey is important, as it forms a key part of the Parish Share calculation. Together with the attendance census this data is vital in determining how the total Parish Share requested by the diocese is allocated to each parish.

The survey responses are anonymous and confidential. There is no desire to know how much any particular person in a church earns. Conducting an Income Survey simply allows us to gain an understanding of the giving potential of one church relative to another so that the potentially more prosperous churches can support the less prosperous ones.

2. WHO should be asked to complete the income Survey?

All those who are aged 16 or over, and who have attended worship services at the church at least 12 times in the past 12 months. Where a member of the congregation attends more than one church, they should only complete the form at their 'home' church. You should **not** ask anyone attending anything other than a worship service to complete the form (for example, community groups using the parish room or church hall).

2a. Considerations for midweek 'school admissions' services

Many churches are now providing a shorter family-friendly midweek service so that children can attend and be considered for admission to Church of England schools.

In most cases the parents of these children also attend but do not become regular, contributing members of the church's congregation. Asking these parents to complete income survey forms could skew your parish's income survey result.

Therefore parishes may, if they wish, decide not to carry out the income survey at these particular midweek services.

3. HOW do we conduct the survey?

A fundamental aspect of the survey is that it is **confidential** and **anonymous**. A sealed box must be provided into which the congregation place completed survey forms. Please remind the congregation that the survey is anonymous and that no-one from the parish sees their form or the detailed results of the survey. However, if a member of the congregation asks for help in completing the form, then assistance should always be given. Congregants attending online during the survey period should not be asked to fill in a form as they will not be able to remain anonymous.

A minimum response rate of 70% of the previous year's average weekly attendance is needed for the survey to be considered representative. Previous experience has shown that more forms will be returned if the form is given out at the start of the service, an announcement is made during the notices, and the congregation are asked to complete the form and place it in the sealed box as they leave at the end of the service (rather than taking the form home, completing it, and bringing it back the following week).

4. WHEN do we conduct the survey?

Please complete the survey exercise between **Sunday 4 October and Sunday 25 October**. The unopened survey box(es) should be returned promptly at the request of your designated deanery representative.

5. WHERE do we deliver the unopened boxes?

Your Area Dean, Deanery Lay Chair or Deanery Treasurer will notify you of the arrangements in due course.