



# Diocese of Chester

The Church of England

The Bishop of Chester  
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*Dear Friends,*

## The Chester Clergy Family Trust

I am writing to all donors to the Trust, and to the clergy and PCCs in the Diocese, with a report on the first ten years of the life of the Trust. The Trust was incorporated in October 1999 with the following objects:

1. The relief of need, hardship and distress among the families of clergy and of licensed lay workers of the Church of England for the time being serving in the Diocese of Chester.
2. The promotion of the education of the families of clergy and of licensed lay workers to the Church of England for the time being serving in the Diocese of Chester and who are in financial need.
3. The promotion of the family life and recreation of the clergy and of licensed lay workers of the Church of England for the time being serving in the Diocese of Chester and their families and who are in financial need.

The initial fundraising produced nearly £200k, of which approximately £150k was requested by the donors to be regarded as equivalent to permanent capital (although the Trustees retain a discretion in this matter). The £50k of initial spendable income has been supplemented each year by further donations, together with income from the capital base. These have produced a total additional income of around £240k, averaging in recent years around £35k, on a gently declining trend.

Grants made to date by the Trustees total £253k, with 62 different families benefiting from 162 grants.

The majority of grants have been to assist clergy with the educational costs of their children, and in particular their University costs, and the cost of specialist tuition in music etc.. It was the withdrawal or curtailment of state grants for these purposes which had led to the founding of the Trust.

In special circumstances, grants have been made towards the cost of private education - for example, where a child has been badly bullied in the state sector, or where there has been a demonstrable educational need.

Other grants have mainly covered individual and varied cases of hardship.

Grants are 'means tested', in that account is taken of the capital resources available to a family, and additional family income over and above the stipend. However, the Trustees discount capital in the form of a retirement house, or set aside to provide such a house.

I know from the circumstances of the families which have benefited, and many appreciative letters, how much the grants have meant to those who have received the Trust's support. The Trust has settled down to play a vital role in the Diocese in support of clergy and their families.

We go forward with an income reserve to support future grants of around £30k p.a., but gently declining as the Trustees approve planned levels of grant which exceed the annual income. The Trustees wish to encourage past donors to renew or continue their support, and would wish the existence and needs of the Trust to be brought to the attention of everyone in the Diocese who has a special concern for the support and encouragement of our clergy. Donations, or enquiries, should be sent to me at Bishop's House.

Finally, I would wish to thank especially Mrs Gill Aldridge, our Clerk, for her highly efficient administration of the Trust, assisted on the financial side by Mr Michael Lyon FCA. Only 2% of our income has been spent on administration.

With my best wishes

+ Peter