

Clergy Expenses Policy
Holy Trinity Headington Quarry
November 2025

This policy is heavily based on the guidance from the central Church of England, especially the booklet 'Parochial expenses of the clergy 2017' which can be found here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/Parochial%20Expenses%20Guide%20-%202017.pdf>

which is to be read in conjunction with the relevant section of the Diocese of Oxford Clergy Handbook
<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/ministry/clergy-handbook/terms-of-service/#grants-and-expenses>

1. It is the policy of The PCC of Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry ('The PCC') that all reasonable and agreed clergy expenses should be met by the PCC.

2 Spending

Where the member of the clergy is an account signatory on the PCC accounts, it is the policy of The PCC that at least one other account signatory should authorise any spending outwith the limits specified in point 3 (see below). That account signatory should also be a member of the PCC.

All payments, wherever possible, should be made by the contractor or service provider raising an invoice, which is then paid through the treasurer / bookkeeper. Where this is not possible due to constraints of time or practicality (for example where goods are ordered through an online retailer) permission should be sought in advance in accordance with the spending policy (see point 3).

3. The PCC agrees that clergy may spend and claim back up to £100 in a single transaction without the prior approval of the PCC, up to a total of £500 in any one calendar month.

4. Records

Clergy must keep written record of all expenses claimed. This ensures transparency between the clergy and the PCC, and is invaluable evidence

should either party become the subject of an HMRC or Charity Commission investigation.

5. Definition of Expenses

The guidance states that *'Parochial expenses may be defined as all those running costs which clergy and PCCs agree are necessary for clergy to fulfil the duties of their post.'* Heating, lighting and house-related expenses come under a separate system. The PCC in this policy adopts this definition.

The PCC therefore agrees to reimburse such expenses which are *"wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of duties"*, the specifics of which detailed in the guidance.

6. Postage, Internet and Telephone

Postage costs will be reimbursed, where incurred.

Telephone and internet bills often come as a package these days, containing a fixed number of 'free calls', which may be included in a bundle with internet access. Internet service provision is similarly provided by property not by user. In practice, therefore, it is a difficult and arduous task to itemise the use of these.

The PCC therefore agrees to reimburse up to 50% of 'landline' and broadband charges. If a member of clergy considers a 'work' mobile or 'landline' (or 'digital home phone') to be necessary for ministry, the whole cost of this will be reimbursed by the PCC.

7. Computer Equipment

Where clergy are required buy a new computer of which they will remain the legal owner, but which will used extensively for official purposes throughout its functioning life, it is the policy of the PCC to meet 50% of the purchase cost, up to a mutually agreed figure. This will also apply to essential maintenance and upgrades of the machine. Most IT equipment has a lifetime of 5 years, after which its value is written off.

8. Visiting Clergy expenses

It is the joint responsibility of the PCC and incumbent to arrange suitable cover for services, e.g. when the incumbent is on holiday. For visiting clergy the PCC agrees to pay the appropriate fees and expenses at the normal clergy rate. (NB there are different for stipendary, non-stipendary and PTO clergy.) The latest fees can be downloaded from the Diocese of Oxford website.

9. Travel Expenses

These should be claimed at the current mileage rate (currently 45p / mile) for official journeys only. For specific examples of claimable journeys please see the guidance. Updates to mileage rates, should any occur, will be communicated via the Diocese.

10. Books and publications

The PCC agrees to reimburse only those books and publications that are to be used in services or given away as part of courses, baptism preparation sessions and so on. If books used for sermons are to be claimed as expenses, technically they would remain the property of the PCC; clergy may wish to retain them, in which case they should meet the purchase cost. However, books used in this way by the clergy can be written off against tax.

11. Claims

Claims for expenses should be made using a standard form provided by the treasurer, which contains the appropriate accounting codes.

All expenses should be claimed in full, and not viewed as part of clergy 'giving.' Clergy giving is however encouraged through the normal planned giving scheme, enabling gift aid to be recovered. This also gives a clearer sense of the actual cost of ministry which would otherwise be hidden.

If clergy find for any reason that the PCC is unable or unwilling to reimburse their legitimate expenses, they should consult their archdeacon or the diocesan office.

12. Annual Accounts

Clergy expenses will be clearly identified in the PCC accounts, presented at the APCM.

13. Taxation

It is the policy of the PCC not to provide clergy with taxable 'benefits in kind.' For more detailed tax information, see the guidance and incorporated links to HMRC guidance.

14. Conclusion

Clergy expenses should be claimed regularly and paid promptly.

The guidance states that its '*essential objective is to ensure that no one who ministers on behalf of the Church should be left to find any part of his/her proper expenses out of his/her own pocket.*'

It is the policy of the PCC to abide by this objective.

Approved at meeting of the PCC November 2025

Date of review: November 2026