



## THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL MAUNDY DISTRIBUTION AND GIFTS

The Distribution of the Royal Maundy Gifts is in two parts and each Recipient will receive two purses – one red and one white. The purses will be handed to Recipients on the south side of the Minster after the First Lesson and to those on the north side after the Second Lesson.

This year the Red Purse contains a £5 coin commemorating The King's 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday, which will take place in November, and a 50p coin commemorating the Windrush Generation. Both coins have been minted in 2023. Historically, the Red Purse contained an allowance of £3 for clothing, £1.50 in lieu of provisions and £1 for the redemption of the Sovereign's gown.

The White Purse contains uniquely minted Maundy Money. This takes the form of one, two, three and four silver penny pieces, the sum of which equals the number of years the Monarch's age. This year 74 pennies worth of pieces will be distributed.

Maundy Money started with an updated issue of hammered coinage (attributed to Charles II) in 1662. The first full set was issued in 1670. The coins were struck in sterling silver (of 925 millesimal fineness) until the general change in 1920 to silver of 500 millesimal fineness. The sterling standard was resumed in 1946, and in 1971 when the UK currency was decimalised, the face values were raised from old to new pence.

2023 marks His Majesty The King's first distribution of Royal Maundy Gifts as Sovereign.