

## **Money Matters Treasurers Newsletter**

**February 2019**

### **In this issue:**

- ✓ **Fraud Awareness Update (Appendix 1)**
  - ✓ **Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme Deadline for 2016/17 Tax Year**
  - ✓ **Managing Financial Accounts During a Treasurer Vacancy**
  - ✓ **Card Reader Transaction Charges**
  - ✓ **New Legacies (Wills) Leaflet for Parishes**
  - ✓ **BMO Fees for Weddings and Funerals**
  - ✓ **Ecclesiastical Insurance's 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Promotion**
  - ✓ **Maintenance Booker: New National Church Maintenance Scheme**
  - ✓ **Data Developments & Stewardship Training Days**
- 

### **Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme (GASDS) Deadline for 2016/17 Tax Year**

The deadline for claiming against any GASDS\* qualifying cash gifts from the 2016/17 tax year is **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019**. HMRC allows GASDS claims for the preceding two tax years only (unlike Gift Aid which is four tax years).

Both GASDS and Gift Aid run on a tax year basis (6<sup>th</sup> April to the following 5<sup>th</sup> April). If you have any unclaimed gifts from the 2016/17 year you must claim them now.

\*GASDS allows a church to claim on anonymous cash and contactless donations of up to £20 per gift. Churches and charities can claim up to £2,000 for each tax year under this scheme, subject to various criteria (full details of which can be found [here](#)).

### **Managing Financial Accounts During a Treasurer Vacancy**

As per the Church Representation Rules (Appendix II, Rule [13] 1.e.i) if a church has a vacancy for a treasurer then responsibility for managing the finances falls to the churchwardens. This includes arranging for the completion of all bookkeeping and the production of accounts and reports.

## Card Reader Transaction Charges

Please be aware that where card readers charge a % rate per transaction this cannot be passed on to donors or customers; it is against the law to charge extra to customers wishing to pay by card. This applies to all transactions put through a card reader using contactless or Chip & PIN.

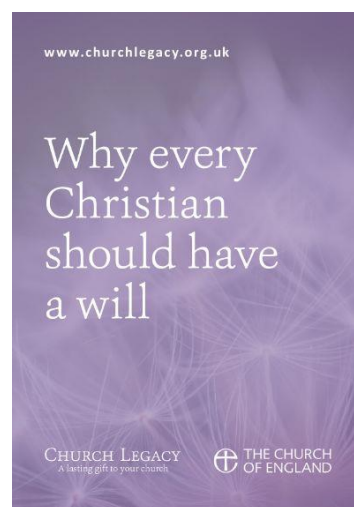
NB Gift Aid and GASDS can be claimed on the full amount of the donation without having to subtract the transaction charge.

## New Legacies (Wills) Leaflet for Parishes

For nearly 500 years the Church of England has encouraged people to make a Will. Everyone knows it's a good idea, but for many of us it's one of those things we never quite get around to doing, and there's always a reason for putting it off.

To motivate Christians to make a will in 2019 the National Church have created a small and succinct A6 leaflet for parishes to use as part of a wider legacy campaign, or with Baptism and Marriage couples.

You can [download](#) and/or order printed copies from the Parish Resources [website](#).



## BMOs: Statutory Fees for Weddings and Funerals

For worshipping communities authorised by a BMO the foundational document should normally make provision about what types of services may be conducted in the community's usual premises. If this is not a church building, then it probably will not be licensed for marriages.

Where a service is taken by a BMO or other non-parish based worshipping community which includes a statutory fee (including weddings and funerals – a full list can be found [here](#)) the fees belong to the DBF and the PCC of the parish in which the service takes place (even if the service is in the BMO's own building).\*

PCCs and BMOs may negotiate a local arrangement for the apportionment of the parish share of the fee. The DBF portion belongs to the London Diocesan Fund and a [parish return](#) must be completed by the BMO.

\* This does not include weddings taken by Special Licence.

## Ecclesiastical Insurance's 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Promotion



Following the success of their 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary promotion [Ecclesiastical Insurance](#) have decided to extend the offer to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. When a private individual takes out [Home Insurance](#) through Ecclesiastical Insurance using the code TRUST130, the insurer will send a £130 donation to the church of their choice. ([T&Cs apply](#)).



## Maintenance Booker: New National Church Maintenance Scheme

A new national church maintenance scheme called [Maintenance Booker](#) has been launched. It is supported by the [National Churches Trust](#) and is designed to help keep churches in good repair.



They offer services including:

- gutter clearance and repairs
- lightning protection inspections
- tree surveys and maintenance
- asbestos surveys and removal.

NB The Diocese has an internal gutter maintenance scheme, details of which can be found [here](#).

## Data Developments & Stewardship Training Days



[Data Developments](#) have announced the following software [training days](#) in Heathrow:

Finance Coordinator Start-Up: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May

Finance Coordinator Running: Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May

Donations Coordinator: Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May

[Stewardship](#) are running a one day course on *Capital Fundraising for Churches – How to Plan and Deliver a Successful Appeal*. The course will take place between 10am and 4pm on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April and you can find out more [here](#).



## Contact Details for the Area Finance Advisers

<b>Mary Spredbury</b>	020 7932 1245	for Kensington and Two Cities
<b>Theresa Moses</b>	020 7932 1247	for Stepney
<b>Julie Churchyard</b>	020 3837 5015	for Edmonton
<b>Joshua Townson</b>	020 3837 5014	for Willesden

email: [firstname.lastname@london.anglican.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@london.anglican.org)

## **Appendix 1: Fraud Awareness Update**

Below is a round up of alerts that have appeared in previous additions of Money Matters. Fraud is an ever-present danger for all charities both from outside and from within.

There is some very helpful guidance on the [Charity Commission website](#) and the Charity Commission [guidelines on internal controls](#) can be useful for parishes to help ensure that proper procedures are in place.

NB: Ensuring two people are involved in the authorising of every payment will help to spot fraudulent payment requests as well as avoid errors.

### **CEO Fraud: Government Warning for Charities**

A warning has been issued by the government concerning CEO fraud. This is where a third party pretends to be a senior trustee and requests an unusual financial transaction (usually via email). An example for a church would be someone pretending to be the vicar. You should continue to maintain your vigilance to protect against fraud.

In particular you should take extra care when a PCC Member (e.g. treasurer, vicar or churchwarden) requests an unexpected transfer of money. Additionally you should always double check in person when you are emailed notifying an unexpected change of payment details for employees or contractors.

The government warning can be read [here](#). Additionally [Action Fraud](#) has a page which highlights some of the areas of fraud that charities are vulnerable to.

### **Unusual Offers of Money or Gifts to Parishes**

Donations are an important source of income for parish churches and the generosity of our donors allows us to build God's Kingdom in London. Having said that we always encourage caution when offered large, unsolicited gifts of money or other types of financial benefit from unknown people. Where an offer appears too good to be true or something seems unusual please think carefully about the appropriateness of accepting it. There have been repeated offers to parishes within the Diocese of thousands of pounds worth of gift vouchers from an unknown man purporting to want to reward generous givers to Church of England parishes. At present we are not convinced of the genuine nature of these proposals; please exercise extreme caution if you are approached with a similar offer.

## **Cyber Security**

As technology evolves there are ongoing risks associated with using computers. The risks involved (including the risk of being hacked, acting on a fraudulent instruction etc.) should be included in your annual risk management process. At the very least there should be up to date anti-virus and firewall software on any PC used for church purposes, as well as detailed written procedures in place for payments. If you are in any doubt about the validity of a payment instruction or a change of bank details contact the purported sender using the existing contact details – if in doubt never just reply directly to the e-mail.

## **Fraudulent gas bill**

A reminder to check invoices carefully – a church in the City received a bill that appeared to come from British Gas, but which was a fraudulent bill. If you receive unexpected invoices or ones which appear in any way different from your usual ones then it's wise to investigate further before paying.

## **Fraudulent standing orders**

Please do remain vigilant in checking your PCC bank statement each month and reconciling all items to your records. We have recently seen an attempted fraud where copied signatures were used to set up a Standing Order to take money from a PCC's account in favour of a fake insurance company.