

Parish Stewardship Promoters

It is clear, from wide experience, that the best intentions for initiation and regular renewal of Christian Stewardship will not be turned into reality unless it is clear who has responsibility for promoting it within the Parish.

With that in mind, it is recommended that each parish identifies an individual and/or team with principal responsibility for promoting financial (and possibly all) stewardship, with particular attention to regular planned giving. A suggested title for this role is Parish Stewardship Promoter.

Almost all of our parishes already have a Gift Aid Secretary/Stewardship Recorder. That role may already include responsibility for promoting stewardship along the lines suggested in this guide. Alternatively, it may be a more passive role, perhaps restricted to recording income and administering recovery of tax on Gift Aided donations.

Depending on existing circumstances, possible options for the recruitment and positioning of the Parish Stewardship Promoters (PSPs) will include:

- (i) Broadening the role of the existing Gift Aid Secretary (GAS)
- (ii) Recruitment of a new PSP to work in tandem with the Gift Aid Secretary
- (iii) Leadership of the Stewardship Group, to assume the role of PSP

In all cases, close liaison between the PSP/GAS and the Treasurer are vital.

The following section sets out how the key tasks, contained in financial management and stewardship, might be shared in the case of

- 3 person team (Treasurer, Gift Aid Secretary and PSP)
- 2 person team (Treasurer and PSP)

Parish Stewardship Promoters (PSPs)

Key tasks

The key elements of the PSP role are likely to include:

- Promoting Christian giving and practical stewardship, Gift Aid administration
- Helping clergy, readers and home group leaders to teach about stewardship
- Organising the annual pledge renewal process within the parish/benefice
- Encouraging every member to use their 'time and talents' ministry gifts effectively
- Communicating financial information to the wider church membership
- Ensuring the church says *Thank you* to its members once a year
- Helping casual supporters (e.g. Friends, visitors) to make tax-effective donations)
- Preparing an annual Christian giving progress report for the PCC
- Participating in the diocesan Stewardship network

Outline person specification

Successful PSPs are likely to exhibit most of the following characteristics:

- ✓ Enthusiastic and able to motivate others to give back to God
- ✓ Sensitive to individuals, and will not pressurise them into over-commitment
- ✓ Totally respectful of confidentiality about church members personal details
- ✓ Have prayerfully reviewed their own giving, and are happy with it
- ✓ Well organised, used to dealing with lists, computers etc
- ✓ Creative and able to organise local publicity and displays, possibly with a background in sales or marketing
- ✓ Understand that real progress will only be made by encouraging regular, committed and generous giving and that this takes years to achieve

Roles and Responsibilities

Typically, PSPs will work alongside the PCC Treasurer and Gift Aid Officer. Typically, the various tasks might be distributed between two or three individuals on the following lines:

Task	3 person team	2 person team
Responsible for book-keeping and regular financial updates to the PCC	T	T
Preparation of annual report and accounts, Working with auditor or independent examiner	T	T
Maintaining appropriate cash management and Banking arrangements and controls	T	T
Developing an annual budget, and reporting Against this to the PCC	T	T
Communicating the budget to the wider church In narrative form	PSP & T	T
Encouraging teaching of Christian giving and Wider stewardship (e.g. time and talents)	PSP	PSP
Promoting giving and stewardship through Articles, posters, displays, home groups etc	PSP	PSP
Organising annual renewals of planned giving pledges	PSP	PSP
Helping to organise fundraising for one-off appeals	PSP	PSP
Low-key drip feed promotion of wills and legacies	PSP	PSP
Encouraging tax-efficient giving (Gift Aid, Shares, legacies etc)	PSP & GA	PSP
Talking to individual church members, Answering questions etc	PSP & GA	PSP
Administering the Gift Aid scheme, keeping records, making regular tax claims	GA	PSP
Ensuring all planned givers are thanked at least Once a year	GA	PSP

T = Treasurer GA = Gift Aid Secretary PSP Parish Stewardship Promoter

Where there are only 2 people, the PSP and GA roles have been combined under one heading. Different allocations of specific tasks are, of course, possible.

Parish Stewardship - A Health Check

These are the signs which are typically displayed by parishes which have a healthy and effective approach to stewardship.

Each parish is invited to consider how many boxes it can honestly tick. The compilation of PCC members' responses is a good way to do this.

- There is a regular pattern of prayer for financial resources
- There is a regular approach to teaching and preaching about stewardship of money and of our 'time and talents'
- There is an individual or group responsible for promoting stewardship within the parish
- There is an annual budgetary process connected with a renewal of planned giving needs
- Requests for money are led by the parish vision and future plans, rather than 'what can we afford?'
- Planned givers receive regular letters of thanks for their contributions
- The parish gives away 10% or more of its general funds to external organisations
- The profile and quantum of planned giving is reviewed regularly by the PCC
- Full PFP or other stewardship campaigns occur regularly (not less than 5 yearly)
- All PCC members are planned givers (the Gift Aid Secretary can advise)

Parish Score

This health check can help the PCC to assess the effectiveness of its approach to stewardship and to identify any specific areas for attention.