



## Treasurer Update 27/05/20

(incorporating notes from the Deanery Treasurers' Meeting held 06/05/20)

### 1 Common Fund Update

- The position at 30 April 2020 is that we are (only) 0.2% behind the same time last year, which is an amazing response
- We do not underestimate the challenges being faced by PCC's locally
- Bishop Robert, Giles Frampton and Neil Williams had sent a letter to all Treasurers at the end of March acknowledging the challenges, but asking people to keep making contributions as best they are able and to keep us informed if not
- Bishop Robert has recorded a video to say a thank you to treasurers.

### 2 Diocesan Finance Update

- The Finance Team is in conversation each month with all those PCC's that contribute via direct debit, to check we can still request the usual amount. We have seen a 7% drop for May. Standing orders are about 15% down. We are modelling a possible 25% shortfall in 2020, but it is still too early to know.
- We will be sending an email to all treasurers in June, asking for information on their income for the period January – June 2020 (and the comparator for 2019). This will help us formulate a strategy for any shortfalls in 2020. The same process will be repeated at the end of September.
- The request for participant numbers would normally go out to PCC's around now. We are proposing to use last year's number, but ask people to let us know if that needs to change.
- It will not be possible to set the 2021 budget in the normal way, so we are likely to go down the interim budget route

### 3 Parish Giving Scheme Update

- The Parish Giving Scheme has re-opened and they are signing up donors over the telephone: <https://parishgiving.org.uk/register/>. All that is needed is the Parish Code.
- The website A Church Near You will be introducing the option to have a donate button on each church's page.

- GASDS – Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme. GASDS allows parishes to claim 25% back from HMRC on small cash and contactless donations. A parish can claim on gifts totalling up to £8,000, so they could get an extra £2,000. Each gift has to be £30 or less. Also, you can only claim up to ten times the amount of Gift Aided donations you have received. For example, if a parish received £50 of Gift Aided donations, they could claim on £500 of GASDS donations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/claim-gift-aid/small-donations-scheme> or contact Stephen Mitchell ([stephen.mitchell@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:stephen.mitchell@exeter.anglican.org)).
- During the COVID 19 crisis HMRC have said they will accept for GASDS weekly envelopes containing £30 or less given when the churches re-open. Alternatively, one envelope could contain all the donations if it also contained a declaration which clearly set out how much is being donated for each date. This is the information the Diocese was sent by the Church’s Legislation Advisory Service:
  - “Many CLAS members contacted us expressing concerns at financial pressures facing churches, as traditional income streams from lettings and face-to-face fundraising have dried up due to COVID-19.
  - In particular, concerns were raised about the operation of the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme during the coronavirus crisis, given that many eligible cash donations could be lost. Donors that would ordinarily make small donations each week were asking if they could keep aside the individual donations that they would normally give and make them separately once the crisis is over, above the standard £30 limit.
  - In a letter to HMRC, CLAS called for temporary flexibility in the operation of the GASDS scheme, by accepting multiple cash donations of £30 or under that have been saved up during the crisis.
  - HMRC officials have now responded: *“In respect of GASDS, guidance on the eligibility for donations for inclusion in this scheme is clear in stating that claims can only be made on cash donations of £30 or less; and contactless card donations of £30 or less collected on or after 6 April 2019. The decision over what constitutes an eligible donation is one for the church/charity to make for themselves, rather than for HMRC, but the conditions for something to be considered a ‘small donation’ are clearly set out in legislation. **Where it is the case, for example, of separate donations being given in a single envelope, then if the church/charity official is happy these are clearly separate ‘small donations’ (and clearly stated as such) then they will be eligible for GASDS, as is the case where separate envelopes are used”**.*
  - HMRC appear to be happy for church treasurers to assess whether these are a series of separate donations and, if so, make a claim accordingly. This is a welcome development. Churches will want to think about any practical steps they can introduce and how to communicate this to regular givers. Please feel free to share this update within your networks.”

#### **4 Grants**

There may be an opportunity for Church Halls to receive a Small Businesses Grant. To be eligible for the grant, they should be in receipt of a Non Domestic Business Rate bill – even if the bill has been reduced to zero. Churches with charity shops would be likely to qualify for a claim. Parishes that believe they may be eligible should contact their local Council.

#### **5 Insurance**

As they understand the financial pressures that parishes may be facing, Ecclesiastical Insurance is offering:

- To help with cashflow, payment can be made as twelve interest free instalments via direct debit rather than one upfront payment
- Quotes for increased excesses (for new and existing policies) to reduce the premiums payable

#### **6 Energy Footprint Tool**

There is now an Energy Footprint Tool for parishes to complete on the Parish Returns website. <https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org/> This will help to identify their carbon footprint as well as energy efficiency during 2019.

#### **7 MyGiving**

To help churches during this challenging time Data Developments is offering its donation software MyGiving free of charge with free training to help Treasurers set up on line donations on their websites. More information can be found at [www.acat.uk.com/news/data-developments-launches-major-free-initiative-to-help-church-treasurers-through-covid-19-crisis/](http://www.acat.uk.com/news/data-developments-launches-major-free-initiative-to-help-church-treasurers-through-covid-19-crisis/)

#### **8 Webinars about Online Giving**

The national church is offering three more webinars about online giving [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/5015888640699/WN\\_rutsVUNwQ3-O-BNJhARLrA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/5015888640699/WN_rutsVUNwQ3-O-BNJhARLrA)

Topic: **Receiving online donations**

How can we encourage people to give financially to the church during this time?

June 1, 12 pm

June 10, 10 am

June 18, 4 pm

## 9 Revised Timetable for Submission of Accounts

The **deadline for holding the APCM** has now been extended from 31<sup>st</sup> May to **31<sup>st</sup> October 2020**. Under Church Representation Rules accounts must then be sent within 28 days of holding the APCM. So the scenarios are:

- If a PCC has already held the APCM before the shut down → the accounts should be submitted within 28 days of the APCM as normal (via email)
- If a PCC has already approved their accounts but not yet held the APCM → There is no reason that the accounts cannot be submitted now even though the deadline is 28 days after the APCM
- If a PCC is yet to approve their accounts → There is no reason the accounts can't be submitted once they have been approved even though the deadline is 28 days after the APCM
- If a PCC is a registered charity → the submission deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020