

# The Parish Giving Scheme

## Frequently Asked Questions



### **What is the point of PGS?**

PGS helps us in Liverpool Diocese to provide to donors an automatic direct-debit based systems, the preferred method of giving to the church.

### **How does PGS help donors?**

PGS offers donors a convenient, elegant and secure method of making their regular donations to their local church by Direct Debit. In due course, it will be available online as well. Donors may have their donation automatically uplifted by inflation each year, if they so choose. Also, donors can remain anonymous to their local churches if they prefer.

### **Are some donors scared of Direct Debits?**

Yes – and we need to overcome this fear! Donors are protected by the Direct Debit Guarantee which makes it a very safe system, safer than cash and Standing Orders. More information is available on the website [www.directdebit.co.uk](http://www.directdebit.co.uk) or [www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk) (search for 'direct debit').

### **So why are we so keen to promote PGS in this diocese?**

Because it helps local Treasurers and/or Giving Officers with administration and saves them time and, through them, it benefits the local churches in Liverpool Diocese by addressing static levels of giving.

### **How does it help PCC Treasurers?**

PGS remits money directly to the local church's bank account on the 10th of each month. The amount remitted is the total for all the PGS donors in the congregation, already uplifted by Gift Aid where appropriate. The Treasurer receives a monthly report showing names and amounts for each donation, except where the donor has chosen to remain anonymous.

### **How else does it help local churches?**

As more and more donors switch to the PGS, it will save many hours of administrative time at local church level. Donations are much easier for the Treasurer (or Giving Officer) to reconcile than standing orders or cash. It will improve cash flow, since Gift Aid is added each month, so there's no need to wait for the reclaim. Furthermore, with the inflationary uplift added to each gift unless the donor chooses otherwise the church receipts should increase year on year.

### **What measure of inflation is used?**

The system applies the most recently published January RPI on the anniversary of the donor's gift through PGS. It only applies this increase to those donors who have agreed to the increase on the Gift Form. The majority of donors in the participating dioceses have increased their giving annually by inflation.

## Why is inflation so important?

Because, one of the biggest problems faced by churches is that of 'static giving'. If giving had kept track with inflation since the year 2000, look at the difference it would have made:

Year	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gift Amount (example)	£40.00	£45.35	£52.32	£54.98	£57.14	£59.02

## Who operates the PGS?

The scheme was devised by the Diocese of Gloucester. They have been running it since 2010, so it is well 'bedded in'. They were managing and operating PGS initially, but they have transferred it into a UK charity whose trustees are from the participating dioceses. The PGS was initially adopted by the dioceses of Chichester and Winchester with Liverpool, Exeter, Guildford, Truro, and Portsmouth in first phase of national roll out. Other diocese will be joining the venture on a phased basis to ensure quality of service.

## What material is being provided?

A full range of well-presented material is being made available to churches in our diocese. This includes an Implementation Handbook for churches (A4 format), leaflets for PCC members and church members and gift forms (Direct Debit mandates) & tokens for those who are ready to sign up.

## How much will it cost us?

The Diocese of Liverpool is paying the set up costs of participating in a scheme. There are NO additional costs to a participating parish in Liverpool Diocese.

## How long does it take for the money to come through?

Money is collected from donors on the 1st of each month, and remitted to PCC bank accounts on the 10th of each month – or the subsequent working day.

## What are the key strong points of the Parish Giving Scheme?

- An efficient Diocesan system offered for the benefit of all our local churches
- Its positive effect on Parish cash flow
- Easier to reconcile than standing orders or cash donations
- Most donors are inclined to automatically uplift the donation each year (option to opt out on gift form)
- Reduces the administrative and time burden on Treasurers and/or Giving Officer

## What do PGS donors do as the bag or plate is passed round on a Sunday?

We can provide scheme participants with PGS tokens (as illustrated in header on first page) which can be placed on the plate or in the collection bag. This indicates that they participate in PGS and give regularly to their church, it also enables them to express an act of offering during the course of Sunday worship.

## What's the next step?

Local churches need to register for PGS. Full details are given in an Implementation handbook which can be requested from the Cath Gaskell in the Resources Team at St James' House:

Ring 0151 705 2180 or email [resources.team@liverpool.anglican.org](mailto:resources.team@liverpool.anglican.org)