

Funding Guide 16

Holding a Fundraising Event



A fundraising event could take a variety of forms but must be cheerful and positive in atmosphere. Short speeches (maximum five minutes) may be made setting out the nature of the appeal. It can be good to incorporate the event into a special service or a major festival, or perhaps a stewardship supper or another annual event which already attracts a good turn out. Certainly refreshments and a festival atmosphere are important.

It is essential to have fundraising events, not only to raise the funds required, but also to create a local buzz. There are three main reasons why you should consider running an annual fundraising event.

1. Communication

An event allows the church to explain their current activities including mission and outreach, and why the church is important to the local community.

2. Saying Thank you

An event is a good opportunity to thank people and volunteers for the support they have already shown. The event is not only about giving, but acknowledging and celebrating the life of the church in the community.

3. Gathering Together

Gathering together can build confidence in the church's ability to deliver a successful project, build relationships and create conversations.

Preparation

In anticipation of the event, you will need to distribute letters and leaflets to the local community explaining what the event is and why you're holding it. The brochure should include information on the event including date, time and RSVP (if required).

You should also include a response form and envelope in the form of an RSVP, but also to hold a donation for those unable to attend the event. Producing a simple brochure isn't difficult – templates are provided in Word or in Publisher – if necessary, you may know someone with the skills to help produce this.

Marketing

It is extremely important to spend time planning how you will promote your event. Advertising can be expensive, but there are often lots of cheap or free ways of getting coverage in the media. Produce a simple one page press release for the event, with supporting materials tying the event into your church activities. The press release should stick to the main points, and include a quote or two. You should include contact details so that they can arrange to come and take pictures or do an interview.

Make sure every marketing and promotional avenue is covered; this might include putting information on:

Church Website – Make sure your website is up to date and the event is clearly signposted with information on the activity and how to donate. You could even change the front page to advertise in the lead up to the event.

Your Contact the local press - Newspapers are keen to feature local events, send them your press release and any supporting materials.

Contact local radio for a live interview – Local radio enjoy featuring community events, particularly if you have an alternative fundraising activity alongside the event (e.g. vicar sleeps on roof, to raise money to fix the roof)

Social Media – use social media to get the message out to people who may not hear from your usual routes of communication.

Marketing Materials – Posters, Banners, Newspapers, Flyers, Leaflets, put them up everywhere and anywhere and in plenty of time in advance. Ask local shops and cafes if they can display your poster and make sure everyone knows happening at the event as well as the event details.

Checklist

1. Have plenty of visible information about the project (posters, leaflets, flyers, banners) as well as enthusiastic, energetic volunteers on hand to explain why the fundraising of this event is so important.
2. Make sure the event is well signposted and looks appealing enough to drum up interest from off the street. Use lots of active, colourful, diverse photographs of people and places.
3. Make it easy to give! Have opportunities to donate everywhere, remember if you don't ask you don't get.
4. Where there is the opportunity to donate, ensure there is the opportunity to Gift Aid it.
5. Have plenty of refreshments available (for sale).
6. Make sure there's a lot for people to do and see during their visit.