

Community fundraising ideas compiled at the January 2024 Greenshoots Network get-together.

Fundraising activities

Cake / plant / produce stalls. NB a top tip is not putting prices on things when you have stalls or 'sell' tickets, you can often raise more asking for donations as people are usually generous.

Big Breakfast in village/church hall

Strawberry / cream teas

Cheese and Wine evenings

Quizzes in the local pub or village hall

Sponsor a shingle / tile / brick campaign.

1000 snowdrops in the green donated and people invited to sponsor them to be planted on the bank around the churchyard in commemoration / celebration of whatever the sponsor wished, all recorded in a beautiful memory book kept in the church. This raised a lot of funds.

Church/Bell Tower tea towels and mugs etc. printed and sold.

Locals able to sponsor the church tower to be floodlit and/or have the flag flown in commemoration or celebration of something and advertise the reason on the noticeboard/in a local newsletter.

A local business in return for advertising, offered a £50 donation per new insurance policy set up which quoted a particular code.

Open Gardens Days (not necessarily official National Gardens Scheme ones). Funds can be raised from ticket/garden route map sales, plant sales, tea and coffee/ice cream at church/hall.

Safari Suppers - different courses at different homes around the village. Good at drawing in people from village not just congregation. Need dry weather ideally. Take sign-ups so know numbers and how many hosts needed. Charge ~£15 per head. Four course dinner. Discount for hosts. Need a host for each ~8-10 people, per course. Everyone ends back at church/hall for coffee.

Sponsored Walks - either undertaken all together with lunch provided at one stop, or people can pledge to walk a total no. of miles but over time, a mile or two a day and record the total, this enables less-able people to join in.

Tea and cake/ice cream sales at the church when other village events are on.

Arrange to get the money raised by a certain activity matched by the PCC or a major donor.

Raffles

On Zoom in lockdown, then in the local pub, or village hall during a 2 hour drop in with donated mulled wine and mince pies available for donations, or people could bring their own extra drinks.

Electronic raffle, deliver leaflets to homes, have collection points for cash or cheques. Participants are emailed their numbers, and the winners are picked with a random number generator. Has been found easier than selling raffle tickets door to door, except still need leaflet delivery. Found different people bought tickets that would have bought from neighbours selling them.

Getting prizes donated helps. Sold door to door and put a book of tickets in every village newsletter to each home.

NB Just Giving and Parish Giving do not allow use for raffles.

For any raffle you have to apply for a gaming licence through District Council ~£40 first year then ~£20 to renew.

Some fundraisers run a “200/100/50 Club” lottery. People join and pay in each month; a proportion goes to a monthly prize pot and the rest to the fund. Means no need to find raffle prizes.

General tips

Local pubs and cafés can be key in networking and finding people with useful skills e.g. writing grant applications etc.

Collecting money at an event for more than one cause can increase the reach and numbers that attend/join in, but you do then share the funds raised.

Try not to spread your fundraising over too long a period of donor fatigue starts to kick in. Change the events too, found raffle entries decline on regular annual repeating.

Enabling giving

Parish Giving site for donations and Gift Aid registration with QR code cards in pews, by wall safes and collection boxes.

Just Giving pages

Can claim [Small Donations Gift Aid](#) on donations etc. which you can't do on sold items and event tickets.

Publicity

Village newsletters

Local Facebook groups

Great Bourton have an artist in the village designs all the posters which gives a feeling of branding.

Foster good relationships with local Primary School and invite the school to events.

Raising awareness and a feeling of ownership of the project

For Great Bourton the Churchyard Wildlife Days are not organised as fundraisers but aim to help the people of the village feel ownership of the church and churchyard. To feel able to walk through the churchyard and appreciate it, not just walk past it. Consequently, this has helped the church bell tower fundraising feel more relevant to locals who don't attend the church. Tea and cake provision at the church during the Wildlife Days do raise money for the church.

Grant applications

Listed Places of Worship offer grant schemes for recouping VAT. You do have to raise the funds to pay it but then can claim it back, so maybe able to borrow from PCC etc. for a time.

Look for experienced volunteers in the village to do the bid writing and apply to Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust and Garfield Weston Foundation etc.

It is important to check the grant Terms and Conditions are manageable. Some of the grants had very complex Ts & Cs which would have needed them to raise an extra £30k to pay for a quantity surveyor to meet them.

By the time Great Bourton reached 98% of the initial quote for the works they found the price had gone up by £100k due to covid supply chain problems causing materials to be more expensive. They re-scoped the project to do all they could do more efficiently, minimise scaffolding hire time etc. and managed to reduce the extra cost, but still had to raise some more funds. Advice to keep updating donors on progress.