

I'm interested in recommending someone for a gift Q&A

Who can recommend someone? Please see the page asking you about yourself. If you are a well-known public servant, community figure or known to the church then we're likely to be able to take your recommendation and consider it.

What is your aim over the next few months? Our aim is to provide financial support to the extent of our resources in the next few months, after careful consideration of applications. We see ourselves as a 'pipeline'; some people have money and are okay; we are in a position in the Godalming community to know of some quite profound need. It is that simple.

How confidential and independent are you? The CFSF is a confidential restricted fund of Busbridge PCC. We are part of the local church. We were founded by the church but the CFSF Stewards do not share information with the church trustees regarding details of our activities such as who receives funds or gives donations nor the breakdown of amounts given to individuals. We preserve confidentiality and abide by Charity Commission rules.

When was the CFSF formed? It has existed for over 30 years. We've been a small, local grant giving fund for all that time. Previous Stewards have included those in business, the medical profession and a former senior diplomat. We've got a good track record. We know what we are doing.

Why haven't I heard of you? Because, as a church group, we've preferred to show love and care quietly. This way people are more likely to accept a gift-grant.

Why are you being more public now? Because, though we have a network of people looking out for local need, we think there is going to be more and it will not be public; people are private. We're asking for your help to look out for people in real financial need. We are also wanting to allow more people to give.

Who decides where my donation goes? There are four Stewards who are appointed by the church (PCC). The CFSF Stewards operate independently of the church (PCC) but are accountable to the PCC for its actions to ensure transparency of decision making. The CFSF accounts are independently audited annually as part of the PCC accounts and are reported (ensuring confidentiality for those receiving grants) to the Charity Commission. Rev Simon Taylor (Chair), Rev Simon Willetts (Vice Chair), Rev David Preece, Mrs Jill Johnston (Secretary and Treasurer). Only the Stewards see information which you provide. Names, identifying information or amounts given to individuals are never shared with anyone else. The exception is if the external charity auditors require clarifying information. In this case the information is handled confidentially and under Charity Commission Regulations. Treasury support is also provided by Mr Martin Lambert.

How do you decide what to give and to whom? We use the information that you provide. We do not contact those you are recommending. We operate on a basis of trust in you and your

judgement and this is why we are careful about who we take recommendations from. We combine this with known needs and future needs and criteria for levels and types of support that have worked well for a long time. Sometimes the gift is more about showing love and care and that someone is not forgotten. Sometimes the person you recommend has already received something recently and we try not to 'repeat gift' within 12 months. Sometimes there is a specific need which we have help towards. We can rarely resolve a need completely.

I'm embarrassed to say it, but someone has asked me to ask for a gift? Is this ok? We'd prefer it if this did not happen but we recognise that there are some desperate situations. Please let us know if someone asks you to 'ask'. This way you do not suffer any embarrassment; they will know you have mentioned them to us but it leaves us to make the decision. They will not be aware that you have mentioned anything to us because we never enter into correspondence nor give identifying information.

Can I tell someone I am recommending them? Please don't. We never have enough funds to help everyone and over the past 30 years we have had to be very careful about who we give to, when and what is given. We don't want to disappoint someone who is waiting and hoping.

Will someone know I recommended them? No. We never give anyone any information. A grant comes as a lovely surprise gift.

Will you tell me if you give to someone I recommend? No. We operate total discretion. We report to the church trustees and via this, to Charity Commission, annually with overall numbers of grants and the amount donated. We ensure that no information could identify anyone.

What sort of grants do you give? We have a *usual* upper limit of £350 but we have reconstituted to allow ourselves much more flexibility. We can envisage some situations where a grant much higher than this may make a significant difference. We try and balance expected need with known cases. In some situations, a grant of £100 is enough to show people that they are loved, but we expect this level to be much higher in the present circumstances.

I need a grant. Can I apply? We don't take applications from people for themselves or members of their families. Sorry.

What 'checks' do you make if I recommend someone? We have some basic rules: you can't recommend a member of your family, people have to live somewhere in Godalming-Hambledon because we are locally based, there has to be a known and immediate presenting need which a grant might help towards and there has to be reasonable evidence that we can recognise. We operate on a basis of trusting your judgement and this is why we have a list of groups and people who we accept recommendations from.