

The St. Chad's Fund



St Oswald's church was built in the 1890s to encourage the residents of the newly built housing in the Highburys to come to church. Following the sale of St Oswald's the PCC wished to establish an Outreach Fund. As the proceeds of the sale of St Oswald's had to be placed in a fund restricted by the Charity Commissioners for ecclesiastical purposes within the parish, the PCC established the Outreach Fund by designating from its general unrestricted reserves a sum

equivalent to the proceeds of the sale, enabling the Outreach Fund to be used for projects both within and outside the parish.

To understand more about our Parish and then learn more about whether and how best to use the Outreach money, the PCC commissioned the Parish Audit. This Audit revealed there were many positives about life in Far Headingley, but also identified five priorities which the church should concentrate on in its interaction with the area. These included: 'exclusion', particularly for old people, a 'sense of isolation', the need to maintain the 'environment', the need to provide more 'spiritual opportunities', and a need to enable and encourage 'volunteering'.

The Community Foundation movement started in Ohio, USA in 1914 and was based on the concept of "local help for local needs." Today there are over 1,000 independent Community Foundations in 37 different countries across the globe, with almost 700 in the USA alone.

However, the audit did not identify a specific project requiring a large amount of immediate funding. As an alternative, the PCC decided to explore the best way of using the capital for long term needs and has created a specific "St. Chad's Fund". This has entailed donating half of the money available to the Leeds Community Foundation.

The Leeds Community Foundation helps improve the quality of life of people living in disadvantaged communities. They do this by making financial grants to support local organisations and charitable groups, of which there are over 3,000 in Leeds. These can vary from a few hundred pounds, to several thousand pounds.

The Foundation encourages a spirit of local giving and provides an efficient and simple way for donors to make a long-term difference to the communities in which they live and work. They assist donors in directing their funds towards those groups and communities and can ensure the money is used in an effective and worthwhile manner.



The interest from this fund will then be available from next year to fund local projects in line with the priorities identified in the audit. The main advantage of this move is that money we have given to the fund has been match-funded from the government. (*The fund will therefore be able to distribute the interest from £180,000, rather than the £90,000 donated.*) The Community Foundation will manage

the fund, and ensure “due diligence” in any donation. St Chad’s will also determine how the money is spent, so long as this is within the terms of the fund.

Through this initiative St Chad’s has therefore established a fund which will be available to fund work to meet the social outcomes of the recent audit.

The audit was about more than money. Now life in St. Chad’s has resumed a more normal pattern, the PCC will be looking to see what else we can do as a church to address the issues of exclusion, isolation, environmental harm and the need for more spiritual opportunities identified in the audit. It hopes to involve church members in the operation and use of St Chad’s Fund managed by the Leeds Community Foundation and will be making more information available about this soon. In the meantime, The PCC has still to decide how to use the remainder of the Outreach Fund.

Tim Ward.