

It is good for parishes to have literature giving details of how previous bequests have been spent and the difference they have made. Have leaflets available at the back of your church giving these details together with details of the church's Legacy Policy and a contact name for anyone wanting more information or help.

**It is important to be aware that it is NOT good practice to approach people individually and ask them to consider legacies. This should be a whole-church, low-key approach and non-specific in its targets.**

**To sum up**, a good way forward for a church that has never promoted legacies before could be:

- Promote will-making within your church.

- Ensure the parish has a Legacy Policy.
- Have personalised legacy leaflets available at all times with, if possible, details of how previous legacies have been used.
- Use appropriate opportunities to remind people of the importance of will-making and legacies. For example, if the parish has a regular annual stewardship review or similar, include a question about legacies.
- Ask someone who has included a legacy to the church in their will to write a short article for the parish magazine telling why they have done so.

This is a very brief outline of how your church might promote Wills and Legacies. There are two very helpful websites which give detailed information on making Wills, writing Legacy Policies etc. These are:

<http://www.willaid.org.uk/>

Details of the Will-Aid scheme including how to find a participating solicitor, charities supported and costs.

<http://www.churchlegacy.org.uk/>

Church of England website giving details and down-loadable resources on making wills, legacies, legacy policies etc

If your parish doesn't have the equipment to be able to personalise and print leaflets, or would like more assistance in running a legacy campaign, we would be very pleased to help. Please contact:

Liz Mullins ([lmullins@diocant.org](mailto:lmullins@diocant.org)) or Jenny Hunt ([jhunt@diocant.org](mailto:jhunt@diocant.org))

at Diocesan House for more details, or call us on

01227 459401.



**CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP CANTEBURY**

DIOCESAN HOUSE, LADY WOOTTON'S  
GREEN  
CANTEBURY, KENT CT1 1NQ

A REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 249972



**Each year  
parishes receive  
over £40 million  
from gifts in wills.  
is your parish  
one of those  
that has benefitted?**

**A leaflet for  
Treasurers and PCCs**

**Each year around 5,000 people** leave a gift in their wills to Church of England parishes, between them giving around £40 million. That's commendable, but if we compare this with what some other charities receive in legacies:

**RSPCA** - £63 million (over 50% of its total income)

**RNLI** - £94 million (over 60% of its total income)

**Cancer Research UK** - £148 million (around 31% of its income)

then we can see there is scope for more legacy gifts to our churches.

If we genuinely see ourselves as God's stewards, entrusted to use His gifts to us for the good of our families, the Church, the needy and in thanksgiving, we should also take Will-writing seriously – setting God's affairs in order and stewarding them wisely to the end of our time on earth and beyond.

We obviously need to promote legacy giving – the benefits to our churches and their ministry and mission can be amazing, - but we need to be sensitive in the way we go about it. This leaflet's aim is to provide some suggestions on ways to encourage legacies and to give details of helpful resources available.

### **First things first – making a Will**

**“And if he hath not before disposed of**



his goods, let him then be admonished to make his Will... men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates, whilst they are in health”

**[Book of Common Prayer]**

It is appropriate for us to encourage church members to consider making wills if they have not already done so:

If we don't make a Will, then when we die our loved ones could be faced with a great deal of trouble, work and distress and it could be left to a court to decide how our affairs are settled. By making a Will we ensure that our wishes are carried out and the money and assets we have worked hard for are left to those people and causes we care for.



It is possible for individuals to write their own Will, but errors can occur that make the Will invalid and it is far safer to consult a solicitor. This can of course be done at any time, but in November each year solicitors across the country participate in “Will-Aid”, when members of the public can visit participating solicitors to make a basic will. There is no fee involved, but clients are asked to make a suggested donation to “Will Aid” that supports nine charities including Christian Aid, NSPCC and Age UK.

Your PCC might like to consider asking a

solicitor participating in “Will-Aid” to come and speak to your church congregation – perhaps using the sermon-slot one Sunday – about the benefits of making a will. Of course, any such talk should be about the merits and advantages of making a will –any mention of legacies should only be fleeting and general.

### **Next, Legacies**

As mentioned earlier in this leaflet, many charities benefit hugely from legacies and those who do so are extremely pro-active in asking their supporters to leave a legacy in their wills. Sadly, Church of England members are not so enthusiastic in their approach, perhaps because money can seem such a sensitive subject. However, if we consider legacy giving as an extension of our Christian Stewardship this gives us confidence.

### **How do we encourage people to include legacies in their wills?**

Very many people, when asked, say they would happily leave a legacy to charity. But if we are going to ask people to consider leaving a legacy to the church, those people will want to know what their money is going to be used for, and to be aware that legacies are very gratefully received! It is therefore vital that each parish should have a Legacy Policy in place, setting out how any legacies would be used and the way in which they would be acknowledged.

