

Contactless giving

Good governance

If your church is interested in acquiring a card reader, please take note of the following:

1. In order to process donations/payment for ticket sales, etc via a card reader, you will need to apply for a merchant account facility with a payment services provider. This is not unlike opening a bank account and should therefore be approached in the same way. The PCC should be advised of the intention to do so, then indicate support for the initiative by passing a resolution.
2. In most cases, the merchant account facility application requires a primary (possibly a secondary) contact, to fulfil the 'administrator' function – for example, setting up users and accessing reports. This is often accessible from a single email address/password. It is recommended that:
 - a. The email is a generic one (where possible) – e.g. treasurer@stmichaels.org.uk – rather than a personal email address, just in case the person in question moves on.
 - b. Email address and password details should be kept in a safe place, accessible to at least one other officer of the PCC, such as a PCC secretary or church warden.
 - c. Transaction reports from the payment services provider should be copied to one other person and settlement amounts cross-checked against the bank statement.
 - d. Changes to the settlement frequency should be approved by the PCC
 - e. Where someone other than the primary contact is responsible for gift aid / stewardship, they should also receive copies of the transaction reports – to assist in reconciliation of gift aid claims and giving records.
3. Some service providers allow the creation of other 'users' who can access limited services on the account (print reports, change products/values on the device, etc). It is good practice to have more than one person (or a rota of people) – in case of illness, etc – who can assist with management of the device and/or the merchant account facility, in order to ensure a consistent service for potential donors.
4. Payments from the service provider into the beneficiary bank account are often made net of charges; however, income should be accounted for gross in the PCC accounts, any associated charges should be recorded separately as bank charges. A detailed report of gross amounts received, and any charges levied, should be available from the service provider.
5. It is important to record the purpose for each transaction, in order to distinguish between donation income and receipts for ticket sales, wedding fees, etc – as some card readers allow for both.
6. Gift Aid should be claimed where possible on any eligible donations received:
 - a. Contactless donations up to a maximum of £30 (as at 6 April 2019) may be included in the GASDS (Gift aid small donations scheme) claim. See Parish Resources [website](#) for more details.
 - b. For donations over £30 (or <£30 chip and PIN), you may wish to make use of Gift Aid declaration forms specially for card payments. Each donation will require a separate form.
 - c. There are also digital options available, for example [Swiftaid](#), where the donor and the church/parish register with an intermediary, who automatically adds Gift Aid to donations (for a small fee).