

## **SURVIVING THE CREDIT CRUNCH : A PARISH ACTION CHECKLIST**

**Firstly, it's important to keep on doing the right long term things.....**

1. Preach and teach regularly on money and giving issues. This should be set in a discipleship context, rather than expressed in terms of the church's need. There are many support resources on the Parish Resources website including a new booklet called 'Stewards in a Slump'.
2. Ensure that you help people connect their giving with the mission and ministry that arises from it. The Annual Parochial Church Meeting is a good time to do this, as are thank-you letters (see 4. below) and annual giving reviews (see 3. below).
3. Encourage church members to review their giving at least once a year. This helps us adjust our giving to how our individual financial situation has changed over the last twelve months.
4. Write to your givers once a year to say thank you, and to let them know what has been achieved over the past twelve months. Guidance is available on the Parish Resources website, together with a template letter.

**Next, four things to avoid being caught out by the credit crunch.....**

5. Monitor income and spending more closely than usual. If you don't produce a written budget, you don't know where your money should be going! Progress should be reviewed at each PCC meeting.
6. If necessary, review your priorities for spending. Parish Share should not be seen as a soft option for cutting back, as dioceses do not have spare funds to pay the clergy.
7. Consider a push on Gift Aid. Whilst many regular givers who are taxpayers will already be giving by Gift Aid, there may still be some who could give under Gift Aid, and also some one off donations which would be eligible.
8. Check your utility bills. This is a significant cost, and utility prices are falling. You may be locked into a contract and need to escape from this when the contract is due for renewal.

**Finally, if you've done all this, and are still facing a deficit this year.....**

9. Consider whether to run a Special Appeal as a one-off event. Whilst it's right for the Church to encourage regular, planned giving, there are a number of reasons why church members may respond to an additional one-off appeal. It is important to position these events carefully, and a special guide has been produced.