

Our Lady and St. Thomas Parish Outreach Group

GUIDELINES FOR DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS TO OUTREACH PARTNERS

(including *Application form for consideration for Outreach funding*)

Agreed December 2018 / Reviewed December 2019 / For Review December 2020

Aims and Objectives

To help the parish fulfil our covenant with the poor and our commitment to justice and peace and to ensure that the Outreach group is accountable to the parish as a whole by:

- Giving financial support to our partners both overseas and in our local area.
- Ensuring that we obtain regular information about how our partners are using the funds allocated to them.
- Informing members of the parish about how Outreach funds are distributed.
- Informing the parish about the work of our partners, and also the social, economic and political factors which create the problems addressed by our partners.

Outreach Partners

- Priority will be given to projects with which members of the parish have a personal connection.
- If a partner is considered by the group to do worthwhile work, but does not have a member of the parish directly involved, then a member of Outreach will be nominated as a *link person* who will be responsible for obtaining feedback from that partner.
- Partners supported must have an efficient and secure way of receiving fund transfers with minimum charges.
- *Overseas partners* will be supported who:
 - meet urgent needs and basic requirements such as food, medicines, clean water, shelter etc.;
 - benefit communities rather than individuals;
 - may become self-supporting and sustainable in the future without needing our long-term support.
- *Local partners* will be supported where there is evidence that they provide practical help, advice or psychological support to people in need within our parish and neighbouring areas.
- Outreach will *not* generally disburse funds directly to large umbrella organisations and charities. However Outreach may support specific projects, campaigns or educational programmes organised by large charities such as CAFOD.
- When there is a reduced amount of money to disburse, Outreach may prioritise projects with limited income rather than those which have significant alternative sources of funding (e.g. commercial sponsorship or government subsidy).

Application by potential new partners

- Parishioners will be kept regularly informed (via parish newsletter, website etc.) of the opportunity to request Outreach support for suitable projects.
- Parish members wishing to request support for a new partner will be asked to complete a short written *Application for Consideration for Outreach Funding* pro forma. They will also be asked to attend an Outreach meeting to explain the reasons for the request.
- Applications by new partners should be made six weeks before a disbursement meeting. This is to allow the application to be discussed at the Outreach meeting which precedes the disbursement meeting.

PROCEDURE FOR DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

Preparation for disbursement meetings:

- Distribution of funds will take place annually usually at the July Outreach meeting.
- Before the disbursement meeting a written report will be obtained from all existing partners and a request will be sent out to the parish for possible new partners.
- Partners who are given regular support will be expected to give an annual report on how they have used our donations, and future plans which may require our support. (The "*Application for Consideration for Outreach Funding*" form can be used for this.)
- A spreadsheet detailing previous disbursements will be kept updated and made available to Outreach members to help ensure that Outreach funds are shared equitably amongst partners who are given regular support.
- Feedback from existing partners and new requests will be discussed at the Outreach meeting held the month before the actual disbursement meeting (usually in June).

The disbursement meeting:

- The disbursement meeting will begin with a period of prayer.
- A quorum (i.e. at least half the currently active members of Outreach) will be required at the disbursement meeting to make final decisions about distribution of funds. If a quorum is not present then provisional decisions may be made and ratified at the next meeting.
- Members of the parish will be invited to disbursement meetings and encouraged to become involved in the decision-making process.
- Decisions about distribution of funds will be made based on information received from parish contacts and link persons. Priority may be given to partners who have identified an urgent or immediate need.

Follow-up:

- Details of distribution of funds will be publicised via the parish newsletter and website.
- In order to inform the parish about how their contributions to Outreach are used, the group will give regular updates to the parish about the work of our partners. This will include information in the parish newsletter and website and organising talks by our partners.

N.B.If an urgent or immediate need has been identified, Outreach members may decide to disburse funds to individual projects at any quorate meeting.

APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION FOR OUTREACH FUNDING

N.B. To be completed as part of initial application by potential new partners and then annually by partners seeking repeat funding.

<p>Name, address and contact details of parishioner requesting donation (including phone no./e-mail) or name of Outreach Link Person</p>
<p><i>[New applicants only]</i> Information about the project (who, what, where, when etc., particularly details of how funds will be used, and what is your connection with the project.)</p>
<p><i>[New applicants only]</i> Name, address and contact details of nominated recipient, including details of how funds can be safely transferred and accounted for. [Include recipient's Bank details and swift code/IBAN no.]</p>

[Regular Partners only] Please give a brief summary of how previous donations by Outreach have been used.

[Regular Partners only] Please describe future activity, special projects etc. for which you may require donations by Outreach.