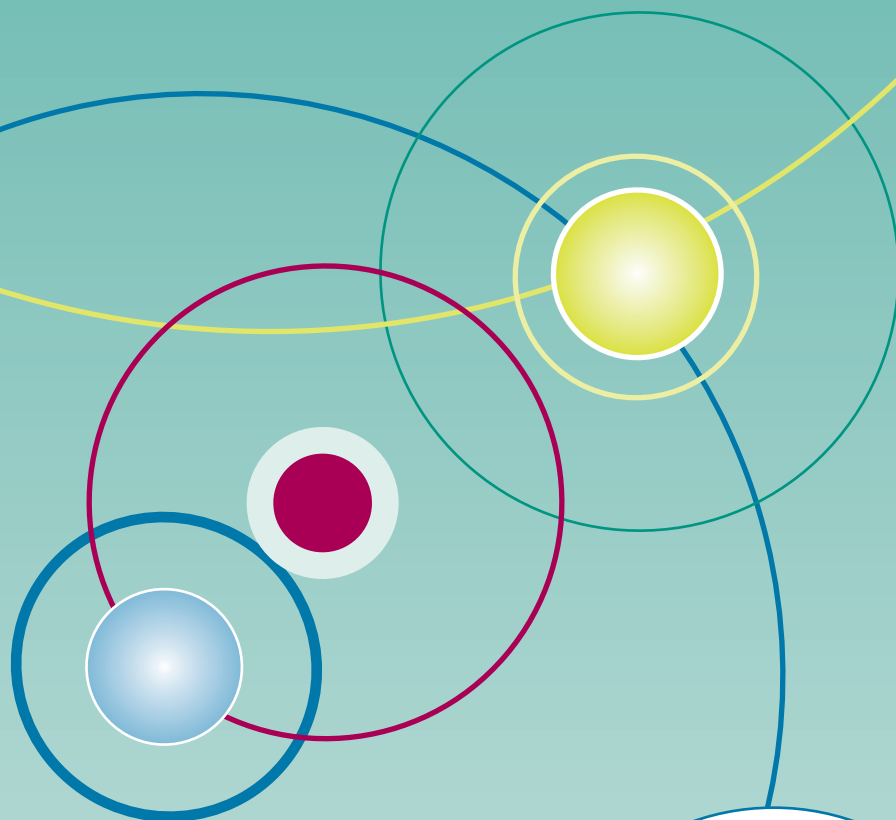


Putting the fun into fundraising

A guide for
community
groups

By Martin Shaw

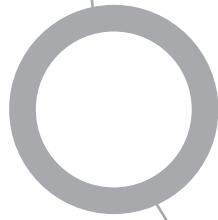


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Introduction

My first job in the charity sector, in the early 1970s, was as a youth leader at a large youth club in north London. When we needed funds, for example to pay for a new boiler or subsidise a weekend away, we found the money by pushing a bed along the high street with collecting buckets, or by the older members doing a pub crawl with collecting tins being filled with everyone's loose change. Somehow it was enough.

How times have changed! Fundraising has become so much more sophisticated – and rightly so. The amounts needed to run even a small youth club have grown dramatically, which has demanded a new range of fundraising techniques. As a youth leader I had never even heard of charitable trusts or statutory sources – now such sources are core elements of any fundraising strategy.

And for all organisations, regardless of their size, a fundraising strategy has become an essential tool of planning and management. Once budgets are set, the fundraising needs to support the projected work. Fundraising is never an easy task and, as with all elements of our work, it has to be planned. It needs to be a systematic, year-round process of gaining income from an ever increasing range of potential sources.

In small organisations, faith and community groups, the task of writing and implementing the fundraising strategy will often fall to a member of staff who has many other responsibilities and duties and who is expected to find even more time to fundraise. Sometimes it even falls to volunteers or trustees, who have even less time. Given the ever increasing complexity of funding sources, long application forms to bodies such as the Big Lottery Fund and 8,000+ charitable trusts to research, it is no wonder groups find it hard to find the time, energy or enthusiasm to fundraise.

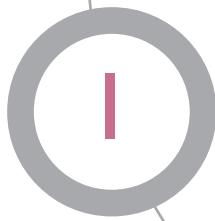
However, resources and funding are the most talked about issues in the charity sector. Wherever I visit, in whatever part of the country, in whatever capacity – whether as a trainer, officer or support person – I will always hear stories of the difficulties of raising the necessary funds, often just to carry out the core work of the organisation, let alone any identified potential needs.

I have no easy solution, but I have been really heartened to have seen and heard so many good individual examples of fundraising events and activities, from a huge range of organisations, both large and small, that are certainly not as tedious as filling in long forms. Indeed, many of them have been fun and, at the same time as raising much needed cash have also helped the organisation achieve its aim of more involvement and participation as well as

INTRODUCTION

an understanding of its goals. I have therefore put together this booklet of ideas to share with you all. I hope you can raise money, using some of the ideas I have seen on my travels, together with others with which I have been personally involved.

Some ideas will not always be relevant or possible, but all have the common thread of involvement. Whether you are an inner city group or based in the countryside, these ideas are often simply about making an effort to bring people together when sometimes they might be reluctant to do so. Fundraising can be hard work but I hope that, even with this effort, organisations will be able to raise money and have fun doing so.



Let's enjoy fundraising

Introduction

One of the objectives of this guide is to encourage faith and community organisations to look outside the tedious fundraising methods of applying to trusts and completing long application forms. Fundraising can be enjoyable: this chapter therefore is about putting the 'fun' into fundraising.

This may be a new way of looking at fundraising. Many people regard it as a chore and are often daunted by long application forms, confusing grant conditions and a maze of potential sources.

It is true that fundraising can sometimes be difficult, and it is certainly time consuming. However, this doesn't always have to be the case, as shown by the following activities and ideas. This is not to say that you shouldn't be looking at making applications to trusts and applying for other grants, but just these ideas are a lot more fun!

The answer lies in the soil...

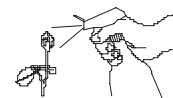


Gardening is an active and popular hobby, and a community centre in a village just outside Derby had no trouble finding volunteers to tend its small surrounding plot of garden. However, how could it turn this popular interest into a fundraising activity?

There were plenty of ideas.

Firstly, many of the centre's members had fine gardens themselves, so, on a Sunday afternoon in the middle of the summer, they organised an **open gardens** day in the village, modelled on the National Gardens Scheme. The centre produced a handbook publicising each garden and each member charged a small entry fee, which raised £1,000. The members were encouraged to sell their own plants, with all the proceeds going to the community centre. The event was sponsored by the local garden centre; the MD of the garden centre became the judge to find the best garden, and it soon became an annual event.

The members then decided to hold a plant swap event in the centre, and invited the local members of the local horticultural society to run an 'ask the expert' session.



Finally, several members organised a gardening service whereby, in return for a donation to the centre, they would clear or tidy up a local person's garden.

In one year the garden project raised just over £4,000 and provided a very useful service to the community. Of course, all this fitted well into the ethos of the community centre, not just in organising activities at the centre but also by reaching out into the community.

Getting fit



We all know about the traditional 5-a-side football competitions, but a Unitarian Church in Birmingham found that many of its congregants had many other sports interests. The challenge was how to combine these interests into a fundraising event.

It was decided to organise a mini Olympics, including both team and individual events, run by the congregants.

An audit of the congregants' interests showed they included cricket, basketball, hockey, rugby, table tennis, tennis, darts and snooker. After much negotiation, the Church managed to hire the sports facilities and hall at a local secondary school for a Saturday – day and evening.

Faith and community organisations in and around Birmingham were invited to enter teams in any number of the day's sports competitions. Entry fees brought in nearly £6,000; a local sport outfitter sponsored the day (clever link!) and, after costs of just over £1,000, the church was left with a 'profit' of around £8,000. The winning team came from a Presbyterian Church from a small village just outside Walsall. The event was a success, not just because it raised money, but also because it started a dialogue between different faith groups in a fun environment, rather than in the 'normal' serious discussion arena. People from different faiths got to know each other as a result.

Something a little more ambitious...



In November 2007 Kisharon, a special needs school in north west London, sent out a team of 23 athletes to take part in the Eilat Triathlon, all of whom were asked to raise funds in aid of Kisharon.



The triathlon required athletes to take a dip in the Eilat waters for a one mile swim, followed by a 25 mile cycle, ending with a 6.5 mile run. On the days leading up to, and after, the triathlon Eilat was full of spectators, amateur and professional athletes eager to support this annual event. Each participant raised sponsorship for their own air fare and through other sponsorship the event raised around £27,000 for the school.

Auctions

Auctions are becoming popular, and holding one during your event will give it another dimension. For 'fun' try auctioning people's time – providing services to the winner such as for cleaning their house for a day, washing their car, cooking them a meal, babysitting their children, washing their windows, being their chauffeur for a day or taking their children to school.

Raffles and Lotteries

Do you agree with the morals of a raffle or lottery? If you agree with the ethics of running a raffle or lottery then it is important to know the rules about running raffles. There is considerable confusion over the use of cloakroom tickets (books with tear off numbered slips), so do check. As registration is through local authorities they often produce effective guidelines – have a look at www.woking.gov.uk/council/lottery/laanoregist.pdf as a useful example.

Idea

This is not always relevant to faith groups, but holding a **raffle** at, for example, Easter or Christmas, is still an effective way of raising money, although not everyone enjoys selling raffle tickets. Just make sure all the prizes are donated.

Similarly, if appropriate, the Unity Lottery is an interesting membership scheme that gives supporters the chance to receive something in return for their support. By playing the lottery each week for just £1, supporters have the chance of winning a range of prizes including a £25,000 jackpot. The organisation receives profits directly according to the number of players it recruits; for each £1 spent by your supporters, you receive 50p. See www.unitylottery.co.uk/ for details of Sterling Management Centre, which runs the scheme for charitable organisations.

More ideas

I have, for several years, worked with the Russian Revival Fund, a very small charity run entirely by volunteers with energy, enthusiasm and a willingness to try different events. The Fund's primary fundraising events have been concerts with an exciting programme of music, readings and poetry, all with a Russian theme. An important ingredient for their success is the social element and so each concert is planned in such a way as to give time for socialising.

One event, '**Tea at the Pushkin**', was rather different. It took place at Pushkin House in Bloomsbury, which serves as a home and dedicated showcase for Russian culture in London, a focus for Anglo-Russian cultural exchange, a provider of education and information on

Russian language and culture and a resource and networking centre for individuals and institutions. When looking for a venue this seemed ideal.

The committee invited Simon Sebag Montefiore, eminent journalist and author of *Young Stalin*, to hold a conversation with Bridget Kendall, BBC journalist and diplomatic correspondent in January 2008. The event began with tea and cake, followed by champagne and canapés to whet participants' appetite for an auction, which raised nearly £7,000.

On a smaller scale you need not hire venues such as Pushkin House but you can use your own places of worship, the local community hall or school. However, the link between the programme and the charity is the magic ingredient.

Technology can be fun too ...

SMS text is an exciting tool for charities to use to capture donations, using a premium rate reverse bill text message.

A variety of customised applications are possible, including:

- **Competitions** – using your mobile to enter competitions (as often seen on TV – 'Text your answer to ...')
- **Outbound alert services** – where the organisation can send messages to its supporters alerting them to a crisis or emergency or events.
- **Inbound services** linked to outbound calling or email campaigns – again this is using your mobile to respond to another media call – the supporter is encouraged to text a response.

At a music festival in Leeds, a large charity set up a scheme whereby one of the bands stopped playing and asked everyone in the audience to send the charity a text to support it. As an incentive everyone who sent a text was entered into a prize draw for a large-screen TV that had been donated.

More than 2,000 revellers sent a text and received an immediate acknowledgment asking whether they would like to remain on the text mailing list; 25 per cent responded positively.

Idea

How SMS text raises funds

Once you have set up a keyword with the phone provider (T-Mobile, Orange etc), donors just need to send a text message to a dedicated number (usually something like 82222) followed by the keyword. The donor receives a return message, which triggers the deduction from their mobile phone account or, in the case of pre-pay, their credit balance. The phone provider receives a preagreed percentage and the charity receives the balance of the cost of the text, which is often between £1 and £1.50 per text. There is also usually a facility to capture a further donation on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.



The exercise raised around £1,000 and the charity got a text mailing list of more than 500 new supporters.

Charities such as Oxfam organise similar large signups at music festivals on a regular basis, not only to get supporters to sign a petition but also to capture their mobile phone numbers.

One of the best resources for information on the use of SMStext is the Charity Technology Trust (www.ctt.org).

Internet quizzes

These can be set up fairly easily and can be good fun. A church group in south London set up a weekly quiz for local businesses that was circulated via email to around 100 local office workers for a month. Those entering the quiz were asked to pay a fee to take part using a PayPal facility and, surprisingly, several small donations were added. Not only did the quiz raise a few hundred pounds, it also attracted several new members. The prize giving was held at the church.

Conclusion

Running a charity, faith or community organisation can be often time consuming and sometimes even tiring. Many people see raising money as a chore. However, organisers, trustees and volunteers also need to enjoy themselves, and fundraising can be one way of doing so. It is not just about hard work; we all need to relax. If we are having fun we feel good and often open our purses a little wider. A note of caution: people have different ideas of fun. What one individual enjoys may not be the same for someone else, so don't assume that one event will be fun for everyone.

The lessons of the Russian Revival Fund and the gardening project are that they aligned the interests of the members and volunteers with fundraising and an enjoyable activity.

It might be easier to create outdoor and/or physical events, but I have tried throughout this chapter to show that it is also possible to set up other non-physical events that also include an element of a 'challenge' and fun.

2

Fundraising in the community

Introduction

Fundraising in the community is a method of fundraising used by nearly all faith and community organisations.

It has two objectives. Firstly, obviously, to raise cash, but secondly – and crucially – to get the community more aware about, and involved in, the life of the organisation.

Most community groups complain that no one knows of their existence. The most common complaint is that the local newspaper never prints anything about them – well just being there is not really news, is it? So, you need to make yourself newsworthy. An effective method is to get out there and plan an event in the community. It can get you known, and positive things can happen as a result – people join, people attend your activities people support and people volunteer.

This chapter could also be called 'Fundraising with the community'. Many of the ideas here (and in other chapters) create opportunities to bring together people from diverse backgrounds and minorities for a common purpose. Working together on a project and raising funds is a chance for people to share a common goal and to get to know each other.

Nearly every town, parish, borough or village has an **annual fair**. Often charities are encouraged to take a **stall** or enter a **float**. Both are fun to organise, and present a great opportunity to involve volunteers. You can ask people to do all sorts of things at a stall, such as throw a wet sponge, pick a lucky number or take part in a raffle. Try and sell some items (such as home-grown plants) if possible; at a simple level you could just have some collecting tins to rattle at passers by.

But before you use collecting tins in a public area (either on the street, or house to house) you must get the consent of the local authority or, in London, the Metropolitan Police

(www.met.police.uk/charities/streetcollection.htm).

All collectors must be aged 16 or over.

Make a first start...



In June 2004, the campaign ‘**Save Southdown Ponds**’ was launched in partnership with the Harpenden Society, to regenerate the polluted, unusable ponds that resulted from water coming off the roads and draining directly into the ponds on Harpenden Common. The aim was to reinstate the area as an important educational, ecological and recreational site for the benefit of local schools, the community and visitors.

The launch coincided with the annual ‘Classics on the Common’ classic car rally held on Harpenden Common. The event was first held in 1994 with 25 cars, and had grown rapidly to involve more than 2,000 classic cars. We negotiated with the rally organisers to put a stall up near the refreshments area (which happened to be in front of the ponds) to publicise the campaign. Hundreds of locals attended the event, and we were able to hand out leaflets to visitors at the same time as showing residents the problem at the ponds first hand. We also held a raffle to attract people to the stall; the first prize was some fishing tackle donated by a local company even though it knew that fishing was not allowed in the ponds (we think this was a small protest to the council!).

A sad story about the Southdown Ponds was that the poor resident ducks often became homeless. Thankfully, a primary school and hotel located opposite the ponds came to their rescue and fed them, but we used this **sad story** to launch a ‘Best (or even worst) Duck Joke Competition’ for local schools and youth groups – yes we were being quackers! For a small entry fee children were invited to submit their best duck joke. We all suffered some really bad jokes to get some winners, but it did get good press coverage (and the ‘bill’ was not too high!). Involving children in this way made sure that their parents and family also became aware of the campaign through the children’s jokes and because the entry form had to be signed by a parent or guardian.

The end result was that nearly everyone in Harpenden became aware of the campaign to save the ponds, and individuals, organisations and companies came forward to support it. If we had just gone around the town with a petition before any of the other activities had taken place we would not have received such a good response (and we would have needed to wake people up at the quack of dawn to make any impact!) It also meant that, when the council made formal applications to external grant agencies, it could show evidence of local support.

After seeing the story in the local newspaper, our Southdown Ponds campaign inspired another charity in a local village to organise a slight variation on the duck theme: during a local fair it launched a **duck race** along the local river using plastic yellow ducks (which really annoyed the anglers!)



A special needs primary school used the annual village fair to launch a **balloon race**.

It persuaded a local builder to sponsor the event (the cost of the balloons, the air and the printed tickets to attach to each balloon). The ticket had the name and address of the school (and, of course, the sponsor) on one side; the other side was left blank for the finder to complete their personal details before posting it back. Finders were encouraged to make a donation to the work of the school; a free prize draw – for a previously donated holiday voucher – was offered as an incentive to return the ticket.

At a designated time during the fair the children released around 200 blown up balloons. The school received 140 tickets from the balloons with donations amounting to more than £400. An added dimension was that, as the tickets arrived from all over the country – and one even came back from France – the children had to map where all the tickets had come from, which really pleased the geography teachers!



Sponsored events

Sponsored events, such as walks, are a well tried and tested method of raising money, and can help raise the profile of the organisation as the walk takes place around the area. Such events often attract the curiosity of onlookers, so have plenty of banners and signs about the charity for the walkers as they go along – and flyers to hand out so that people can contact you afterwards.

Sponsorship forms are critical for such events. Do include the opportunity for the sponsor to gift aid (and so increase the value of) their contribution. This can be achieved by a simple tick box on the form with the correct declaration – see box in chapter 4, page 19.

The brilliant Macmillan Cancer Support Big Hush Event (www.macmillan.org.uk/Microsites/Big_Hush/Big_Hush.aspx) in January 2008 was an example of a sponsored silence for children.

As the website says:

‘Taking part in The Big Hush couldn’t be easier – or more fun! You can sign up the whole school or a single class, and organise the children to be sponsored for every minute they keep quiet, or pay a small amount to take part. Every penny they raise will help improve the lives of people living with cancer.’

On a smaller scale, you could ask children (and even teenagers or parents!) to hold their own sponsored silence as one-off event. I am sure that parents and family members (and even teachers) would be delighted to sponsor them.

Part of the exercise of holding such an event is to discuss with children which charity or type of charity they would like to support. Have they or their family members been exposed to any particular illness (such as leukaemia) or are they interested in any specific issue (such as the environment)? They could each adopt an individual charity or cause or as a whole class; the more committed they are to a cause the more they will feel spurred to raise money and sponsorship. Hopefully the principle will also get children involved in supporting charities at an early age, as well as beginning to understand the importance of charities.

The Boys' Club movement used to organise an annual sponsored '**Cross the London bridges**' walk, when youth club members were sponsored to cross all of London's bridges – at that time 26. Not only was it great exercise, it also meant members saw London and the beauty of the Thames.

More community fundraising ...

The boy's club and youth club movement used to organise '**Club Week**', which has been replaced by 'Youth Work Week', which is similar but not so general. It was a great idea as youth clubs would literally stop their regular weekly activities and organise a week of fundraising events instead. Somehow they always ended with a disco!, but the variety of fundraising activity was amazing, including competitions, collections, raffles, sponsored events and challenges. Organisations could apply the same principle, by running a similar 'week' where everyone's energy is channelled into fundraising.

Also try and find events that are non-physical – there are many examples.

Idea

Another way of involving children could be a **sponsored toddler's bike ride** around the playground, getting all the parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and family friends to sponsor for a number of times they go around. It's good exercise and a lot of fun.



Subbuteo (a set of board games simulating team sports such as football, cricket, rugby and hockey, but the name is most closely associated with football) is still produced and very popular. Playing Subbuteo involves a skill in flicking the playing pieces, which stand on weighted bases, across the tabletop mat towards the ball, which is oversized and stands nearly as high as the players.

Why not have a competition for all-comers?

Ask your supporters to donate the proceeds from a **jumble or car boot sale** – always a great way to clear cupboards and generate funds at the same time.

Another fun event is what we used to call a **talent show**. However, perhaps we can now call it an **X-factor** evening?

Any disadvantages?

Many of the above ideas do not generate large sums. They may sometimes raise only a few hundred pounds, and the results need to be weighed against the time and effort involved arranging them. They take planning and demand detail, and some organisations tell me they wished the event had raised more money.

Idea

Another fun competition for all of us is a '**Guess the baby competition**', with photos of staff or colleagues as babies. Everyone entering needs to pay a small entrance fee in order to guess the identity of the baby.

Also, little errors that happen on the day – such as forgetting the flowers for the guest – often get blown out of proportion to the scale of the event, and supporters can make a fuss for seemingly no reason. We often have to spend time with supporters smoothing over the waters.

Conclusion

So are these fundraising ideas worth your effort? Well they are – even if sometimes we get a little frustrated. Involvement and participation are key to a group's success, and fundraising in the community is the ideal tool to facilitate opportunities. Planning an event is also part of the fun process and the more people involved in the planning, the greater the participation. Events are festivals to participate in and the more fun and participation, the more we celebrate, and the greater the strength of the group. Oh and, by the way, the money also comes in useful!

Idea

Schools often will help local charities raise money. Although the activities will have to be organised by the school, rather than the charity, it is a good opportunity to create positive links with local schools. **Bring a teddy to school** is a simple example. Children can donate money to your charity, and run a competition to guess the name of the teddy.

Idea

Amazingly Hasbro, the producers of **Monopoly**, organise official tournaments around the UK. Why not organise your own tournament – either with individual or in teams – or maybe a **darts** tournament?

3

Fundraising from local companies and businesses

Introduction

Many faith groups tell me they have little or no contact with their local business community, believing that businesses would not be interested in such links. By forgetting that many of their members could be working in such companies, they are also forgetting the basic principle of corporate fundraising.

Businesses and companies are there to make money. Too often charities make the mistake of simply 'asking for charity'. The businesses are not there to give away their hard earned income to charity, but it may be possible to create a situation where, as a result of a link with a local group, a business is able to increase its sales and profit margins. Maybe more prospective employees will think about working for that company if they see it being linked to a good cause; and the goodwill generated from the link will encourage more people to think positively about the company.

Think of the link as a **partnership** that is going to help both parties; generating interest will bring about dual benefits of increased sales and income to the organisation. Because the organisation might be a faith group does not negate this principle: all types of community groups should be able to create such partnerships. The secret is not to think too big – stick with **local companies and shops**. Multinationals and large companies want partnerships with larger, well-known charities and voluntary organisations, and their decision-making is often carried out at some anonymous headquarters well outside your district. It is far better to create a relationship with your local store manager or office manager.

Ovingdean Hall School for severely and profoundly deaf children is located on the outskirts of busy Brighton, and was unable to get much interest from the local business sector. We discovered that the largest 'industry' in Brighton was in fact estate agents – with more than 170 of them in the city. With the help of school staff and pupils we created a competition for local estate agents – a quiz entitled '**We know Brighton the best**' with questions on, for example local history and geography – and charged a small entrance fee (which raised a nice little income). Nearly all the estate agents entered for the chance to beat their rivals and, with the support of the Association of Brighton Estate Agents, the competition was fiercely fought. It meant walking up and down the high street a few times, but it was an ideal way of introducing the school and getting the estate agents interested in its work.

The competition also gave the school an excuse to contact local businesses for prizes. Around a dozen gave contributions ranging from shopping vouchers, to meals out, wine and champagne as they all wanted to be associated with such a prestigious event. In the end three estate agents scored top marks, and seven others were runners up. The prize giving was held at the school and, for the first time, a link was made between local commerce and the school. Two estate agents joined the governors; the latest I heard was that local solicitors were anxious to muscle into the next competition!

This exercise worked well as it was a positive two-way exercise; as with all fundraising it is a question of creating a positive relationship. What can we offer businesses to help them increase their income, their customers and, subsequently, their profits?

If they can see from their relationship with a charity that this will happen then, and only then, will they see a benefit. Our proposals need to be geared towards improving both the charity and the business, and must be related to the type of business being approached.

So here are a few more ideas...

Organising a charity quiz night is not that difficult, providing you sit down and plan it properly – preparation is the key to success. You need to decide on the type of quiz you will be holding: is it going to have a theme, e.g. sport, Halloween, James Bond, or will it be general? Invite **local companies** to take make up teams to compete against each other. And what about organising an **intranet quiz** in a local office whereby you deliver a quiz sheet to each employee's PC, at the same time publicising your organisation with contact details?

Idea

Recycling is a good concept for everyone, but it should fit well into the concept of many faith and community groups. Why not get everyone to recycle their old mobile phones and printer cartridges and, at the same time, raise money for your organisation – typically three pounds per item. It is very simple to introduce and everyone can get involved. But you don't have to stop there.



Idea

By holding a **charity quiz** night hundreds – even thousands – of pounds can be raised for relatively little capital outlay. People have an enjoyable evening taking part in the quiz knowing that, at the same time, they are raising money for a good cause.



Link in with local businesses and companies and get them to recycle their phones and cartridges for you. The agencies that help charities recycle often supply pre-printed envelopes and printed boxes that can display the name of your organisation. Company employees will feel good both for recycling and for helping a good cause. And imagine how satisfying it would be to walk into the reception of a local business centre and see a recycling box with your organisation's name on it.

There are several agencies set up to help the not-for-profit sector recycle. Here are a few:

www.recyclingappeal.com

www.recycle4charity.co.uk

www.cartridges4charity.co.uk

www.reclaim-it.com

www.uk-energy-saving.com/charity_recycling.html

www.inkagain.co.uk/charity/charity_schemes.shtml



Why not organise a **5 a side football competition** between local businesses? Variations could include mixed gender teams or, for example, solicitors against accountants, and make sure you charge a reasonable entrance fee to cover all your expenses. Don't forget to invite your local newspaper to make up a team!

As a variation, why not create a **BBQ recipe book**, and ask your members to contribute their favourite recipe or, better still, ask some well-known local chefs or cooks for their ideas? See if you can get a local restaurant to sponsor it and sell it during your BBQ evening and afterwards.

Another idea is, instead of simply a BBQ evening, to see if you can persuade your local restaurant to host an **evening for local business leaders**. The restaurant will love the idea as it can lead to the business community using it more in the future. Ask your local Chamber of Commerce if it would co-host it, and then think about a suitable speaker. Businesses like the opportunity to mix with each other, and your organisation can benefit at the same time. A good meal, a pleasant evening in the company of your fellows, and an interesting talk can lead to further corporate partnerships.

One organisation – Haringey Shed – produced such an evening hosted by its patron, local MP David Lammy, which led to several other good opportunities. A PR company based in the City offered to hold **an in-house fair** for the charity, which raised over £2,000.

Idea

Persuade your local café, pub or restaurant to organise a **BBQ evening** for your group's members and supporters. It will bring in customers (more drink and food being consumed) and provide a good source of income for your organisation by charging an entrance fee, running a raffle, having collecting tins around or simply asking the proprietor for a percentage of the takings for the evening.



SALE

Everyone loves a bargain or a discount! One charity approached its local tyre and exhaust dealer and negotiated a deal with the manager. He agreed that, over the next month, he would give everyone who bought new tyres or exhausts and who mentioned the charity a **5 per cent discount** and **donate 5 per cent of the sale to the charity**.

The charity agreed to publicise this deal to all its supporters and friends. Around £2,500 was raised and the manager reported an increase in overall sales. Why not consider talking to a new shop as it opens in your area, to see if you can encourage a similar deal during its opening week?



Challenge events are always good fun and many charities use them as a very effective way of raising money for the organisation at the same time as offering local businesses and companies the opportunity to create team building for their staff. They can also strengthen an existing corporate relationship. If the company is willing to sponsor the event by underwriting the costs, then all the money raised by the teams can be available for charitable use. An added advantage, for the sponsor, is to be able to target its own specialist sector by inviting teams from within its group, suppliers, customers and even competitors.

One small organisation, the Jubilee Waterside Centre in Camden, an outdoor pursuits centre, organised an **in house challenge event**, whereby members of the centre challenged local business teams and a team of local councillors to take part in climbing, abseiling and canoeing. The winning team received a trophy donated by a local sponsor. Each team raised sponsorship to cover the entrance fee (£250) and visitors to the event were encouraged to pay an entrance fee to watch this spectacle as well as participate in the raffle.

The idea can be varied to include **non-physical challenges** such as chess, board games or Monopoly evenings, where teams also pay an entrance fee, or raise sponsorship for the event – sponsor someone to play non-stop for x number of hours or to see how many different games they can play at once.

There are several agencies that can help organisations offer challenge events and that specialise in the not-for-profit sector, including:

www.acrossthedivide.com

www.charitychallenge.com

www.utcharitychallenges.co.uk

www.challengeforcharity.co.uk

www.tallstories.co.uk

Everyone has a **tea or coffee break!** So why not produce mugs that include your organisation's name and get them into local offices – they are always short of mugs. I am sure they will give you a donation for them.

Again there are several agencies that can assist, including:

www.charitymug.co.uk

www.emcadgifts.co.uk

Conclusion

Companies vary greatly in their requirements from supporting charities. Some demand publicity; others shy away from it. Sometimes they have committees who are well organised; sometimes they want charities to organise events for them. However, once established, company support is immensely rewarding. It can be measured in financial support, but often can also lead to in kind support and links to other networks, both corporate and personal.

A corporate link also adds to your credibility with both supporters and other funders. If they think you have sufficient standing in the community to gain support from a local business it certainly does help.

The competition for corporate support and sponsorship is immense and growing all the time. Some people describe this as the fastest growing sector and it is certainly very, very competitive. Whilst we know that companies need their 'hand held' all the time if the relationship is to bear fruit, it is nevertheless satisfying to know that we can play a role in bridging the gap between local business and the community.

4

The internet and the world wide web

Introduction

Like it or not the internet is here to stay. We have all recognised the necessity of a presence on the web, whether or not community or faith groups want to create one. Potential users, funders, supporters and even competitors will look for your website.

Faith groups, in particular, can benefit enormously from a well constructed website. It can give details of meeting times, community activities, events, prayer times and relevant contact information. Websites need to be continually updated, which often creates challenges for groups, but there is no doubt about their importance.

However, what is their significance for raising funds? This chapter examines the potential of the internet and the use of websites for fundraising.

Donate Now!

Whatever the size or complexity of your website, an essential item is the **'Donate Now' button on the front page** – often called the Index.html or home page.

If someone likes your organisation and wants to donate money, they will want to see quickly and easily how to do it. Whilst writing this chapter I randomly looked at 30 community and faith group websites; only 14 included such a button. An alternative link could be a **'How to help us'** button.

DONATE NOW

So what happens when you click this button?

It should link to a page of ideas showing how a potential donor can support the organisation. These include:

- How to send a **cheque** (at least while they are still in use!) – you should create a **freepost address** to make it easier for a supporter to post a cheque.

Freepost™ is operated by Royal Mail (www.royalmail.com). Basically, you either issue envelopes pre-printed with your Freepost address, or you encourage donors/supporters to handwrite their own reply envelopes. There is no need to put a stamp on the envelope; the charity/organisation pays for the second class postage. You need to pay for a separate licence (and deposit) for each address that items are returned to and then pay for each reply you receive. Your deposit will cover the initial responses and your licence fee will give you 12 months' usage.

- How to use a credit card online to make a donation. There a number of agencies that will assist organisations create a secure online presence to take credit cards, which include (note: the list is not exhaustive):
 - Just Giving: www.justgiving.com
 - Bmycharity: www.bmycharity.com
 - Charities Aid Foundation: www.cafonline.org/
 - Charity Technology Trust (CTT): www.ctt.org
 - WorldPay: www.worldpay.com/uk/
 - PayPal: www.paypal.co.uk/uk
 - Baigent: www.baigent.net
- Of course, the small disadvantage of taking a credit card donation online is that the agencies listed above will make a deduction, but this should be no more than five per cent.
- How to add Gift Aid. An **advantage** of online credit card giving is that the person making the donation can also sign up to **gift aid** whilst making the donation.



- If you are a UK taxpayer, the value of your gift can be increased by 28 per cent under the Gift Aid scheme although from April 2008 this will be reduced to 25%.

The Gift Aid scheme enables charities to claim back the tax already paid on donations from individuals, at the appropriate tax rate. Such donations can also include sponsorship money for events. There used to be a limit on the size of donation, but this was lifted in April 2000. Gift Aid applies to any gift where the individual has given their permission to the charity to claim back the tax.

The individual must be a UK taxpayer and have paid income or capital gains tax equivalent to at least the amount of tax the charity reclaims from that donor in the tax year. For example, at present, on a gift of £10, the charity can reclaim £2.82 tax, making the gift worth £12.82. So, for a UK taxpayer using Gift Aid, a donation would be worth an extra 28p for every £1 they give, at no extra cost to you, or the donor. From April 2008 the amount of gift aid reduces to 25p in for every £1.

For more information see www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/gift-aid.htm

- Direct debit is easy to sign up to on the internet. Setting up your own **direct debit** system with your bank can be quite expensive and complicated, so it is advisable to use a third party agency such as CAF and CTT (see above). In this way you can either create a form to be completed online or a downloadable Word or PDF file for the donor to complete and post back – again using a Freepost address.
- Direct debit is usually preferable to a **standing order**, although many donors still prefer this method. Holding a Direct Debit instruction allows a group to make changes to the amount more easily if the donor increases their gift, whilst with a Standing Order a whole new form needs to be completed each time there is a change in the amount the donor is giving. Again, you can create an online form for a standing order or a downloadable Word or PDF file for the donor to complete and post back.

In memory of ...

Many people find by setting up a **memorial page on a website** they bring tremendous comfort to themselves and others left behind; it's a convenient way for people to pay an everlasting tribute and offer their condolences from anywhere at any time.

A gift or donation **in the memory of the life** of a loved one who has passed away is very appropriate for faith and community organisations.

Finally, do not put your organisation's bank details up online for all to read and use!

Some other internet ideas

If you buy gift vouchers online at www.days.org.uk DAYS (Donate As Your Spend) will donate 3 per cent of whatever you spend to your nominated charity. Why not ask your supporters and members to do this too: if you are a registered charity (and you have registered on the DAYS site), they can nominate your group to receive the 3 per cent donation.

Organisations can benefit from the sale of goods on **eBay**. For example, if one of your supporters is selling their record collection, they can nominate how much of the final sale price will go to the charity – anything from 10 to 100 per cent. For further information and to register see www.missionfish.org.uk. Once the sale is completed and the money received, the amount allocated from the final price automatically gets transferred to the charity.

Amazon UK (www.amazon.co.uk/) had a reseller set up whereby you create a link (actually a search button) on

Idea

One of the easiest ways to raise money online is to **make www.everyclick.com your home page** – **Everyclick.com** enables you to search the web, shop online and generate money for your favourite charity, all at the same time.

your own website. If a supporter uses this link to look for and purchase any item from Amazon, the referrer (that is, your organisation) gets a small percentage of that sale. Like the other sites, you need to register the organisation as the referrer.

Zubka (www.zubka.com) is an online recruitment website that supporters of the organisation can recommend friends and colleagues for jobs, and earn good rewards for it. As with all the above, you need to register with Zubka to benefit.

For many of these and other similar websites there is usually no requirement for the organisation to be a registered charity, but most will require you to have a bank account and some form of governance. In most cases the user gets a choice about which charity to support; eBay is an exception – the seller chooses which charity benefits.

The ABC of fundraising

A good idea I have seen on several charity websites has been suggestions and encouragement for supporters to raise money through their own events and activities; some include this link on their home page. One website includes the **ABC of Fundraising**, which lists 36 ideas; another has an **A to Z of fundraising ideas** and manages to get in a Z – **‘Zzzzzz...A pyjama party. Or a “wear pyjamas to work for a day!”**

Other websites encourage people to sign up online to receive a **fundraising pack**, which includes sponsorship forms and necessary legal information. These needn't be expensive; they could also be emailed to save printing costs – and also the planet!

Sign up to an email newsletter

Websites are an effective way of getting an instant sign up to various ideas and causes. As most organisations develop their 'emailings' – in particular email newsletters – the website should be the place to sign up immediately. Create a simple online form to enable this.

I would like to subscribe to your free monthly newsletter.

Name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Address (cont.)	<input type="text"/>
County	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Phone	<input type="text"/>
Fax	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>

There are now several agencies that help you maintain a **database** to send out your email newsletter – which is much more sophisticated than just using ‘bcc’ in your sent mail.

Your MailingList Provider (www.yourmailinglistprovider.com) and Constant Contact (www.constantcontact.com) are both reasonable and reliable.

Don't forget that if you maintain such a database you will need to register under the Data Protection Act. See www.ico.gov.uk – the website for the Information Commissioner's office – for more details.

In conclusion: is this all too complicated?

Well not really! If you already have a website this chapter should have given you some ideas for improving it and increasing the traffic to it. Too often websites are looked at once and never again. Having interactive sections and fundraising ideas will mean that your supporters will keep coming back (and earn some money for you), which also means that visitors will see updated information about your activities and projects.

If you don't have a website this chapter will hopefully encourage you to introduce one. Take some time to explore how to create a simple website that both supports and promotes your organisation. Get supporters involved in developing and testing the content and text: they are the people most likely to read and understand it. This has the added advantage of strengthening your own organisation by offering an opportunity for greater involvement.

Not too many people have yet mastered the art of creating websites – but it is getting easier and no doubt we all have a five year old in the family who can show us! New easy to use resources are appearing all the time, and **software** is becoming cheaper and easier to use. Many internet service providers (the organisations that provide our broadband and dialup services) provide software and good support, often with interesting templates as well as the know-how to create online forms. The website www.ictHub.org.uk/ includes a range of **free advice and support** to charities and community organisations.

There are also some good **internet training courses** specifically designed for community and faith groups, run by the Charities Aid Foundation www.cafonline.org and the Directory of Social Change www.dsc.org amongst others.

UK Fundraising (www.fundraising.co.uk) is an **excellent online resource** for the charity and not for profit sector and includes links to many groups – both commercial and not for profit – with some excellent ideas.

Finally, my advice is – **ask other charities** and your local business friends how they achieved an effective online presence. It is the way forward!

5

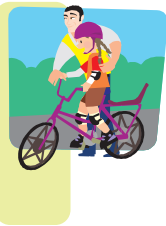
Fundraising and faith

Introduction

At a first glance these two terms seem incompatible; but for those in the 'faith' arena of course they are not: they would see that having faith can help raise money.

However, there is a more concrete link between fundraising and faith groups; not only does fundraising raise cash for the group's activities, but the activity of **fundraising can also play a key role in the group's development**. Faith groups need activity to exist, and many of the ideas I suggest in this chapter will enable a group to achieve both goals.

A first step ...



Stamford Hill in north London is home to many ultra orthodox Jewish groups. There is some contact between them but many are quite insular. Many men and boys study the Torah and the Talmud in study centres. One such centre wanted to try and raise some cash for its work, and the boys wanted to see if they could help.

Most of the boys cycle around the area and so the first idea was for a sponsored cycle ride. However, no one could think where the ride could take place or what its purpose would be. Eventually we came up with the idea of a sponsored **cycle and study**. We calculated that within a small radius there were around a dozen study centres and synagogues. The groups got together and the boys (from all the groups) were sponsored to ride from one centre to another. They stopped at each centre, where they were taught a passage or idea from the Torah. When they got back to the first centre, they had to relate to their parents what they had learnt at each centre, so completing the sponsorship. The event took around three hours; the parents and centres were delighted with the outcome, the boys enjoyed cycling around, and about £3,000 was raised, which was split amongst the centres competing.

From this idea, there are some variations:

- Walk or cycle from church to church, mosque to mosque etc.
- Walk or cycle around a town or village from one place of worship to another; this is an effective **interfaith event** as you can walk from a mosque to a church to a synagogue to a prayer hall.

- Sponsor the imams, priests, rabbis etc to walk or cycle from one place of worship to another in a **display of unity**.
- If long distances are involved, you could have a **car rally** instead of using bicycles or walking. The event could be an initiative test, with the teams having to find the answer to clues based at each place of worship or centre.

Some other ideas...



Food often plays an important role in faith activity, and many interfaith events take the opportunity to share food and the various cultural thinking around its importance. Here are a few ideas based around eating.

Get different members of your own community to submit their favourite recipes for a **recipe book**. Divide the book into sections, for example, recipes for particular festivals, different seasons and specific celebrations, vegetarian recipes, hors d'oeuvres, lunches and cakes. Get the book into a printable format (a PDF file is now easy to produce but even a Word document will work), print it and sell it!

Idea

It is surprising how many organisations and statutory bodies, when planning their events diary, clash with religious festivals, even though **faith calendars** are available. Why not produce your own, and if you can't sell them, just give them away. This is good PR, and their production will be a useful exercise in learning about other religions. You could produce them digitally using a local printer (so that you can print them as required), and perhaps the printer or another local company could sponsor them.

A few years ago, an interfaith group in the Worthing/south coast area wanted to raise some money for its activities and, after several food-type events, it had picked up a number of interesting tips and recipes. The group felt it would be a good idea to put these into a recipe book but then decided to extend the idea.

Worthing is home to a very large HM Revenue and Customs office, where some group members worked, so they used their contacts to get some of the senior management to submit their favourite recipes.

Worthing also includes many residential homes and so the group decided to write to the chefs/cooks of the homes to ask them to submit their favourite recipe. The idea then moved onto inviting local clergymen and imams to submit their recipes, and then several local radio presenters. The result – the *South Coast Faith Recipe Book* – was printed and sold out due to the extensive press and media interest. It raised over £2,000.

This is a good example of thinking about the natural networks around us and how we can use them to our advantage: for fundraising and for raising our profile. Many individuals are connected to several groups and the idea of producing a recipe book could be extended – for example, your office recipe book, your family recipe book and your road's recipe book.

And more food...

Religious festivals are often celebrated with meals, and many communities have a communal meal. A new Muslim group in Croydon decided to extend this tradition by celebrating its faith with a **cook-in** for the 80+ strong community, when each family was invited to contribute to a celebratory meal, paying a small entrance fee, and other members of the local community were invited to share the meal. During the evening a small auction was held for a set of cooking pans donated by the local shopping centre. The group is now planning a **celebrity cook-in**, sending out invitations to some of the well-known TV chefs.

Many faith communities rely on 'tea and sympathy', so why not extend the idea into a fundraising event? You could copy the idea of Macmillan Cancer Support's annual 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning', which is one of the biggest fundraising events in the UK. In 2007 an estimated 2 million people raised their mugs for Macmillan. The event took place in September when more than 50,000 people hosted a coffee morning, with each person drinking coffee making a donation to Macmillan.

The Willow Foundation varied this idea with the event '**A piece of cake**' when it invited supporters and friends to hold an afternoon tea party. Similarly, everyone eating a piece of cake made a donation to the Willow.

You could extend this idea to having an interfaith coffee morning, getting one community to host others. This would be a great opportunity both to meet new people and raise funds.

Other ideas ...

Idea

An **Easter egg hunt** is always popular, as is a competition for the best decorated Easter egg. You could also give prizes for the best **egg joke**.



Idea

Shrove Tuesday is a good opportunity to cook pancakes – and for organising a **pancake race**. For each race, charge a small entrance fee, and get someone to sponsor the prize. An interesting variation could be an interfaith contest whereby each faith group uses its own traditional food in the frying pan. You could also copy a famous weekly cookery show and run a timed omelette contest, from whole eggs to plate.



Faith festivals and celebrations

It is not unusual for faith groups to hold concert-type events. For example, many Chinese community groups celebrate the Chinese New Year with a street festival or community fair. Similarly, many celebrations are held at the Buddhist New Year, at the Hindu and Jain Diwali, at Chanukah in the Jewish community and Eid in the Muslim community. These celebrations, which are important fixtures in any faith calendar, are primarily there to celebrate or commemorate, but they could also be another opportunity to raise funds.

You could charge a small entry fee or, if not appropriate, make a tin or bucket collection at the event (remember that you need to register for such a collection – see chapter 2); take care that it doesn't detract from the celebration.

Faith venues can often also make excellent venues for **concerts and galas**. These can be musical evenings, both classical and popular, poetry or reading evenings, or a mixture of singing, readings or short plays. Produce a **programme** for the event, and try and persuade local companies and businesses to pay for a small advert in the programme to offset the cost.

And finally: did I hear someone mention seasonal cards ... ?

Idea

Cards are still a good source of income, and many are now labelled 'Season's' or 'Festive Greetings'. But there are other variations; many are now available in an electronic format, including cards covering the Chinese and Jewish New Years, Diwali good wishes and Sikh greetings. Join up to www.123greetings.com for a good choice. If you still send Christmas cards by snail mail do have a look at <http://www.christmas-cards.org.uk/>

We are now also seeing companies and businesses sending out e-cards instead of paper cards, and saying that the money that was previously being spent on postage, etc is instead being donated to their favourite charity. So why don't you approach your local businesses and suggest they donate to you?

Conclusion

This chapter shows that it is possible to mix fundraising with faith activity. For example, most of us like food, and it can be refreshing and fun to use food as an activity in our fundraising. Faith celebrations are important to us all, and food is often part of that celebration. As we know, involving our supporters and members in planning our events is part of our growth, and planning menus, buying food and getting the right utensils for the cooking is all part of the fun.

Many faith celebrations are, of course, based on an annual calendar, so many of these activities can be repeated with slight variations each year, which can give our supporters a programme to look forward to.

As with community fundraising, many of these activities and events might not involve a huge monetary return, and organising such fundraising can take effort, many volunteers and often a lot of risk. But as, they say, 'have faith' and the money will come in!

6

Marketing faith groups

Introduction

I hear two common phrases whenever I visit faith and community groups: 'I just haven't got any more time ...' and 'no one seems to know about us ...'.

This chapter is about the latter and I will outline some ideas for **marketing** faith and community groups. As for 'time', I will leave this to my management consultant colleagues – although sometimes we all need to work a little more efficiently in the time we have available.

Marketing, however, may seem a strange term for voluntary organisations. In the commercial world, marketing is fundamental. Marketing teams have to use techniques to create consumer awareness of the products/services and, unless a business pays due attention to its products/services and consumers' desires, it will not usually prosper long term.

Is the concept the same for the **voluntary sector**? Unfortunately, too many organisations make assumptions about the 'public' somehow getting to know about them without having any real marketing strategy. Just as organisations need financial and fundraising strategies, they also need to develop a marketing strategy that will include elements of advertising, branding, communications, direct marketing and public relations.

The name, the brand...

Sometimes it is not possible to change the name of an organisation. Sometimes it might be possible, but not appropriate, to change the name. Many a large company has changed its name and regretted choosing a new, unrecognisable one.

However, the concept of a brand extends far beyond just your name and logo; it includes an organisation's core values and every interaction you have with members and visitors. In effect, your brand creates and maintains your **reputation** and so reflects your members' **experience** of your organisation.



Haringey Shed is an inclusive theatre company in Tottenham, north London. It often needs to explain the 'Shed' part of its name (it derives from being established as an outreach group of the theatre company Chicken Shed) and it is now rethinking its name.

However, it has established a slogan – ‘**where everyone has a part to play**’ – which really does say everything about the organisation’s brand.

Successful branding is about promoting your **strengths**. Start by thinking about what you’re **good at** and what you **believe in** as an organisation. It might be worth creating a document listing your core values and standards about how you wish to operate. Haringey Shed, through an interactive process of consultation with staff, parents and users produced a ‘way forward’ document that explained the process of introducing more inclusive theatre to a wider audience across the borough and beyond. It also outlined how it expected staff and practitioners to interact with users and parents, stating that inclusion is primarily about positive interactions.

Do we advertise?

A few years ago a conversation about advertising would have probably concentrated on the various merits of newspaper or magazine advertising. Now we can also consider local radio, local TV channels, email advertising and the internet. But do we want or need to spend money on actual adverts? We have all seen TV adverts for some of the major overseas and medical charities, but for small faith and community groups it does seem a high cost without really knowing what the returns are going to be. So I think we need to explore other cheaper ideas and media.

Some ideas then...

So what will interest editors?

- Centre your story around an **individual** – preferably someone living locally – not the organisation.
- Give lots of **quotes** from individuals and try to include **photographs** of those making the quotes.
- Try and involve a **celebrity** in the story.



Despite the sceptics, **local newspapers** will publish positive stories about a local group, but they will not be interested in only ‘good’ news. Your press release needs to be an interesting **story** – either good or bad. Newspapers want items of news that their readers will want to read about – describing an interesting event, a slightly controversial issue, a local campaign that might affect them – and will not be interested in a boring press release simply recording ‘information’.

National Talking Newspapers and Magazines, which produces audio formats of local newspapers, wanted to increase its subscription base as well as raise more funds. It approached **Newsquest** (which publishes 17 daily and more than 330 weekly newspapers), to suggest a 'talking newspaper week', whereby newspapers would carry a story promoting the organisation's service and use the opportunity to sell more advertising space. Each story was personalised to the local area with a feature on a local reader.

Several advertisers were prompted to say in their adverts 'We are proud to support the work of Talking Newspapers.' It was a win-win position: the organisation got some good coverage and the local newspaper got some additional revenue.

A **school in Brighton** wanted to organise a hockey tournament for local faith, voluntary aided and state schools, and approached the local newspaper for sponsorship. Amazingly it agreed (I think the editor's children went to the school!); it printed the entry form for a couple of weeks and featured the event the week it happened.

A **church in Norwich** wanted to name three stray cats found in the church, and asked the local newspaper to get its readers to name them.

The **Saffron Walden Museum** needed a name for its new centre, and ran a competition through the local newspaper. The prize was a 'pot of gold' (well, actually 50 one pound coins), which was presented to the winner (the Heritage Quest Centre) by local celebrity Carenza Lewis (from Channel 4's 'Time Team') at the launch of the fundraising campaign.

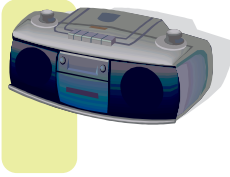
Bringing in a well known local resident will certainly help with your publicity and marketing. People like to meet celebrities and have their photograph taken with them. Celebrities are busy people, and often hard to contact, but they too want to meet 'their public'; they recognise that once you are well known it is part of the job to sign autographs and get involved in charity work.

Can we ever get on local radio?

There are more and more local radios appearing, including an increasing number of faith based channels. The problem is that their time for news is often limited at half hourly intervals so it is unlikely that you would be able to get an item included. There are some **news channels**, which might be easier to use, but you still need to present a **good story** that lasts for several minutes.

The church in Norwich story was replicated by a **village community centre** just outside Eastbourne, which had found a stray dog and needed a name for it. Another community centre, in Wales, needed a name for its new hall and ran a competition using the local radio station. The committee to choose the name comprised the radio station manager and the community centre manager, and one of the radio presenters was invited to the naming

ceremony. Involving the radio station brought positive publicity for the community centre and its activities became better known in the community.



However, the most effective radio story involved a local charity in Bristol that wanted public opinion on an issue relating to the care of children with disabilities. It was a **controversial subject** and the local radio station ran a phone-in with the charity's chief executive.

Most callers agreed with the charity's perspective, but even having negative callers meant the subject was at least being talked about in a public forum. Without directly asking for money the charity received unsolicited donations of over £2,000. The charity became much better known in the community, and gradually began receiving more calls from parents wanting support. It also received several negative phone calls from the public, but this gave the charity the opportunity to respond in a constructive fashion.

Should we get involved in direct marketing?

Again, this is a regular activity for large national charities, primarily for fundraising. Local faith and community organisations cannot afford the printing and distribution costs, so for me the answer is NO. However, one cheap idea is to do a **mail drop** in targeted roads or estates.

The cost of printing A5 flyers is relative low – find sources in Exchange and Mart or LOOT – and for under £100 you can print up to 5,000 leaflets. One enterprising charity decided to leave leaflets on cars parked up at a county show, and used nearly all of the 2,000 leaflets it had had printed. Other charities have distributed their flyers outside stations (with the permission of the station management). Other ideas include putting flyers inside newspapers (ask your local newsagent), in libraries, at reception areas in hospitals and on communal notice boards.

Should we get involved in public relations?

Reputation arises from what you do, what you say and what others say about you. In this age of fierce competition in all sectors, it can be an organisation's greatest asset. **Public relations** (PR) aims to manage reputation in order to gain understanding and support and influence opinion and behaviour.

These publications may be produced for members but you need to give thought to their wider circulation – amongst other groups, local councillors, businesses and so on. The annual report is also often a neglected tool and could be used to better effect. You don't have to spend a lot of money on printing it – you could gather together email addresses of groups, councillors and so on, and email them a copy with a brief message explaining why your group is important, and inviting people to contact you if they want to join or are able to help.

Idea

What can faith and community organisations do in terms of PR? The easiest, but often most neglected, methods are through **newsletters** and the organisation's **annual report**.



Other ideas

- Hold an **open day**.
- Offer to **speak** at meetings such as Rotary and Lions Clubs.
- Host events such as **business lunches or receptions**.
- **Sponsor** a local community event or offer prizes at local fairs.

Remember a good reputation is not earned overnight. It has to be carefully cultivated as understanding and support develop.

Can the internet help?

Internet service providers often provide **software** that help create websites, but whatever your final creation, I would suggest it contains the following features:

- **Contact details** of several people in the organisation.
- Information on **opening times and how to find** the organisation's venue(s).
- Information on the values and ethos of the organisation – that is, its **brand**.
- How to go about finding more – an **enquiry form**.
- A good mixture of **text and pictures**.
- Opportunities for **donating and fundraising** (see previous section on the internet and fundraising).

Don't forget to submit your site to the main search engines such as google, yahoo, so your site can be found when people search for you.

Conclusion

The steps to successful marketing and implementation in a faith and community organisation include:

- **analysing** your potential members and supporters and the environment in order to **identify** key opportunities for meeting their needs better and more profitably
- figuring out how to **act** on those opportunities, and then
- **implementing** your plan.

The process doesn't have to be cumbersome. Five-year plans and novel-length documents are not required. The logic of the **action** is what is important.

Idea

One thing I am certain about is the place of the world wide web in our marketing strategy. Faith and community organisations need a **website**, which must be up to date, clear and easy to navigate. Not only do funders look for a website, but potential supporters and members also look for information, for example about opening times, contacts and activities.



As I said in my introduction, the purpose of this booklet is to give organisations some good ideas about how to fundraise. Perhaps we could have called it 'That's a good idea!', as I wanted to stimulate some new ideas in fundraising. However, many of these ideas are not that new and have been tried and tested in a variety of situations; it's just that no one knows about them.

So what are the ingredients of a successful fundraising event?

An event planner once tried to convince me that the most successful ingredient of her events was never delegating, as you could never rely on anyone! She might be right in some circumstances, but this approach is not one for us in the voluntary sector. In order to achieve our goals we need to get people involved at all stages of planning and implementation. Their commitment is critical at all levels and, although we will sometimes need to chase them to get something done, we cannot underestimate the importance of their participation. We simply have to devise a system of working and action plans that ensure their roles are clearly understood and followed through to make it all happen.

Secondly, we must be prepared to be flexible in our approach and delivery. Whether we are organising a float at a carnival or a 5 a side football match, however good our planning for events, we often have to change our plans at the last minute. You can guarantee something will change your well-planned timetable and if you can't be prepared to alter your plans your event will fail. Similarly, you can almost guarantee that someone will forget the flowers for the guest speaker or the minibus will break down, so you must build a contingency for these eventualities into your planning. (Footnote: we must also learn not to PANIC!)

Thirdly, and for me this is what is attractive about fundraising in general, is that we need to be creative and think outside the box. The creativity of the organisations in this booklet is staggering, and somehow the more creative the idea the more successful a fundraising event has been. Although the original concept might be quite straightforward, it can nevertheless be rethought to make it really attractive and **exciting** to potential punters. There are so many demands on people's time (and purses) that they will choose an event to support that looks **interesting and different**.

So that is our challenge. Whilst trying to create events that work and will work well on the day, how can we find that additional **spark** that will attract both new and existing

supporters? Sometimes the punters will come not to support the cause or organisation but simply because they find the event interesting or different. Of course, once hooked we have the opportunity to follow through.