

St. John the Baptist, Crowthorne
Hardship Fund

Purpose

Coronavirus restrictions have had an adverse effect on the finances of many and this fund has been set up to help alleviate this hardship. The purpose of the fund will be to provide immediate assistance to individuals and families who have a ‘meaningful connection’* with St. John’s to prevent them from falling into new debt directly associated with the impact of Coronavirus. Clearly the government has a role to play in supporting people over the long term, but it is expected that for some this help will take too long to establish and leave them in short term financial difficulties.

Examples of things which may be funded

- The cost of special food or medical aids or equipment
- Electricity – to put £20 on a prepayment meter
- A council tax payment
- Medicines – to pay prescription charges – if exemptions can’t be claimed
- Travel expenses – to attend hospital, doctor or other medical appointments or for visiting purposes
- Emergency car repairs where car use is essential
- Payment of fees for a course or travelling expenses to assist people to earn a living
- Replacing essential broken household items such as a washing machine
- Mobile phone top ups of £20 where phone is essential
- The cost of essential personal items such as school uniform or shoes
- Other items which, in the applicant’s circumstances, are considered essential

What is unlikely to be funded

- Food (Crowthorne Foodbank is available for this. Vouchers can be obtained from the Vicar)
- Mortgage payment – The mortgagor should be asked to provide a capital and interest payment holiday
- Rent – There are new rules to prevent evictions during lockdown
- Any costs associated with people running their own business

How do we help?

- We can award grants to pay, or part pay, for items, services or facilities that help alleviate hardship and need
- Grants will be given for specific purposes. We cannot commit to providing long term or regular grants
- We cannot award grants for services that should be provided by the Local Authority or the Government.

Grants will only be made based on the funds we have accumulated for this purpose. If the Fund is empty, then no further grants can be made.

How can a grant be applied for?

Please supply the information on the attached application form and email it to the Vicar - vicar@crowthorneparishchurch.org.uk or post it through the church letter box marked ‘Hardship Fund’ and for the attention of the Vicar. The application will then be assessed, and someone will get back to the applicant. We will need to be made aware of the applicant’s financial circumstances before making grants as we need to ensure that we are being good stewards of the funds that we hold.

Once a grant has been agreed the applicant will need to supply their bank details for the grant to be paid directly into their bank account. In exceptional circumstances, an alternative method of payment, covered by a receipt, may be agreed.

Who can we help?

Anyone who has a ‘meaningful connection’* to St. John’s who is suffering hardship and is in need.

* ‘meaningful connection’ with St. John’s is anyone who attends the Church in any way whether as a regular attendee, or as a participant in a regular Church related group for example Minus 5s, Mothers’ Union. Housebound Parishioners receiving Home Communion and/or the Weekly News are also eligible.

All applications will be treated in confidence and should, wherever possible, be made by the person in need.