

St. Kea PCC

Establishment of an Acts 435 Advocate.

“Then they would give the money to each as any had need” Acts Chapter 4 verse 35

**“ACTS 435 is designed to help us fulfil Christ’s calling to give to those in need”
Archbishop Sentamu**

What is it?

Acts 435 has been established and then rolled out from the Archdiocese of York.

ACTS 435 recognises that people want to give, often a little, sometimes more, to people with genuine need. When need seems to be constant, giving can sometimes feel hit and miss, and choosing between charities can be difficult. ACTS 435 puts people who can give in touch with people who are in need with the Church as the physical, face-to-face forum to enable online giving.

In short it acts as a “clearing house” between needs and a way of meeting those needs.

Advocate role

Liz Baird has been approached and is happy to accept the role of advocate. This will involve her in meeting with applicants in urgent need of cash. Together with the applicant (whose identity she will check) an application form will be completed describing the need. This becomes the applicant’s “advert” that is placed on the Acts 4:35 website so that potential donors become aware.

Once a donor has (or donors have) agreed to support and transferred funds to the central bank, the advocate is notified and the funds transferred to the local account. The advocate will then make arrangements to provide funds to the applicant.

This could be cash, cheque or in some instances providing a cheque or making a payment to a third party (e.g. paying an electricity bill) dependent on an individual’s circumstances.

There are other advocates locally but Liz will only work with applicants referred via CAP in order to loosen a particular bottleneck.

Kea Church role

It is important that the senior leadership in the Church is informed and is supportive of what ACTS 435 is trying to achieve.

Essentially the local advocate and hence organization must be under the “ownership and authority” of the local church for the following reasons: -

- To ensure integrity and accountability in respect of the handling of the money

- and compliance with the Charities Act for the money they have in their control.
- That each partner organisation has their own Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- A GDPR Data Protection Policy is in place and monitored.

Whilst the church will have oversight of the operation I would ask that the flow of funds are kept outside of PCC accounts. As PCC members well know we have been working hard to reduce the number of church bank accounts and opening a new one, with all of the controls required will put pressure on those I am trying to take it from.

I propose to open an account at a different bank possibly Co-op or CAF bank. Liz would have a chequebook and a cash card and Sian Goddard has agreed to act as a second signatory. I will examine bank statements and supporting documents on a monthly basis until another suitable independent person is found.

Is there a cost to Kea Church?

The costs to the church would be minimal in that Acts 435 is effectively acting as a conduit for donations to the needy. The church is not expected to contribute to that given out. Given the budget report on this agenda, the church is in no position to contribute.

The only costs that may be incurred would be bank charges although this will be a factor in choosing a bank. Based on current Lloyds bank charges this is likely to be a little under £100 per annum.

As the ministry proposed has similarities with Foodbank a suitable donation from the Missions Giving budget. That is a decision for that team, not the PCC as it is a delegated responsibility.

John Taylor
Treasurer