

CORNERSTONE

*Long term financial growth
with easy to follow steps.*



Contents

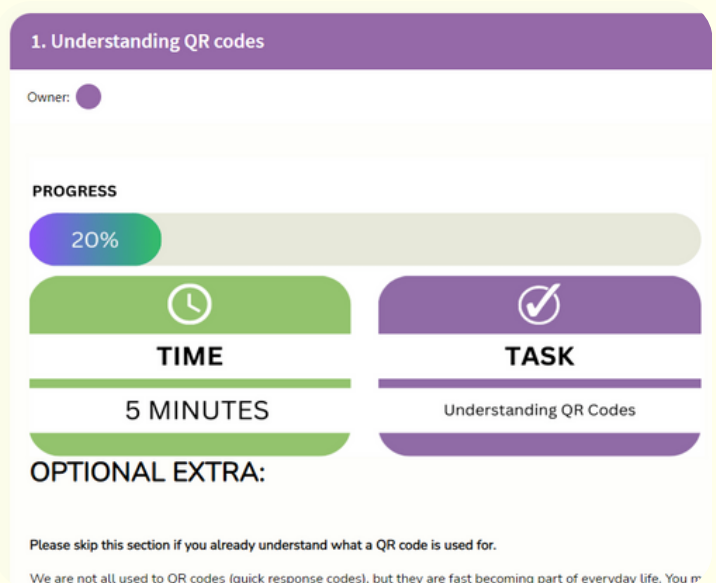
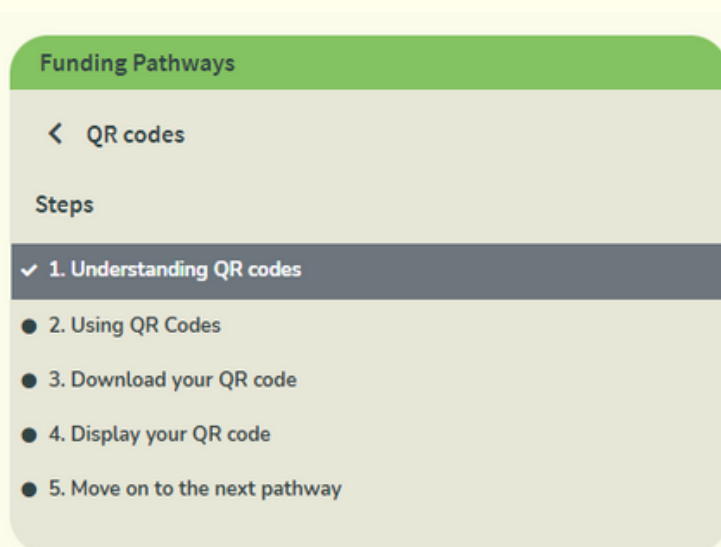
Introduction	3
Benefits of Cornerstone	4
The Six Stages	6
How to use Cornerstone	7
MINT	8
IDEA	9
How to get Online	10
Help and Advice	11



Introduction

The ministry and mission of parish churches is mostly funded through the **incredible generosity** of those who give to it through money, time and talents. But when times are tough, financial struggles can seem overwhelming. Cornerstone has been developed by the National Giving Team, with the aim that it will take you on a journey to understand your church's giving culture and financial situation. It aims to leave you with clear, simple steps to **grow giving and income**.

Cornerstone is supported by an online platform that helps show areas where you can focus your resources to get the best results. The platform has **easy to follow** step-by-step actions which are called **Pathways**. Each step in a Pathway shouldn't take longer than 20 minutes; you can see an example below.

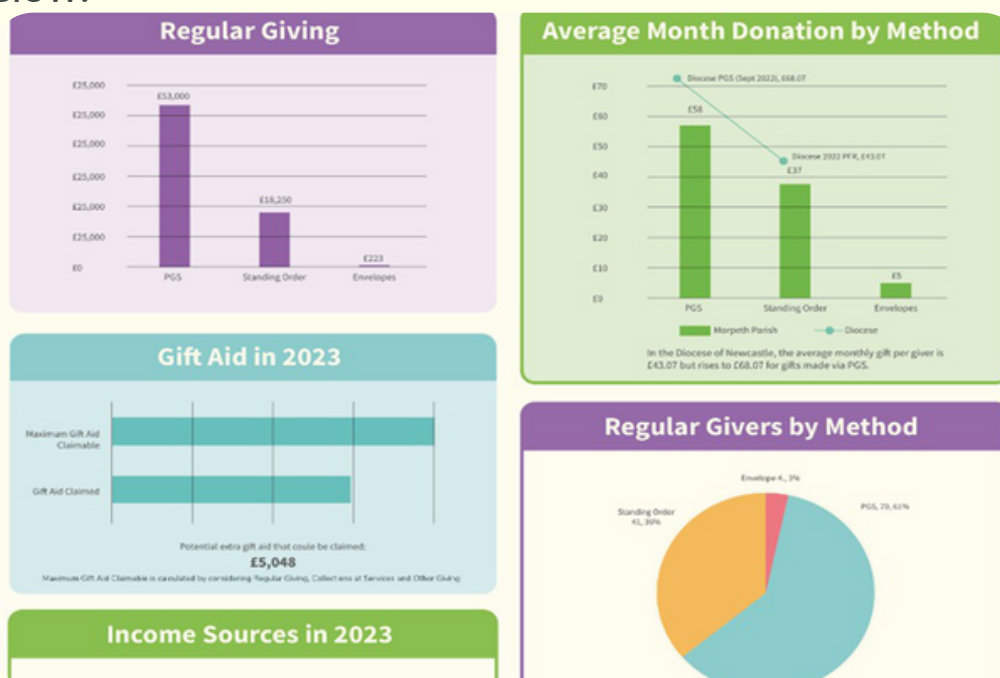


Benefits of Cornerstone

We recognise that many churches would like to have more conversations with their worshipping communities about money and generosity but can find it difficult or feel unsure where to start. Cornerstone is designed to look at all aspects of **generosity** and to develop a culture where generous giving is embedded in the discipleship of worshippers and in the wider community.

Cornerstone builds on and celebrates the **existing generosity** within your parish. It recognises that each parish is unique and, as a such, it is not designed to be a “one size fits all” solution, but instead it encourages you to look at your **own parish situation and circumstances**. This is done by looking at your parish data, seeing where additional changes could be made and then choosing the Pathways that will help you make those changes.

The Cornerstone platform converts your parish data into easy to read graphs as shown below.



Benefits of Cornerstone

As part of the Cornerstone process, parishes are encouraged to ask questions of themselves and their situation. From here, your Diocesan Giving Advisor will help to identify areas of giving practice that could be improved; these are chosen to meet the needs of your church or parish. You are then **guided through simple steps** to take appropriate action on these areas. These steps, as mentioned previously, are contained in Pathways, which are chosen by you to build on the great work you already do.

One of the main benefits of Cornerstone is that each Pathway has been designed as a series of short tasks, each around 20 minutes long, so that it doesn't feel too much of a burden. Our aim is to make this **as easy as possible** while **delivering great results**.

One of the churches involved in the first round of pilot schemes reported an increase in giving of £15,000 in the first year of focussing on generosity. Although we cannot promise the same outcome for all parishes, this success story demonstrates the possibilities.

Funding Pathways

< Maximise Gift Aid

Steps

1. Claiming Gift Aid through the Parish Giving Scheme

2. Getting started

3. Registering with the Government Gateway to Claim Online

4. Create spreadsheets in the right format

5. Making the claim

6. Identify givers who have not declared Gift Aid

7. Send an email

8. Review your Gift Aid form

9. Promoting Gift Aid

10. Say thank you and acknowledge the processing of any Gift Aid forms.

11. Send an annual thank you letter

12. Reissue declarations every five years

13. GDPR and record keeping

14. Diarise an audit

15. Move on to the next pathway

1. Claiming Gift Aid through the Parish Giving Scheme

Owner: Status: ☐ Complete

PROGRESS

6%

TIME

5 MINUTES

TASK

Gift Aid through PGS

Joining the Parish Giving Scheme can make claiming Gift Aid simple, but it is optional!

Donors can set up a Direct Debit with PGS online, over the phone, or by filling in a gift form at church. This can be made on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis. Each donation is restricted to a parish church chosen by the donor and cannot be used elsewhere. The donation will be passed back to the church of the donor's choosing by the 10th of the month. Any eligible Gift Aid will be sent separately once it has been received from HMRC.



The Six Stages

What's involved?

We have summarised the Cornerstone process into six easy to follow stages.

1. **Invitation** - You are invited to participate in the Cornerstone process by your Diocesan Giving Advisor.

2. **Briefing** - During a webinar you are briefed on what's involved and what the expectations are.

3. **Research** - You will gather the parish's data and other information.

4. **Workshops** - Face to face sessions take place, examining the data that was gathered during the 'research' stage.

5. **Pathways** - You will choose actions/Pathways that will make the greatest impact on giving in your parish.

6. **Implementation** - The parish works through the chosen Pathways in 20 minute chunks.



How to use Cornerstone

The **first phase** of using Cornerstone is to complete a short **questionnaire** which your Diocesan Giving Advisor will send to you. This gives an insight into the generosity culture that exists in your parish. It uses **MINT and IDEA** (detailed on the next page) as a basis for understanding what the current situation is.

We will look at your parish's **financial data**; this is based on your **Parish Return** and we will also ask you to share some information that is not available through the Parish Return's system. Using the questionnaire and financial data, we can help identify Pathways that will help foster generosity in your parish and build giving to **sustain your mission and ministry**.

These Pathways can be found on the online Cornerstone platform which your Diocesan Giving Advisor will give you access. Individual activities can be allocated to the person best suited within your parish to take the necessary action. Once all of the selected Pathways have been completed, it's time to review the culture and financial data and select some new Pathways.

The screenshot displays the Cornerstone platform interface, which is divided into three main sections:

- Suggested Pathways:** A purple header section containing three cards: "GDPR", "How Can I Introduce Contactless Giving into my Church?", and "Fresh Expressions".
- Agreed Action Plan:** A light blue header section with a circular icon in the top right corner.
- Your Active Pathways:** A green header section containing three columns: "Parish Finances", "Parish Outreach", and "Parish Culture". Each column lists pathways with an owner (TSM) and a progress bar.

Parish Finances			Parish Outreach			Parish Culture		
Pathway	Owner	Progress	Pathway	Owner	Progress	Pathway	Owner	Progress
Maximise Gift Aid	TSM	100%	QR codes	TSM	100%	Add new		
Reduce your parish outgoings	TSM	100%	QR codes		100%			
Add new			Fresh Expressions	TSM	100%			
			Add new					





In order to grow your church's income by encouraging giving, there are four areas you need to focus on, and they helpfully form the acronym MINT. If you have these things in place, you have created the most effective environment for people to give.

Mechanisms: You have the right mechanisms for giving to take place, such as Parish Giving Scheme direct debit, contactless giving, online giving, legacies, Gift Aid and so on.

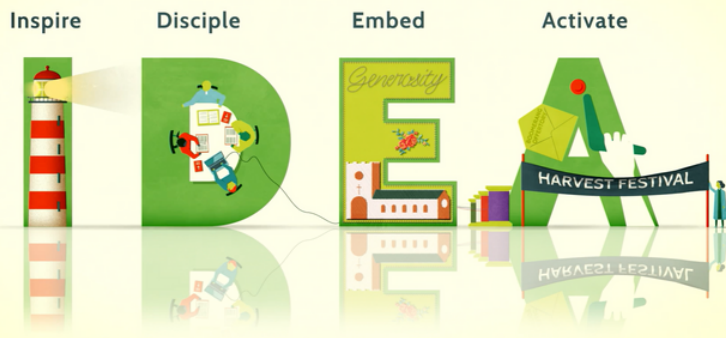
Impact: You show the impact of people's giving and how it enables the church's ministry and mission.

Need: You explain the need for people to give, so they can see how important it is that they give.

Trust: You build trust, so that people have confidence that the church will spend their gifts wisely and well.

Understandably, many parishes focus on the 'mechanisms' section, as they are tangible and easy to measure. However, we can't neglect the other areas, they are every bit as important and need equal attention. There is a multiplier effect with these four areas; the more you develop one area, the greater the impact of the work you do in the other areas.





Growing a generous culture is also essential. This is where we grow in our understanding of God's generosity to us and share that generosity through our ministry and mission. To grow a generous culture there are four things you need to do well and they helpfully form the acronym IDEA.

Inspire: Inspire people through generous leadership and celebrating generosity within the life of the church.

Discipleship: Disciple members, through resources, teaching and learning, so people can grow in an understanding of God's generosity towards them, and how they can live generous lives.

Embed: Embed generosity in the life of the church, in its plans, services and ministry and weave it into everything the church does.

Activate: Activate generosity by providing opportunities for people to grow in generosity and apply what they have discovered.

Click [here](#) for a video explaining MINT and IDEA.



How to get online

Your **Diocesan Giving Advisor** will invite you to the Cornerstone platform, you will then receive an email from this email address:

do-not-reply@cofecornerstone.org, with the subject “Invitation to join [Parish Name]” From this email you can accept the invitation and you will then be prompted to enter some account information and a password.

Once the initial sign-up process has been completed you will be able to head to **cofecornerstone.org** at any time to access your account.

FAQ's:

Q: I have been told I should receive an invitation but nothing has appeared in my inbox.

A: Sometimes it can take some time to receive your invitation via email. Please also check your spam/junk folders, if you are still experiencing issues please inform your Diocesan Giving Advisor, and they will raise a request on your behalf.

Q: When I accept the invitation to Cornerstone the link doesn't work.

A: The acceptance link inside the email expires for security reasons after a set period. Please ask your Diocesan Giving Advisor to resend your invitation.



Help and Advice

We hope you find this exercise valuable and that you see giving and generosity in your church grow. Your experience and feedback is welcomed as it will help make Cornerstone into an exciting and effective tool for the whole Church. Your **Diocesan Giving Advisor** will be available to help with any part of the process, or to have a wider conversation about **giving and generosity in your church**. Their details can be found [here](#).

Contact Us:

If you are having trouble logging onto the platform please contact your Diocesan Giving Advisor.

If you are logged on to the platform and something isn't working or needs fixing please use the chat icon in the lower right-hand corner of your screen and one of the team will be in touch.

