

Literature checklist

The literature is a vital part of the Giving in Grace programme. This document presses the pause button for a quick, quality review of what you are asking people to read.



Has your thoughtful and well-crafted literature been spell checked and proof read to root out the unintended howler? Is it going to the right people via a mailing list that is both comprehensive and differentiated and which respects our GDPR responsibilities? Pause a moment and check.

The mailing list

We want to make the right ask to the right people so that they can make a response that is appropriate for them. In one church one of the biggest givers did not receive a clergy ask letter at all while her son, who had not attended church for four years and no longer lived at home or even in the same city, was asked to increase his giving.

That kind of mistake is never intentional, is usually forgiven but can have a reputational cost. Review your database, your mailing list. Is it:

- *Comprehensive*: including all those whom you want to receive a letter and missing no one out.
- *Differentiated*: dividing the list into different groupings: Leader, Planned, Plate and, possibly, Friends in the wider community.
- *Compliant*: observing people's privacy expectations

Do double check the guidance at [Building the Database](#) on differentiating the mailing list given the requirements of UK GDPR and PECR with regard to electronic communications such as email.

The audience

Try to see your literature from the point of view of the person who receives it. If you can describe and identify the look of a 'normal' mailing from your church, then be assured that your congregation can as well!

Does your Giving in Grace communication stand out as a bit different from a normal church communication? Does it look like something that invites both attention and response? Your literature will land in homes saturated with high quality direct mail. We can't compete; we don't need to. We just have to give our literature some thought. One fundraising consultant suggests asking five questions before mailing:

- Do I want to open this?
- Why should I take time to read this?
- Why should I respond to this?
- When should I respond to this?
- Will anyone notice if I don't respond?

For hard copy literature a template for a mailing-out envelope and a response envelope are available and will help things along. Find them in Downloads at [A Literature Checklist](#)



Quality hard copy

In a hi-tech world Giving in Grace still defaults to the personal touch of a hand written salutation and sign-off. The editable Canva templates for the brochure and response forms ensure a good design standard and ease of hard copy printing. Do consider professional printing of the brochures, locally or via internet printing, for a cost effective quality finish.

Small office colour printing can give reasonable quality brochures and may be appropriate for a smaller mailing list. Church office printing is adequate for the response forms, response envelopes and clergy letters. Avoid black and white printing. Avoid photocopies. Avoid anything that looks cheap. If some literature at least will be picked up at church it must stand out and look as personal as it can.

Do what you reasonably can to keep costs down but, sadly, there may be criticism whatever you do! If it looks half decent, someone will complain about the cost of printing. If you post the literature, someone will complain about the stamps. See this criticism for what it often is: deflection to trivia so that people don't need to engage with the core issue.

Proof reading

This is an art that not all of us possess. It's not just a spell check, it's a sense check also. An early Giving in Grace document referred to '*funerals and other forms of fundraising*'! Ask someone who has not been involved in the preparation of the literature to bring fresh eyes, to 'red team' the brochure, letters, response forms. Like an inspired Rugby League full back you need someone who can tackle the howlers before they hit the try line.

Cross-checking packages to the database

Are you sending the right letter and response form to the right person? Before you send out the literature packages, check that each person's package contains the right literature. We don't want a Leader letter from the Vicar going to someone who attends less frequently and gives via the open plate.

Distributing the literature

Consider how best to distribute the literature in your church and, where appropriate, your community? For example, a rural church writing to its church friends in the community who rarely attend will probably mail that literature but hand out the rest on Sunday.

Posting letters is efficient but costly. If some literature is handed out in church make sure the process is

courteous and personal. Don't thrust literature at people as they leave the building. Another option is to deliver letters by hand to each home. If so, as far as possible deliver face to face, not through the letter box; it's too impersonal.

The reply envelope

A template for a hard copy reply envelope is provided that can be sent out with the literature. Always pre-address the reply envelope with a personal name, not a post holder ('The Planned Giving Officer').

The reply envelope with the response form can be returned by hand, probably to the church on Sunday. But if you want it mailed back or if the literature was mailed out in the first instance, then there must be a full mailing address on the reply envelope, and a stamp.



Digital communication

Many churches use of email and other digital communications. If you are doing this for Giving in Grace be alert to privacy issues under Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (*PECR*). make sure you have your consents. Check out the technical guidance at [Building the Database](#).

The generic brochures can be uploaded to the church website. Differentiated online [response forms](#) can compliment, even replace paper forms. You can link to differentiated online [clergy ask letters](#) from email or messaging services. Check your hyperlinks work.

Work your social media. Explain the what and why of Giving in Grace. Tell stories of how giving makes an impact. Encourage people to read the literature, on paper or online. Consider the content and frequency of Facebook posts. Pay attention to how Giving in Grace is communicated as someone else may be responsible for social media content.