



Statement on Fundraising Practice

Following the reporting of the death of Mrs Olive Cooke in the tabloid press, a lifelong donor and fundraiser who it was reported took her own life after constant direct mail requests from charities, this summer has seen unprecedented attention given to fundraising.

The Government announced in September 2015 that it was accepting in full the recommendations made by Sir Stuart Etherington in his Independent Review, which included among other things.

- i. Greater fundraising regulation and the development of a new fundraising preference service, to allow people to opt out of being contacted for fundraising purposes by charities.
- ii. That charity's must have an 'opt out' statement on direct mail to supporters and they may have to move to an 'opt in' system for all communications (including newspaper adverts) depending on EC recommendations. The font size for statements should be a minimum of 10 point.
- iii. Donors' data must not be sold and sharing made difficult unless the donor has expressly agreed.
- iv. Sanctions to be introduced for charities around breaches of the new regulations.

In addition, all charities were encouraged to review the governance of their fundraising activities, and ensure that their Board of Trustees are fully aware of the organisations fundraising strategy and activities.

St Mary's would like to reassure all supporters that our trustee board has a separate fundraising/income generation committee to oversee fundraising activities. In addition, assurance is given to the board, every 6 weeks that St Mary's has not purchased external contact details, has not used an external fundraising company for direct sales. That our charity has used minimum font sizes on all permissions information and incorporated an opt-out clause on fundraising communications, has not sold any data, or shared any data without explicit consent.

St Mary's is a member of the Fundraising Standards Board at present and will apply to be a member of the new fundraising regulator, once details are announced. We have an ethical fundraising policy and we work to that alongside the fundraising code of practice, which is at present drawn up by the Institute of Fundraising.

Fundraising is very important to us. We will respond sensitively, and ensure we meet all changes, but we cannot stop asking as we need to put our beneficiaries at the heart of what we do.