

## Guide to Street Collections

Street collections or Flag Days are a very successful way of raising money. They do require a good deal of planning, but with an enthusiastic group of volunteers and a well chosen location, you will not only raise money, but also raise awareness for your organisation. One of the great benefits of holding a Flag Day is that they can reach a very large selection of your local community.

### ***Getting Started***

#### **Obtaining a permit**

You will need to apply for a permit from your local authority to hold a Flat Day, or if you are collecting in London, the local police must be informed. Remember to do this well in advance (as soon as you are able to), as there are many other charities applying for permits and they may have prior claims to the particular date you want.

Collections on 'private property' ie forecourts of supermarkets, shopping centres, airports, inside a football stadium or inside a public house do not require a permit, but you will need written permission from the owner/management.

### ***Planning Ahead***

#### **Volunteers**

In order to maximise the day, you will need to ensure that you have a good supply of enthusiastic volunteers. These can be either through your organisation or through community networking. You may find placing a small advert in your local newspaper and the Volunteer Centre will attract helpers. Occasionally you may find student groups are willing to help with street collections. Ask volunteers if they can get their friends, family and colleagues to help.

NB. Remember to check the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all new volunteers.

Set up a rota for the day, making sure that volunteers don't collect for more than a few hours at a time. Have a central location for the volunteers to meet before and after their shift. Use your contacts to obtain somewhere central to the location, preferably someone's house. This can act as a meeting point to provide refreshments and also as a place to safely store money collected.

#### **Location**

Your choice of location when collecting is essential in order to access the maximum number of people. Collectors should be positioned in well populated areas and where the passer by can think about whether they want to donate money. Standing directly outside a

shop door is not ideal, as it will not give people enough time to consider if they want to support your group. An ideal location is one in which the passer by can see the collector well in advance and give them enough time to think about donating.

## **Date**

Although the time you choose may not be imperative to a successful collection, it is a good idea to think about the time of year to hold your collection. During warmer months there will be more people out and about. Also, which day of the week is best for collecting? Saturdays are usually best in busy shopping centres.

## **Materials you could use**

- A good supply of sealed collection boxes
- Flag day stickers (this is not a legal requirement)
- ID cards for your collectors
- A good supply of information leaflets

## ***On the day***

### **Briefing volunteers**

Ideally all volunteers will need to attend a briefing session either on the day or shortly before. This is an opportunity to explain the regulation that collectors must follow, distribute collection materials and brief them about the work of your organisation – this can be provided in the form of a handout.

### **Regulations to be followed**

- A certificate of authority must be carried by the collectors at all times
- Collectors must occupy a stationary location and not more than two collectors may stand in the same place
- Collectors must be at least 30 metres apart
- All collectors must be 16 years of age or over
- Collectors must not shake the box or solicit a donation – ie not ask directly for a donation
- All collection boxes or buckets must be properly sealed.

### **Counting of money**

Arrangements should be made for the money to be brought to the central location at the end of each volunteer's shift. Boxes should be opened and re-sealed before the next volunteer takes them out on to the street.

At the end of the day all money must be counted in the presence of two people and banked accordingly.

You may find it useful to keep a record of how much was collected at each location, so if you hold future collections, you will know which locations are the most profitable.

## ***After the Collection***

### **Thanking collectors and supporters**

With any type of fund-raising it is important to thank your collectors and donors. Sending a thank you card to all the collectors will help in securing their help in the future.

### **Tell the press**

Some local authorities may ask you to inform them how much was collected and to advertise this in the local newspaper. It is always a good idea to tell the press how the collection went as this is a great way of raising awareness to your case and thanking the public who supported you. See the guides to the media for more information on how to do this.

