

How we did it! Taking contactless payments at our church event

St Peter's Church, Hinton St Mary PCC, Blackmore Vale Deanery

"It was a revelation to us!"

I thought you would like to know about the use of Sumup card machines at our recent Open Gardens fundraiser. Despite a variable mobile signal in the village, we successfully used both the Sumup Air and the standalone Sumup 3G (but did not use the printer function) card machines. I did some testing over the couple of weeks prior to the event just to make sure I could successfully deal with transactions, but fingers were still crossed on the day! I did test them using WIFI at home, which also worked well, but we were not able to access a decent WIFI signal in the area of our event, so relied on the mobile signal – generally 4G.

This fundraising event for the Church attracting around 500 people over the weekend was a great success and despite not advertising the ability to pay by card on any of our advertising, we received payments of just over £1,500 using the machines, which represented over 20% of our total receipts. Any apprehension about using contactless was quickly allayed. The machines were easy to use by even the most non-techno minded volunteer after a short tutorial. The visitors seemed very pleased with being able to pay by card. They happily paid by card at the entrance to the event, at the stalls selling plants, books and collectables and even buying their afternoon tea and cake as an alternative to cash. In fact, people often said "Oh great we can pay by card!" Sometimes they had run out of cash, so it might have been a sale we wouldn't otherwise have made. It was a revelation to us!

The process of setting up the profile was easy with the help of the SumUp manual provided by the Diocese, and Sumup onboarding, which were very helpful. The Onboarding team at Sumup contacted me subsequently by email/by phone and I just had to provide them with a Minute confirming the appointment of the Treasurer in whose name the profile was set up and also a copy of the bank statement of the PCC, to prove the business address of the Church which was at the house of the Treasurer.

As recommended in the manual, I set up a dedicated new email (gmail) account, so going forward any treasurer can utilise this for either the Sumup machines or for Treasurer business. I did not set up separate employee profiles as I just wanted to keep things simple this time, but the Sumup team gave me full instructions.

I have packed each of the machines safely away for our next event. Sumup say that the profile will not be deleted through non-use, but for safety I will make a small transaction (£1) using the profile on a monthly basis.

I would be happy to recommend these machines for church events and would be willing to speak to any other parish reps who were thinking about these machines and help them with the setting up of the profile. After the event, Sumup provided a detailed breakdown of each transaction and the money was transferred into the Church's bank account within two days, less their small fee. Their UK help desk, accessible by phone or email have been very helpful. I am really impressed by their reporting.

I have attached three pictures taken of visitors using the machine at the gate of our Gardens Open event. I cannot say that we would not have received the £1,500 in cash if the card facility had not been available, but I think that the ability to pay by card was very helpful and we would certainly use it again when fundraising – at a small or large event.

Secretary to the PCC, Hinton St Mary