



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

How do we measure up in welcoming visitors?

- Do an audit: Get people from other churches in your benefice or deanery to visit your church indicating positive or off-putting aspects.
- Visit local heritage attractions in your area to see how you measure up professionally.
- Tell visitors you are open by placing a board outside. Invite them to explore and discover.
- Think about first impressions and make your church tidy and welcoming.

From tourists to pilgrims

Communicating our Christian faith to visitors

- People are all on different stages of life's journey so don't want to be overwhelmed.
- Have a simple notice or leaflet about what Christians believe and a contact telephone number or e-mail address.
- Be aware of those that may come for solace and provide a quiet and comfortable space, perhaps with a carefully chosen piece of art or sculpture for reflection.
- Keep it simple. Too many notices and too much clutter can intrude and that special moment can be lost. We're aiming for visitors to experience a building that lifts their spirits and speaks to them about the presence of God.
- Some of the best suggestions on how churches can respond to the needs of visitors can be found in 'Encouraging visitors on a spiritual journey' by the Revd Eileen McLean, former Vicar of Bamburgh, Northumberland. It's based on her research during a sabbatical in 2006 but still relevant! Available here. <http://cvta.org.uk/resources/encouraging-visitors-booklet>.
- SGM Lifewords are an effective way of getting the message of Christianity across when your church cannot be manned. They even have a special selection of resources for historic churches which use architecture as a starting point for prayer and reflection. Visit the website <http://www.sgmlifewords.com/uk/welcome-sgm-lifewords>
- Visit the excellent website of the Churches Visitor and Tourism Association for more suggestions <http://cvta.org.uk>