



The Welcome Audit of your church

“I believe in Jesus the Welcomer”

“Christian Welcome is not just about being nice to visitors, it is about incorporating new people into the Body of Christ”



Do you agree with this statement? Write your own statement of what you think welcome means. How a newcomer and visitor would feel. How would you like them to have gone away from the church different from the moment they came?

Even though many people come to churches – how are they drawn into more than just a historical monument but into a living Christian community?

Becoming a stranger

The only way to know how a stranger feels is to become one
Try visiting a betting shop.

***First
impressions
leave lasting
impressions***

A Welcome for children and families

- Do we make clear that parents with children are welcome?
- Is there something for babies and small children to do during the service?
- Is there a space for children during the service to draw and listen?
- Is there somewhere parents can take small children if they need to without a fuss during the service?
- Do we do interesting things for children in the service?
- Do we sing songs they will like, or old songs?
- Do we provide a welcome person/face that children and young people will like and know?

- As children, what do you like about coming to church?
- And what do you not like?

Action to take!



A Welcoming Church Exterior

Finding the church

- Signposts
- Church trails
- Brown Signs

Action to take!

Approaching the Church

- Parking
- First impressions
- Church Notice Board
- How attractive and welcoming is it?
- Beware negative signs – e.g. No parking here, No entry
- Are your service times made simple + outcomes? (e.g. BCP and CW are “in-house” and mean nothing)
- Are the contact details displayed, name, address, phone number (academic qualifications not necessary)?
- What about “outcomes” of the experience?
- Is there information for disabled people?

Action to take!

Outside Area

- Often more important than the church for people
- Are paths neat and in good order?
- How neat are the building surroundings? Do they say “ We care” or “We neglect”?

Action to take!



A Welcoming Church Interior

What is the building saying about itself?

- What are the impressions created by architecture furnishings and fittings, light, smell etc?
- A museum? A holy place?
- A homely place? A forsaken place?

**Mission Statement of
a pub in Finedon**

***"Your next visit
is our success"***

What is the building saying about its life and family?

- Do they care for the building?
- Mission Statements and other sentiments
- Magazine available, weekly newsletters, good news stories
- Displays of Sunday School material
- Material *for* children (as opposed to material *about* children to make adults go "ahhhhh")
- Pictures of people - photos of minister/stewards, etc
- Do we really need to know how much it is to bury ashes?
- Out of date notices and "In-house" notices?
- Is there a place to pray, candles lit, lights on, music playing, flowers?

Action to take!

What does our building say about God?

- Is He central or peripheral?
- Is He given a chance to engage with visitors?
- Is it made easy for those who come in and pray? How and where?
- Is there any devotional literature, suitable for the visitor?
- What "atmosphere" is or could be created?

Action to take!

What does our building say about money?

- Is it mentioned at every turn?
- Does the place look as if money is in short supply or unimportant?

What does our building say about

- Disability, Comfort, Ambience, and Safety?

Action to take!



A Welcoming Church Member – *“consider others better than yourselves”* Philippians 2:3

Before the service

- As this is a ministry, why not gather to pray a prayer together
- Whose job is it to welcome people to the church? Are they the best people?
- Do members think of themselves as “ministers of welcome”?
- When is their job over? When the service begins or when the last person leaves?
- What about some people welcoming, whilst others worry about books?
- Do we know where to direct people – especially children and disabled
- What about loos? – clearly marked – on the service paper?
- Where do welcomers stand? Inside or out?
- Good questions to ask: *“have you been to Trinity often before?”* is better than *“are you new”*
- Introduce yourself to people
- What happens to late comers? How long are you hanging around at the back? Do you need a piece of felt on the latch or the door?

During the service

- Introduction to the service – why not just give a warm welcome, rather than highlight visitors (after all we are all visitors!)
- Welcomers should be willing to sit with others not just their friends
- To introduce and gently guide through the service if people are struggling

After the service

- How are they welcomed before and afterwards?
- How are we sensitive to different people’s needs?
- How do we find out about people and follow them up?
- Do we have information on the activities of the church as well as its history?
- Invite them for coffee, which means escorting them over, getting them coffee and chatting to them and introducing them to others who may have similar interests.

After Sunday

- What about a follow up visit? How can this be organised? A small group of people who call round within about 10 days.
- In an average church, there may be up to 10% of people who have either never come, not come for ages, or are passing through.
- Do you have a welcome pack with a flavour of the life of the community?

Action to take!

Now please put this completed response form in the “Back to Church” box in the Church entrance lobby next time you are here.