

# Hidden Stories Open Doors

## Discover Churches

### Tourism Resource Guide

### Templates and examples



**Discover  
Churches**  
Herefordshire & Shropshire

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The guide has been written and collated as part of the Discover Churches project in Herefordshire and Shropshire.

Here are some templates and examples you could use in developing your own church tourism strategy, welcoming visitors, surveying, and planning and creating interpretation and publicity.

### Version 1 : **October 2024**

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Please note that the last national research undertaken on the profile of tourism visitors to places of worship is very outdated. Your Local Authority or Destination Management Organisation may be able to provide information from the latest visitor economy research in your area. Or you could find a wealth of visitor research on the [Visit Britain](https://www.visitbritain.com) website.

Type of Visitor	Country Loving Traditionalists	Fuss Free Value Seekers	Families	Visiting Friends and Family; including overseas visitors.
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75 % have/use mobile phones and devices</li> <li>Get information on line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>66% use social media</li> <li>90% use mobile phones and devices</li> <li>Get information on line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information hungry using all resources</li> </ul>	No data available
<b>Motives for visiting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unspoilt clean environment</li> <li>Connect to beautiful landscapes</li> <li>Want to feel like a local</li> <li>Ancestral Tourism</li> <li>Religious heritage, cultural/spiritual/pilgrims routes</li> <li>Fine Arts</li> <li>Photography</li> <li>Specific historical, architectural or environmental interests</li> <li>Health and well being</li> <li>4 top reasons given :</li> <li>65% 'explore' countryside</li> <li>30% visit places of interest</li> <li>21% walking, cycling</li> <li>19% eating, drinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impulsive existence</li> <li>Fuss free and easy</li> <li>Meaningful signature experiences – learn a new skill</li> <li>Country Outdoors</li> <li>City Breaks - cathedrals</li> <li>Ancestral Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspirational family fun</li> <li>Engage in active friendly family fun linked to culture, heritage and activity/sporting events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NOS data indicates that overseas visitors are predominantly from Eastern Europe visiting friends and family now domiciled in the county or seasonal workers in agriculture/horticulture. This sector is in decline as Brexit restrictions impact.</li> <li>Independent long haul visitors are in general 3rd or 4th generation families tracing their ancestry. This group has been adversely affected by the pandemic and the current global economic situation. Predictions are that it will be 2024 before recovery to pre pandemic numbers visiting.</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	50+	Under 30s	Late 30s +	
<b>Gender</b>	Male / female equal	48% male / 52% female		

<b>Income</b>	51% in £20-45K	1 in 4 £45K + 43% £20-45K	High earners	
<b>Length of Stay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59% short breaks</li> <li>• 26% mid length breaks</li> <li>• 2-3 short holidays</li> <li>• 70% book accommodation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52% mini breaks</li> <li>• 32% mid length breaks.</li> <li>• 30% book accommodation – look for ‘deals’ on arrival</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take regular city breaks or breaks within the vicinity of theme parks, heritage attractions</li> <li>• Choose budget accommodation (Premier inn, Travel Lodge)</li> </ul>	
<b>Pursuits under taken</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 57% explore small towns</li> <li>• 65% explore countryside</li> <li>• 38% outdoor leisure – walking cycling</li> <li>• 38% visited heritage buildings (NT, churches)</li> <li>• 7% participated in a guided tour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 34% explore small towns</li> <li>• 31% explore countryside</li> <li>• 32% outdoor leisure – walking cycling</li> <li>• 15% visited heritage buildings (museum, cathedral)</li> <li>• 7% participated in a guided tour</li> </ul>		
<b>Live</b>	South, East, North and West urban and semi-rural	North, East and West conurbations	South, East	



### REDUCING THE RISK TO WALK IN VISITORS : BLANK ASSESSMENT FORM

Please note this does not replace your generic place of worship Risk Assessment and you may need to add additional elements.

Assessment No:	Location:	Further assessments required:	Persons involved or affected:	Special groups:
	Assessor's Name:	Fire COSHH	Employees Volunteers	Disabled Young persons
Task/Activity/Area Assessed:		Manual handling Display screen equipment Young persons	Visitors Contractors Members of the public	Nursing and expectant mothers

Hazards Identified	Worst Case Outcome	Current Control Measures in Place	Likelihood	Score X2	Rating
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Aid:</b> Need a means to treat all types of injuries. Incapacity from ill health, unsafe act(s), unplanned exposure to extreme hazards, by self-harm or foul play by person(s) unknown.	Fatality (10)	Should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who is able to offer immediate assistance?</li> <li>All major injuries to call for ambulance on 999 from any phone.</li> <li>All injuries to be reported using accident reporting form, copy provided to person &amp; original to</li> <li>Arrange for friend (if one present) to phone family member. Action to be taken if none present.</li> </ul>			Low/Medium/High
<b>Security:</b> May be a real time threat associated from maintenance work, break in, vandalism. May suffer threat/attack from person(s) unknown.	Fatality (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should a security incident occur report it.</li> <li>Report anything suspicious.</li> <li>In the unlikely event of a terrorist incident – Run: Hide: Tell:</li> </ul>			Low/Medium/High

Action required (note any temporary action/ control measures required):	Action Review Date:	Action Completed by (Name & Title) / Date:
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<b>Slips, trips &amp; falls:</b> May suffer serious injuries if they slip, trip or fall on/from steps, uneven floors, cables, any other similar hazard.	Fatality (10)	This might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Warning visitors of the general hazard from uneven, old steps and floor that may be slippery.</li> <li>Mitigated ramps and other similar hazards with hazard tape or railings.</li> <li>Visitors may need to be aware that the base of Nave or other columns protrude and may present as a trip hazard.</li> <li>Advise visitors to take care when descending into and ascending any steep steps or rope off against people using them.</li> <li>Carpets may present a hazard.</li> </ul>			Low/Medium/High
<b>Fire:</b> May suffer serious, possible fatal injuries from smoke inhalation, burns, structural collapse.	Fatality (10)	Needs to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All exit routes and signs to be kept clear and unobstructed:</li> <li>The No-Smoking ban to be enforced.</li> <li>If appropriate fire alarm assembly points.</li> </ul>			Low/Medium/High
<b>Contractors:</b> Injury from contractor works in progress, setting up and dismantling.	Fatality (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractors responsible for providing certification as applicable, own Risk Assessments and training for their staff.</li> <li>Advise visitors of any ongoing works and to take due care.</li> </ul>			Low/Medium/High
<b>Falling Masonry:</b> May suffer serious injuries from falling masonry.	Fatality (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be vigilant in identifying sites of potential risk: immediately cordon off pending assessment.</li> <li>Masonry could fall without warning.</li> </ul>			Low/Medium/High

Worst Case Outcome				
Fatality	Severe injury	Lost time injury	Minor injury	No Injury
10	8	5	3	1

Likelihood given precautions in place				
Certain / imminent	Very Likely	Likely	Unlikely	Remote
10	8	5	3	1

Risk Rating Table		
High 50-100	Medium 20-49	Low 1-19

Further actions that may require longer term consideration:	Action Review Date:	Action Completed by (Name & Title) / Date:

If any issues are outstanding from the 'Action Review' date, detail the reasons:

Signature:	Date:
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Assessment Review Date (as required):	Assessment Review Date (as required):
New Risk Assessment required: Yes/No	New Risk Assessment required: Yes/No
Completed by (Name):	Completed by (Name):
Signature:	Signature:

Developing Church Tourism

A Tour Guide's

Ten Top Tips

for making your visitors

feel welcome!



presenter penny platts

**To introduce myself - Penny Platts**  
**Herefordshire Tour Guide**  
**& Hereford Cathedral Guide**

**+**

**Churchwarden in a small rural church**

**So can see situation from both sides:**

**the welcome visitors may expect**  
**& the problems fulfilling those expectations!**



# Aims of this workshop

- To help you take a fresh look at your church building and see its potential
- To discover what other people are doing
- To help build a network of contacts for support and information

## Discussion time

A chance to **share** your creative solutions with others

# Any Questions?

❖ Please put them in **'CHAT'**

❖ Answers at the end

# 1. How do Visitors find your church?

- ❖ 'A Church Near You' [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)

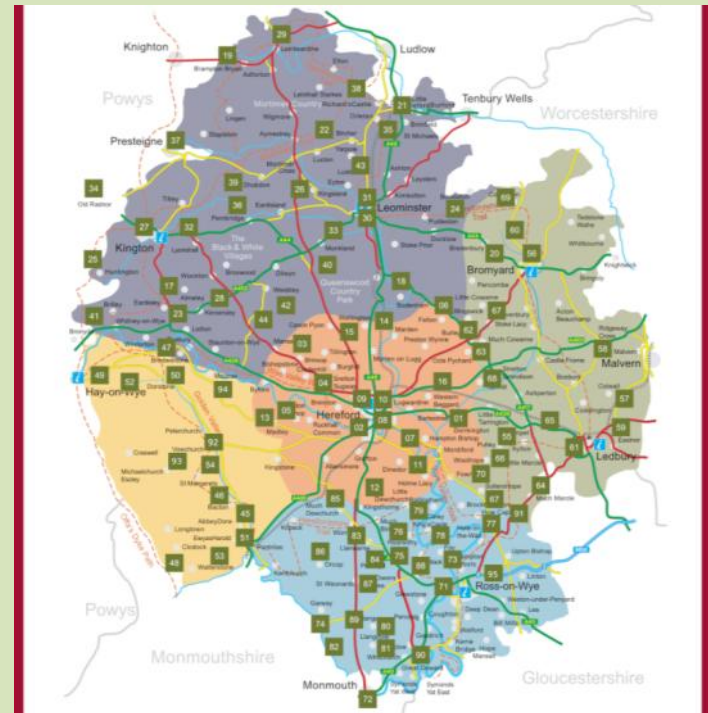
the C of E's tool for people to find the nearest church to them - with the features that they might require e.g.:

*Food Bank ? / Alpha course? / Beautiful stained glass windows for wedding photos?*

The **vicar** of each church can now approve **up to five people** to edit each profile.

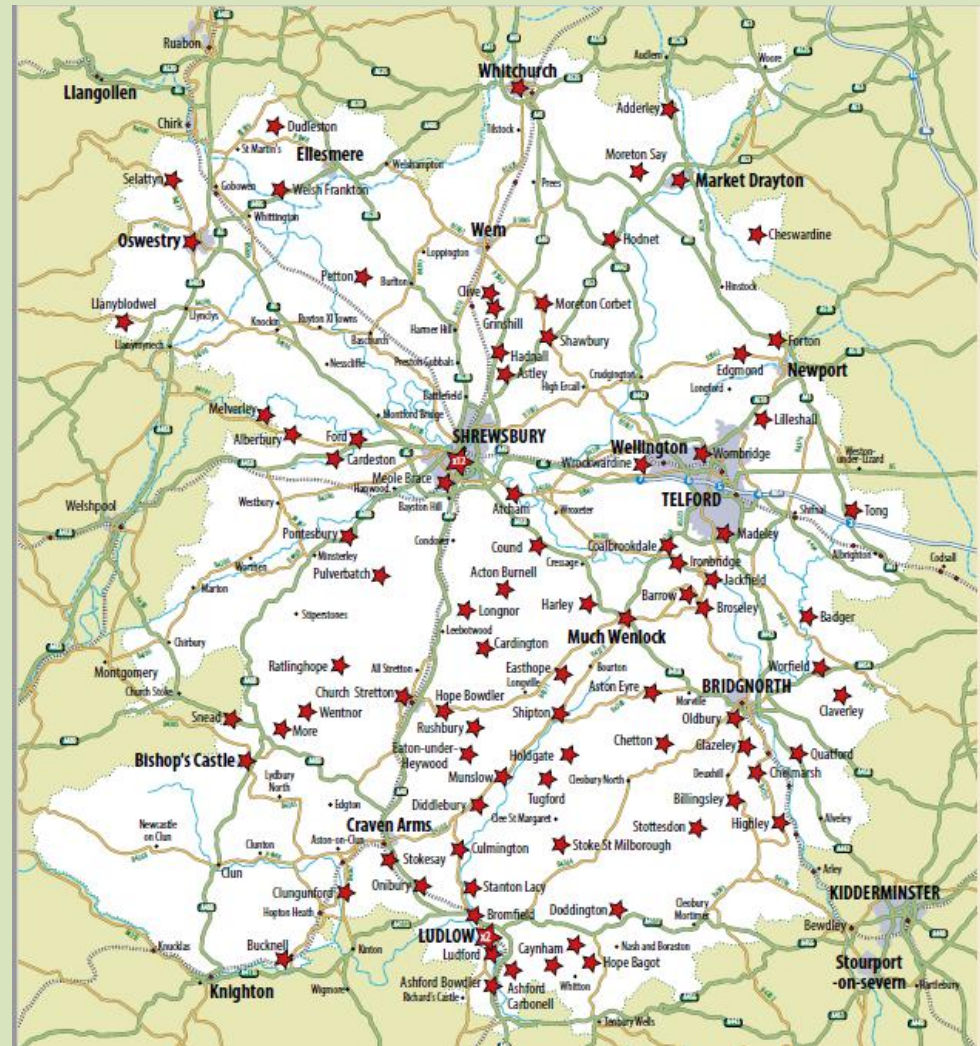
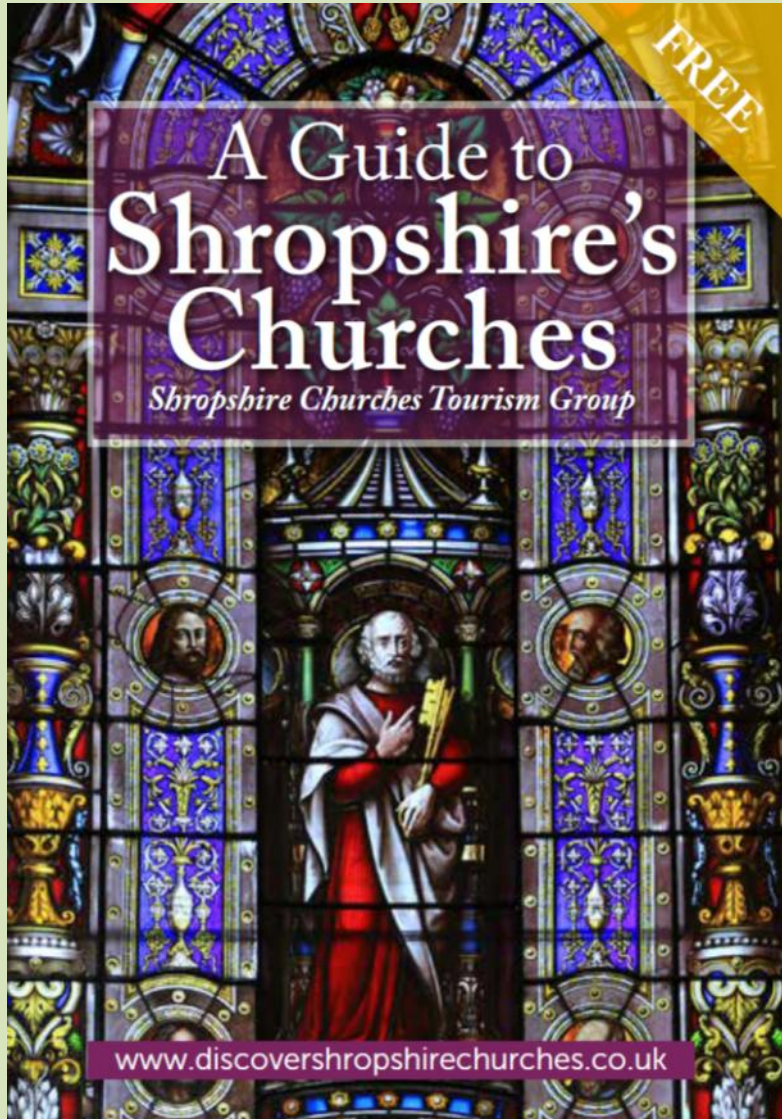
# 1. How do Visitors find your church?

## ❖ Local churches tourism websites:



[www.visitherefordshirechurches.co.uk](http://www.visitherefordshirechurches.co.uk)

# 1. How do visitors find your church?



## Claverley All Saints

Grade I listed. Features in Jenkins' 1000 Best Churches. Late 11th and early 12th century with Saxon remains. Stunning early 13th century wall paintings.



## Stottesdon Font

The intricately carved stone font is a treasure (created c.1138) by the legendary **Hereford School of Romanesque Sculpture**.

# 1. How do visitors find your church?

## **Specialist Trails** in the locality

- ❖ Norman Romanesque sculpture
- ❖ Victorian churches
- ❖ Special Stained Glass

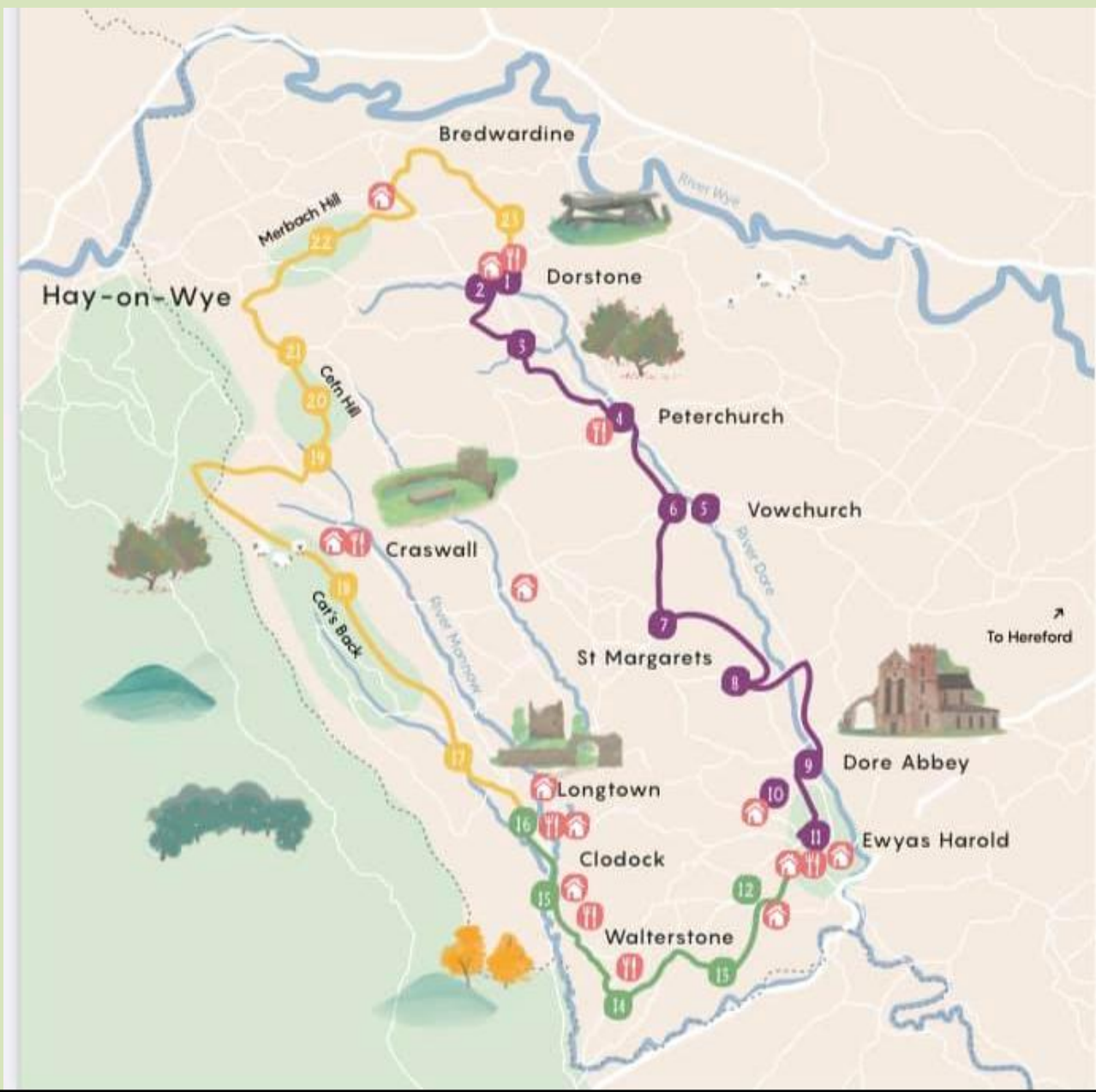
1. *How do Visitors find your church?*

Target Bell Ringers!





# ❖ Pilgrimage Walks /Historic Trails



# 1. How do Visitors find your church?



www.visitherefordshire.co.uk

HEREFORDSHIRE

See & Do Eat & Drink Stay Inspiration What's On Information

**City & Towns**  
Hereford City  
Bromyard  
Hay-on-Wye  
Kington  
Ledbury  
Leominster  
Ross-on-Wye

**Scenic & Trails**  
Black & White Villages  
Cider Circuits  
The Wye Valley  
The Golden Valley  
Ley Lines in the Landscape  
Hills of Herefordshire

**Get Active**  
Canoeing & Paddleboarding  
Cycling  
Walking  
Top Routes  
Multi-Day Walks

**Inspiration**  
Heavenly Herefordshire Gardens  
Family Adventures in the Wild  
Herefordshire Cycling Route  
Country Paths & Cobbled Lanes  
More Articles & Itineraries

**Directory**

**Activities & Experiences**  
Animal Encounters  
Food/Drink Producer  
Gardens  
Golfing Breaks in Herefordshire  
Workshops & Rural Crafts  
Indoor Sports & Leisure  
Outdoor Activities & Recreation

**Heritage & Nature**  
Castles and Stately Homes  
**Churches**  
Forests & Woods  
Historic Interest Sites  
Open Spaces

**Arts & Culture**  
Art galleries  
Museums  
Music venues & Nightclubs  
Theatres & Cinemas

**Shopping in Herefordshire**  
Farm Shops & Local Produce  
Home & Garden Centres  
Outdoor Stores & Hire

Green  
Hike or bike our h

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# 1. How Do Visitors find your church?

List Map

Business name

All locations

Accessible

Dogs Welcome



**Richards Castle St Bartholomew Church & 11th Century Castle**  
Perched high above the village, next to one of the early 'marcher castles' built to defend the Anglo-Welsh border.  
[Read More →](#)



**Rotherwas Chapel**  
The family chapel of the Roman Catholic Bodenham family.  
[Read More →](#)



**St Michael and All Angels, Moccas**  
A Grade I listed gem built of local tufa stone, an almost unchanged Norman church set in a very beautiful rural setting.  
[Read More →](#)

# 1. How do Visitors find your church?

## ❖ Develop your own website:

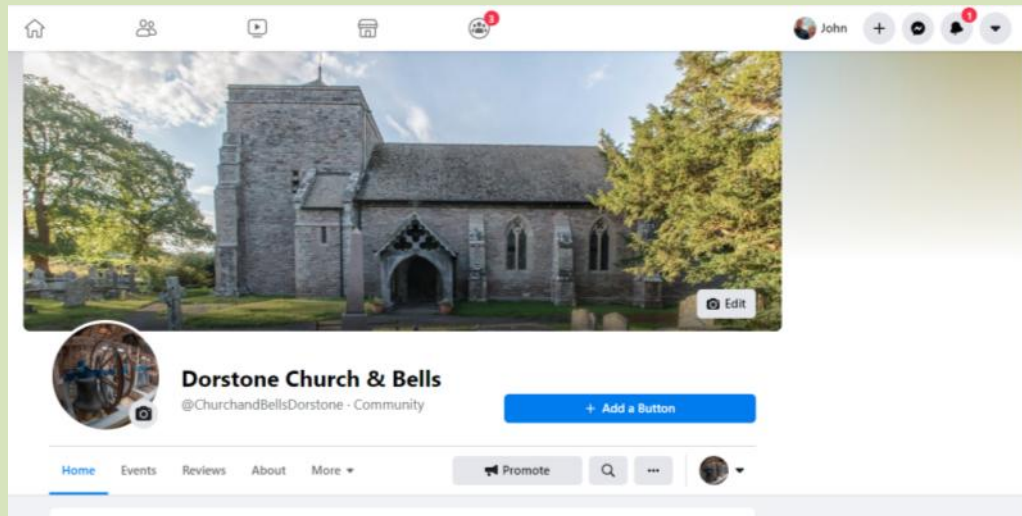
- Wix
- SimpleSite
- Wordpress

[www.dorstonechurch.org](http://www.dorstonechurch.org)



# 1. How do Visitors find your church?

❖ **Facebook** - You Tube/Instagram/WhatsApp/TikTok



- easy to update instantly
- quick advertising for special events
- publicise services so visitors can attend

# 1. How do Visitors find your church?

## ❖ Exact Location

- Post code
- Map reference
- ‘what3words’ Every 3 metre square of the world has been given a unique combination of **three words**. Used for e-commerce and delivery, navigation, emergencies and more.



2a. Is there clear signage?



## 2b. Where can they park?





### 3. What do they see on the way to the entrance?

❖ How does the churchyard look?



### 3. What do they see on the way to the entrance?

❖ Is there a bench to sit on?



Essential  
'facilities'!



## 4. What information is in the porch?

- ❖ For **Emergency Services:**  
postcode / map ref. & What3Words
- ❖ Where can you find a phone signal?
- ❖ Broadband/Wifi password
- ❖ Is the information kept up-to-date?

# 4. What information is in the porch?

❖ Defibrillator location



# 4. What information is in the porch?

## AN INVITATION GWAHODDIAD

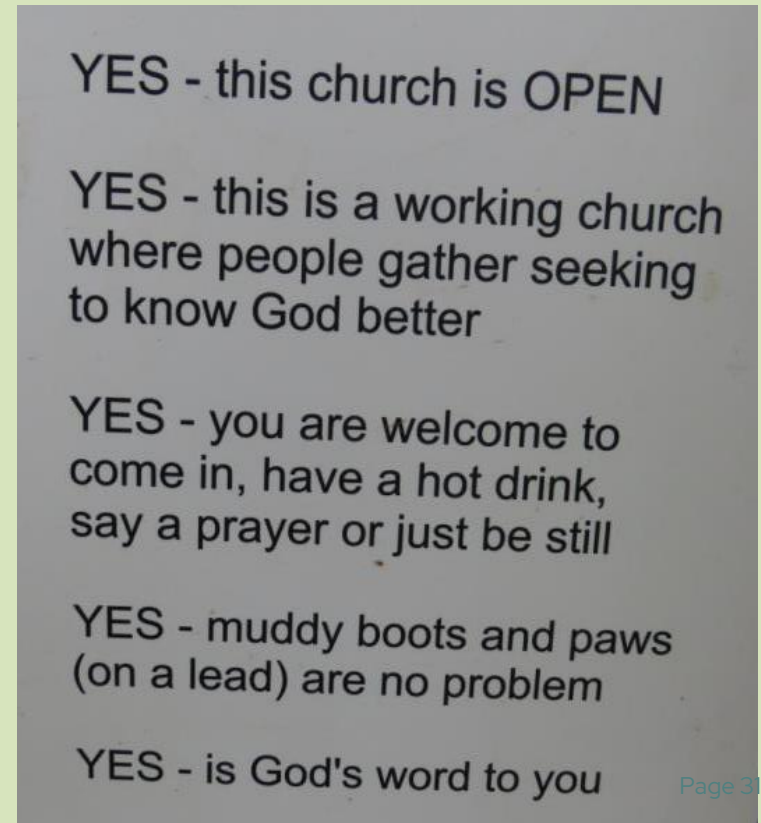
To all who are weary and need rest  
To all who are friendless and desire friendship  
To all who believe in God and wish to worship him  
To all who are grateful and would give thanks  
To all who hunger for prayer and wish to pray  
To all who know sin and need a Saviour  
This Church opens wide its doors and  
in the Name of our Lord Jesus bids you

**WELCOME**  
**CROESO**



# 4. What information is in the porch?

- ❖ Opening hours
- ❖ Who is the contact for the key?
- ❖ **people** info — Rector/CHW/Tower Captain



# 5. Is access to the building safe for all?





## 6. Is the interior clean and tidy?

- ❖ Dead flowers – my pet hate!!



## 6. Is the interior clean and tidy?

- ❖ 'clutter'
- ❖ cobwebs
- ❖ dirty floors & windowsills
- ❖ old chairs
- ❖ mouldy hymn books





**Prayer Tree**  
Please use cards in box on the table



## 7. Where do they find Church History?

### ❖ Paper booklet?

- ✓ source of income
- ✓ can take them home
- ✓ do not need hi-tech phone

## 7. Where do they find Church History?

### ❖ Paper booklet?

- X costly to print small numbers
- X not easily updated
- X limited information
- X few illustrations
- X often poor quality
- X soon look tatty

# 7. Where do they find Church History?



printed boards  
£66 (Vistaprint)  
easels - £16  
+ QR codes

### Bell Restoration Project

In 1930 the tower was lowered by 30ft. The bells were rehung on the oak fram and lay silent for almost 70 years.

e. 1350  
cast on site by  
John of Gloucester

1639  
1650  
1654  
still cast by John Fiech of Harford

December 2017 ~ Removal of Fram & Bells

Transformed

scan for a short film of removal

Meanwhile in the Tower ~

9th November 2018 ~ Return of the Bells + 2 'orphans' (1904) from Richmond, Yorks.

Armistice Centenary 11-11-18

Rehanging the bells for full circle ringing

Ready for first ring  
1st March 2019

scan to see & hear first ring

# Dorstone Ringers - first ring on new bells

## 7. Where do they find Church History?

- ❖ Highlight the **people** of the past – make it interesting – not just dates of bits of stone and wood!
- ❖ Info. on tombs/by stained glass etc.



## HOW OLD IS BREDWARDINE CHURCH?

Nobody really knows!

It is clearly very old and the fact that it is built on a circular mound on top of a hill suggests that this has been a site for worship and burial since before the Christian era. It is likely that there was a Christian place of worship here from some time Christianity reached these islands. It is also likely that this was probably that such an early Church would have been of timber construction and that therefore no visible remains can be seen today. There are a number of features suggesting that the nave is largely of Norman construction, the windows with round arches and the carvings around the doorways for example.

There are other pointers suggesting that there may be older in date. The 'Herringbone' masonry low down at the West end of the North Wall is one. In the Chancel the design of the door with a sharply pointed arch is another. Recently an expert has pointed out that some of the masonry, particularly at the corners, has been laid with its grain in the vertical plane rather than horizontally. In his opinion this indicates a pre-Norman date.



The rounded arch of a typical Norman window



The design of the Chancel door with the sharply pointed arch is believed to indicate a pre-Norman date.



The 'Herringbone' masonry in the lower part of the north wall of the Nave

### Why is it such an odd shape?

It is unlikely that it is because the masons made a mistake! Again nobody really knows but there are a number of theories.

1. That it was deliberate and represents Christ's head resting at an angle as he was dying on the Cross. A number of Churches exhibit this feature but they are of 'virescent' plan with 'Transepts' to the North and South of the structure. There is no evidence of the existence of such transepts at Bredwardine.
2. That the Nave and Chancel were built at different times and the discrepancy is due to the changes in the direction of 'magnetic North' over the intervening years.
3. That the existence of underground water or some other geological anomaly made it necessary to depart from a straight line.
4. It has recently been suggested that in early times this Church was a 'Minster' of the Welsh Church from whence Priests went and to minister to other smaller communities in the area and that what is now the Chancel was the place of worship and that the site of the present Nave was another building, perhaps where the priest lived, and that later the two were combined to form a larger Church.

### Why are some of the walls so out of vertical?

This is usually said to be because the Welsh patriot Owain Glendower blew the Church up with explosives during his campaign against the English in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century. It has not been possible to find any positive indication that this was the case. However despite the fact that Owain was mentioned in a letter of Sir Roger Vaughan, whose village was in the Chancel of this Church, Sir Roger was a staunch supporter of the English King and this may have prompted Owain to try and destroy his Church.

It is noticeable that it is only the walls on the South side that are severely out of plumb, normally the force of an explosion is felt in all directions and would be expected to show damage in all directions. It is also possible that the presence of underground water or other ground weakness to the South side of the Church caused an instability resulting in an explosion having greater effect.

Perhaps there was an explosion and the movement of the walls has been caused by some instability in the mound upon which the Church was built.

### Why is the North door sealed?

It is never given by whom a newly built or altered Church was consecrated it was the custom for those consecrating in the Church to drive the Devil out of the North door and then seal it up so that he could not get back in. The result arch in the middle of this door suggests that it is of Norman origin.

### What is a 'Sheela na gig'?

On the inner side of this doorway is a carved and unadorned head. The somewhat strange carving is similar to that found on many old Irish churches particularly in Ireland. Little is known about its origin but it is believed to be an ancient fertility symbol. Ancient ironwood timber can get 'Sheela na gig' into Gough where many theories can be found.



Exterior of the North Door

## THE REV FRANCIS KILVERT & HIS FAMOUS DIARY



The exterior of the church, showing the tower and the main building.



The interior of the church, showing the nave and the chancel.



A portrait of Rev. Francis Kilvert, the author of the diary.

In the 1870s, the Rev. Francis Kilvert, a young man of letters, was appointed to the living of the church of St. Andrew, Brecon, in the diocese of Exeter.

Although not writing the intended autobiography, Kilvert's diary, written in the form of a journal, is a most interesting and valuable record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s. It is a record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s. It is a record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s.

Francis Kilvert's diary is a most interesting and valuable record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s. It is a record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s. It is a record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s.



A photograph showing a scene from the diary, possibly a church interior or a landscape.

THE REV. FRANCIS KILVERT, M.A., CURATE OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, BRECON, 1870-1872. WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY MISS MARY KILVERT, M.A., M.P. THE REV. FRANCIS KILVERT, M.A., CURATE OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, BRECON, 1870-1872. WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY MISS MARY KILVERT, M.A., M.P.

Exploring Kilvert Country  
Chris Barber



A photograph of a landscape, likely the Kilvert Country, showing a church and surrounding fields.



A map showing the location of the church and surrounding areas, including the town of Brecon and the diocese of Exeter.

How quiet and empty and lonely the village was this morning in 1870 in the village of St. Andrew, Brecon. The only living soul in the village was the curate, the Rev. Francis Kilvert, who was sitting in the study of the vicarage, waiting for the arrival of the vicar, the Rev. John Jones, who was to be consecrated in the church of St. Andrew, Brecon, on the 10th of the month.

Francis Kilvert's diary is a most interesting and valuable record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s. It is a record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s. It is a record of the life of a young man of letters in the 1870s.

THE KILVERT SOCIETY  
Founded in 1960 to commemorate the Rev. Francis Kilvert, the Society has over 100 members. It is a society of people who are interested in the life and work of the Rev. Francis Kilvert. The Society has published a number of books and pamphlets, and it also organizes lectures and other events. The Society is a non-profit organization and its income is used for the benefit of the Society.

For more information visit the Society Website: www.kilvertsociety.org.uk

This display was arranged by Chris Barber, the author of Exploring Kilvert Country which provides a very full introduction to the man associated with the Rev. Francis Kilvert.

Published by Brecon Books, Exploring Kilvert Country is available at local bookshops, or direct from the publisher. Brecon Books: 01873 592114

## SMALMAN MONUMENT



Francis Smalman (1565 – 1633) of Kinnersley Castle and Letton, was an MP in 1621 under the reign of James I and again under the reign of Charles I in 1626.

This fine alabaster and black marble monument was erected

by his son, William, in 1635 and is dedicated to William's parents Francis and Susan. William (b 1615) was also a politician, becoming an MP in the Short Parliament of 1640.

Susan Clark was Francis' second wife and the mother of William. It was also her second marriage.

The monument depicts the couple facing each other beneath a canopy with drapes and trumpet-bearing cherubs. Beneath are depicted their children by both of their marriages. Underneath the monument is also a brass plaque to William Leviot, former priest, who died in 1421.

Francis reputedly acquired Kinnersley Castle around 1616 from the son of Roger Vaughan. The monument is described as "a very fine piece" and "the sculpturally best of any group" by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner in his book on Herefordshire buildings.

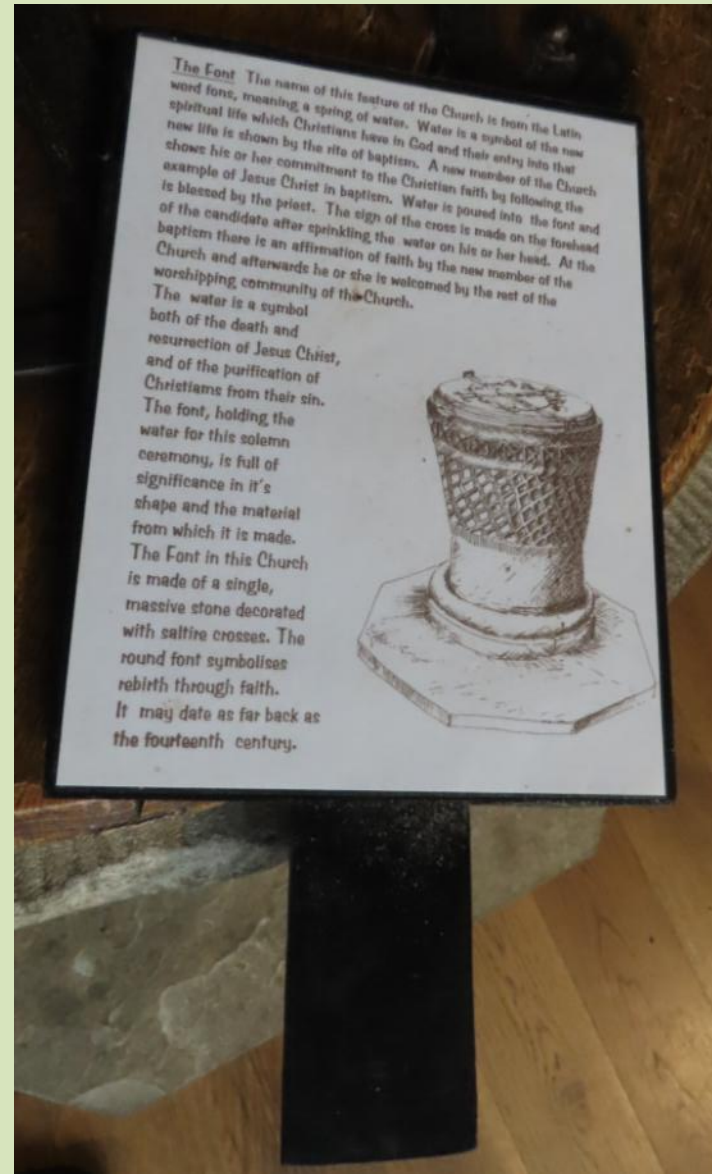
We are currently in the process of raising funds towards repairing and supporting the monument to ensure it does not collapse.





SIR ROGER  
VAUGHAN  
Killed defending  
Henry V at the  
Battle of  
Agincourt. 1415.

## Hand-held boards



*The Font* The name of this feature of the Church is from the Latin word *font*, meaning a spring of water. Water is a symbol of the new spiritual life which Christians have in God and their entry into that new life is shown by the rite of baptism. A new member of the Church shows his or her commitment to the Christian faith by following the example of Jesus Christ in baptism. Water is poured into the font and is blessed by the priest. The sign of the cross is made on the forehead of the candidate after sprinkling the water on his or her head. At baptism there is an affirmation of faith by the new member of the Church and afterwards he or she is welcomed by the rest of the worshipping community of the Church.

The water is a symbol both of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of the purification of Christians from their sin. The font, holding the water for this solemn ceremony, is full of significance in its shape and the material from which it is made. The Font in this Church is made of a single, massive stone decorated with saltire crosses. The round font symbolises rebirth through faith. It may date as far back as the fourteenth century.



Watch out  
for typos!!



This elaborate stained glass window was erected as a memorial to the Rev. Newton Hand Dickenson Newton who was Vicar of the Church from 1830 to 1873

# 8. Do you offer 'hospitality'?



❖ Who will check this?



## 9. Is there LOCAL information?

- ❖ nearest shop / PO
- ❖ nearest Pharmacy
- ❖ nearest towns
- ❖ pubs - phone/website
- ❖ local cafes
- ❖ B&Bs
- ❖ places of interest or Open Gardens

## 10. What Souvenirs + how to pay??

**Ideas** - what could you offer?

- ❖ bookmarks and prayer cards
- ❖ cards of church interior/exterior
- ❖ plants
- ❖ homemade jams and chutneys
- ❖ Walking Routes





# Security?





## 10. What Souvenirs + how to pay??

Use the wall safe

or

**Credit/ Debit card machine**

no Wi-Fi needed

power source required

secured to a table

# Encouraging Donations

- ❖ **Gift Aid** declaration for gifts - £30+
  
- ❖ **Join the Parish Giving Scheme**  
Regular income even without services

[www.parishgiving.org.uk/parishes/how-it-works/](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk/parishes/how-it-works/)

Thank you for watching!

Now it's your turn - **Question Time**

❖ Questions in **'CHAT'**

❖ Open discussion

Please share your experience with us.

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## Churches Tourism Project

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### Churches Visitor Research

**A Research information sheet for participants should be displayed to explain the purpose of this survey to you and how it will be used to aid this project**

Q1. Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. Have you visited this Church before?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Q3. How did you hear about the church?			
Live Nearby <input type="checkbox"/> Friends/Family <input type="checkbox"/> Local business or other visitor attraction <input type="checkbox"/> Brochure <input type="checkbox"/> Internet <input type="checkbox"/> Herefordshire/Shropshire Tourism Group Guide <input type="checkbox"/> Herefordshire/Shropshire Tourism Group Website <input type="checkbox"/>			
Q4. How many miles have travelled from your point of origin?			
Under 5 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 5-14 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 15-24 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 25-49 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 50-74 miles <input type="checkbox"/> 75+ miles <input type="checkbox"/> Please indicate here if travelling from overseas <input type="checkbox"/> Please state which country _____			
Q5. How many people of the following ages were in your party?.			
Aged under 7____   Aged 7-12____   Aged 13-16____   Aged 17-30____   Aged 30-64____   Aged 65+____ Total number of people including yourself____ Please indicate which age group you personally fall into____			
Q6. How long are you visiting this area of the county for?			
0 – 3 hours <input type="checkbox"/> 1 day <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight <input type="checkbox"/> More than 1 night <input type="checkbox"/>			
Q7. What was the purpose of your visit today?			
Spiritual / Sacred reasons <input type="checkbox"/> Family History <input type="checkbox"/> Social History <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> Flora & Fauna <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition <input type="checkbox"/> Concert/Event <input type="checkbox"/> Tombstone Research <input type="checkbox"/> Other .....			
Q8. Did you have knowledge of the church before your visit?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Q9. Did you find out more than expected from your visit?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	



## Group tours, experiences and trails

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Some of these trails were developed as part of the project and can be found on [DiscoverChurches.org.uk](https://DiscoverChurches.org.uk)

Below is outline of the information and ideas for work undertaken developing tours with businesses, and for the routes and trails using existing rights of way, footpaths and green lanes and quiet side roads. Please use these as ideas and examples for group tours, experiences and trails that could be developed in your area.

**In the footsteps of Charles Darwin** : A 3-day day bookable experience as an individual, couple or as part of a group. Explore the botanical links with some of Shropshire's finest churches, but also connect direct links with Charles Darwin. An ideal short break to celebrate the great work of Charles Darwin on the 140th anniversary year since his death taking place on 19th April 2022.

**Music and Literature on the Welsh Borders** : This 2-day experience is a great way to immerse yourself in the undulating scenery on the Welsh Border and discover why the county holds so many musical and literary connections. Take part in evensong at Hereford Cathedral. Visit a church that was close to the heart of William Wordsworth. Follow in the footsteps of composer Sir Edward Elgar, poets Elizabeth Barratt Browning & John Masefield, author Rev Francis Kilvert, poet and religious writer Thomas Traherne. Visit Hereford – which hosts one of the world's oldest classical choral music festivals every three years and visit Hay on Wye, the town of books home to one of the world's biggest literature festivals.

**Walking along the Heart of Wales Line in Shropshire & Herefordshire** : This moderate 20 mile walk is a great way to immerse yourself in the undulating scenery on the Welsh Border where Herefordshire, Shropshire and Powys connect. Discover the churches embedded well within the landscape that have helped shape the history with some dating all the way back to the 1400s. Taking the Heart of Wales Trainline from Craven Arms to Knighton, the walk follows part of the Shropshire Way and Herefordshire Trail and visits four historic churches situated in Herefordshire and Shropshire, all with their own stories to tell with an opportunity to find out more on arrival

The Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has launched a guide to **Peaceful places of inspiration along the River Wye** with walking and driving routes that take in churches with links to the early Celtic church established along the border between England and Wales in the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. Download the [Celtic Churches](#) leaflet.

**Cuckmere Pilgrim Path, East Sussex** : Established in 2018 the [Cuckmere Pilgrim Path](#) is a waymarked circular route of approximately 17 miles along existing footpaths which can be walked in one day or over the weekend, linking seven churches in the South Downs National Park between Lewes and Eastbourne. Every church along the route has its own special character and atmosphere, from Berwick – with its colourful paintings by Bloomsbury Group artists Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell and Quentin Bell – to the 'cathedral' of the South Downs at Alfriston, partnered by the timber framed Old Clergy House, the first property to be taken into care by the National Trust.

**Golden Valley Pilgrim Way** : A stunning 6 /7-day 59 mile circular pilgrimage route along beautiful and ancient paths that begins and ends at Hereford Cathedral. Leaving the city and cathedral behind, this is a rich and silent land, good for the body and the soul. The [Golden Valley Pilgrim Trail](#) offers a shorter 2/3-day path and an 82 mile cycle route.

An energetic group of parishioners in south Wales has recently created a brand new pilgrimage route called the **Ffordd Pererindod Penrhys, the Penrhys Pilgrimage Way** ([penrhyspilgrimageway.wales](http://penrhyspilgrimageway.wales)), by waymarking public rights of way linking the Anglican cathedral at Llandaff, near Cardiff, to Penrhys in the Rhondda. The 21-mile route is divided into six easily manageable parts; it can be walked over a weekend with an overnight stop in Llantrisant. It leads to the shrine with its 1953 statue of the Virgin, replacing a miraculous statue of the Virgin that was destroyed at the Reformation.

Another ancient pilgrimage destination is **Holywell, in Flintshire**, where the spring and chapel dedicated to [St Winefride](#) is the oldest pilgrimage site in Britain in continuous use. Even the Reformation did not manage to stop pilgrims coming to this shrine where, according to legend, a well sprang up in the 7<sup>th</sup> century at the spot where Prince Caradog cut off St Winefride's head because she refused to marry him. The shrine is housed in a 16th century Perpendicular Gothic building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument cared for by the Catholic parish of St Winefride, but it forms the start of an [ecumenical pilgrimage route](#) being developed jointly with the Anglican diocese of Bangor, linking several historic churches leading across north Wales to Holyhead, on Anglesey. As well as being places of worship, these churches will serve as visitor spaces, event areas and civic spaces for families, hospitality, retail and inclusive gathering places for all, bringing together history, community, worship and pilgrimage, encouraging pilgrimage and heritage led tourism, leading to positive change in the community at large.

**The Cistercian Way** : A long distance walk along Roman roads, medieval pilgrimage routes and 19<sup>th</sup> century canal towpaths. The path explores the great abbeys of the Cistercian order and the little churches of the Welsh Hills and takes the walker through friendly villages, remote mountains and spectacular coastlines.

**St Thomas Way** : In 1290, an unlikely group of pilgrims set off from Swansea for the shrine of St Thomas de Cantelupe at Hereford Cathedral. Walk, cycle or drive [in their footsteps](#) to discover magnificent castles, cathedrals, hidden treasure, natural beauty, and fascinating stories from the medieval past.





## In the Footsteps of Charles Darwin



- Join our guided 3-day bookable experience as an individual, couple or as part of a group.
- Explore the botanical links with some of Shropshire's finest churches, but also connect direct links with Charles Darwin.
- An ideal short break to celebrate the great work of Charles Darwin on the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary year since his death taking place on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

**Stay for 2 nights at a Shrewsbury Hotel based on Bed & Breakfast. Evening meals will be arranged to include specialist talks of Charles Darwin and a celebration of his life and times in Shropshire.**

*A journey of discovery - His curiosity, natural inquisitiveness, and desire to understand his world made Charles Darwin the ideal candidate for his voyage of discovery on HMS Beagle.*

*It was from the Lion Hotel on Wyle Cop that Charles Darwin caught the coach south to meet The Beagle and begin his epic voyage.*

*On this five-year journey he collected specimens from animals, plants and fossils from four continents.*

*He would use the experience to develop the theory of evolution by natural selection and write The Origin of Species and change how the world would view man's evolution.*

*(Taken from the Little Book of Darwin Shrewsbury)*

HCTG, c/o Leintwardine House, Leintwardine, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 0LB

Resilient Heritage Lottery funded Project. Sustainable Tourism for Sustainable Churches.

**Day one** Arrive at Shrewsbury in your own time, free to explore and relax ready to for tomorrows guided walking tour.

**Day Two** Total walking distance 3 miles

9:30 Meet your guide at the and make your way to Shrewsbury Library and Charles Darwin statue.

*In the 1800's Shrewsbury Library on Castle Gates was home to Shrewsbury School where Darwin studied before attending university. His headmaster Dr Butler revealed he had little hope of filling his pupil's head with Latin or Greek as Darwin had already started observing and recording the natural world around him.*

11:00 Board the Sabrina Boat for a 45 min river tour with your guide

12:00 Free time for lunch along the Victoria Quay

13:00 Continue your walk over the Welsh Bridge, past Theatre Severn and head to St George of Cappadocia, situated close to Darwins Birthplace.

*The Frankwell area was familiar to the Darwin family. Charles Darwin's sister, Caroline was married to Josiah Wedgwood III at St George's Church in the first wedding ceremony held in the building completed in 1832.*

13:30 Head towards the River and visit Darwin's Childhood Garden.

*The Mount built by his father Robert Darwin in 1798, Mount House was Darwin's family home and it was here in the gardens that his curiosity for the natural world flourished.*

This fragment of the Darwin family garden was bought by Shropshire Wildlife Trust in 2013. While much of the formerly extensive grounds attached to The Mount, his birthplace and childhood home, have disappeared under housing, other parts survived in private gardens.

14:00 Walk through the Quarry park and the Dingle via the Port Hill Suspension Bridge

*Darwin loved all things natural. As a boy he spent afternoons searching for creatures in the 30-acre Quarry Park and catching newts in the River Severn.*

14:30 Visit St Chad's Church where Darwin was baptised in November 1809

15:30 Your last visit to the Unitarian Church via 13 Claremont Hill where Darwin went to school at the age of eight. It was run by the Rev William Casey, a Unitarian Minister.

*The Unitarian Church on High Street is where Darwin worshipped with his mother until she died when he was aged eight. There is a commemorative plaque to Darwin inside the church and another plaque outside outlining the liberal outlook of the Unitarian movement which is thought to have helped Charles develop his open and enquiring mind.*

A short walk back to the hotel to freshen up before our evening meal.

19:30 Evening meal at the hotel with your Guide to talk about the day and celebrate the Life and Times of Charles Darwin

HCTG, c/o Leintwardine House, Leintwardine, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 0LB

Resilient Heritage Lottery funded Project. Sustainable Tourism for Sustainable Churches.

### Day Three

Following Breakfast and Check out, head to Shropshire Wildlife Trust  
Head over the English Bridge towards Shrewsbury Abbey and visit the Cut Garden Project – Wildlife Garden, which we are sure Charles Darwin would have approved!

Free time can be spent before heading home.

<http://www.discoverdarwin.co.uk/fun-and-games/darwins-shrewsbury-film/>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/shropshire/content/articles/2009/01/28/darwin\\_in\\_shrewsbury\\_with\\_stan\\_feature.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/shropshire/content/articles/2009/01/28/darwin_in_shrewsbury_with_stan_feature.shtml)

<https://www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/darwins-childhood-garden>

“The love of all living creatures is the most noble attribute of man.” Charles Darwin 1871

“A man who dares to waste one hour of time has not discovered the value of life.” Charles Darwin 1836

### For further information contact Tony & Liz:

Churches Tourism Officers - Email: [tourismofficer@visitherefordshirechurches.co.uk](mailto:tourismofficer@visitherefordshirechurches.co.uk)

## Features to include in interpretation

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This is a more easily printable version of the checklist, intended to spark ideas that you might like to think about when preparing your interpretation. You don't have to include them all, just focus on those that have the best story to tell.

### Outside

- The shape of the churchyard; it's position in relation to the parish and settlement; any nearby monuments (eg prehistoric burial mound, castle, motte).
  - Local geology and imported building stone as reflected in the perimeter wall, the paths, the churchyard memorials, the roof slates / tiles, the stone of the church or chapel.
  - The approach to the church: interesting perimeter walls or barriers, the carpentry of the lychgate and any inscriptions, coffin stand, gates and stiles, steps, paths.
  - Curtilage buildings: stable, carriage house, bier house, ossuary, almshouses, school rooms, parish rooms, guildhalls.
  - The character of the churchyard, local styles of headstone, chest tombs, ledger stones, wall memorials, interesting epitaphs or carvings, unusual local surnames, the graves of famous people or people with an interesting story, the churchyard cross and war memorials, views.
  - Noteworthy trees and plants, and the best time of year to see them – snowdrops and daffodils, wildflowers in June; butterflies, birds and bats; the age of the yew trees, wells and springs.
  - External features of note, the style of the chapel façade, towers and spires, buttresses, inscriptions, datestones and foundation stones, windows that are diagnostic of date, blocked doorways and windows, separate priest's doors, carved stones, corbels and gargoyles (examples of humour), scratch dials, masons' marks.
  - The style of the porch, the roof carpentry or atone vaulting, historic graffiti, crosses and mass dials scratched into the stonework, carvings and statuary around and above the door, holy water stoups, the age and ironwork of the door, upper rooms and their use.
  - The meaning of the chapel's name, lives and histories of the patronal saint(s), especially in the case of unique or unusual dedications.
  - Calendar festivals and seasonal traditions associated with the parish and church / chapel.
- 

### Inside

- The plan and the architectural styles and dates of the different parts.
- A plan and explanatory notes showing what is where and why: font, pulpit, altar, lectern, communion table.
- Evidence of iconoclasm, details of restoration work (when and by whom), patrons.
- West end: bells and bellringing, font and font cover.

- Nave: arcades, columns and capitals, clerestory, royal coats of arms, lecterns, pulpits, readers' desks, box pews, pews, carved bench ends and poppy heads, graffiti, galleries.
  - Chapels: arcades, columns, window openings or tracery.
  - Crossing tower and transepts: chancel arch, rood screens and lofts.
  - Roof trusses, bosses, painted ceilings, angels and carvings.
  - Chancel: choir stalls, communion rails and tables, reredos, misericords, piscinas, sepulchres, sedilia.
  - Throughout: flooring, tiles, aumbries / cupboards, chests, carved stones, chests, parish registers, books, documents, museum exhibits, lighting, candelabra, squints and evidence for anchoritic cells.
  - Memorials: ledger stones, wall memorials, brasses, effigial monuments, hatchments, armour, flags, war memorials. Crypts and burial vaults.
  - Textiles: kneelers, banners, tapestries, vestments, altar clothes.
  - Organs and organ cases.
  - Stained glass.
  - Wall paintings.
- 

## Chapels and Meeting Houses

- Explain the story of your particular denomination and what that means in terms of history, practices, beliefs and differences from other denominations.
- Explain the key differences between a chapel and a church.
- The style and decorative elements of the façade; foundation inscriptions, date stones; the name of the chapel; male and female entrances; schoolrooms and manses.
- Information on the way that the chapel was funded and built from local contributions of money, labour and skill; local builders, architects, the role of the Minister.
- Pews and galleries, seats for elders, fonts and baptistries.
- Stained glass, framed or painted Biblical texts, wall tablets and memorials, decorative plasterwork, ironwork, tiling, door furniture, screens, clocks, gasoliers, lighting.
- Organ, choirs and the musical life of the chapel.
- Notable members of the congregation.
- Chapel china, photographs and archives illustrating the chapel's history and activities.
- The burial ground and its memorials, tombstones, biodiversity.
- Historic activities: social, educational and political; temperance movements.

## Communications plan discussion document

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This is the discussion document used as a basis for developing the Discover Churches communication plan. You could use it when starting to write your communications plan, or for inspiration to engage other people in the process.

The details relate to the Discover Churches project. Please adapt it to your church, your unique selling points, and your planned activities.

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In drawing up a communications strategy a number of key elements have to be agreed by project steering group members.

When these are in place effective communications can proceed without the need for each separate action to be referred to members. This minimises delay in promoting the project, particularly when timely communication may be required, for example when responding to a request for information or comment.

Key elements of the strategy, examined below, are:

- Messages
- Audiences
- Social Media
- Images (video)
- Specialist communication
- Dealing with bad news

### Messages

- Are we clear about our core messages?
- The strapline used in our branding “Open doors Hidden Stories” points to these being:
  - Our churches are OPEN
  - Our churches are WELCOMING
  - Our churches are SURPRISING
  - Our churches are FOR FAMILIES
  - Our churches are ALIVE
- Each of these offers numerous opportunities for publicity and can be expanded/interpreted in line with activities and events in member churches. So, the fact that all our member churches are open is a given but needs to be included in all communications as this may not be immediately obvious to the wider public. It will also be especially important in whatever post Covid situation we may have to work within.
- Similarly we need to identify concrete examples of ‘welcome’. Simply having an open door will not be enough to attract visitors or media interest. Where these examples exist they need to be

publicised. This need not be the work of the project but may be achieved by encouraging member churches to 'spread the word'.

- The element of surprise will require identification of 'hidden stories' from across member churches. It might also be as simple as a summer news release highlighting, say 'Ten great churchyards for your weekend/holiday picnic'.
- In these cases publicity should be handled by the project.
- The appeal to families may be through trails (inside or outside churches) or events organised by members. General publicity about the offer to families across the two counties can be handled 'centrally' with individual member churches using their own networks to attract visitors.
- Opportunities to promote all the above messages will become available as member churches buy into the ethos of the project.
- It is important that our communications also highlight the fact that the churches are LIVING communities and places of worship and not simply interesting old buildings. While they hold history and stories we can emphasise that they are still creating both.

### **Audiences**

- There are already a large number of people who visit churches, either because this is a particular interest or because their habit is to 'pop into' the local church when touring an area. These people may still be attracted to our area and our churches through publicity. This might well be through general local publicity or via the 'church' media.
- Perhaps more important are the people we do not yet attract. These will probably be families and younger people. It will be important to identify specific outlets and occasions which offer a chance to reach these groups.
- Facebook (see social media below) will also be an important tool here, particularly if we can identify groups which exchange this kind of information.
- We can also target publicity at special interest groups such as local historians, people with an interest in natural history or archaeology.

### **Social Media**

- On one level social media communication is time consuming but it does have the advantage of reaching groups who may not currently give any thought to churches as places to visit.
- There is a second advantage, too. If we encourage interactivity with our member churches and with visitors they will help populate our pages.
- This will require some priming activity by the project in the first instance. For example encouraging visitors to share stories and pictures of their days out. We might also consider the use of online competitions or inducements as an incentive for people to become involved. (Could we offer a short stay at a local hotel/B&B for example?)
- All our publicity material should contain links to our social media pages. We might also wish to consider using member churches to identify any supporters who have special skills or insights in the field of social media,
- We should include communications as part of Social media workshop/s

### **Images and video**

- We already have a considerable number of stock images of our churches. The vast majority of these, however, feature interiors and exteriors of church buildings. In line with our core messages it is important that we acquire as quickly as possible images of activities, events and most importantly a range of people.
- These will be of use as illustrations for news releases and for our social media pages. In turn interactive social media will be a valuable source of such images.
- Video will also enhance our social media offer but if we are reliant on submissions from our member churches or visitors we will have to exercise quality control.
- In due course we might wish to investigate commissioning short videos which can be used on social media, issued as video news releases and which, ultimately, will form a record as part of an evaluation of the project.

### **Specialist Communications**

- While most of our publicity will be aimed at local news outlets and social media there are numerous opportunities for targeting specialist journalists and publications. This might be, for example, travel writers or outlets which feature the countryside or history.
- We might consider a 'Post Covid' invitation to a selected group to spend a couple of days in Herefordshire and Shropshire and organising a tour for them. This might be something to be organised in co-operation with local tourism businesses and agencies.
- In the meantime material can be aimed at travel supplements and specialist publications.

### **Dealing with bad news**

- No communications strategy is complete without its 'crisis comms' section and ours should be no different. The task at this stage is simple. We should identify any areas of concern – a list of what might go wrong. It will be a short list but might include unfavourable comments from visitors who believe the project or a member church has failed to deliver what was promised; an accident leading to injury at some church tourism event or to a church visitor or some adverse publicity around our funding or the management of the project.
- In all cases the actions are clear.
  - Identify our spokesperson
  - Identify what we want to say
  - Be firm in not being bullied into saying anything we don't want to say
  - Apologies where appropriate are fine but be aware they can be seen as admissions of liability



Aug 2020

# Church Tourism Branding

# Welcome

A Discovery session to refine and re-affirm the concept and move towards creating our brand.

- Agreeing our brand
- How does it sit alongside current sites
- Considering our audience & stakeholders
- Sharing thoughts on presentation style & tone
- Heading towards names

# 'Brand'

It's more than the name.  
Or the logo.  
Or the colour palette.

Your brand is the encapsulation of how you look, feel, and speak.

It is how you present and communicate. How you are different to others. And how you engage in a way which encourages others to engage with you.

It is your personality. The sum of all your parts. And reflected in every touchpoint.

And once it's established then the name or logo is the shorthand to all your brand represents.



# Deliverables

“We will need the following from the branding”

- Theme (look and feel)
- Strapline
- Logo (various size print files)
- Social Media Banners (direction on content)
- Mailchimp emails
- Style for the Church Handbook
- Short Video films
- Tours and trails (either online or hard copy)
- Any promotional material – Training forms, leaflets, pop ups for exhibitions etc
- Interpretation
- Church Tourism Conference packs
- Church Building Development Guide for Turnastone

# Discovery

- Received the Visioning Workshop notes
- Useful meeting at Orphans with Wendy, Jenny, Liz and Tony
- Considered the overall proposition
  - Objective to help Churches survive
  - Building the tourism story
  - Connecting Churches with other activities to create 'tours'
  - Engaging the Churches to contribute to delivering the new service
  - Across two Counties
  - Best practice then shared to other regions
  - Turnastone project
- Touched on our target audiences
- Considered the communication path. Includes website(s) and active social media
- It needs a name!

# Visioning Workshop



# Brand Strategy

The New Brand must sit alongside current platforms.

**SCTG SHROPSHIRE CHURCHES TOURISM GROUP**

Home Welcome News **NW Shropshire** NE Shropshire Shrewsbury SE Shropshire SW Shropshire Members' page  
Contact us Membership Locator Links Search Photos

 **Shropshire Churches Tourism Group**

From Monday 15th June 2020 churches MAY be opened for private prayer, See the Members' Page for [Coronavirus Guidelines](#)

AGM POSTPONED. In view of the situation, we have decided to postpone the AGM until further notice.

Please note: our contact email address has been changed. Instead of each officer having their own address, there is now just one:-

<scgoffice@gmail.com>

It cannot be used from here, but you can copy and paste it into your email 'compose' box.

Melverley Church, pic by Karen Reynolds

SCTG is a network of unparalleled Shropshire churches and chapels in the county, which have dominated the landscape and life of communities for more than a thousand years. All our churches offer visitors both a warm welcome and features of interest.

SCTG is an ecumenical body of self-motivated people interested in the development and promotion of church tourism to enhance the visitor's appreciation and enjoyment of Shropshire. SCTG is a fully constituted voluntary organisation.


Are you visiting Shropshire? This website gives you all the information you need to start [exploring our churches](#).

Are you part of a church community in Shropshire? Find out more about the benefits of being a [member of the SCTG](#)


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OUR LATEST NEWSLETTER (JUNE 2020) CAN BE READ [HERE](#)  
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**Membership**

We've had a great response to the request for membership renewal. Thanks to all those who have paid for this year and next. We shall be working on the new brochure this year, so if you'd like to be in it now's the time to re-join. The cost remains at £60 for two years and now you can do it all online. Visit our new [Membership](#) section for details.

 **HERITAGE FUND**

Visit Herefordshire Churches  
People... Heritage... Belief...



Download Brochure About Friends Transport Contact Members Virtuous Circles 2

Towns A - C Towns D - G Towns H Towns I - L Towns M - O Towns P - R Towns S - U Towns V - Z

### About HCTG

Churches tell a story, many stories – of families, of political intrigue and social change, of architecture, and changes in belief.

Herefordshire Churches Tourism Group is a network of some of the best churches and chapels in the county that have dominated the landscape and life of communities for more than a thousand years.

#### What will you find when you enter the door?

A source of fascination, awe, or a deep sense of peace?



Here people have come and still come, generation on generation, seeking the place of their ancestors or solace for the present.

Our churches still play a significant part in the life of our communities. Some act as community centres with modern facilities, others have developed their churchyards to attract wild life, all serve as living monuments to our heritage and history.







Visiting our churches can enhance your appreciation and enjoyment of Herefordshire.

#### Come and share

*Mappa Mundi, Hereford Cathedral. Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Hereford and the Mappa Mundi Trustees.*

HCTG thanks the following for their generous support:

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# Our Brand

- Innovative (this is new thinking, a new place for Churches)
- Light touch and interesting (so much more than buildings ... stories, surroundings, other activities)
- Varied audiences – families, historians, couples, ‘real’ holidays, interesting Staycations
- Collaborative – the more our ‘representatives’ give the more enjoyable the visit – equally, with our creative ‘tours’ (i.e. ‘Churches & Ale’)
- Engaging – you’ll find our interesting content variously on Social media.

Putting Churches on the Tourism map.

Architecture, centuries of tales and beautiful places to enjoy en route.



# Thoughts on Names

## Project Name:

Virtuous Circles 2

## Brand Name:

- Inspired
- Churchscapes
- Pews & Views
- Aisles & Stiles

Incredible architecture  
round every corner  
(they just happen to be Churches)

Church  
es to marvel.  
Landscapes to adore.

Putting Churches on the Tourism map.  
Architecture, centuries of tales and  
beautiful places to enjoy en route.

# Thoughts on audiences and visitors

How should our brand look, feel and sound?

# What are they interested in?

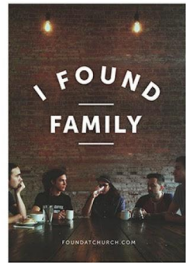
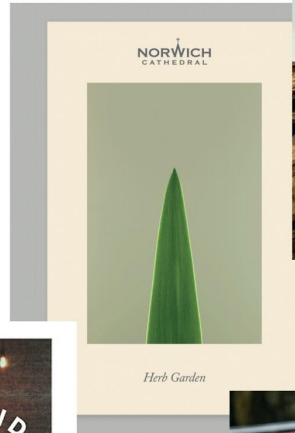
How do we engage with them?

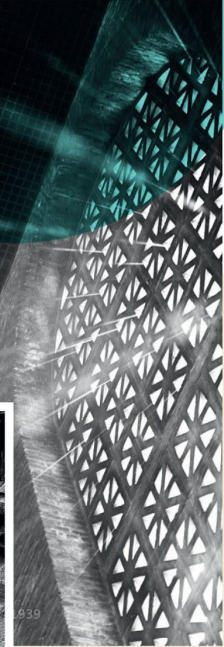
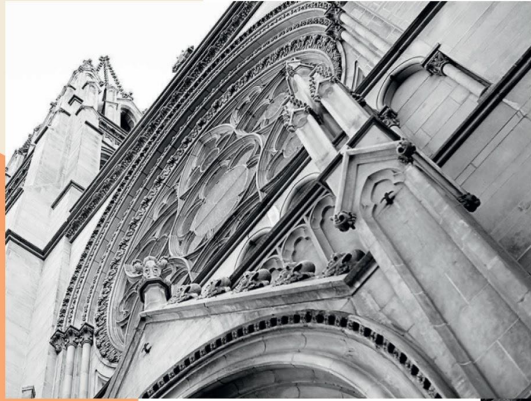
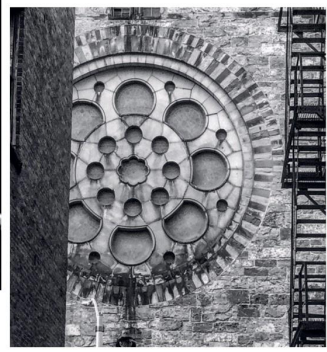
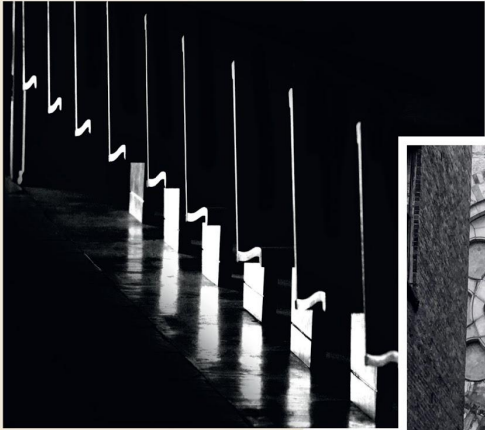
<https://theclickdesign.com/our-work/national-trust-natures-playground/>

# Our personality & positioning?

How should our brand look, feel and sound?

# ART, HISTORY, NATURE, STORIES.





Name agreed at meeting

# Discover Churches

Strapline agreed

Hidden Stories, Open Doors

We agreed our churches are about;

**architecture, landscape, stories, people, heart of communities, history/heritage, quiet & peaceful Spaces. And that the churchyard is the first space people see and crucially at the moment is an open, outdoor space.**



Orphans

## Where Next

1. **Orphans to develop branding routes for presentation**
2. **Virtuous Circle group to consider how the approach and name can start to dictate delivery on the ground.**
  - Are the churches open & welcoming?
  - Is the churchyard welcoming?
  - Do we know/the volunteers know what's special/intriguing about their church that can be shared?

## Press release example

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This is an example press release from Discover Churches.

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**For immediate release 27 October 2020**

### New modern look for ancient church buildings

An initiative backed by the Heritage Lottery Fund is set to put church tourism on a professional footing. Using new branding and technology, a pilot scheme in Herefordshire and Shropshire is serving as a blueprint for churches, which want to make the most of their potential to attract tourists.

“Herefordshire and Shropshire already have active Church Tourism Groups with two hundred plus members between them, churches that already take visitors seriously,” said Jenny Beard, from Herefordshire Churches Tourism Group. “With over two hundred thousand pounds in grant money, we are able to take medieval churches into the twenty-first century.”

The funding will enable the use of contemporary branding, the installation of visitor counters and contactless giving points in selected churches. This will be followed up with a digital marketing campaign as well as the development of popular themed tourism experiences to complement the holiday package that today’s tourists are already familiar with in the two counties.

The first step for the two groups is the introduction of common branding which has just been agreed and approved. Its aim is to have a recognisable ‘look’ for both groups.

“We are very excited about our new branding, which we will be rolling it out to our local member churches and hope that they will soon start opening the doors to the hidden secrets within.” added Anni Calver, Secretary of Shropshire Churches Tourism Group. “It is something we could share with other county groups in the future.”

The project will be carrying out audience and visitor research, to inform church members of what their visitors are looking for and how they can better prepare the best experience for them. Church buildings have been closed during the Covid pandemic but they are already planning to be ready for the new season in 2021.

“We are fortunate locally to have an amazing number of stunning buildings many dating back a thousand years or more, and many examples of significant ones too.” said Jenny and Anni .

“We have a church foundation which dates back to 660AD, a Knights Templar church – think Da Vinci Code - numerous buildings with Saxon origins, a Benedictine Monastery, another designed by Augustus Pugin as well as one of the oldest Unitarian Churches in England. If that is not enough, we also have a splendid medieval chapel that’s been a Greek Orthodox Church since 1997.” (See Editors Notes below \*\*\*)

The branding has been designed by Orphans Press based in Leominster, Herefordshire. The local project has national partners in the National Churches Trust, the Churches Visitor & Tourism Association and the Church Conservation Trust. A national Conference is being planned for October 2021.

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**Notes to Editors:**

The following people are available for interview:

Churches can be made available for interviews, filming and photographs and from:

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Information on buildings referred to in news release above.

\*\*\*Leominster Priory is built on the site of a monastery founded in 660AD and 1400 years later still has Christian worship on the site.

\*\*\*St Michael, Garway is a Knights Templar building founded in the 1180s with characteristic round nave and chancel

\*\*\*Several Churches in Shropshire have Saxon remains – please contact Anni above

\*\*\*Belmont Abbey was founded in 1854, 25 years after the Catholic Relief Act made it possible.

\*\*\*Shrewsbury Cathedral was commissioned and paid for by the 16th and 17th Earls of Shrewsbury. Augustus Pugin was the chosen architect but he died in 1852 leaving his son Edward to finish it in 1856.

\*\*\*Shrewsbury Unitarian church is one of the oldest in the country , the third building on a site dating from the foundation of Unitarianism in 1662. The current building rebuilt in 1715 was attended by Charles Darwin and family and can claim poet Samuel Coleridge as one of its ministers.

\*\*\*Greek Orthodox Church was consecrated in 1997, but is housed in a church dating back to Saxon and medieval times. Belonging to the Roman Catholic Church when first built, it became Anglican after the Reformation and was sold by the Diocese of Lichfield to the Greek Orthodox Church in the 1990s.

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[www.visitherefordshirechurches.co.uk](http://www.visitherefordshirechurches.co.uk)

[www.discovershropshirechurches.co.uk](http://www.discovershropshirechurches.co.uk)

<https://www.instagram.com/discoverchurches/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ChurchTourism>

<https://twitter.com/DiscoverChurch6>

## Creating a churches tourism group

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This guide has been written by Anni Holden, Secretary of the Shropshire Churches Tourism Group (SCTG) and Executive Member of Herefordshire Churches Tourism Group (HCTG).

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Herefordshire and Shropshire are very fortunate in each having a Churches Tourism Group. Herefordshire is 20 years old and Shropshire is 11.

They were established by a group of people coming together because they cared about their local church and churches. alongside a wish to share their treasures with visitors.

A professional brochure is produced, originally every other year, but following disruption during COVID and in a bid to keep costs down, SCTG has decided to move to 3 years. SCTG has a website and a Facebook page, organises the occasional coach trip, runs training courses as needed and sends out a newsletter 4 to 6 times a year.

### Setting up

The easiest place to start is the Church of England. Historically they 'own' most of the historic buildings, many of them Grade 1 and 2\*, indicating some of the most important buildings in the country. You need to identify a few like-minded people who might be interested, for moral and practical support.

Next step is to contact the Diocesan office that covers your county and ask to speak to the communications person/office, you could check the Diocesan website to find out their name. Explain that you want to set up a Tourism Group and would it be possible to publicise the idea in the Diocesan mailing? They are unlikely to say no! Prepare a notice according to the decision you make in the next paragraph.

**ACTION** Contact Diocesan Office.

Prepare advert for your Churches Tourism Group

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This is a decision-making moment. Do you want to advertise for people interested to contact you or do you want to identify a couple of places in the county where you could hold a meeting. From SCTG experience, we chose 2 places in the area about 30 miles apart. They can be church buildings and they will be free (but they are cold in winter). We held both meetings on the same day, morning and afternoon. Check the date the next mailing is going out and arrange meetings about 3 weeks ahead. This may exclude people who work fulltime but there is time for them later.

**ACTION** Book church buildings for the first meetings.

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We were surprised how many people turned up! We took names and contact details (email and phone number) and the name of the church they were representing,- sometimes a few people from a group of parishes were there on behalf of all 6 churches in their group for example. Greet people as they arrive at the door to ensure you get names; it is the start of your data base. Assure people you will only use the contacts when necessary and will never share with anyone else.

**ACTION** Get the contact details for the people who turn up.

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## How the group works

The group runs on very simple lines. Each church pays £60 to join once every 3 years. The size of the church is not relevant and there is no discount for church groups. (It is too complicated to work out fair deals!) As we point out it is only £20 per year.

For this they receive:

- A professionally produced full colour 32 page booklet with details of their building, postcode and opening hours and their web address and Facebook page and a picture for every church.
- An informative website on which every member has pages if they choose.
- An opportunity to advertise events on the website and Facebook
- A Facebook page which keeps the existence of our buildings and the treasures they hold at the forefront
- A regular newsletter 4 to 6 times a year with ideas of how you might attract more visitors, information considered important, what their executive has been doing
- Access to executive members via email for questions.

Delivering the list is the job of the executive. After we explained what church membership meant, we specifically asked whether anyone would be interested in joining a small executive to set up the group. You need a Chair, treasurer, a secretary to take minutes, a publicity person is useful (you can get help from SCTG) and other members to contribute ideas, 8 - 10 people are enough. At this stage, willing volunteers is all you need. We have a ready-made Constitution available too.

**ACTION** Explain how the group works and ask for volunteers.

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The work is not arduous. Once you have a group and positions are filled (a treasurer is essential), you need to open a bank account. Shop around for the best deal (you are not a charity).

Advertise that the new group is open for members using any means you can think of. A simple A4 poster can be sent to all your contacts asking them to ensure each church in their group gets one. Use parish magazines and go back to the Diocesan Mailing. Consider whether you have any non-Anglican churches that you might also contact, Churches Together can be useful here.

(SCTG has 2 Catholic churches, 1 Orthodox, a United Reformed Church and a Unitarian church - We still hope to recruit a Methodist Church )

**ACTION** Advertise the formation of the Group everywhere you can think of.  
Open a bank account.

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When you have an Executive and an advertising campaign, you can start to collect membership subscriptions. Make sure all details are collected of members - an online form to fill in is the best way of doing this. Begin forming your data base.

The treasurer needs to be on the ball. Payments may be made straight into the bank account or can be a cheque from the church treasurer (still used widely in 2022). The form you will ask them to fill in will ask for two names as contacts plus the treasurer's name and email. It is essential that details are meticulously recorded but in a digital world this is not difficult. This will be their first year of membership so choose dates for launch carefully, advice is available from SCTG.

**ACTION** Invite Churches to join.

Keep careful records of contacts and payments.

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As soon as possible think website.

Branding is available to all who want to be involved in a countrywide grouping. We believe common branding would look professional and it is free from us. We recommend the web address: 'discovercountychurches.co.uk' : [www.discovershropshirechurches.co.uk](http://www.discovershropshirechurches.co.uk)

Give members a date by which they must provide their information for the new brochure. This could be your first newsletter. We suggest 50-80 words and 3 photographs per entry (for design reasons) Add all three pictures to the webpage you have set up for each member. We work in an alphabetical system for the layout of our brochure, but the way you chose to lay out is up to you. (Herefordshire work on a 5 area pattern) We use a qualified designer who lives locally. He does all the negotiations with the printer too. He is worth every penny. Get costs for designers and printing.

Contact the local authority tourism people if they exist, explain what you are doing and how you hope to contribute to the tourism offer in the county. Explain the brochure and ask if they have a county map you can use to identify church buildings in the brochure. This is the start of a relationship with the bigger tourism industry.

After that it is time to compile the brochure, which will be ready for your first AGM for collection by members. This could be your brochure online:

<https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f199d4599122/content/pages/documents/churches-tourism-brochure-v8-1-.pdf>

- ACTION**
- Create a website.
  - Contact your new members for brochure entries.
  - Use a local web designer.
  - Make contact with the local authority tourism officers.
- 

Someone has to take responsibility for the entries for the brochure and others need to proof read it. There is no rush here as once happy, you will send it back to the Members for them to check their entry. This should ensure you have the right web address or FBook page and their postcode. Get prices for designers and printing and then decide how many you think you will need. We print 30,000 and they are picked up like hot cakes. Paper is still popular!

Ask the local authority officer for advice on the number for print. They will know the visitor profile for the county - worth you asking for this too. You will want them in tourist offices/visitor centres, other major tourist destinations, hotels & guest houses, as well as each member church. This is a major piece of work but it will be easier next time round.

Choosing the front page picture for your booklet is important too. When put in a leaflet holder you need to see the name of your group on a lovely background. We have worked out over time that stained glass attracts people to the brochure. (see examples of some we have used)

- ACTION**
- You cannot check too many times.
  - Contact tourism officer for advice on numbers to print.
  - Choose stained glass picture for front page.
- 

## The AGM

Distribution is done at the AGM. Having it to coincide with the Tourist season makes it pertinent, Sometime in March works and choose a member church to host it. Choosing a church venue near the centre of the county always helps to attract more people. It needs to have means of providing teas and coffees and a toilet is essential. A good speaker helps too, possibly an encouraging Bishop, a good speaker from the wider tourism community or a local personality that the executive members feel comfortable with.

We hand out 50 brochures to small churches and ask the bigger ones how many they want. They can receive top-ups by asking or at the following year's AGM. Always ask for new volunteers for the executive group. We have a small turnover which has worked well as people move on and new talent arrives.

At the first AGM you will need to approve the Constitution, so you will need copies available and a copy on the website. When contacting members inviting them to attend and pick up their brochures, direct them to the website to read the Constitution they need to approve. Also mention in the newsletter that volunteers to serve on the Executive are always welcome at the AGM.

Not every church will send a rep to pick up the brochures and some will have 1 or 2 people collecting for several churches. Get people to sign for each church they are taking them for and insert their name and email on the forms you are providing. This will add to your database.

At the end of the AGM you have a county church Tourism Group and life calms down You have achieved what you set out to achieve. By now your executive will be looking something like this:

- One of the team is responsible for the website
- One is in charge of the newsletter
- One is in charge of the accounts and finance
- Share responsibility for Facebook /Instagram/Social Media
- Everyone will do something at some time during the year and ACTIONS marked on minutes are taken seriously.
- Try to meet for lunch together before/after meetings, which helps us get to know the others personally rather than just across a table.