



Churches Tourism Association

Members' newsletter
August 2011

Welcome

We compile this edition amid the worrying events of civil chaos. Those whose responsibility it is to care for church buildings must be particularly anxious at this time.

Nevertheless, there are many positives about church tourism to report on and the last meeting of CTA Trustees really highlighted the high level of activity across all regions of England.

First, programme and booking details for the 2011 Symposium which is a mere few months away!

CTA Symposium & AGM

The Monastery, Gorton,
Manchester M12 5WF

11.00 – 3.30pm

Thursday 3rd November 2011-08-10

'Making Connections or Going It Alone; Going Public or Staying Private?'

Presentations and opportunity for debate on partnerships between Parish Churches and Cathedrals;

Conversations and engagement between Christianity and other faiths;

Do Churches need public accreditation?

Delegate fee £25.00
to include refreshments/lunch

Booking form available by email from
canonjbrown@mac.com

Or by post
556 Galleywood Road,
Chelmsford, Essex CM2 8BX

Or downloaded

www.churchestourism.info

A Church for the Community in Uploders

This piece is reproduced with permission from *Pilgrim Post in Dorset* and the writer, Lois Gribble, gives an encouraging view of what is possible in small country churches.

Uploders is a small rural community of about 450 people, 2.5 miles east of Bridport, 2 miles north of the A35. The Methodist chapel is a galleried, Grade 2 listed building. In 2004 major restoration work was required but with only 9 members, this gave rise to discussion as to whether perhaps it was time for the chapel to close.

This was not a view held by the membership of Uploders, who saw the chapel not just as a place for Sunday worship but as a resource for the wider needs of the community it sought to serve. By the grace of God this view prevailed and permission was given to go ahead with major works.

There are no shops in Uploders, but there is a pub. Our funding platform, therefore, was that we were looking for money for the other public house.....that sought to serve the needs of the community.

Nearly £100,000 was raised, modern facilities were installed, local craftsman, Ron Emmett, who had worked with John Makepeace, designed contemporary style furnishings. Now, the chapel is in constant use with various community events as well as services. It's even liaised with the local PCT to provide a venue for monthly medical check-ups.

The number of worshippers has also grown. Once over the threshold for whatever reason *we make a fuss of them.....coffee and biscuits have long been standard issue.Uploders chapel is a little gem.*

Further information from
alison.cocks@tiscali.co.uk

Churches Tourism Association

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<http://www.churchestourism.info/>

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Visitor analysis

Jeremy Martineau, St Mary's Fishguard, has recently initiated an effective system for monitoring visitors to his church.

He says that visitor books are only completed by a fraction of actual visitors and do not give a true picture of the 'footfall'.

Therefore, as part of the drive to have the church open and welcoming and to make sure that there is an accurate record of visitor numbers a beam counter has been installed. Jeremy reports that the counter cost £130 and took him just 5 minutes to install! Technically this is the property of the diocesan tourism group and is available to other churches to borrow.

Jeremy believes that this development combined with a revised visitor questionnaire will help provide more information that will be useful in the planning of future outreach work.

If you have questions contact Jeremy direct
Jeremy.m@talktalk.net

Notes from the Chairman

Canon John recently attended a very useful meeting of the Southwell and Nottingham Church History Project. One of the practical outcomes of this initiative is that the diocese has invested in some large plastic 'CHURCH OPEN' signs.

For further information about the project, which has a tourism component, please contact Heather Sirrel heather.sirrel@southwell.anglican.org

He also reports a productive meeting with the Archdeacon of Charing Cross and a small working group looking at promoting London churches to visitors and tourists. With the Olympics on the horizon and the prospect of huge numbers of visitors to the capital, the group are considering holding a conference later in the year to encourage the openness of churches across the diocese.

A very interesting and stimulating meeting, hosted by the Diocese of Bath and Wells, was held towards the end of July in Taunton. The meeting was attended by representatives from a number of the dioceses in the south-west. An informal

presentation was given about the work of CTA, including an appeal for all of the dioceses of the south-west to take account of the fundamental role which church buildings play in the mission of the Church. Discussion was also invited regarding the Church's response to the Olympics and to the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee also in 2012. A presentation was subsequently given by Janet Uttley from Visit England introducing suggestions as to the benefit of church buildings being publicly accredited.

Canon John notes that the route and dates for the OLYMPIC TORCH is now on the Olympics website and there is the suggestion that Local Authorities should promote an event/s associated with the journey through their area. So be in touch with your Local Authority.

A number of people have pointed out that it is also a golden opportunity for churches to be open and put on their own celebrations – possibly a ringing of bells..... Canon John is happy to provide more information 01245 358185

Historic Chapels Trust

Hospitality and a venue for a recent meeting of CTA trustees was provided by the HCT in St George's German Lutheran Church, London. The Trust looks after 20 chapels across England and once restored these places host numerous events as well as commemorative services for those who have a connection with the chapel.

St George's has a particularly interesting story being the oldest foreign chapel in England. Originally one of three German chapels in East London, it was built to serve the large population of German immigrants who were responsible for developing sophisticated methods of sugar refinery in the capital. Later, the chapel had connections with Bonhoeffer – and in time the chapel also became a valued building within the East London Jewish community.
www.hct.org.uk

Next newsletter

The next edition will be issued in October with September 30th copy deadline.

York Diocesan Church Tourism Group And South Holderness Deanery

A collaborative event in June provided a positive example of how to promote a friendly welcoming atmosphere in local churches as well as being a tourist destination. Three churches were visited through the day with guidance on how to promote the local heritage connections. These were St Patrick, Patrington, The Queen of Holderness, St Augustine, Hedon, the King of Holderness and St Andrew, Paull, Nr Hull.

Further information on how this successful day was co-ordinated from Roy Thompson
roythompson2@btinternet.com
01347 878644

CTA is always looking for examples of best practice whether it be in terms of individual churches or groups of churches, the remits of Diocesan Tourism Advisers or Officers, or Diocesan Tourism Groups. York Diocesan Church Tourism Group is leading the way in inviting members of the Group and others who would like to join them for day visits round the diocese at approximately 3-monthly intervals. What a beneficial way for making it clear to parishes that a diocese is deeply committed to the openness of church buildings to visitors and tourists, and of course giving members of the Diocesan Tourism Group and others the opportunity of discovering churches within their diocese with which they may well not be familiar, or previously never have visited.

Canon John wishes to remind members that it was in 2008 that General Synod unanimously endorsed Roy Thompson's (Roy is a trustee of CTA) proposal that every diocese should appoint a Diocesan Tourism Officer and/or a Tourism Group. Although the proposal did not mention the aspiration that every diocese should also become a member of the Churches Tourism Association, 11 dioceses did sign up to CTA. Canon John's secret hope – now public! – is that eventually all 43 dioceses sign up as this will provide the strongest of signals that openness of church buildings really is a shared priority.

He concludes that if this is heard '*with open ears*' then please either download a membership form

from the CTA website or e-mail
canonjbrown@mac.com

Church websites

CTA have received information from Church-Edit, which offers specialist IT help on how to promote your church. They provide consultancy and seminars, looking at the creation of church websites and videos.

Their next seminar will be held in Swindon on 8th September. To find out more about what they can provide visit www.churchedit.co.uk

Diary dates for September

The Autumn always heralds two events which are now very well established in the national calendar:

Heritage Open Days 8-11th September
London Open House 17/18th September

Heritage Open Days provides a national treasure trail of fascinating buildings from castles, factories, town halls, barns, chapels, churches to many more which are often not easily available to the public, thus providing a veritable feast of hidden architectural delights.

HOD says the event is all about 'people and places.... And celebrates community and reflects the importance of the built environment on our lives.....'

Forward plan by looking at the whole programme on www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Similar principles of openness underpin London Open House Weekend, showcasing wonderful buildings within the capital.

The informative website www.londonopenhouse.org guides you through architects, period and type (this will give the subsection of 'religious' if you are looking for sacred buildings)

Two weekends to savour!