



The Gatekeeper

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The Big Draw

St. Nicholas, Kenilworth, the church in Abbey Fields, hosted The Big Draw on 16th October, and we were well catered for on many fronts. The parish were warmly welcoming and supported the event brilliantly. We welcomed around 30 people of all ages who took part – some had to be persuaded more than others to put charcoal to paper! They all created their own little masterpieces using the inspiration of the building and the surrounding area of the Fields. Despite the weather, some of those who joined us worked outside until their hands became too cold to hold a pencil!

Mo Enright and James Kerr led the day, bringing with them examples of their very different styles and ways of working. They inspired the artists to try different techniques and materials. It was a very positive experience welcoming those who may not have explored a church before in this way. The congregation at St Nicholas provided tea and home made cakes so there was a passing trade despite the chilly weather. This is definitely something we'll try again, perhaps during the summer, and something you could all do in your churches at any time. Do let us know if you'd like some support.

Big thanks to Mo and James and to Mervyn Tweed, Janet Cherry, Richard Awre and Graham Wright for their warm welcome - and to Pat who helped me pack up my car at the end of the day! Take a look at our [virtual gallery](#) of the images and the artists who took part. This should be up and working later this week.



Coventry Blitz – 70 years on

This month Coventry marks the 70th anniversary of the Blitz, which destroyed

so much of Coventry's historic centre, including the great Cathedral, and killed over 1,000 people. The city and the Cathedral are hosting a series of events to commemorate the terrible night of 14th November 1940, and to promote the city as a centre of peace and reconciliation. Many of these events will take place over the Remembrance Sunday weekend, adding an extra dimension to this annual commemoration.

One of the Cathedral's special events is a performance of Benjamin Britten's War Requiem on the evening of Saturday, 13th November. This challenging work was commissioned for the consecration of the new Cathedral in 1962. You'll find details of this and many other events on our website www.divine-inspiration.org.uk/news-and-events. Coventry is also running a Peace Festival throughout the month of November with a wide variety of talks, exhibitions and events. To find out more visit www.coventry.gov.uk/peace or call 024 7683 2351.



Take a look at our Holy Histories

We hope you've noticed the recent changes we've made to our website. This has been partly to accommodate the new feature 'Holy Histories' to which many of you contributed. We also have lots of information available in the new resources area, which holds the toolkit, sample leaflets and the Gatekeeper. It should now be much easier to find what you're looking for.

The news and events pages have been merged so you can see at a glance what's been happening and exciting things coming up in the diocese.



Slave's Grave, Oxhill

Do take a look - we hope you'll find these features improve the site. We always welcome your feedback, so please send any comments or suggestions to Amanda Amanda.ross@divine-inspiration.org.uk

CLAIRE'S COLUMN



If you've ever heard Helen and Amanda talking about the work of Divine Inspiration, or read Toolkit 4 'Getting Noticed!' on the DI website, then you will already be fully aware of the importance of noticeboards in attracting visitors to your church and improving your welcome. The notice board is often the first point of contact between yourselves and passers-by and its impact may be greater than you think! It is prime advertising space! In this week's column, I'm going to give you some tips of how to make your noticeboard more effective, and of course how to go about getting the permission to erect it.

A LICK OF PAINT?

Noticeboards are even more important if your church is locked some or most of the time. It provides an opportunity to tell people about the church's activities, and information about the church, showing that it is very much alive. A tired, sad, neglected noticeboard will give the impression that the church is tired, sad and neglected – and that is precisely the impression we don't want to give! A lick of paint and some up to date information may be all you need to give your noticeboard a new lease of life.

DESIGNING NEW NOTICEBOARDS

If a brand new noticeboard would make all the difference to your welcome then there are a number of things that are worth thinking about. Choose colours and lettering that suit the church and its surroundings, and most importantly make sure the language used is clear and easy to understand – choose the font for its legibility rather than its decorative effect! Gothic styles may be nice and 'churchy' but can be difficult to read!

Contact information will change over time, but the least number of alterations you make the better, to keep your noticeboard up to date. Some churches choose to have a separate lockable, Perspex, watertight section where you can display information relating to church activities such as fetes and jumbles sales. This will make it easier to keep your noticeboard as recent as possible.

TOP TIPS

- Include the Diocesan logo and the Church of England logo – it will give your noticeboard 'belonging' and show your affiliations clearly!
- Avoid ecclesiastical terminology – many people won't understand it – 'Morning Service' is easier to understand than 'Matins' for example



In need of a facelift

- Elect a Noticeboard Warden, who can ensure that it remains in good condition and is up-to-date with recent news and events
- Include details of where further information can be found, when the church is open, or how access can be gained if it is not open
- Most importantly – your noticeboard is an offer of welcome, don't be afraid to show this!



That's much better

FACULTY?

Repairing noticeboards: if you merely want to repair your existing noticeboard, and the design, position, and details will remain the same, only Minor Works consent is necessary from the Diocese

Replacing noticeboards like-for-like: if you just want to replace your noticeboard in a like-for-like fashion, again, only Minor Works permission is necessary.

New noticeboards: these require Faculty consent, and may even require Planning Permission and Advertising Consent. It is worth ringing the local authority about this at an early stage.

When submitting an application for Minor Works or a DAC Certificate for a noticeboard, please remember to submit details of the noticeboard (including design, and how it will be fixed into the ground/on a wall), a PCC Minute authorising the work, and a plan/photo showing where the noticeboard will be. Contact me in the DAC office if you would like to discuss this further.

NEXT DAC MEETING

The final DAC meeting of the year is on 2nd December, and the cut off date for submitting information is the 4th November. If you have any DAC queries in the meantime or want to say hello, contact me in the DAC office Claire.Strachan@CovLec.org or 02476 521327. Our website is <http://www.coventry.anglican.org/admin/>

Worth waiting for...

The best things in life are often those we have to wait for and a building project, whether from scratch or a refurbishment, can take a good seven years + in the planning and realisation.

The Team at St. Nicholas, Kenilworth first met with me back in 2006 to share some ideas about how they might develop their church hall. The building, opened in 1911, is Edwardian in style, quite a grand space over two floors, opening up on to the pavement of High Street in the older part of the town. In its lifetime to date it has been many things – a school room, a sports hall, a utility building during the war, as well as being the social space for the congregation for church events.

After nearly 100 years of wear and tear, the team acknowledged the building needed a facelift involving much more than a lick of paint. We encouraged them to do some sound community research to help determine the kind of space needed for the 21st century. A return visit this week – four years down the line! – demonstrates that they have made incredible progress. They sold a property next door to the Hall, to raise some funds towards the £520,000 project costs. This was not a difficult decision as this late Victorian building was not realising its potential as a rental investment.

The refurbishment means that they will have a huge meeting hall, catering kitchen, mezzanine meeting room and a committee room, as well as a studio on the first floor, a smaller servery for light refreshments and a full complement of toilet facilities throughout the building. A huge amount of work has been done outside, to the rear of the building, to clear what was an overgrown



jungle. Removing fences to get the JCB through the vicar's garden was an early adventure. They now have a large turfed and landscaped garden to call their own as

an extension of their new facilities. The contemporary, high-quality finish highlights the original features that have been retained and preserved. The floor in the main hall area, for example, is original and is in good enough condition to restore. The building is not listed but the team have been very careful to retain the Edwardian style of the building and the footprint remains the same.

They will share their space during the week with an architect who's agreed to lease the airy studio room on the first floor. Having a tenant on site from Monday to Friday is an excellent move as well as being an income generator.

Maggie Curley, the project group spokesperson, pictured right, is excited by the prospect of sharing the space with the community when the work is complete. She told us: "As Nelson Mandela said '...vision without action is merely dreaming'.



Our vision had been there for a long time to renovate and restore this much loved building in old Kenilworth. The 'action committee' set to work almost five years ago to realise that vision and create a vibrant 21st century meeting place to be a bridge between our church and town communities.

"We have been blessed with a group of nine people with diverse skills and boundless energy who have managed to meet every month, work together, laugh together, get mad with each other and yet remain the best of friends. Our vicar Richard Awre has been on hand whenever we needed a "rudder" to guide us out of the difficult times – and there were many - when it felt like we were walking through mud! God has taught us to be patient and all would be well. We have found the expertise, we have found the money and early in 2011 we'll find our dream become reality."

Vibrant Past – Bright Future



This new free handbook from Methodist Heritage will be invaluable for exploring Wesley's Britain, offering readers a guide to visiting 100 historic sites, including the Old Rectory at Epworth in Lincolnshire, the childhood home of John and Charles Wesley. To obtain a copy call 01733 235962.

Also free is the twice-yearly publication 'Heritage News' with the latest information about the Methodist church's initiative to raise the profile of its heritage buildings. For more information contact Jo Hibbard hibbardj@methodistchurch.org.uk or call 020 7467 5257.

Website of the Month

The new 'Guide to Offering a Ministry of Welcome' from the Church in Wales is very comprehensive and a good tool to use if you're thinking of developing this in a bigger way. You can download a copy from this link or order a hard copy for £2.50 from the Diocese of St Davids.

<http://www.stdavidsdiocese.org.uk/tourism/resources/>



LPWGS latest news

First the good news. We're pleased to report that Government has announced that the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme will continue. However, the additional concessions, on professional fees, organs and bells, secured in 2006 will not be reinstated.

Thank you to everyone who signed the petition and lobbied their MP on this issue. The outcome balances the need for economies with recognition of the role and potential of our church buildings, which currently is refunding £1 million a month in England alone. You can find out more about the scheme here. <http://lpwscheme.org.uk/>

Workshops coming up...

Growing the income of your Church

To help churches meet their regular outgoings and finance sustainable growth in their ministries through a combination of increased giving, major donor fundraising, higher legacy income and service delivery as part of the 'Big Society' Birmingham on 24 November, London on 6 December

Funding capital projects

For churches which need to raise large sums to fund a major refurbishment or a new building. It enables churches to develop specialist skills required to run a successful capital fundraising programme, and to use the momentum generated to achieve a step change in regular giving.

London, 8 November, Birmingham, 17 November.

Suitable for clergy and laity on church leadership teams with responsibility for income generation.

Cost is £80 including lunch, book at: www.actionplanning.co.uk/churches

Keeping Faith in Your Community Project

Date: Thursday 11th November 2010

Time: 9:45am-4pm (we start promptly at 10am)

Venue: [St Matthews Centre](#), St Matthews Close, Church Hill, Walsall, WS1 3DG

Cost: £10 (including lunch)

An interactive day designed to help you reconnect your work to your deepest convictions

For more information or to book, call 01543 306030

Charles.Adams@lichfield.anglican.org.

West Midlands Region Churches Forum

Tuesday 2 November, 10.30am to 12.45pm
Darlington Street Methodist Church
24 School Street, Wolverhampton WV1 4LF

Covering the spending review, Big Society and implications for Christian mission in the region. To attend, please email office@wmchurches.org.uk

Coventry City Council runs a funding helpdesk help desk for community and voluntary groups, you can find details of this service [here](#).

Christmas is coming-



With only seven Sundays left before Christmas, here is something for all of you who are not yet fully prepared. Useful resources for all those Christmas activities from SMG Lifeworlds can be found on their website <http://www.sgmlifeworlds.com/christmas/>

Divine Inspiration is funded by English Heritage, through the Inspired! initiative, and the Coventry Diocesan Board of Finance and our services are free of charge to all parishes in the Diocese of Coventry.



DIVINE INSPIRATION
unlocking churches in coventry & warwickshire

Through Divine Inspiration all parishes in the Diocese have the opportunity to develop their welcome, explore their churches history and share that story with all who make a visit to their building. Divine Inspiration works closely with other Diocesan Officers, especially DAC, to help parishes to make achievable plans as they undertake development work in their church buildings.

Our website www.divine-inspiration.org.uk offers every church a page on the web to market themselves effectively as places of interest for heritage, learning, tourism, culture and leisure.

A volunteer network of Ambassadors enables representatives of all churches to share good practice, creative ideas and bespoke training. A downloadable toolkit gives those volunteers a set of resources to complement the development work they undertake over the next few years.

You can contact us at any time to arrange a visit, to discuss any issues or to explore ways in which you might develop your welcome and research your church heritage in more detail.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

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