

Introduction : questions 181120



Access: not just for disabilities, but a lot of older people struggle to climb up to our church:

This is a really important point. When we think of access it's easy to assume we mean disabled access but there are lots of limitations people face. It could be making sure that text is large enough in low light, there are handrails on steps or even that a buggy can get to the door and inside.

Our other concern is young teenagers coming in. We are loathe to keep them out, as it's also their church!

I completely understand this but commend you for wanting to welcome everyone. There's probably no simple answer and I don't want to just give platitudes. But, one story from our Lincolnshire project is of a churchwarden finding three teenage girls in her church... she asked them if they were OK (not wanting to be confrontational and ask why they were there) and it became apparent that one had had an argument with their family and didn't know where else to go. They now advertise themselves as a place to hang out / feel safe (with restrictions on behavior of course) and have much more engagement with local young people.

Please could you give an idea of how much a digital counter would cost to buy?

A digital counter from us costs £168 + VAT.

It's something you can and should really add into any application for funding, whether for tourism or repairs or whatever.

It's a two way laser counter with two boxes about the size of mobile phone which are light enough to be fixed with Velcro. If you're interested (or interested in borrowing one when we reorder our project for next year) please email me

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What is the multiplier for visitor book entries?

Various are used, alongside manual counts for events and activities.

I have always used 5, but that's very conservative. The CCT use 7. But we have found from research that it should be more like 15. We hope to prove this with the #GreatChurchVisitorCount.

If you could be involved that would be great!

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For manual counts we use these (lots of different sellers but this is a good photo):

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Counters-AFUNTA-Mechanical-Tracker-Clicker/dp/B01N4GUUQ9/ref=sr_1_10?dchild=1&keywords=tally+counter&qid=1605709263&sr=8-10

For visitors books we use these:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Classic-Black-Guest-Book-Organizer/dp/1441303316/ref=bmx_5/262-7054176-0492968?_encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=1441303316&pd_rd_r=f6ef47a8-481a-407a-8ba9-80cf13daa66d&pd_rd_w=1Nefm&pd_rd_wg=gMciF&pf_rd_p=1c67f0c1-d460-4c49-88d7-d8384dea5f37&pf_rd_r=8YYV30MAEGXM2PT1JNZN&psc=1&refRID=8YYV30MAEGXM2PT1JNZN

Is there a specific date that your data is going to start on?

We need to do a bit of work to our process to make sure that we can take account of Covid discrepancies or effects. So, we will start on 1st January, but if you could sign up before then that would be brilliant!

Digital counter numbers might be skewed in the other direction if, as in ours, church members often come in and out for church business.

Yes and no. When we did our research in Lincolnshire we combined the digital counter with a week of manual counting (where counters knew who church members are). Actually, we found very little discrepancy, especially as sometimes when two people walk into church at exactly the same time they sometimes only count as one on the digital counter. Also, church members are still church users... so we want to count them anyway.

Our visitors book is on the refreshment table with the tea, coffee and biscuits.

Sounds perfect, the more prominent you can make it the better. Also, explaining why it's helpful for people to sign is also an encouragement (many visitors don't realise that you need to prove how many people use the building).

Do we ask for contact details for future events?

Don't ask for contact details anywhere that other people might see them.

Best for GDPR compliance would be to use a system like mailchimp where people can sign up for updates online, but can also unsubscribe very easily. Although you will need to initially set this up, it will ultimately save you time as it's all automated.