



The Church of England
in Essex and East London

Diocese of Chelmsford

Barking Episcopal Area Communications Guidance Note - Number 3

Revamping your church notice board

Notice boards create the first impression about your church. Full stop.

In some ways it could be said to act as a permanent missionary for your church, indicating if the church is alive or dead. It's definitely the first point of welcome to the outside world and if it looks tatty, is hard to read, or doesn't contain enough information, it inevitably sends out negative messages.

A church near me has a line on its notice board that says 'Details of other services can be found in the porch.' Unfortunately the porch is only open when the church is open ... so, in effect the church is saying 'if you are not already part of us, with full knowledge of all that we do, you are only welcome on a Sunday morning!'

In general, church notice boards are in poor shape, and that's a shame, not least because it reflects very badly on the Kingdom of God

Basic tips

- Church signs last for several years and need to be easily updatable as phone no's and email addresses change
- Use high quality materials – they need to be built to last
- Avoid jargon

Who is it for?

- What type of sign (or signs) will you need?
- Who will see it?
- Audit your site; approach the church from different directions – think about who passes it? Pedestrians, motorists, bus passengers? People at the bus stop?
- Aim the sign at the most predominant viewers

What do you want it to say?

- As a first draft type up everything it could say on an A4 sheet – church name, service times, names, addresses of clergy, readers, availability for banns etc
- Seek feedback – take it to the PCC/communications group
- Less is more! Edit and edit again – don't waste words
- The sign definitely needs a welcome, the name of the church (but not necessarily the name of the Parish), service times, contact details, web site address, and your church logo and perhaps the Church of England logo
- Name the clergy, but just use the name, and not the qualifications, The Revd Fred Smith is enough
- Use language that is understood by everyone
- You can add a line – contact church office for details of other activities - or these could be on a poster, shown in parish mag, on website etc.
- If you have a web site include the address on the notice board (and make sure the website is updated very regularly)
- Renewing the notice board gives the chance to look at the whole 'corporate identity' of your church / team of churches. So, you may like to take the opportunity to think about branding, your mission statement, use of the Church of England logo and the Chelmsford Diocesan crest.

The design

- Once you have the information agreed, start playing around with layout
- Choose bold typefaces
- Use your church logo if you have one, and maybe the CofE logo if you like it
- Think about ease of reading it. Use contrasting colours, blue on white looks good, as can a dark background with gold type (if that will fit in with the image you want)
- Do you want space for posters?
- Keep the board in sympathy with your surroundings

Don't be cheap

- Allow sufficient budget, be prepared to spend several hundred pounds on the initial sign and installation
- It's cheaper to invest and then maintain a good quality sign than buy cheap and replace every few years

Consult the experts

- Get quotes from several sign writers, visit or have in-depth conversations with several. Some companies specialise in church signs (see church press) or you could use a local sign writer (good witness opportunity)
- The sign writer will advise on materials that are vandal and weather proof. Listen to them.

Planning permission

- Consult your local authority for advice
- If you are replacing your notice board you will need a faculty, but probably not if you're just looking at a revamp. Best advice: Always ask the Archdeacon!
- Clean it regularly. Maintain it before it needs it.

The last word

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