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Diocesan Advisory Committee
for the Care of Churches

CHURCH NOTICE BOARDS

The church noticeboard is often the first point of contact that visitors or passers-by will have with your church. The impact it has may be far greater than you might think and it is essential that you take advantage of what, in modern terms, may be one of the 'prime advertising sites' available to your church.

This may be even more important if the building is normally kept locked because it will give the opportunity to provide information on the Church and its activities and, thus, the Christian message, and it will be doing this for twenty-four hours a day seven days a week.

If you are considering erecting a new board or replacing an old one, it is worthwhile spending some time on the serious consideration of the design so that you can ensure that the board will give the message you wish to impart.

The following notes may help:

1. The Board and the lettering on it should be sympathetic to its surroundings, particularly in terms of colour and materials but the most important aspect of this is readability. A notice board is not a poster but is there to convey information with clarity, and the contrast between background colour and the lettering upon it is vital.
2. The passer-by must be able to understand the message it is conveying, and the size of the lettering is important. Many people are not familiar with ecclesiastical terms. 'Morning Service' is easier to understand than 'Mattins', 'Solemnisation of Matrimony' less clear than 'marriage'.
3. The character of the board should aim to express the character of the church and its worship. Strict formality on a board may suggest formality in worship.
4. Logos and Symbols can be helpful and may add to the decorative quality but the meaning must be clearly understood to someone who does not go to church. Every external noticeboard should indicate the church is part of the Church of England, and the current logo for the Diocese is available from Communications at Church House.
5. Avoid information that will date. Personnel may change and names need altering, but offices are permanent. The use of words 'Parish Priest' or 'Vicar', instead of the incumbent's name is often sufficient. If a name is considered essential, a Christian name added is more important than personal qualifications

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6. The activities of a church are as important as are the times of services, but do not confuse regular activities with those of a temporary nature such as Jumble Sales. Information about these should be kept separate, and may need a different form of display e.g. paper behind Perspex.
7. Do not forget the effects of exposure to all weathers and to vandals. Careful choice of materials is important. Peeling paint, fading colours and fluttering paper notices always give an impression of neglect.
8. Choose lettering for its legibility rather than for its decorative effect or its association with some 'religious' or historic concept. Arrange the lettering with some suggestion of relative importance and do not forget that the board will probably be prominent in its setting and should be of artistic value to the scene.
9. Do not be afraid to call upon the skills of professional designers. An original design produced specifically for your church is more likely to have an impact and express to the world outside a great deal of the atmosphere and character of your church and its members.
10. Do not forget to inform the public where further information can be found and how access to the church can be obtained.
11. Remember that a notice board can offer welcome as well as information. There is no harm of making a point of this on your board.
12. Finally, remember that a 'cheap job' always looks cheap and rarely pays in the long run.

Make sure that the board is worthy of your church

Please remember that a new or replacement Noticeboard will require either Minor Works authorisation or a faculty, and in addition possibly planning permission (about which the local planning authority MUST be consulted) as well.