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visitwaleschurches



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## Open Church Day 2010

This year saw an unprecedented amount of press coverage across Wales (and beyond). The Daily Post; Western Mail; BBC Wales online; the Evening Post; south Wales Echo; Topix, Carmarthen; Christian Today ; Manchester Wired; all featured something in print whilst BBC Radio Wales covered the event with a piece in their morning show on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>.

If you experienced problems registering details of the church for this annual event, please accept our apologies and a special thank you to those who called CTNW and showed great sympathy with our position as well as ensuring their material did appear on the web site. Our web site developed a glitch which kept recurring. The company who help us with this site do so on a no charge basis and did their best at a very busy time for them. When CTNW generates more income we will be able to pay for someone to manage our web site and then there will be little room for irresolvable glitches!

Thank you to all those who cooperated with the national and local press – special thanks to Bishop Andy John of Bangor and Professor Terry Stevens for their willingness to provide a quote for the press release, The extensive national coverage was a consequence of the hard work put in by Anna Morrell of the Church in Wales.

An example of the coverage appeared in the Daily Post:

*from churches on farms to cathedrals built on the footprints of saints, Wales' rich ecclesiastical heritage will be on display next weekend as more than 200 churches take part in this year's Open Churches Day*

and from BBC Wales online

*Tourists and locals across Wales discovered how a visit to a church can shed light on the lives and times of defining figures from the nation's past*



# TOURISM TIDINGS

## Churches more popular with visitors than castles or historic houses

Recent figures published by Visit Britain, the body responsible for marketing the UK overseas, shows that more overseas visitors visited religious sites than castles or historic houses

The figures show that among the 29.9 million visits in 2009, 6.4 million visited a religious monument or building, 5.8 million visited a castle and 5.0 million an historic house.

For the full report go to

[http://www.visitbritain.org/Images/Foresight%20Issue%2083\\_tcm139-194889.p df](http://www.visitbritain.org/Images/Foresight%20Issue%2083_tcm139-194889.pdf)

In 2009 6.4 million people from overseas visited a religious monument or building in the UK

Religious monuments/buildings		Castles		Historic houses	
Market	Visits	Market	Visits	Market	Visits
USA	861,878	USA	829,785	USA	666,400
France	804,751	Germany	765,347	Germany	642,339
Germany	724,323	France	607,344	France	549,126
Spain	465,571	Spain	365,185	Spain	319,180
Netherlands	352,869	Australia	318,397	Australia	273,340
Italy	332,512	Netherlands	294,243	Netherlands	251,927
Australia	317,642	Italy	247,583	Italy	201,174
Irish Republic	245,414	Canada	209,093	Canada	160,924
Canada	213,066	Irish Republic	172,704	Irish Republic	148,306
Belgium	187,465	Poland	157,859	Belgium	124,340

## Research of Visitors at Attractions:

Professor Terry Stevens (CTNW Patron and International Tourism Consultant) hosted a seminar for an invited audience (including John Winton of CTNW) to hear from one of the World's leading authorities on research into visitors to attractions. Laszlo Puczko invited the delegates to explore different ways to find out more about how the visitor views their attraction. What do visitors really take away in their memories? What do they tell others of their experience? Exactly what do they look at in your building? Of course the essential element of all research is -exactly what do you want to find out?

It may be that more than one method has to be employed to get a full picture – the traditional research questionnaire (either on-site or electronically gathered after the visit – this can be more reliable in assessing what elements of the visit made of a lasting impression). Perhaps a combination of methods could be applied

Two other methods were offered for thought:

### VED- Visitor employed diaries:

offering the visitor a paper document which asks them to record their thoughts as they pass around the attraction – Laszlo admitted that when applied in a museum there was some criticism but from such a small number of people that the evidence gained from those who did complete a diary, was worth this small amount of negative reaction.

### VEP- Visitor employed photographs.

Every visitor is given a disposable camera and asked to record their visit – the camera is handed in at the conclusion of the visit. The images are transferred to DVD and a copy sent to the visitor -who is asked for the permission for any images to be used. This method does give an indication of what the visitor found interesting.

**Could your church benefit from a deeper understanding of what the visitor thinks of their experience?**

the essential element of all research is -exactly what do you want to find out?

# TOURISM TIDINGS

## Lightship Cardiff Bay

Tourism Attractions are always searching for their USP (unique selling point) – The Lightship as a Christian presence and visitor attraction is unique -the only one of its kind in the world – not many places in Wales can boast that claim. Cardiff Bay has grown as a major destination for visitors from across the world. In 1995 when the concept of the bay was under development the then Cardiff Bay Development Corporation sold the Lightship to its trustees for £1. Its presence has

been a significant feature of the bay ever since – the base of a Chaplain to the Bay, a place where visitors can find peace and tranquillity (especially in the chapel) and light refreshments in the café.



The Trustees recognise that for an attraction to remain popular it has to innovate and remain fresh without losing the core values that the regular visitors treasure so much. The Lightship

has about 100000 visitors a year which includes a substantial number of people who are regular visitors. **Volunteers** are the life blood of this ship but the numbers are not large enough to ensure that the total visitor experience is memorable. Perhaps you could give an hour of your time on a regular basis to help at the ship or you may know someone who could? Could you advertise this opportunity in your church or wider community. If so, in the first instance please contact John Winton (details on page one of this newsletter).

...The Lightship has about 100,000 visitors a year

Could your church be a TIC?

## Church to Open Loch Lomond Tourist Office

A most innovative church has officially opened its tourist information office on the banks of Loch Lomond.

Luss Parish Church, which already boasts a Pilgrimage centre and shares its services online in more than 50 countries, has been running the facility for a few weeks now, and the red ribbon was cut by the chairman of VisitScotland Dr Mike Cantlay Minister Reverend Dr Dane Sherard explained the thinking behind the venture: "The area of Luss receives 750,000 people each year and the people who come here deserve to be welcomed. No one else is doing that, or able to do that, and that's where we come in."

"We had some spare space in our Pilgrimage Centre, so we thought we'd give it a shot. There is a Biblical message in welcoming strangers, and I can honestly say it has enriched the life of our church community too.

Dr Sherard also explained the uniqueness of the new office: "I can proudly say we have the only tourist information centre in Scotland, which does not take any commission for arranging bed and breakfasts, but also drives people to their accommodation or campsite." "During our research for making a successful tourist information office, we found the best ones made people feel welcome, had useful information and had a visitor attraction. There are three full-time employees thanks to funding from the local authority, but also an army of volunteers who help in various ways.

## The Galilee Chapel -Llantwit Major

Founded in 500 AD by the Welsh monk Illtud, the Church of Llantwit Major (Llanilltud Fawr) is believed to be Britain's earliest centre of learning. St Illtud established a monastic school of over one thousand pupils, including, it is said, St David of Wales and St Patrick of Ireland.

At the western end of St Illtud's Church stands the Galilee Chapel. Originally a two-storey building, built in the 13th century, it is now a roofless ruin. The Galilee Chapel Project aims to raise funding to develop the Chapel and bring it back into use as a centre for education in Celtic Christian studies. At the heart of the project is the provision for an appropriate exhibition space for one of the most important collections of [Celtic Christian stones](#) in the UK.

If successful, we hope the project will benefit not only the local community and schools, but academics, tourists and pilgrims from around the world.

Besides promoting the story of St Illtud and Llantwit Major's status of the first centre of Christian learning in Britain, it will provide opportunities for a variety of community and educational projects that should benefit local residents, visitors and schools alike. There are 10 activities under development as part of the project which include self-guided trails for tourists and pilgrims, a youth project (to be called 'Carved in Stone'), a PR campaign, community events and school activities.

A major 'spin-off' benefit of the project is that it will make the West Church more accessible for use by local community groups, due to the provision of fold-away seating and the installation of toilets and tea-making facilities in the adjacent Galilee Chapel.

We're on the  
Web!

See us at:

[www.ctnw.co.uk](http://www.ctnw.co.uk)

### British/Wales Tourism Week

**12 to 20 March 2011**

The dates now confirmed for British Tourism Week include Saturday 12 March for the launch event, Monday 14 March - English Tourism Alliance House of Commons Reception, Wednesday and Thursday 16 & 17 March - Best of Britain & Ireland event (back at the NEC) and Friday 18 March - Involve your MP day.

***Could your church work with other attractions in the area and invite your am/mp/mep to experience the importance of churches in tourism?***