



## **Heritage Open Days Safety Checklist**

### **Welcoming Visitors Safely**

Heritage Open Days are a wonderful opportunity to open your church tower and welcome the local community. A little planning beforehand can help ensure that everyone enjoys a safe, enjoyable and memorable visit.

This checklist is intended as a practical guide to support your event. It does not replace your church's own health and safety procedures, safeguarding policies, or risk assessments.

### **Before the Event**

- Carry out a risk assessment for your event.
- Ensure all volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Brief volunteers on emergency procedures.
- Check that all walkways, staircases and exits are clear.
- Ensure adequate lighting is available where needed.
- Remove or identify any trip hazards.
- Check that handrails are secure.
- Ensure any first aid kit is fully stocked and easily accessible.
- Confirm emergency contact details are available.

### **Managing Visitors**

- Welcome visitors and explain what to expect.
- Consider limiting group sizes for tower tours.
- Supervise visitors at all times while in the tower.
- Ensure children are accompanied by a responsible adult.
- Clearly explain any restricted areas.
- Encourage visitors to wear sensible footwear.
- Advise visitors if there are steep or narrow staircases.
- Allow visitors to move at their own pace.

- Consider accessibility and alternative ways to engage visitors who cannot climb the tower.

### **Bellringing Demonstrations**

- Ensure demonstrations are led by experienced bellringers.
- Keep visitors in safe viewing areas.
- Explain that ropes should only be handled with permission and under supervision.
- Prevent visitors from entering the ringing circle unless invited and supervised.
- Stop demonstrations if visitor safety could be compromised.
- Clearly explain any "have-a-go" activities before they begin.

### **Safeguarding**

- Follow your church's safeguarding policy at all times.
- Ensure volunteers understand safeguarding responsibilities.
- Obtain appropriate permissions before photographing children or young people.
- Never leave children unsupervised.
- Make visitors aware of who to approach if they need assistance.

### **Accessibility**

Consider how you can make your event welcoming for everyone.

- Clearly advertise the number of tower steps where appropriate.
- Explain any physical limitations before tours begin.
- Offer ground-level displays for visitors unable to climb the tower.
- Provide seating where possible.
- Ensure information is easy to read and understand.

### **Refreshments**

If serving refreshments:

- Follow good food hygiene practices.
- Clearly label common allergens where possible.
- Keep serving areas clean and tidy.

- Ensure hot drinks are handled safely.

### **Photography & Media**

- Follow your church's photography policy.
- Obtain consent where required.
- Respect anyone who prefers not to be photographed.
- Ensure photographers do not obstruct visitors or demonstrations.

### **After the Event**

- Thank your volunteers.
- Record any incidents or near misses.
- Discuss what worked well and any improvements for future events.
- Share feedback and celebrate your successes.

### **A Safe Welcome is a Warm Welcome**

The best Heritage Open Days events are those where visitors feel welcomed, informed and cared for.

By planning ahead, communicating clearly and looking out for one another, you can create an enjoyable experience that encourages people to discover the people, skills and stories behind church bellringing.

Thank you for helping to share this remarkable living tradition safely and confidently.

**Please note:** This checklist is intended as a guide only. Event organisers remain responsible for complying with their own church, diocesan and statutory health and safety, safeguarding and insurance requirements.