



Interpretation

Creating a visitor experience at your church



Association for Heritage Interpretation

- UK and Irish forum/association for anyone involved in interpretation.
- Source for good practice ideas and resources, day-long training events and networking via our LinkedIn and Facebook groups, conference, eNews and the Journal (some of these are for members only, while others are open to all).
- 2018 - Day-long courses in Interpretive Planning, Interpretive Writing and Interpretation for Museums
- Conference in Chester with a focus on heritage buildings.

What is interpretation?

Interpretation is the provision of information to visitors about a site and its collections. However, good interpretation should communicate more. It should express to visitors the site's enthusiasm about its history, encourage them to realise the significance of the place and the need to conserve it:

*“Through interpretation, **understanding***

*Through understanding, **appreciation***

*Through appreciation, **protection**”*

(Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 1957)



- Providing information
- Answering questions
- Providing enjoyment

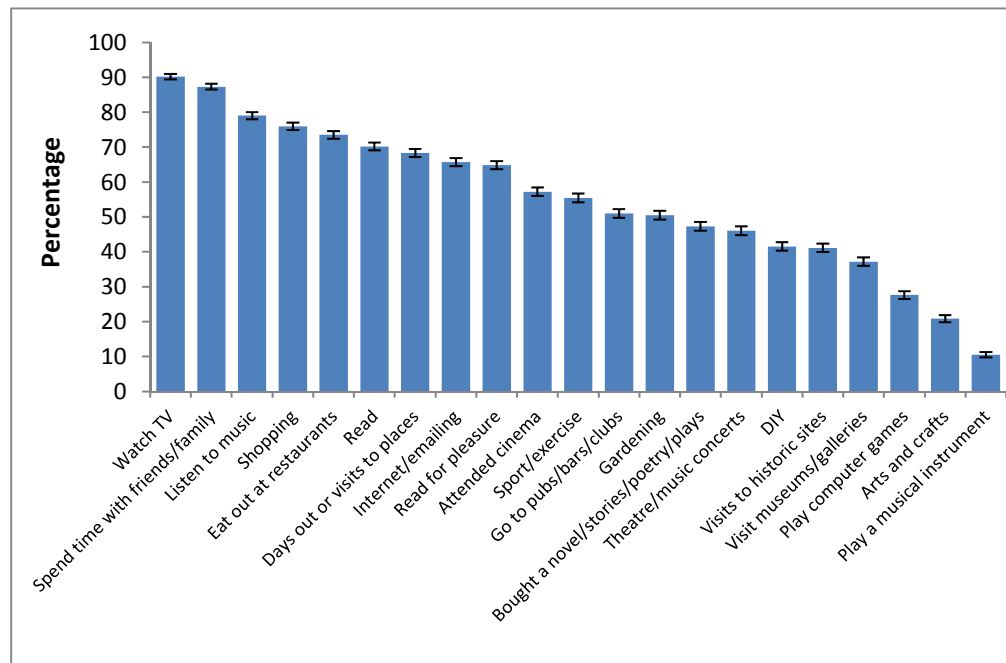


Why is interpretation important?

- Competition for leisure time and spend
- Heritage Lottery Fund

Most popular leisure activities for all age groups from 25 to 64

1. 1 Watching TV
2. 2 Time with family and friends
3. 3. Listening to music
4. 4. Shopping
5. 5. Eating out at restaurants
6. 6. Reading



“ I’ll tell you what’s a good day out... its going to IKEA, and then having something to eat there”.

“ You need the banter don’t you. I mean you’re one parent, one child, ... They’re wanting to do something else, you’re trying to explain what this is, they lose interest, before you know it you’re at loggerheads... And it’s turned into a very unhappy Saturday.”

Heritage experiences should be

- Site specific, unique to that heritage
- Engaging emotionally and intellectually
- Enjoyable as well as educational
- Memorable, unlike anything visitors can do at home

Successful bids

- Are usually learning-focused (even though the majority of costs may actually be allocated to capital costs)
- Demonstrate participation opportunities and how their proposals actively involve key audiences, partners, staff and volunteers.

‘The starting point for any interpretation project is an interpretation plan - a document that sets out in a clear and logical manner what you want to achieve and how you intend to do it. ‘

HLF guidance notes

Adult visitors (existing)

- English speaking.
- Likely to be ethnically white.
- Most likely to be 50+
- Likely to be local residents and or members of the congregation.
- May be visiting with family and friends so likely to be repeat visitors.
- May be visiting from the USA or Australia.
- Likely to use the café

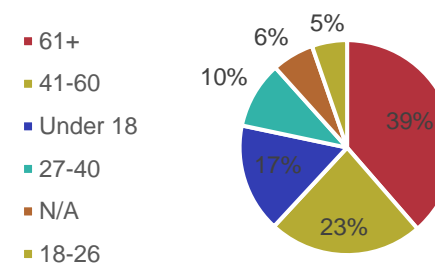
Families with children aged 7-11 years (new)

- Most likely to speak English.
- Most likely to visit during the school holidays.
- May be brought by a child after a positive experience on a school visit.

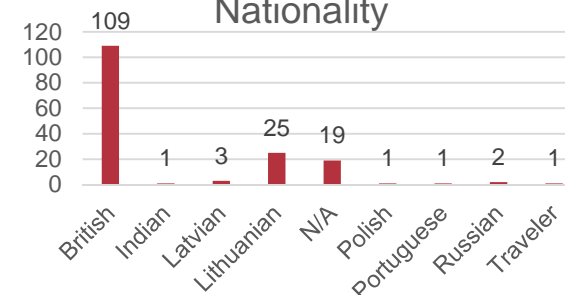
East European adults and children who are resident locally (new)

- Most likely to have never visited or entered only to light a candle and pray.
- Unlikely to use the café.
- Likely to feel uncertain about using the church.

Age Range



Nationality



What technology is right for **you** and **your** audience?

Spencer Clark
Director, ATS Heritage

@ATS_Spencer



What is your vision for **success**?

Dwell time

Engage new audiences / access

Trip advisor / reviews

Income

Press & marketing



Getting the **balance** right

Panels

Dress-up boxes

Touch objects

Physical interactives

Films/AV

Soundscapes

Audio guides

Multimedia guides

Apps

Lighting

Touch screens

Projections

Costumed actors

Events

Staff

Website

Social media channels

Guidebooks, leaflets



Integrate the experience



What to **consider**

Budget (cap-ex, op-ex)

Audiences (segments)

Experiences (on-site / off-site)

Operations (Self-serve, staffed, volunteers)



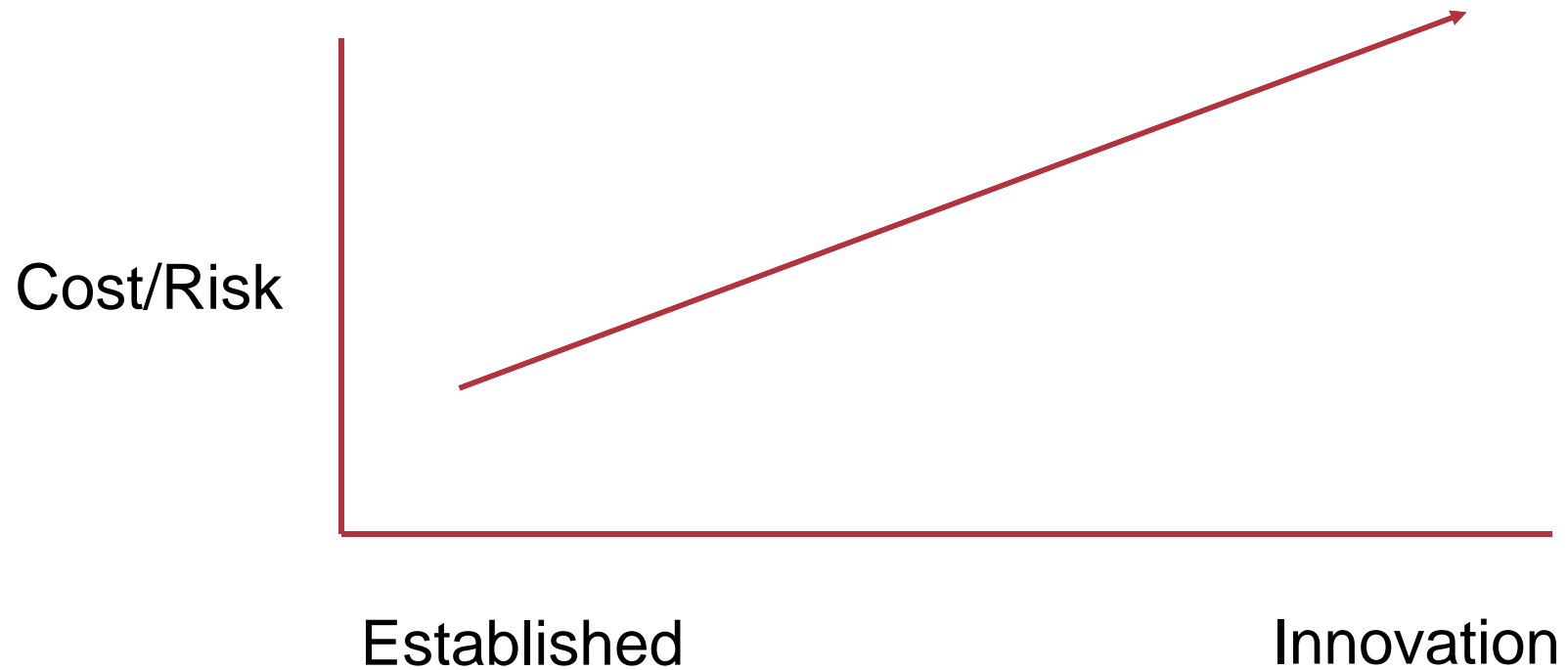
Client brief



Client budget



‘Tech for tech’s sake’



BYOD (apps) vs On-site device

Audience (behaviours, memory, battery, headphones)

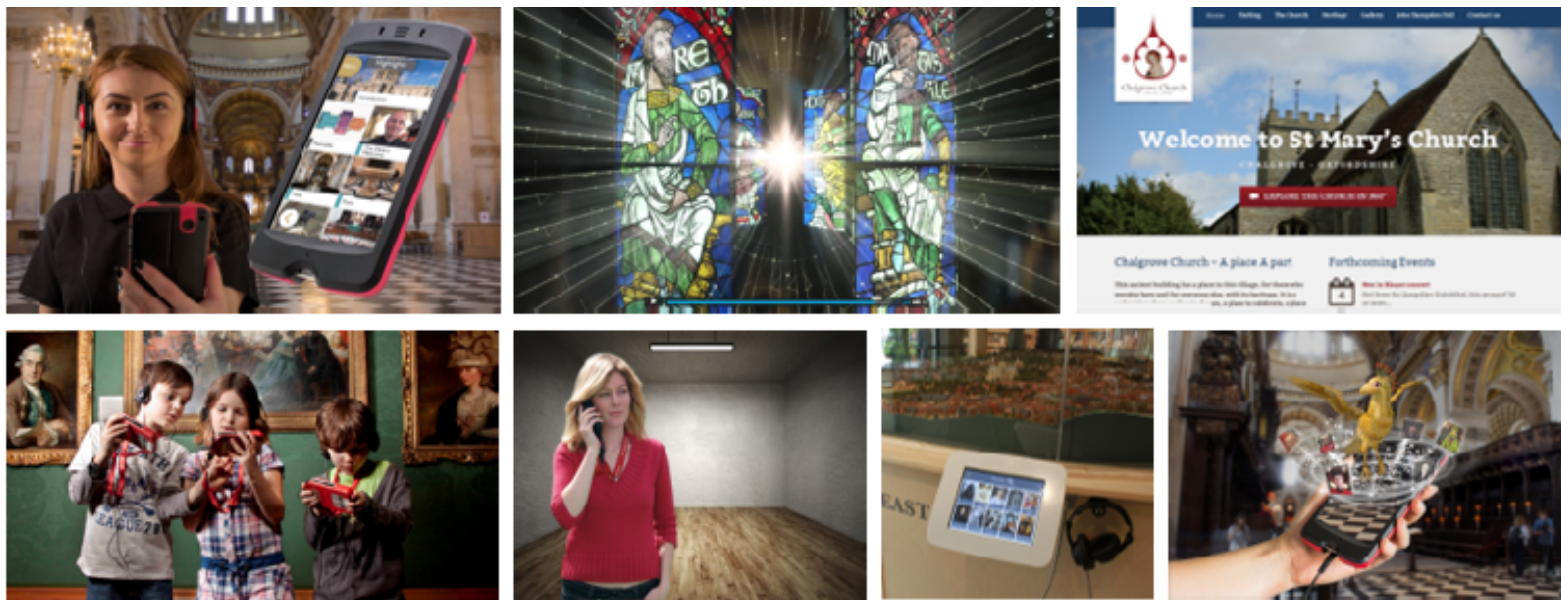
Experiences (on-site / off-site, value, headphones)

Budget (build, design, host, maintenance)

Access (marketing, Wi-Fi, staffing)

Will this realise your vision for **success**?

Creative interpretation examples



If you would like to discuss what technology is right for **you** and **your** audience, please get in touch.

Spencer Clark

Spencer.clark@ats-heritage.co.uk

T: 02392 595000

@ATS_Spencer





admin@ahi.org.uk



www.ahi.org.uk



Association for Heritage Interpretation



@ahi_social



Association for Heritage Interpretation

Association for Heritage Interpretation
54 Balmoral Road
Gillingham
Kent
ME7 4PG
T: 01634 329065
