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## Volunteers: Their Role in the Management of the Visitor and Pilgrimage Experience

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# Our Service to Visitors Delivered Simply and at Low Cost: the case of Derby Cathedral

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This research acknowledges the strong customer-relationship management achievements of a Cathedral located in Derby in the Midlands of England. In conjunction with the clergy and volunteers, the researcher identifies, through visitor data capture and analysis of a customer satisfaction survey and interviews with key stakeholders, that high levels of satisfied visitors and volunteers exist.

Using a recognised expectations and perceptions approach driven by the service quality model (SERVQUAL) and elaborated by literature, the researcher offers recommendations to maintain customer and volunteer satisfaction (Bitner *et al.*, 1997; Atilgan *et al.*, 2003; Williams *et al.*, 2000). These recommendations include a reliable reward system generated for volunteers, some compelling narratives for sacred and secular pilgrims, relevant displays and performance and appropriate resource allocation. The exceptional service and experience model is derived from an analysis of data from visitor surveys conducted by the Cathedral's volunteer greeters and guides over the course of a year. In addition to delivering outcomes on the importance attached to expected and perceived service quality attributes, the report concludes by suggesting factors to help maintain a low-cost strategy for sites of pilgrimage and worship that inform future management.

As a result of the volunteers and visitor strategy, this Cathedral benefits from delivering a low cost visitor-friendly invitation, welcome and experience and is able to use core human resources to support the mission and share faith and identity in a continuously refreshed manner. Recommendations for marketing the Cathedral, for managing and inspiring volunteers and for recruitment of volunteers and customer-relationship management are offered.

**Key Words:** pilgrimage, service quality, cathedral, visitor, experience, volunteers

## Introduction

This paper reflects the central and critical role of the volunteer, who is the unpaid interpreter, guide and greeter, in the consumer experience at the place of worship which is a sacred space. Moreover, it reflects on the critical and central role in the Church of England that volunteers play to build, nourish and encourage both a tourism role and a sacred observance role. The setting is the Cathedral of All Saints, the seat of the Bishop of Derby and, since 1927, the focus of the wider Diocese of Derby, encompassing the county and city of Derbyshire and Derby and the 'mother church' of some 350 special places of worship.

The Diocese of Derby was created in 1927 and more or less includes the vast area of the Peak District National Park, the uplands of limestone and gritstone, united to preserve the landscape and celebrate the recreation it affords the residents, in 1951. The Diocese features some special sites of outstanding natural beauty such as Lathkill and Dovedale; it features splendid upland sheep and cattle farming on the moors, crags and dales; it has strong historical associations with intellectuals such as Darwin and Whiteside, artists such as Wright, authors such as Elliot and Lawrence and the birthplace of the eighteenth century's industrial revolution. Derby City sits at a medieval cross-roads in England and this very centrality has contributed to the city and county's claim-to-fame at the heart of an evolving story of the Church and enlightened thinking for centuries. The City has dabbled in power relations between the

Church of England and Roman Catholicism; it has at times supported the monarchy and at times, the pretender to the English throne, Bonnie Prince Charlie. It has a legacy of powerful and influential landowners and aristocrats from Elizabeth Cavendish at Hardwick Hall, reputed to have been the second wealthiest woman in England in the sixteenth century, through to the current 12th Duke of Devonshire, guardian of Chatsworth which is one of the most celebrated historical palaces that is not in the hands of the Crown. The Cathedral of All Saints' Derby is central to the intriguing story of Mercia, Middle England, the Midlands and England. Derby is at the cross roads of pilgrims' routes to all points of the compass and is marketed as 'central' in terms of access to most parts of England.

It is against this background that the paper reports on current practices to link the present with the past at the Cathedral and the values, beliefs, vision and focus of those entrusted to manage volunteers combined with the rich history and interesting stories that are found in sacred and secular Derby and its Anglican Diocese. There are clues in the ways that the Cathedral manages its volunteers in how successful the Cathedral rates itself as a place of pilgrimage and worship as well as a special venue for events and experiences that are highly rated by sacred and secular visitors. All Saints' in Derby possesses three key sets of attributes for both pilgrim and tourist:

- It possesses a rich heritage with a narrative that is entirely congruent with the origins of settlers from Saxon and Norman times and medieval Mercia at the core of England;
- It reflects the glory of music, performance and history that the community around Derby holds as important and a point of difference in that community;
- Finally, but not least it embodies the sacred mission of the Church of England in this community.

The management team places specific values on the volunteers that are central to the visitor experience and that team espouse the philosophy 'staff not stuff' based on the significance they attribute to those volunteers which overrides the physical artefacts and heritage evidence that are perceived to be at the core of the visitor experience; people over place in the marketing approach that has been traditionally espoused (as per Kotler, for example).

## Literature Review

At the centre of this research is the indisputable demand by both visitor and resident for key elements of the Cathedral building, its heritage, architecture and its faith. Tools to manage the visitor experience have been identified as being critical to the success of any relationship between the site of pilgrimage or visitation and the visitor or tourist (Aragao *et al.*, 2011; DiGiovine, 2010; Dalton *et al.*, 2009; Griffin *et al.*, 2008). More specifically the tools relate to people who volunteer to support the Cathedral and the pilgrim, visitor or worshipper (McGehee, 2014; Morpeth, 2012; Lockstone-Binney *et al.*, 2010; Holmes, 2006). This focus enables volunteers to deliver on promises, to identify their strengths and weaknesses and more generally consider competitors' offers and opportunities, to deliver additional value perceived by visitors and potential visitors through a management lens as well as through sacred purpose. These tools are explored and identified as relevant in the case study and through the review that follows.

Community engaged partnership is a theme which recurs in the literature (Fyall *et al.*, 2012; DiGiovine 2010; Moira *et al.*, 2012; Dredge, 2006; Duff, 2006; Simmons, 1994; Simone-Charteris *et al.*, 2010). Effective means by which teams working within the Cathedral can participate in matters relevant to visitors, their needs and expressed or implicit wishes, are central to this theme (see for example Willson *et al.*, 2013 and Willson, 2011). There is evidence that the alignment of volunteers within the Cathedral is substantively engaged with the visitor through shared perspectives on visitors' needs and ways in which capital held by volunteers is disseminated in a knowledge transfer platform (Stausberg, 2014; Arnaboldi *et al.*, 2011; Frew & White, 2011; Craig, 2007; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999). The evidence for this is both photographic and written. The knowledge dissemination process appears to be sustainable; there are archives and resources for the next generation of supportive volunteers to access and these are maintained and presented in a manner which is found useful and appropriate by current volunteer staff. As Dalton *et al.* would suggest, knowledge transfer is aligned to market demand (Dalton *et al.*, 2009).

The difficulty perceived is that economic benefits from knowledge transfer into the community and visitor market are difficult to evaluate in other than a social exchange. Auditors will continue to struggle with identifiable economic outcomes that measure contribution to heritage conservation, monument protection, insurances, depreciation of assets and in effect, any component of the explicit offer that carries

**Figure 1: Detail of the tomb of Bess of Hardwick, Cathedral of All Saints Derby**



(Source; author).

costs to be borne by worshippers in equal share (or more) with visitors (Shinde, 2004; Shackley, 2005).

Values accruing from volunteers are identified as socially and economically sustainable benefits and outcomes. Also notable are innovative approaches to tourism and visitor service delivery which are captured and contribute to best-practice in delivery systems here and elsewhere. Finally, in this section the role of public and private enterprise working collaboratively is important (Erdely & Reisinger, 2013; Morpeth, 2012; Dredge, 2006). We can emphasise that a proactive local destination management organisation is working hard to establish links at management and directorial level between the Cathedral and volunteers and the city's own marketing and branding partners. There is no sense of distance between tourism and visitor services and the Cathedral. Equipping volunteers with both knowledge and resources while accepting them as partners is essential to the development of the Cathedral in its role as an attraction. This is also important in positioning the Church perspective with relevance to sacred purpose and not compromising the intention to worship, to celebrate the Church and its vision for the future.

The Cathedral has a critical key role in Derby as a centre for interpretation. This is a role that it willingly shares with various museums, art galleries and the tourist information centre; the latter is located only some 300 metres distant in the Market Place of Derby. In addition the Cathedral has a role as an interactive centre with its physical features as key elements in the narrative on display. These features include Bess of Hardwick's tomb, the various paraphernalia of the Church, the separate chapel for private worship and prayer, the various gilded iron screens, created locally by Robert Bakewell, throughout the Cathedral and the

places for private and public gatherings. There is a rich story about these features that volunteers can contribute to make the Cathedral more poignant, redolent of the sacred and secular history of Derby. Indeed, the interactivity expected through technological innovation is not yet delivered in Derby. One can safely say that technological innovations are going to be needed and as of this moment, still a missed opportunity for visitors and for relating a story that has a fine pedigree. A themed narrative is being established that supports sacred visitors and pilgrims in equal measures with tourists (Dalton *et al.*, 2009).

Co-creation and capacity building is important as a characteristic and feature of any attraction. In effect visitors and worshippers contribute equally to the creation of new knowledge, new services and products for visitors that can be appreciated and not disdained by worshippers (Palmer, 2010; Holmes, 2006; Graham & Lennon, 2002; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). A problem occasionally experienced is the disjuncture between services and products and development agendas. The Cathedral guards against undue development that is beneficial to secular visitors yet frowned upon by worshippers, or true pilgrims (Collins-Kreiner, 2010). Therefore, a cautious approach to social capacity building is applauded; an approach that continues the theme of innovation, entrepreneurship and intellectual development within the Derby community without compromising or alienating the value of faith and the Church. As is later explored, the co-creation of services that relate to worship or pilgrimage but are relevant to tourists, is an outcome of managed volunteers working within the Cathedral.

The community itself has a central role to play in supporting volunteers' efforts to provide relevant, resonant and pertinent materials and exhibits to support the pilgrim experience at the Cathedral. At the same time the community must understand the competitive environment in which destinations seek to attract visitors with these identifiably vernacular displays (for example place attachment as discussed in Tuan, 1974). The focus of experience must emphasise interpretation and high quality displays that provide accessibility and relevance for a wide range of potential pilgrims. Palmer suggests that such a stream of experiences provides a sustainable competitive advantage (Palmer, 2010; 204). Exploring customer satisfaction helps in benchmarking exercises and simultaneously provides guidelines for funders and policy-makers (Leask, 2010). These key stakeholders function to maintain or enhance funding to relevant, resonant and pertinent exhibits and events and, for pure reasons of return on investment, must function rationally with scarce

resources (Alonso & Liu, 2013; Timur & Getz, 2008; Graham & Lennon, 2002).

Identity and tourism overlap; volunteers have responsibility for education as well as information and that role is seldom acknowledged in the literature or contemporary case studies. Animateurs, enthusiasts and volunteers also accept the role of providers of continuity as they manage change adaptation with display and interpretation (see Goncalves *et al.*, 2012, for a Brazilian perspective or; Kawharu, 2009 for a New Zealand interpretation). It is indeed a fine line between commodification and authenticity but this line is well-marked with popular opinion, candid research conducted with pilgrims and both spiritual and secular visitors' feedback (Mill *et al.*, 2011).

Religion is the unifying feature for participants in the Cathedral experience. Although there are differing motivations for participation in events and displays, the core defining and unifying factor is active or passive engagement in worship and the sacred. Cathedral decision-making is predicated on consumption patterns in many places along a continuum between wholly sacred worship and mainly secular visitation with experiences for many visitors, and volunteers, partaking of sacred or secular activity and involvement (Vukonic, 1998). There is room for collaborators, entrepreneurs maybe, as animateurs who can advise and support stakeholders in seeking extended membership of the Cathedral (Simone-Charteris & Boyd, 2010; Stanculescu *et al.*, 2010; Stoykova, 2009; Welbourne *et al.*, 2009). These people can support policy-making, advise on levels of quality of experience and find themes linking a chaotic political process of relationship management. Opportunities for engagement by both suppliers and consumers in defined experience participation are possible.

The researcher must be reflective on the management issues emerging from volunteering (McIntosh *et al.*, 2010). The researcher sees the normative evangelical and sacred purpose merging or blurring seamlessly into the commercial, profane and vernacular of the heritage and cultural focus that the Cathedral affords to casual passers-by (Shinde, 2011). The Cathedral provides sacred expertise and philosophical direction whilst providing a socially important welfare venue for the dispossessed and the flaneur (Stausberg, 2014; Wiltshier & Clarke, 2012). Without doubt volunteers work at the crux of the spiritual and uplifting and the profane and tourism. The boundaries between the two are blurred and indistinct here at Derby Cathedral as they are at many much more celebrated sites. The Cathedral supports all comers as the site of visits that

are multi-dimensional, complex and profound (Weidenfeld 2006: Weidenfeld & Ron, 2011; McIntosh *et al.*, 2004). By its own admission the Cathedral is a venue for multi-faith activity and worship.

In conclusion, the volunteers must manage expectations from a myriad of visitors. Volunteers must identify for their funders' benefit objective standards of customer service and service quality (Hughes *et al.*, 2013; Holmes & Smith, 2012). Potentially volunteers can anticipate new visitors in special interest tourism; archaeology, ancestry, history, geography, politics and society (see Lo Presti *et al.*, 2011; Morpeth, 2011; Duff, 2006, "Sacred Britain Strategy" for examples). Tourism can be seen as transcendental and spiritual, caring, engaged and considerate of humanity (Lowe, 2009). Volunteers can help maximise pilgrims' religious experience and should have an ability to satisfy religious visitors' needs. At the same time these volunteers must accept boundaries and boundary-less needs, inclusivity and collaboration opportunities (Welbourne *et al.*, 2009). Volunteers need to cope with demands from the fervent, the scholarly as well as the general visitor market (Mangeloja, 2003).

## Methodology

In keeping with a review of expectations and experiences in the visitor economy, and with consumer and supplier expectations and perceptions key components, a mixed methods qualitative focus was employed. A survey instrument was developed based upon earlier research activity to gather visitor experiences at Salisbury Cathedral in the UK (Vaughan & Edwards, 2011). This instrument was designed to capture visitor expectations, why and what aspects of Salisbury Cathedral were being visited. It also asked visitors to evaluate points of contact with staff/volunteers who were working to greet and guide visitors. The survey went on to request a review of visitors' experiences on a five-point Likert scale (from 1 strongly agree to 5 strongly disagree). The survey collected demographic information as to whether the visitor was based in the UK or a visitor from overseas. In addition to collecting data from a sample of visitors to the Cathedral, information was gathered from volunteers as to their experience and expectations of visitors and their own reflections on their volunteering and the heritage, community and sacred aspects of volunteering at All Saints Cathedral Derby. The visitor data were collected over one calendar year from March 2013; the interviews with volunteers and visitor manager and Cathedral Chapter Clerk (currently also Human Resources Manager for the Cathedral) occurred

in September-December 2013. In total 134 valid surveys were collected and eleven interviews conducted with key Cathedral informants (nine of which were volunteer guides or greeters). The Cathedral estimates 100,000 visitors are admitted per annum and there are approximately 270 volunteers at the time of writing. Of those volunteers 231 claim a spiritual focus, 75 a cultural focus (including some aspects of heritage) and 79 claim an architectural focus. We can see several volunteers elect more than one role as a greeter or guide. In fact some interviewees also work on cleaning, decorating the Cathedral with flowers and embroidery work on clerical robes.

### Findings and Discussion

This research is designed to test management areas for excellence within the context of the case study - All Saints' Cathedral in Derby. Enthusiasm in the management team is expressed by a clear intent to develop a research knowledge-based approach to future initiatives. A framework for development, assembled with the cooperation of community partners and networks, is already in existence to support further achievement of key milestones in the development of both sacred and secular purpose. Key factors developed from the literature which are tested through suppliers (the volunteers) and consumers (all visitors for sacred or pilgrimage purpose and visitors for largely touristic or secular purposes). In the interviews the following factors were discussed:

- an effective reward system for volunteers;
- compelling stories that volunteers and visitors enthuse about;
- sensitively presented material for those narratives;
- relevant displays and performances;
- benefits for volunteers that co-exist with appropriate resource allocation.

#### Volunteers

Volunteer interview respondents are uniformly positive about their role and relationship with the Cathedral and with each other. One seventy year old male volunteer comments:

*I love it. I love doing it.*

*When I first started (volunteering) I was getting over cancer and I was lost; without something to do. The head verger found me something to do and I've enjoyed every minute of it. This*

**Figure 2: Forthcoming music events, Cathedral of All Saints Derby**



*Cathedral is my community. I've found a place that suits me. I'll keep coming until I can't manage it.*

A further male volunteer continues:

*The volunteer contribution is well acknowledged (by the clergy). We wouldn't have the Cathedral is there weren't volunteers.*

And again (a male volunteer comments):

*The Cathedral would not function if we did not have volunteers. We are recognised by the visitors and by the authority.*

With reference to visitor expectations, a female volunteer responds:

*The congregation has increased (in the fifteen years I've been here). Everything has grown. We have more services, and more expectations.*

*The visitor numbers have increased and this is down to the effectiveness of the visitor manager.*

*One visitor comes regularly to see the flowers.*

A female volunteer adds:

*Visitors feel welcomed by the right people. We have to have a welcome at the door and that initial meeting is so important.*

*I enjoy meeting people. I was a teacher. Working with . . . [flower ladies] . . . is making contact with others of a like mind. We all know one another and we are a happy band of people . . . [This place] . . . is never too large and we know who we are. I wouldn't come if I didn't enjoy it. The Dean and staff are always thankful and that does make a difference."*

A male volunteer continues:

*You are appreciated and recognised by staff for what you do. A lot of back-up volunteers and the body of the church all pull together . . . so it's got a very friendly feel. This is down to the size - it's a small cathedral. We're all in together and don't get lost in the vastness."*

A male tour guide and greeter concludes:

*Derby is not well known generally speaking. People anticipate a medieval cathedral and are surprised by their encounter. Up to 90% are thinking medieval and are surprised to find a neo-classical building. People are pleasantly surprised, especially those that visit other cathedrals. I wouldn't be a welcomer if I didn't enjoy it. It is vital that people are welcomed. We can facilitate advice and help for those seeking a priest. It is important that people are met and greeted. Being a historian and guide is more interesting than being a welcomer. Some [visitors] do want an in-depth knowledge of the Cathedral.*

At present, Derby Cathedral has 270 volunteers engaged in various job descriptions. The management team, comprising of the Chapter Clerk - concurrently the human resources manager with a specialist background in human resources strategy and management - and the visitor officer, are tasked with the recruitment, development and reward of these volunteers. The initial encounter with the visitor is the key responsibility of all volunteers and is rated the most important by management. Without a highly skilled, motivated, managed and directed volunteer team the Cathedral would be incapable of meeting the desired visitor experience outcomes. This applies to both sacred and secular contexts in the visitor journey

**Figure 3: Visits to the Cathedral of All Saints Derby**



(source: author)

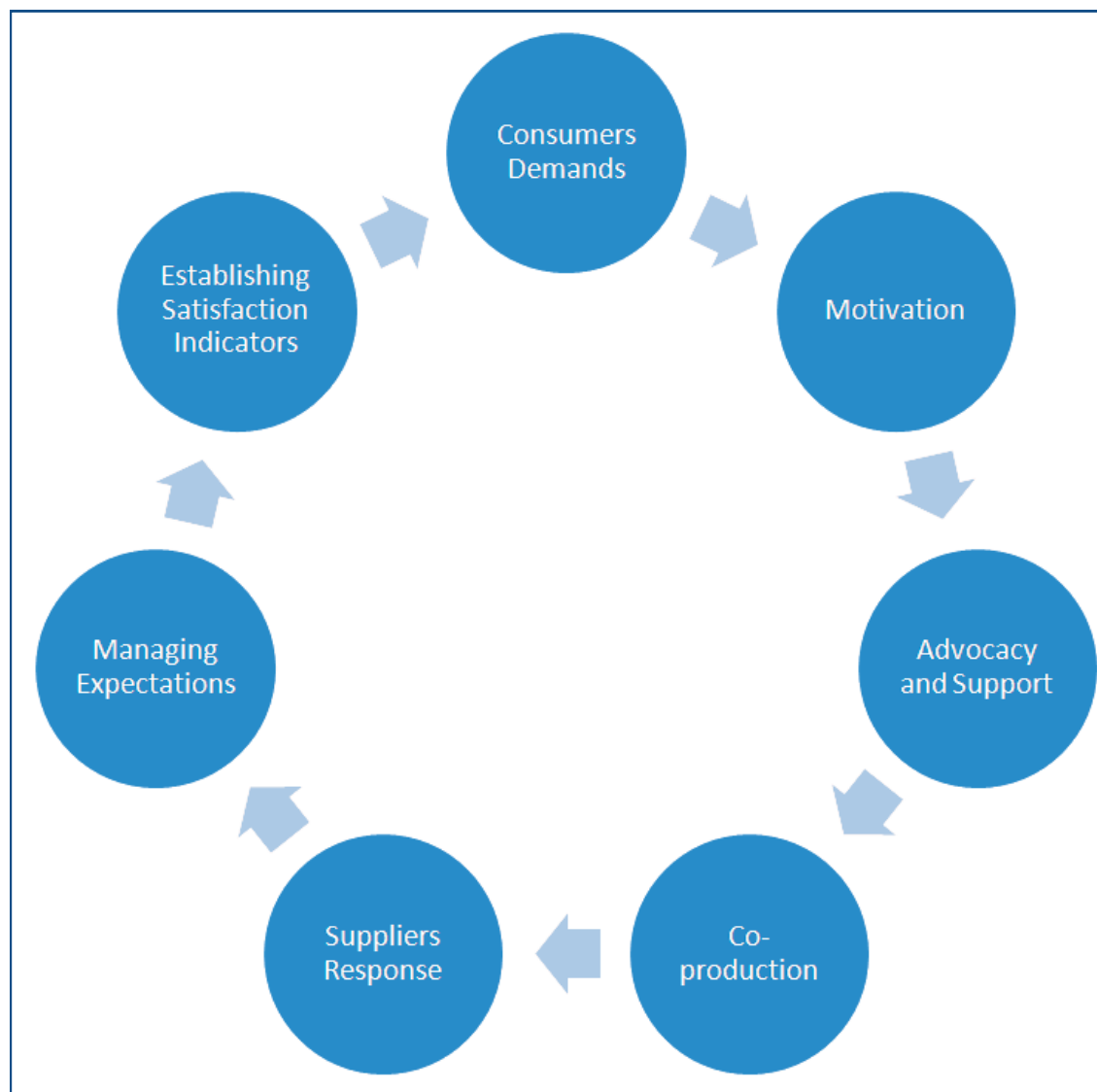
and therefore supports the theories on defining excellence through experience in the literature (Shinde, 2011; Rivera *et al.*, 2009; Duff, 2006; Shackley, 2005; Silberberg, 1995).

The volunteers are tasked with obtaining feedback formally, through a visitor experience survey and informally, through responses received orally by the welcomers at the door to the Cathedral. There is one volunteer assigned to collecting electronic feedback via the likes of Trip Advisor.

**Figure 5: Quality assurance and benchmarking Cathedral of All Saints Derby**



(source: author)

**Figure 4: Staff not Stuff - resource allocation and management philosophy**

(Source: author with credits to Checkland, 1999)

The Cathedral is perceived by management as a place for events and experiences with many dimensions. Palpably these events and experiences are supported by physical evidence and by evidence of partnerships maintained over decades with the aristocrat Cavendish family at Chatsworth House, Hardwick Hall, the City Council, Art Gallery & Museum. The management team cautiously acknowledge the importance of these networks and partnerships which are needed to link volunteers to experience through evidence (Fyall, Garrod *et al.*, 2012; Dredge, 2006; Edwards, 1998; Frew & White, 2011; Frew & Hay, 2011).

One of the identified strengths of the service model is the longevity of the commitment to volunteering and to partnerships. Volunteers working for the Cathedral are admitted to an organisation, the Guild of King Edmund, which helps to create commitment, longevity

and also, offers a reward system. The Guild operates an annual service enrolling volunteers. Management perceive this element of their retention and reward strategy as crucial in publicly recognising the engagement of volunteers. This can be conceived as being a deliverer of sustainable advantage and reinforcement of sustainable values (Padin, 2012; Lo Presti *et al.*, 2010). Team meetings with volunteers are scheduled at two vital stages in the Cathedral year; March and October to refresh and review performance. Opportunities for participation are further enhanced through 'Inspiring Derby' and 'Heritage Open Days' held conjointly with the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site team. In addition volunteers deliver 'Tower Days' where the ancient tower of the Cathedral can be visited by diverse groups from scouts and guides through nature-lovers associating the Cathedral Tower with the nesting peregrine falcons. These varied



activities facilitate volunteer engagement with the compelling stories linked to memorable visitor experiences.

One compelling story involves music and worship at the Cathedral. The current Master of Music and their assistant have in excess of thirty years' employment. The span of engaged visitors ranges from entry-level students to professional performers. Music recordings and sales are important to the Cathedral as a business. One respondent claims that the Cathedral has the 'best choir in the country'. He also maintains that one visitor 'tried to buy the organ'. Several volunteers are convinced that the Cathedral has enjoyed a 25 year relationship with exceptional music and organists.

The research for this paper has been limited by a lack of clearly defined welcome based upon brand, identity and image. These marketing and branding approaches are not the subject of this paper but the author reflects on the importance of stakeholder engagement with tourism, more specifically, articulation of a clear, concise and widely understood and agreed strategic approach to planning tourism. The stakeholder engagement approach is common; widespread in the literature and is required therefore to ensure that tourism is embedded as an opportunity in the community's development agenda and action plans (Duff, 2006; Simmons, 1994).

### **Visitors**

The visitor surveys produced results that broadly concur with the literature on compelling stories, a sense of belonging or engagement with the stories of sacred worship, heritage and cultural memorials and architecture. The split between reasons for visits are broadly equal over these three components.

Approximately 27% of all sampled visitors are from outside of the United Kingdom with no clear dominant nationality represented. All visitors rated the service of the guide or greeter as exemplary (on a five point Likert scale the average was 1.1). Most respondents rated the quality of printed material for their visit as above expectations (1.6). Most visitors did not take the opportunity to explore the cafe and bookshop adjacent to the Cathedral.

In broad terms the respondents were overwhelmingly positive about their experience of visiting the Cathedral. Key words used in one open question were 'inspiring, peaceful, calming, lovely, interesting, tranquil and welcoming'. There were no negative comments or feedback suggesting no visitor dissatisfaction with the actual experience of the visit.

The findings presented identify a systems-thinking solution to the problem of retaining, rewarding and remunerating volunteers to maintain the Cathedral as a leading visitor attraction that has experiences which are highly relevant to both sacred pilgrim and secular visitor. Figure 4 is indicative of the planning, preparation, management and review activities outlined in the recommendations and, is based on the findings from consumption, delivery and feedback from site management personnel. Success comes from maintaining the sacred and secular audience, preparing materials for both audiences, reviewing the management activities around retained volunteers and managing volunteers' expectations. This largely maps across the criteria outlined by Dalton *et al.* (2009) and Simone-Charteris & Boyd (2010) and corresponds to a flexible yet managed set of indicators that have been covered in the literature review and introduction of the paper.

Volunteers are celebrated in their diversity, in their self-sufficiency, in their span of control and knowledge which has created an enduring, clearly recognisable resource for the Cathedral. The volunteers provide continuing excellence, recognised by service awards and the acknowledged prestige they gain from this delivery at the site.

Future training programmes embed visitor feedback and expectations and set an agenda for resource allocation (people and funding). Sacred Britain already exists with a template to support the required training needs (Duff, 2006). It appears that honouring volunteers with a 'Bishop's Badge' and membership of the Guild of St Edmund is appropriate and a strategy that the Cathedral acknowledges is shared nationally. Volunteer training and development is undertaken both formally and informally and delivery rests with an important group of individuals within the remit of the Dean of the Cathedral. Those empowered to manage the visitor experience, the human resources and volunteer management team have identified opportunities to embed principles of visitor management to secure even more impressive feedback from current sacred and secular consumers.

The Cathedral acknowledge 'staff come before stuff' and the volunteers acknowledge the recognition received from both visitors and the Cathedral hierarchy. The Cathedral staff also acknowledge the need to explore added-value for visitors in the under-utilised cafe and bookshop.

The very fact that the Cathedral is so reliant on the success of volunteering identifies a sustainable approach to development (cf. Alonso & Liu, 2013;

Palmer, 2010; Orr, 2006). This is a place of worship that is fiercely proud of its heritage, architecture, sacred purpose and special identity. The administrative structures support and encourage volunteers through retention, reward and recognition strategies embedded in current good management practices coupled with the experience elements and activities that are important for the visitor journey ( Mill *et al.*, 2011; Dalton *et al.*, 2009; Shackley, 2005; McIntosh *et al.*, 2004).

The Cathedral represents a central and attractive offer to many types of visitor, is placed at the heart of the community and the journey of pilgrimage being taken is essentially no less stunning than the Camino Reale di Sant Iago. Derby as a compact, central and hi-tech, manufacturing centre strives to provide a compelling reason for visiting. As has been mentioned, the key difference between Derby and other high profile places of pilgrimage is possibly attributable to low levels of brand identity and image of the City. This research is not designed to push a re-branding activity; it is more about celebrating the journey to the twenty first century that is remarkable enough as a representation of a community at the cross-roads of central England. As Vukonic would identify, the Cathedral is at a middling position on the sacred to secular continuum. The Cathedral is at a stage where identity through worship and tourism are overlapping yet tourism and pilgrimage remain blurred journeys (Frew & White, 2011).

### Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated cost-effective approaches to developing tourism based on visitor experiences and additionally benchmarking good practices in service delivery. Good practices that are derived from networks and partnerships are highly attractive.

The Cathedral continues to provide sacred and secular multi-faith events and celebrations which can be used to attract visitors driven by and through the volunteer and management practice. The role that churches may play in any revitalisation, or development and regeneration, of community is well understood in examples from Europe and elsewhere (Goncalves *et al.*, 2012; Stănculescu & Țîrca, 2010; DiGiovine, 2010; Stoykova 2009).

The emphasis in this research is that continuing good practices must be cost-effective, must link resources from partnerships and networks already in existence (and therefore already demonstrably sustainable and effective). As Dalton *et al.* identify in 2009, capacity building for the future in resources must be driven to

be effective from the combination of visitor experience elements, activities, physical artefacts and activities planned and completed.

A codicil on the positives outlined in this paper mirror concerns discussed elsewhere. An ageing population of volunteers may prove unsustainable in the longer term and further innovative strategies in reward, remuneration and retention may need to be explored by Cathedral management to diversify the mix of ages as the relationship between supplier and volunteers develops further (Olsson, 2012; 244). It is also acknowledged that this special relationships between supplier and volunteer is far from unique. There are plenty of narratives built around the well-established networks of tourism projects for faith and church tourism, so, quite possibly sharing practices through organisations like the Churches Tourism Association (CTA) should become a focus for this Derby case study (Morpeth, 2012; 115). Prosaically, the economics of supporting a growing visitor and pilgrimage site is the need to balance budgets, present the mission and ministry of the site to its staff and visitors as well as possible (Shackley, 2005: 39).

Celebrating success in managing volunteers is a theme that the Cathedral can already adopt and promote in workshops through events for the Church, based in the Cathedral. Funding for these events can be driven from networks and partners in the region; both sacred and secular. These key relationships are the glue that will help bind the essential, central heritage jewel box that is the offer made by the Cathedral of All Saints in Derby.

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