




Diocese of  
**Guildford**   
TRANSFORMING CHURCH  
TRANSFORMING LIVES

# Storytelling guide

June 2020

Planning and telling your story template with guidance.

## Planning your story

### Why

What is the story?

### How

How does it fit in with the overall vision and mission, or message, of the church?

### Who

Who is the audience? Be specific and think about age group, gender, likes and dislikes, and their relationship with the church.

### What

What do you want the audience to know, feel and do as a result of the story.

### Where

Where is the best place to tell the story? Social media, parish magazine, website, through a Sunday service, and so on.

### When

When is the best time to tell the story? When will your audience be receptive to your story?

### With what

What other resources do you need to tell the story?

## Writing the story

Start by writing the full story. The long form should be in places that readers are likely to spend time reading, such as a parish magazine, your website/blog and newspapers.

**Length** – this should be appropriate for the channel it's on and what you want your audience to do.

**Entice the audience to keep reading** – not all readers will read the full story and the key details should be in the first sentence or two. But

**Imagery** - need to back up the story and help you tell it.

Once you have the full story you are ready to make some adaptations. We take in information differently depending on where we encounter it, for example:

- Twitter posts need to be short, write something that grabs attention and ensure there is a way to take the next step. That may be a link to the full story or to complete a form etc.
- Facebook posts can be longer and should contain imagery. If you can share a condensed version of the story, do. Remember to make it easy for the reader to take any action by giving a quick link.
- Instagram is all about the imagery so make that good. And remember you can't link directly to something else in a post. You can change the link in the bio but this is not easy for the reader so you have to make the action compelling, or use Instagram as one of your ways to tell a story and back up other messages elsewhere. I.e a reminder of service times.

### The first sentence or two

*This should include the basic information; the what, when and who of the story.*

### Second paragraph

*This paragraph jumps into the story telling, or the how of the story.*

### Quote

*Quotes are useful to give the story some real life and make it personal.*

### Adaptations

**Twitter**

**Facebook**

**Instagram**