**How to help Visitors feel safe and welcome in the Diocese of Bristol**

**When they arrive**

1. Familiarisation is vital: we all find that we need to adjust when we travel abroad, and Westerners have the advantage of being able to discover in advance what they are likely to encounter, and to prepare for it. Few Ugandans are able to enjoy an adequate briefing before arriving in Britain.
2. IMPORTANT - make sure that you make it clear at the start what is acceptable and what is not in terms of making requests of hosts or churches for financial support. To avoid embarrassment the general guideline is the same whether we visit Uganda or visitors come to us, the emphasis is on relationships and people should not make personal requests for help or money. All visitors are representatives of their diocese and any requests for or offers of help should be made through diocesan bishops and link structures. For advice contact Chris Dobson.
3. Sadly, some overseas visitors are treated discourteously at immigration, and they may appear in the reception area of the airport feeling a bit battered or shocked. Make them feel very welcome!
4. They may not expect our climate to be as cold as it is - even if they have been warned, few will have any warm clothing with them. So when meeting them at the airport have something warm to give them. Put a hot water bottle in the bed when you get them home, even in the summer.
5. Visitors take time to adjust, so don't overload them with a full programme of activities. "Europeans have watches: Africans have time" and they need just to be with us for a few days before anything significant happens. Indeed that IS significant to them.

**Cultural Differences**

1. Ugandan lay Christians almost invariably expect everybody in Britain to be an active Christian and they are shocked to find our churches not as full as they might be. They also find it hard to understand why we are not as comfortable in naming the name of Christ to our neighbours as they are.
2. Don't be offended if there are fewer "please & thank yous" than we expect. It is simply not the cultural norm in Uganda.
3. Our smooth roads, crammed shops, comfortable public transport (and the price of it!), plumbing and public services generally, bemuse visitors, and they may be uncritical or feel that they are in paradise. They will often ask for money: comparing their conditions with ours and it is wise to have talked this out beforehand with somebody who is familiar both with the country and its customs. Small personal gifts are perfectly acceptable but larger gifts of money or equipment are best made through the Deanery or a recognised Mission Agency.

**Health Issues**

1. It is not unknown for visitors to need medical attention. Have a word with your GP or health centre before they come, so that you know the procedure.

**Church Matters**

1. Your visitors will certainly expect to be publicly welcomed at your church, and to be invited to give testimony and a word. Warn your incumbent! The interview technique is useful here.
2. Bear in mind that English will be their second language, so speak clearly and not too fast. We may find our visitors difficult to understand, especially at first. Don't be embarrassed to ask them to repeat themselves, or possibly to speak more slowly if addressing a gathering.
3. Most Deanery visitors from Uganda will not drink alcohol, so it helps to explain that most Christians here are not teetotallers and that a little wine with a meal is quite acceptable They may also be shocked by Christians smoking.

**Practicalities**

1. Meals should ideally include something hot. Encourage your visitor to try unfamiliar food. Meat, chicken, potatoes, rice, most vegetables and fruit are popular, especially stews and casseroles. Few like salad. Desserts will be unfamiliar but most come to like them. Cheese is not usually popular. Our cutlery conventions may be baffling at first. In Uganda the usual drinks are tea, Milo, and orange (or other fruit juices). Explain that water is safe to drink straight from the cold tap and that milk does not have to be boiled.
2. Visitors may be reluctant to use public transport on their own. Explain that taxis are rarely used in UK because of expense. Ensure that any transport arrangements are made very clearly and probably in writing, including pick tip times and places. Map reading is often not a well developed skill.
3. If possible give them a timed programme or itinerary for their visit so that they know what to expect. Do remember to leave spaces. Encourage others in your Deanery to share the blessing of meeting and entertaining your Ugandan visitors but avoid frequent changes in accommodation, remembering it takes time for them to adjust. Praying together can be very valuable.
4. Offer to put clothes into the washing machine or show them the ropes for doing their own hand laundry. They may be shy to ask.
5. Try to include some sightseeing. A visit to the Zoo or the coast as well as the Cathedral ¬not missing the memorial to their assassinated Archbishop Janani Luwum in the North Choir Aisle, but also try to include a visit to show them that there is real poverty in Britain.

**Contact with home**

1. Making contact with relatives is likely to be very important to your guests. Potentially the telephone can be a source of misunderstanding. It is easier to be proactive and provide your guests with prepaid international calling cards for Uganda - available from most newsagents. A £5.00 card will often provide someone with several hours calling to both landlines and mobiles.
2. Please ensure that you explain how to use it as in the past visitors from overseas have not used them because the instructions were too complex for someone working in a second language.

**Safeguarding issues:**

1. Please ensure that visitors understand the importance of safeguarding and what the expectations are. Think through the kind of visits they will be making, and ensure that any special safeguarding issues are communicated: for example if you visit a school that they understand what the policy is as regards taking photographs
2. If you allow them access to the internet please ensure that people know that their usage will be monitored, we have had occasions in the past of individuals accessing pornographic websites.
3. Contact Safeguarding Officer in the Diocesan Office for advice.

**Flying Home**

1. Before they return remind your visitors to check in online and choose seats 24 hours before departure and if necessary help them, the earlier you can do it the easier it will be to get them the seats that they require.
2. If your visitor is accumulating gifts etc., bear in mind that excess baggage is very expensive.
3. While some charity tickets may allow a larger baggage allowance there is usually still a maximum limit per bag and you may face a charge for each kilo over the limit for individual bags. One traveler was charged over £60 for having an overweight bag despite the fact that she was still well within her allowed limit.