**Welcome pack: How to use this template**

This template can be used as a guide to help you create your own ‘welcome pack’ for people new to your area. You will find highlighted text throughout, which includes guidance on what content should be added. All yellow highlighted text should be deleted and, where appropriate, replaced with information about/relevant to your own community. You should also delete text in yellow highlighted boxes.

Before you start, here are some useful tips to consider when compiling your welcome pack:

1. **Consider carefully what needs to go in your welcome pack**

This might seem like a basic starting point, but creating a comprehensive, well thought-out document is likely to be better received and result in better engagement. You may want to include illustrations, such as maps, photographs (e.g. local landmarks) and may even decide to employ a designer to make it look professional. This isn’t essential though – as long as the guide is clear and readable it will do the job. We recommend you seek input from others in your community who may suggest other information to include and may also spot errors or omissions.

1. **Think about how you will share the welcome pack with new residents**
Will it be delivered by hand or through the letterbox, or will it be made available on a local website? If it is only available on a website then how will new residents know about it? Think about including useful websites if you are creating an online welcome pack, or – if you are printing the pack – think about what supplementary materials you might include, such as flyers for local businesses, waste collection schedules and bus timetables. If you are planning to deliver the pack by hand, could you capitalise on the connection made when delivering it?
2. **Make sure you have appropriate permissions**
Try to only include contact details that are already freely available, such as business telephone numbers and email addresses. Before including contact details for any individuals, make sure you have asked for their permission first (we recommend obtaining this in writing) and that they understand why their details have been included in the packs. If they do not want their details to be included in the welcome pack, you will need to respect this. Also make sure you have the appropriate permission to use any images or quotes.

**Welcome to [name of area/neighbourhood/ward/village]**

**A Handbook to Knowing Your [Neighbourhood/ Village/Community]**

**[You could insert a picture of a local village landmark, point of interest, group of people or collage of local pictures.]**

**A warm welcome**

[Insert welcome message of your own or adapt the following to fit your requirements]

 We hope that the information contained in this handbook will help you to settle into your new home and the community. Your neighbours will no doubt be welcoming and assist you as needed, but this handbook aims to help you find your way round services and activities to enable you to connect with our [community/neighbourhood/area] when you first arrive.

The guide contains up-to-date and relevant information about the area. You will also find this and other information on our website at [insert web address for your organisation or another relevant one. If the information isn’t online just delete this sentence.].

We hope you find this handbook useful and soon settle in. Please do get in touch if you have any additional suggestions you might have or if you find anything is wrong or missing. The person to contact about this handbook is [add name and contact details].

[Name/title; Organisation]

**Contents**

To help readers understand what the guide contains, you might want to create a contents page listing what is in your handbook. Try to gather contacts, activities and services into logical groupings. You might want to add page numbers to the contents page so that information is readily accessible. The list below aligns with the suggested page headings in this template, which you may need to adapt if you use different page headings.

About us

About where we live

Local community representatives

Local faith groups

Community activities and events

Getting about

Household waste and recycling

Local amenities

Local services

**About us**

Tell the reader about your organisation or group and what its role in the community is. You might want to include details about when and where you meet, how often and how new residents can get involved. If you can, add some pictures to create interest and to introduce key contacts.

**About where we live**

The purpose of this section is to give new residents an understanding of the neighbourhood/ward/village, what makes it unique or sets it apart from others. It may be a potted history or some information about the people, traditions or buildings.

Include information about any local history group or a local history guide. If you have quirky traditions, this is the place to mention them, although more detail can be provided later in the guide.

Give a broad description of where you are located, the geography and environment and what some of the local highlights are. This section could include a broader map of the area such as a route map/Ordinance Survey map (obtaining permissions as necessary) or you could create a defined area map, which could contain useful local information such as:

Key landmarks/ houses

Notice boards

Pub/shop

Church

Open space e.g. village green, park, play area, wildlife site

Village meeting spaces – e.g. village hall

Street names

Bus stops/train stations

An example of this has been produced by Blunsdon Parish council, see [www.blunsdonparishcouncil.co.uk/downloads/Blunsdon\_Cold\_Harbour\_paths\_Il.pdf](http://www.blunsdonparishcouncil.co.uk/downloads/Blunsdon_Cold_Harbour_paths_Il.pdf). However, you can produce a simple map using Google Maps, pinning key information on the map with different coloured pins. Your district council may also have maps that you could use, including local asset maps.

Also consider whether you live somewhere that might attract visitors, such as an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB),within a national park, a beauty spot, heritage area or similar. Include a link to relevant websites, such as the AONB, national park and/or the local tourist board website.

**Local community representatives**

* Include information about your local representatives in this section. (This sort of information can change frequently and so take care to ensure that these details are regularly checked and updated.) Representatives could include: details of parish councillors and clerk, and when/where meetings are held.
* Faith representatives, such as the priest or vicar.
* Local MP.
* District and/or county councilor.
* Contact for any local buildings, such as a village hall or community centre.

**Local faith groups**

Include information here about all of the faith groups in the area. As well as contact details it might be useful to include details of regular services, activities or meetings, whether or not they have a newsletter and who to contact for more information.

If you’re not sure about what faith groups are active in your area, there are a range of websites that can help you find what’s available in your locality including:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/>

<https://directory.cbcew.org.uk/>

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/connect/find-a-church/>

<https://mosques.muslimsinbritain.org/>

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/meetings>

<https://www.reformjudaism.org.uk/synagogue-locator/>

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/map-page>

<https://urcdirectory.org.uk/>

Remember to review the information you present regularly and update as necessary.

**Community activities and events**

You might want to mention a few of the key events that take place throughout the year (summer fete, fireworks celebrations etc.) as well as details of any regular clubs, groups and activities which run in the area. Provide a list of contact names, numbers and email addresses (where possible) for each group. It may be worthwhile getting a few people involved with this section so that you can give a comprehensive picture. Ask the groups listed to review the section to make sure the details are up to date.

Examples might include:

Women’s Institute

Parent and toddlers/playgroups

Art clubs

Zumba/Yoga/exercise groups

Drama clubs

Beavers/Brownies/Cubs/Guides/Scouts etc

Sports clubs (football, rugby, cricket)

Walking or cycling groups

Volunteering groups

Campaign groups

Gardening clubs/allotments conservation/environment

Over 60s groups

Community lunch clubs and coffee mornings

Youth clubs

Any regular/annual events put on by the parish council or village hall (e.g. regular bingo, May Day celebration, beer festival etc.)

Traditions, such as scarecrow competitions or pub quiz

Make sure that these details are regularly checked and updated.

**Getting about**

Information to include in this section could include regular bus and train services, such as those to major towns and hospitals, linking to online timetables and other relevant information. (If you were unable to show on the map where bus stops were located, include these details here.) You can also include information on community transport services and local taxi companies.

As transport timetables can change frequently, please review these details regularly so that they can be updated where necessary.

**Household waste and recycling**

Give details of waste collection days and the pattern it follows. You may be able to obtain this information from the local authority website – you could include a link to the relevant webpage or include the local authority information leaflet on recycling with a printed copy of the welcome guide.

It might also be useful to include information on local household waste and recycling sites, as well as opening times, and if you did not add details about recycling points and dog waste bins on your area map, perhaps include those details here too.

Make sure that these details are regularly checked and updated.

**Local amenities**

You may wish **to** include details of post offices/post collection points, local shops, supermarkets, petrol stations, hairdressers, window-cleaners, restaurants, fast-food outlets or pubs in this section. Consider mobile shops and libraries too, as well as any milk delivery and similar services covering your area. This is not designed to be an exhaustive list, but it might be worth considering local businesses that run directly from the ward/neighbourhood/village. Remember to review and update regularly.

Also consider whether these is a regular doorstep magazine advertising local traders, services and events in your area. Could you obtain extra copies to distribute with the handbook?

**Local services**

As the end of the guide, it might be a good idea to present a local directory of services. Include contact details, physical addresses and website details.

Don’t try to list too many organisations, but key services that might be useful could include:

* District council
* County council
* GP or medical centre
* Nearest hospital including accident and emergency/minor injuries unit
* Dentist
* Optician
* Pharmacy
* Local schools
* Pre-schools and child care
* Vets
* Police (including details of your local neighbourhood team or PCSO)
* Leisure centre and sports facilities
* Library (include opening times or if it is a mobile library which days it operates and where it stops)
* Voluntary sector organisations which support carers, older people, community care organisations, foodbanks or free fridges

Don’t forget to regularly check and update these details.