

Disability and Accessibility

The Equality Act 2010 is a very fair law. It says that if a place cannot afford to do something, it doesn't have to. If you take good expert advice, and plan carefully, you will know what is doable in your budget. Ask individuals what will help. Making any of these changes, big or small, is a step forward.

For more information visit
cofebirmingham.com/hub/accessibility

or contact Revd Steve Jones, Diocesan Disability Adviser
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Practical ways to make your venue
more inclusive and accessible



Many thanks to Ann Memmott for all her input to produce this document.



The Church of England in Birmingham is committed to providing an environment that will promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

People think of disability as being wheelchair users, after all, that's the international symbol for disability. But a person's disability can present itself in many different ways. Some are external and use scooters, frames and walking sticks; others are more hidden; including hearing and sight problems, Dementia, heart conditions, mental health issues and many others.

We want to make sure that everyone is considered. Small changes can make a big difference in creating a space that is more accessible and welcoming for all.



The 'All Inclusive, All Accessible' Golden Standard

The 'All Inclusive, All Accessible' badge recognises a church has taken steps to consider the dignity of all people and put into action small changes to allow people with disabilities to feel welcome.

The inclusion & access Golden Standard enables a church or venue to answer 'yes' to following:

- Can I get into the building independently?
- Is there space for me to sit?
- Can I hear everything?
- Can I see everything?
- Can I get to the toilet independently?

So far, 12% of CofE churches in Birmingham achieve this.

In this leaflet are practical, simple ways for more churches to attain the Golden Standard of the 'All Inclusion, All Accessible' badge. **A church can cover 90% of disability needs with a budget of about £600.**





of the people in the UK have a disability

This is why accessibility is so important.



3 million
people with
hearing impairments



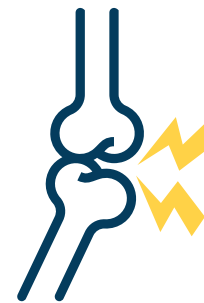
1.2 million
wheelchair
users in the UK



2 million
people with
visual impairments



1 million
autistic
individuals in the UK



10 million
people with
arthritis



million
people who struggle to read English
beyond primary school level



Over a million
people with
learning disabilities

Mobility access

- Repair footpaths and driveways, and clear leaves and rubbish
- Ensure there is good, clear access to get around inside the building
- Try to create level access to your church, or provide a ramp
- If you have a disabled entrance or designated disabled car parking, signpost it clearly
- Designate a space in the church which is accessible, has clear sight-lines, is draft free and has good lighting. Consider using a mat to allocate this space
- Make sure the “carer” is cared for
- Be aware of where the nearest accessible disabled toilet is, even if it’s not in your church building



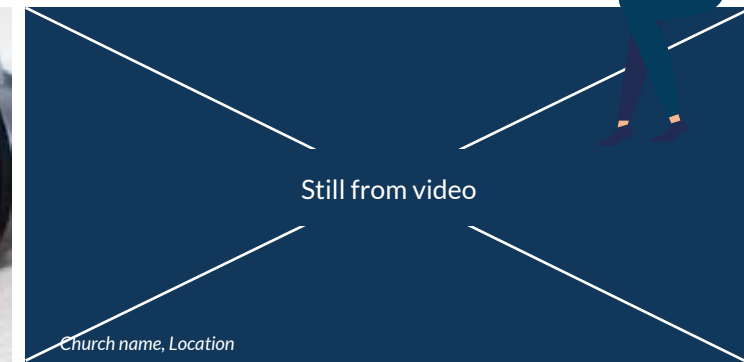
Hearing access

- In a small church, a portable hearing loop costs £100 to £250
- Use a microphone – always (If it’s a radio microphone, regularly check the batteries)
- Always check volume levels and microphones before the service starts
- Loop systems are “zonal” find out where they work best in your church
- Make sure people can see your lips clearly when you talk
- Talk to someone with hearing impairment in a quieter place
- Learn some simple sign language (BSL)



Visual access

- Large print hymn books and Bibles will cost you £50 and will help many
- Provide notice sheets, service sheets in larger sizes (A3) and offer the loan of magnifying readers (£2.50 to purchase)
- Set up extra screens if there are columns or other building obstructions that get in the way of the main projector
- Safety hazard tape on steps and edges
- Remove trip hazards, make sure walkways are clear
- Try not to continually “re-arrange” the furniture
- Provide a bowl of water for guide dogs. It costs nothing to re-use a plastic tub
- Try to avoid saying “as you can see”



Autism

- Include a clear plan of the building on your church website or printed out on the noticeboard
- Designate a quiet corner, or if possible, a quiet room
- Be clear about what will happen in your services - a couple of minutes of explanation helps a lot
- Buy some standard lamps that don't use fluorescent bulbs, for any areas normally lit by fluorescent light. These cost around £20 each (Some autistic people cannot cope with fluorescent lighting as it looks like a strobe light).
- Buy a set of noise-cancelling headphones for those who struggle with noise levels. These cost around £30 each
- Read the top tips for autism in the Welcoming Those with Autism guide for churches – tinyurl.com/welcoming-autism



Learning disabilities

- Those with learning disabilities will appreciate extra explanation and an easy read newsletter. Often local charities are pleased to help guide you on this
- Find more resources at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.com

Functional/Reduced Literacy

- Be mindful of who you invite to read at services, to avoid causing embarrassment
- Read out instructions rather than assume everyone can read them
- Use simple language and explain things clearly
- Make use of visual clues and imagery



Other welcome help

- Chairs with arms for easy standing
- Offer the option of mugs instead of a cup and saucer
- Position staff/volunteers on the door to welcome people into the building and provide assistance
- Read our extensive **Dementia Friendly Church** resource, at tinyurl.com/cofe-dementia-friendly

