



# How to ...

## Create accessible documents

Much of the literature we use in our churches is inaccessible to many people. People can struggle to read materials for a variety of reasons including visual impairment, dyslexia and learning disabilities. By not providing accessible written materials we are not only breaking the law as laid down in the 2010 Equality Act, but more importantly we are excluding people from our church communities.

Just because someone hasn't asked for something doesn't mean they don't need it. Many people will just not return if they find a church inaccessible rather than ask or complain. Literature that is in clear print is easier for everyone to read, not just those with visual impairments and usually leads to cleaner, smarter documents.

### Top 10 tips for clear communications

- Use a sans serif font such as Arial. For body copy, 12pt is preferable, 11pt is a minimum – it's best to add pages and increase white space than to cram everything in, trying to fit on one side.
- Always have a distinct contrast between the font colour and the paper, such as black text on white. Avoid blue ink for the elderly as they find it harder to see blue.
- Avoid using italics, underlined or blocks of capital letters as these can be hard to read. Think about using different colours or a different font or font size for emphasis.
- Ensure there is enough space between the lines on the page – a rough guide is to have 1.5 to 2 times the space between words.
- Even spacing between words is important. Using left side aligned text rather than justified allows people to easily follow from line to line.
- Allow plenty of clear space on the page around text, photos, charts etc. This allows people to locate the different things on the page. Print captions above or below photos rather than on top of them.
- Try and keep all text horizontal; vertical text can be confusing and difficult to read for many people.
- Use cream or off-white nonglossy paper to reduce glare. For those with visual impairments, use uncoated paper weighing over 90gsm (photocopy paper usually weighs 80gsm). If the text is showing through from the reverse side, the paper may be too thin.
- Do not use shadow graphics behind print.
- Keep words simple and to a minimum.

### Further Information

Always have a small number of large print copies available of all literature. For the learning disabled and the elderly, a minimum 16-18 point font is required. Ensure that large print copies are out and available for people to pick up alongside regular print ones so people don't have to ask.

Be prepared to provide materials in a larger font or in alternative formats such as braille if requested.

To read more detailed guidance and understand more about why clear text is important, then please look at the 'Disability and Jesus' Clear Text guide which can be found at [www.disabilityandjesus.org.uk](http://www.disabilityandjesus.org.uk) under 'advice'.

If you need any further advice or help in providing literature in additional format, please contact Alice Kemp, Diocesan Disability Advisor.

It may also be useful to read the 'How to... Produce a great church notice sheet' guide.

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