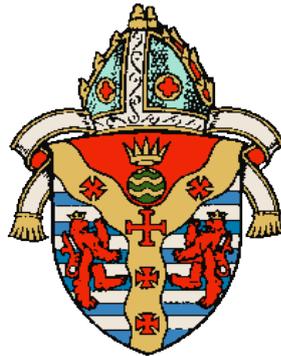


'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full'. (John 10:10)

'In Christ, there is no difference between Jew and Greek. There is no difference between male and female.

You are all the same in Christ Jesus.'

(Gal 3:28)



Diocese of Cyprus & the Gulf Resource Pack on Disability Inclusion including Diocesan Policy 2017

As children of God, we have a new dignity and God calls us to fullness of life. (Introduction to the Common Worship Rite of Baptism 2006)

Disability Inclusion Policy

The weak and the poor are for us a source of unity. Jesus came into the world to change and transform society from a “pyramid” in which the strong and clever dominate at the top, into a “body”, where each member of society has a place, is respected and is important.

— Jean Vanier, Befriending the Stranger

Mission statement

We are made in the image of God, and as such all people are of equal importance and significance. In God there is no distinction between male and female, Greek or Jew, bond or free – disabled or able. We all, irrespective of our status have privileges and responsibilities in the practice and outworking of our faith. Just as there is a ‘bias to the poor’ so there is a Biblical imperative to have a corporate responsibility to those on the margins of society and within the structures of our church. This policy enshrines the principle that all people employed or accessing services offered by the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf are treated equally.

Introduction

Under the UN Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities we are required to respond to the subject of disability. The convention states that all parties need to ‘recognize the inherent dignity and worth and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’.

Article 3 of the Convention – (General Principles) states that there shall be:

- a. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons;
- b. Non-discrimination;
- c. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- d. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- e. Equality of opportunity;
- f. Accessibility.

This has a bearing on our diocese as a service provider and employer and we must therefore take reasonable steps to ensure that our policies, practices and procedures enable people with disabilities (lay and ordained) to enjoy and fully participate in all aspects of Diocesan life and work.

This will affect our organisation at all levels of meetings and events from Church Council to Diocesan Synod in terms of choice of venue, access, large print copies of printed texts, loop systems for hearing aid users etc. It will affect parishes in terms of their obligation to carry out and implement an access audit.

Definition of disability

'A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day to day activities.
(UK Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part 1)

Physical or mental impairments include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long term and substantial effect on people's everyday lives and mobility.

The Body of Christ

1 Corinthians 12

What part of the body of Christ are disabled people? Historically disabled people have been seen as being served by the church as the body of Christ rather than as members of the body with their own spiritual gifts to offer. To see disabled people as fully part of the body requires a shift in our perception of what disability is.

We all have 'models' in our head that frame the way we see other people, especially those who are different to us. When it comes to disabled people there are two main models in operation.

The first, called the 'medical model' sees disability as the problem of an individual, a deviation from what is normal. This model suggests that if an individual cannot access something they shouldn't expect the same life as 'normal' people. This model makes access into a luxury to be implemented if we have enough time and money, and disabled people into helpless objects who should be grateful for whatever they get.

The second model is called the 'social model' which suggests that there is a difference between 'impairment' - the part of the individual that doesn't work properly, and 'disability' - the barriers imposed by a society set up for the non-disabled majority. In this model access is about the whole community taking responsibility for making sure all are included as a matter of justice.

The 'medical model' makes disabled people feel like a burden, like second class citizens. The 'social model' is experienced as profoundly liberating and helps disabled people to see themselves as children of God equal to anyone else.

Paul's vision of the body of Christ underpins this social model. It is a vision of a church where all members have their place, their part to play and where all members work together. It is a vision where 'the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable' (verse 22) are to be treated with honour and respect. If we do not do this, the whole body suffers.

All one in Christ

Galatians 3:26-28

If we needed any more justification for adopting the social model, it can be found in Paul's letter to the Galatians. In verse 27 and 28 Paul triumphantly asserts that all who have been baptized are clothed with Christ and that is the only criterion that matters before God. There are no distinctions based on race or gender or indeed denomination, social background, disability or age.

This passage also reminds us to be careful in the words we use to and about other people. 'Jew' or 'Greek' could be used to insult and divide as well as describe others. In the same way we label someone as deaf and treat them as stupid or assume someone with mental health problems will be violent. Often we mean well, but ask the carer not the disabled person if they want sugar, or make assumptions about what someone can or can't do. In Christ we are people first and disabled second, so our terminology needs to reflect that fact. We are disabled people not the disabled, we are wheelchair users not wheelchair bound, we are deaf without speech not deaf and dumb, and we have learning difficulties not mental handicaps. Each of us will have our preferred way of describing ourselves. All are one in Christ; let our ways of thinking and speaking reflect that fact.

How this affects our Diocese.

As service providers and employers we should take reasonable steps to ensure that our policies, practices and procedures enable people with disabilities to make full use of anything we offer to the public, or to work comfortably within the environment.

If our premises have physical features, that make it difficult for people with a hearing impairment or people with disabilities to work, or to use our service, we should take steps to remove or alter those features. If an auxiliary aid or service would enable a person with disabilities to use our service, then we should take reasonable steps to provide it.

The Purpose of this policy

To consider the theological implications of this issue within our diocese and to inform, support and ensure all processes and structures work towards an inclusive 'good practice' methodology in all areas of its organisation; life, work and strategy.

Strategies to achieve the purpose of this policy

- To support the diocese in its awareness as an employer and as a service provider to be a catalyst for changing lives by changing attitudes towards accessibility and inclusion, through its policies and practice and by seeking to create accessibility for all.
- To support informed advocacy of inclusive attitudes when speaking in public situations, and in written communications.

- To support good practice for parishes, and the diocese as an institution in their role as providers for visitors, tourists, worshippers and pilgrims, in these places of cultural and religious heritage.
- To support good practice for the church as an employer of both paid and voluntary workers.

Our Response to the Biblical Imperative that we are 'All One in Christ'.

Churches take action to try and become more accessible to and more inclusive of all people for a variety of reasons. Whatever our reasons, this section will outline a process that we can follow, including practical action we can take to help us take the desire to being accessible. At any stage we can use the skills and experience of those within our diocese who live and work with different or varying needs of disability.

The process towards an accessible and inclusive church comes under three headings: access, attitude and awareness.

Access

This is the one people immediately think of in terms of welcoming disabled people; it includes making adaptations to the church building so that all can get in, see and hear regardless of their particular need. Some of these adaptations are very quick and simple and cost very little, others are more complex and are a long term project.

The first step in the process is an accessibility audit. It is important that the whole Church Council is aware of and supports this process as they will be responsible for implementing it.

The audit may be requested by the Church Council at any time. If there is a complaint from a disabled person against the church, an audit will be offered as part of dealing with the complaint. (for complaints procedure see below)

The result of the audit will be a report including a list of proposed improvements, some of which may be quick and easy to do; others may be more expensive and long term.

The church will be encouraged not only to provide access, but to advertise their provision so that for example someone arriving in a wheelchair knows how to get attention of the person who can put out the portable ramp for example, or someone who needs large print copies knows where to find them, or a coeliac knows who to ask to make sure a gluten free wafer is available at communion.

Attitude

Also important, and costing nothing, is attitude. Attitude is how we think about people with disabilities, the language we use to talk to them and about them, and how we relate to them when we meet them.

Of the three parts of this section, attitude is the hardest to explain and assess, but the easiest to meet. No expenditure or alterations to buildings are required for a church to have a positive attitude towards disabled people and the smallest congregation can have a good attitude. So what is good attitude?

A good attitude sees the person first and the disability second. A good attitude is one that consults with disabled people wherever possible over what their needs are and how they can be met. This can mean asking a blind person how they prefer to be guided, or asking a wheelchair user whether they need help. It can involve asking a deaf person what their preferred communication method is or asking someone with dyslexia how their reading can be facilitated. Only if communication with the disabled person themselves is impossible should carers or helpers be asked for their advice.

A church with a good attitude will consult with disabled people before making adaptations to the church. This ensures, for example, that ramps and toilets actually are useable by those in a wheelchair (you can't assume that architects will get dimensions and practicalities right) and large print service sheets are actually readable by those who need them (with appropriate fonts and text sizes and colour of paper.)

A church with a good attitude will recognise the gifts of disabled people and seek to involve them in every part of the life of the church, including the leadership.

A good attitude means being sensitive about the language used in talking about disabled people (for example not using words and phrases such as 'the disabled,' 'handicapped,' 'deaf and dumb,' 'spastic,' 'mentally subnormal.')

It is not necessary to be so over sensitive that words such as blind, deaf and disabled people are not used. The terms that most people are happy with can be found throughout this pack. It is important to use language that does not reinforce negative images, incorrect assumptions and stereotypes associated with people with disabilities. All language is constantly evolving and the simplest way to make sure you are using appropriate language is to ask people with disabilities themselves.

Language to be encouraged	Language to be avoided
People with disabilities	The disabled, invalid
Those with visual or hearing impairments	The blind, the partially sighted, the deaf
A person with arthritis, with epilepsy.	An arthritic, an epileptic
Someone who has...	A victim of, suffers from, crippled/afflicted by
A person with physical disabilities	Cripple, handicapped
Someone with learning disabilities	Retarded, mentally handicapped
A person with cerebral palsy	Spastic/Spaz
Profoundly deaf	Deaf and dumb
Hearing aid	Deaf aid
A wheelchair user	Wheelchair- bound/dependant/confined
Accessible toilet	Disabled toilet (doesn't work?)

A good attitude means respecting the dignity and human rights of each and every member of the congregation is seen as an essential part of what it means to be a Christian church and not an added on luxury.

Awareness

No church can make sufficient adaptations to be able to meet the needs of every possible person who might come through the door. A church that is aware is a church that can spot needs as they arise and have some idea how to meet them in the short and long term. A church that is aware knows where its shortcomings are and keeps them on the agenda for improvement. Awareness is the ability to proactively pick up on the needs of individual disabled people and be able to meet them, or plan to meet them. Three things that can facilitate awareness are:

- Appointing a member of the Church Council to be responsible for issues relating to disability and training them appropriately. This person can then become a resource for the congregation and a contact person for any issues that come up. They should not be expected to do all the work in making the church accessible and welcoming, that is still the responsibility of the Church Council and the church as a whole.
- Encouraging all members of the congregation to reflect on issues of disability and difference e.g. through sermons (perhaps with a guest preacher who has personal experience of disability) or bible studies as well as good examples set by church leaders.
- Adopting a disability-equality policy and making sure it is implemented in every activity provided by the church. A model disability equality policy can be found at appendix 1.

By working through this process, your church should become a place that people with disabilities can not only access, but where they can feel welcomed and fully included as part of God's people.

Implementation

To ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities we will develop the following good practice in areas covered by this policy:

Diocesan Good Practice:

- All diocesan synods should where possible be held in accessible locations with disabled parking, toilets, appropriate seating, loop facility and large print text available.
- All diocesan training events (clergy and lay) within the diocese should be held in accessible locations.
- All diocesan boards and committees require accessible locations for the disabled.
- All diocesan services and events require accessible locations and provision.
- Provision for assistance dogs should be available on request.
- All management processes, (interviews, ministerial reviews, etc) should be held in accessible locations.
- Where possible the following should be included in all invitations to Diocesan events:

“In order to enable you to enjoy full participation in this synod/meeting/ training/ service/committee, please indicate below if you require any of the following provisions”.

Induction loop

Large print material

Space for an assistance dog

Wheelchair access and toilet facilities

Disabled designated parking space

Special diet

Other requirements (please specify)

Please return this form to....

Good practice for the Church as a service provider.

- A positive attitude to include all people as equals and so enable their full and equal participation, where possible, in both sharing in and leading worship is at the heart of the Gospel.
- Where possible all should be able to access the building independently.
- Where possible there should be accessible seating, with varying seat height, some with arms.
- Where possible there should be free movement around the building for someone to use a wheelchair or other aids independently to assist their movement.
- Where possible steps and obstructions should be removed. Full participation in all aspects of worship is central to the experience of the worshipper.
- Gathering for Communion at the altar is the heart of Christian worship. Therefore where possible the altar should be fully accessible for communion in the way it is for the able bodied. If, due to constraints that cannot be overcome, this cannot be achieved, a process to include the disabled person should be identified.
- Singing in the choir, serving, chalice assistants, reading lessons, leading intercessions, are all part of worship and where appropriate should be accessible to all.
- A loop system should be available and used at all times, if practical.
- Large print service books and hymn books should be available at all times.
- Church Council meetings and all committee meetings should be held in accessible locations.
- All church activities, socials, prayer groups, bible studies and courses should be held in fully accessible locations.
- All material for meetings should be available in large print.
- All church buildings including halls require a current access audit which should be reviewed and implemented annually.
- It is vital to ask people with disabilities, who are members or users of your facilities, their opinions. They may be happy to help with access audits and offer advice!

Accessibility Symbols

The symbols below may be used to promote or solicit needs of accessibility of places, programmes and other activities for persons with disabilities.



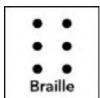
Indicates accessible facilities, paths, toilets and parking areas for people with limited mobility.



Indicates enhanced hearing devices or technology are provided.



Indicates sign language is provided.



Indicates print materials available in Braille upon request.



Signifies print in 18 point or larger.

Access Appraisal procedure

Introduction

All parishes should undertake an appraisal/audit of its premises. It is recommended that at least two people walk through the audit and any members of the congregation who may have mobility issues or sight and hearing impairment should ideally be invited to join them. As well as looking at the buildings it is also important to look at the practices of the church. It is highly recommended that photographs be taken to inform the end report more fully. The appraisal is based on the concept of placing the building in its context, approaching it, entering it, moving about within it, using its facilities and services, dealing with emergencies and leaving it. The sequence of movement on which the audit pro-forma (see appendix 3) is based is as follows:

- A** Approach and car parking
- B** Routes and external level changes, including ramps and steps.
- C** Entrances including reception
- D** Horizontal movement and assembly
- E** Vertical movement and internal level change
- F** Doors
- G** Toilets
- H** Fixtures and fittings
- J** Information
- K** Means of escape

The findings of the audit should then be reported to the church council. Any recommendations should be discussed and classified under one of the following headings:

Straightforward: Matters which can be implemented with little delay and might include the provision of large-print pew sheets and hymnbooks, elimination of a small step, painting a contrast colour line on steps, replacement of worn doormats, etc.

Achievable: Matters which can be implemented in the short term – perhaps when money becomes available or when a re-ordering takes place. Such matters might include the provision of a hearing-aid induction loop or the provision of a permanent ramp for wheelchairs, or handrails on steps. (Remember to seek advice.)

Unreasonable: Matters which are felt to be quite beyond the capacity of the church. Major alterations to a historic building may be aesthetically unacceptable or we may not own our buildings. Some provisions may cost a fortune. It is important to carefully document the reasons why a matter has been deemed ‘unreasonable’ as this may provide useful evidence should legal action be taken against the church.

The Church Council should formally record its decisions, implement the ‘reasonable’ matters and plan for the ‘achievable’ ones. It is recommended that the appraisal be reviewed every two years as new members of the congregation may present new issues.

Complaints Procedure

To be put into operation following a complaint to the diocese regarding facilities for people with a disability, relating to all buildings which are the responsibility of the Church Council.

Preferably the complainant should register the complaint with the identified person within the parish (If the complaint is registered with another person it is their responsibility to inform one of the above as soon as possible).

A meeting will be arranged with the complainant and the churchwardens and incumbent to bring the matter to their attention. Details of the complaint will be recorded.

Audit and disability awareness training will be offered to those involved.

Prayer for our Parishes

Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing on our churches.

May the doorways be wide enough to welcome all in need.

May your love and ours narrow enough to shut out evil and strife.

May the thresholds be smooth enough to present no stumbling blocks to children, nor barriers to those who are elderly and disabled. May the doors be strong to turn back the tempter's power but open and inviting to those who are your guests.

May they be doorways to your eternal Kingdom.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Appendix 1

A Model Disability - Inclusivity Policy Statement for Chaplaincy/Parishes

We are committed to becoming a parish which includes all people and which is committed to inclusion and social justice. Thus:

- We will make our parish more welcoming, more helpful, more sensitive and vigorous in breaking down those barriers, which in the past have excluded people with a disability.
- We will seek the opinion of members with a disability and where appropriate their carers on issues affecting the congregational life and outreach of our parish community.
- In our involvement with other denominations, neighbourhood groups, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations we will aim to listen to and work alongside organisations working for and with people with disabilities.
- We will undertake an audit to identify those barriers, which prevent people with disabilities from:
 - Being included and feeling welcomed at our worship, committees, schools, social events and groups,
 - Gaining physical access to our buildings and moving about once they are inside.
- We will seek to offer appropriate pastoral, practical and prayerful support to people with disabilities and their families.
- We will monitor our performance and seek advice from the Diocese, relevant statutory and voluntary organisations, and those agencies and self help groups, which are working for and with people with disabilities.
- We will pray, work and reflect on our commitment to inclusion and social justice at all levels within the life of our parish, its committees, organisations, schools and groups.

Appendix 2 Types of Disability

(This list is not exhaustive)

Permanent Wheelchair Users

A wheelchair, like a shoe or a car, is a mobility aid that enables a person to get around. Try to talk of 'wheelchair users' and avoid talking about 'wheelchair bound'. If you want to differentiate between people who remain in a chair against those who just use it to get from place to place, use the term 'permanent' or 'essential' wheelchair user.

When talking to a wheelchair user, try to ensure that your eyes are at the same level as his/hers, perhaps by squatting or sitting down. Don't lean on the wheelchair - it is part of the user's personal space. In addition some wheelchairs are sophisticated so leaning on them could damage them or you might accidentally start the motor on a motorised chair!

Do not grab the back of someone's wheelchair to push him or her along even if you think the person is struggling. If you are concerned, ask if help is needed. Many wheelchair users can get around under their own power and prefer to!

People can do almost anything in a wheelchair including sailing, climbing, using escalators and dancing. Some want to, others do not - remember people are individuals.

People may choose not to use a wheelchair for a variety of reasons. Having one discreetly available for use if it is needed, because distances are greater than anticipated for example, can be helpful.

Practically a wheelchair kept inside the church could be a boon when any member or visitor has broken a leg or had certain operations!

Many people with walking difficulties prefer a few steps to a ramp; the steps should have a hand rail. All hand rails should be designed so that there is no danger of the end of the rail catching in clothing or bag straps.

People who are blind or visually impaired

Only a very small percentage of blind people have no sight. Make sure you do not make assumptions about the extent of a person's impairment. One person who may have a guide dog might use a Braille note taker, while others will read large print and write their own notes.

When you first meet a blind person, introduce yourself. If you don't know the person's name, touch them on the arm, so that they know that you are talking to them. When you are going, say so. Do not leave them talking to open space.

Take professional advice on the lighting, as well planned and appropriate lighting helps people who are visually impaired. Remember, blind people may not pick up body language.

If someone has a guide dog remember that it is a working animal and should not be petted or shown particular attention. Remember, however, that it too has needs such as for water and toilet facilities. When offering assistance to a blind person:

- Allow him/her to take your arm.
- Guide rather than push or pull the person.
- Advise on approaching steps (whether they go up or down) and other obstacles as they occur.
- To help them sit down place his/her hand on the back of the chair.
- Explain any changes, even if minor or temporary, in the layout of the building to people who are visually impaired (e.g. a crib at Christmas placed in what might have been a large open area would cause an obstacle).

Access for people who are Deaf, Deaf/Blind or Hard of Hearing

Attitude is all important. Good access for anyone with impaired hearing means remembering week in and week out what adaptations need to be made so we can understand what is being said. Access isn't just about Church services either; we need access to all aspects of church life and fellowship.

There are wide variations in the communication needs of deaf and hard of hearing people. A person with impaired hearing may use a hearing aid and/or lip-read and/or use sign language. If they use sign language they may or may not speak and/or read and write English. The first thing to do when a deaf or hard of hearing person comes into the church is to find out from them how they prefer to communicate and what areas of church life they find difficult to access.

Consider the installation of a loop system and ensure it is switched on and working. Make sure all speakers use a microphone. Put up signs on doors to say there is a loop system available. Ensure hymn numbers, page numbers and Bible references are written up somewhere and not just announced. Even better print all service information out on one sheet along with all notices!

Make sure the deaf person does not sit alone at the front - someone sitting with them can make sure they have not missed any information.

Access for hard of hearing people/hearing aid users

If you are aware someone has a hearing problem try and speak clearly, without exaggerated mouth movements and without shouting. Be aware of background noise; take someone to a quiet(er) corner in church, make sure people talk one at a time in meetings.

Install a loop system in church and ask someone who wears a hearing aid to test it regularly. (Loops work with hearing aids to cut down background noise and reverberations). Use the microphone which goes with the loop and make sure it is switched on and the batteries are working.

Try and hold meetings in a room with a loop - which may mean the church.

Access for profoundly deaf people/ lip-readers

If you are speaking to someone who is lip-reading, speak clearly without exaggerated mouth movements or shouting.

Keep trying - rephrase sentences, write down key words - show the deaf person they are worth the effort. If all else fails, suggest using paper and pen. Keep cups, hands, pens, papers, books away from your face. If you wear a beard or moustache or have hair over your face and you regularly talk to someone who lip-reads you may need to think about trimming it around the mouth. Do not stand or sit with your back to a window or light source which will put your face in shadow.

Think about where people speak from in church, try and see if microphones or lecterns block the view of a person's mouth. Remember short and tall speakers will change the view! If the church is being reordered, consider the lighting. In a candlelit service, think about how a person lip-reading might see the speakers face.

Provide as much as possible that is written down (lip-reading is much easier with context to help follow). For example; provide pew Bibles with a note of the day's readings (it is usually impossible to hear the full book, chapter and verse when it is read out) or sheets with readings on.

If possible ask intercessors to print out or photocopy an extra copy of their prayers for anyone who is lip-reading. If possible, ask the preacher to do the same. Make hymn numbers and page numbers visible, either on a sheet or on a board. Sit with a person lip-reading so you can help them if they get confused with what is happening. Provide written copies or posters of ALL notices.

Access for deaf people/ sign language users

If you can't sign you will usually need a sign language interpreter or communicator to help if there is one available.

People with Learning Disabilities

People with learning disabilities or difficulties have chosen not to be called 'mentally handicapped', so that term should not be used. They are also not 'stupid'. Learning disabilities cover a wide range of conditions and consequently of abilities. Even within a recognised condition people have very different experiences sometimes because of the opportunities and support each person may have had.

It must not be assumed that just because someone has a learning disability he/she lacks the capacity to enter into a valid contract. Do not make assumptions about a person's ability in one area of life, based on his/her ability in another. For instance, a person's condition may mean they have no 'disability' in practical or physical matters, just in academic ones, or vice versa.

Because the written word may present barriers to people with learning disabilities, pictorial alternatives and simple text are important. Avoid ambiguity or abstract concepts. If someone has a learning disability you must be able to give clear, simple instructions if these are needed. You may also need to confirm that the person understands what you mean. If someone has difficulty understanding you, be patient and be prepared to explain something more than once, perhaps in a different way.

Consider using short hymns or choruses that can be easily learnt or picked up. Short, clear intercessions make it easier for people to follow.

Specific Learning Disabilities - Dyslexia - Dyspraxia - Autism Spectrum

These three conditions do not have any outward physical signs so very often children and adults with these conditions are misunderstood. Also there appears to be an increase in people with these conditions attending churches.

Dyslexia

People are often perceived as bad spellers, but it can be far more. They may find it difficult to follow instructions because they may find it difficult to distinguish between left and right. They may also find it difficult to read a Bible with two columns on one page.

Different size print can help as well as different colour paper. Most of all ask, and try to be creative how you work with people.

Dyspraxia

This is a co-ordination difficulty which is sometimes combined with Dyslexia. People with Dyspraxia may knock things over, fall, and bump into things. The key is patience and allowing people to work at their own pace. Sometimes the more people try to quicken up the worse they get and more anxious they become.

Autistic Spectrum

They may be diagnosed as Autistic or Asperger's Syndrome, or be described as being on the Autistic Spectrum. There are many numbers of people diagnosed with this condition.

For more information go to <http://www.autism.org.uk/about/what-is/asd.aspx>

The keys to dealing with these conditions are patience, understanding, recognising of peoples gifts and flexibility.

Dementia

The word dementia describes a set of symptoms that may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language. Dementia is caused when the brain is damaged by diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease or a series of strokes. Dementia is progressive, which means the symptoms will gradually get worse. However, many people with dementia still enjoy going to church and there are ways to help them feel more included.

- Welcome people as they arrive in church. Remind them of your name if necessary.
- People may feel more comfortable sitting with someone they know and trust.
- Encourage them to be part of the service, especially singing hymns and taking part in the liturgy as well as accompanying them for Communion if necessary. Mark places in the hymn book if helpful, and encourage people to say the responses in the liturgy and to pray the Lord's Prayer. Further ideas for a dementia friendly church can be found at: www.livability.org.uk/dementia-friendly-churches-guide
For more information go to: <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>.

People with hidden impairments

It is not always possible to 'see' that a person has an impairment or condition. Be aware that some people may have needs that you will have to meet if asked. However some people like to keep their impairment hidden because of embarrassment or the discrimination they fear they might experience.

- People may need somewhere to rest or take things at a slower pace as they experience fatigue.
- People may need somewhere private to take medication.
- People may be adversely affected by some lighting, strobe lights, cameras with flashes or where lights are switched off for (say for a special service) if they suffer from night blindness for instance.
- People with dyslexia may be embarrassed if asked to read in a service.
- People may need regular refreshments or easy access to toilet facilities.
- People who have an illness, which causes them to shake uncontrollably, may be anxious about receiving communion.
- People who may have specific short-term needs after an operation or an illness.
- Older members of the congregation may be unwilling or embarrassed to admit that they have a specific need — be sensitive.

- Many people have food allergies so consider this when arranging a buffet, etc.
- Consider checking if anyone needs gluten free bread or non-alcoholic wine for communion.

For information on resourcing the spiritual needs of older people, go to: The Gift of Years - Resourcing the spiritual journey of older people

www.thegiftofyears.org.uk

Inclusion

Concerns for equality and access will benefit us all. When thinking about inclusion remember:

- Parents and toddlers. A spacious toilet is useful for changing babies and toddlers. It also aids people who have been temporarily injured (broken limbs) or mothers in the final stages of pregnancy. Short rows of pews where wheelchairs can be placed can also be used for buggies or prams.
- Dietary requirements. Consider those with special dietary needs. Obviously gluten-free bread at communion but also at parish functions. Fruit or fruit salad can be an option for dessert for diabetics. Consider vegetarians and those with allergies. Be aware of what the ingredients are when you have a parish meal as some people may have an allergy.
- Elderly people. Often elderly members or those who have sustained injuries are unwilling or embarrassed to admit they need help. Try to be sensitive & vigilant.
- People of small or large stature. This may affect the type of new furniture that you buy or seating that you have in the worship area.
- People who are emotionally distressed or unstable. This can be difficult to spot but where you know someone has come following a bereavement or family tragedy then encourage a member of the congregation to sit with or near them. It is a balance between caring and smothering.
- People who need to take medication or injections: Access to toilets should be considered. Privacy, access to drinking water and somewhere to take medicine would be a real asset.
- Doors should be easy to open for everyone.
- Do not make assumptions but explain any changes in the order of service so that everyone knows what will happen.

Remember:

'A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day to day activities'. This may or may not be visible so keep alert. Useful information is available on the web today that will offer advice and information regarding medical/non-medical conditions which could result in the person being viewed as disabled as well as how to offer help and include them.

Appendix 3 – Access Audit Pro-forma ^(a)

Guidance notes to assist with audit/appraisal.

Getting to the building

People who have mobility impairments may need to get their car close to a venue, have plenty of room to park and to open car doors so that they can get into a wheelchair from the car. Any kerbs on the route to the building should have a dropped section for wheelchair-users. It is very difficult to propel a wheelchair or to walk with crutches on a pathway that has a loose surface so a firm, well-drained surface is preferable; low planting along the path edge helps to define the route (this is especially important for people with a visual impairment).

Handrails and side kerbs should where possible be fitted to all ramps, gradients should not exceed 1-in-12. Outward-opening doors and windows in walls alongside the path should where possible be protected by rails but not in a way that reduces the width of the path. All pathways should be kept clean and be regularly treated to prevent the build-up of slippery substances.

Changes in level

Ramps

Ramps for people who have difficulty in walking or who use wheelchairs should where possible be provided at any change of level. It is important that steps and ramps should have handrails as it may be necessary to have something to grip as one ascends or descends.

Steps

Some people have difficulty with ramps and so steps are still important; sometimes it is not possible to replace all the steps around a building with ramps and so it is vital that all steps are as safe and convenient as possible. Handrails should be provided where possible to all steps and ramps. In many churches there are existing steps which cannot be replaced by a ramp; every effort should be made to provide handrails on such steps but this should be done with consideration for the aesthetics of the building. As an absolute minimum on short flights of steps (one or two risers), where no other handrail is possible, a vertical handgrip should be provided.

Movement inside the building

Corridors

In order to assist people who use wheelchairs, crutches, or walking sticks passageways should where possible be wide enough to allow people to move freely. Obstructions such as fire extinguishers or other equipment should be recessed and must be clearly marked.

Floor coverings should be non-slip and have no loose edges. A recessed doormat should be flush with the floor, doormats which sit on the floor surface should be slim, have tapered edges and be in a contrast colour to their surroundings; old doormats with ragged edges should be discarded. Some floor surfaces have patterns which present difficulties to people with visual impairment and should be avoided.

Doors

It is important that people who use wheelchairs can easily pass through all doors; the average wheelchair is about 700mm wide. If there is a double-leaved door, both leaves must always be free to open. Door handles should be lever-style and in a contrast colour to their surroundings. Doors should be glazed so that one can see through whether standing or seated. Door closers should be set to allow the door to open with a gentle pull. Be aware that doors that are constructed entirely or primarily of glass can present real problems to people with impaired vision and so should have bold markings on the glass at eye levels for both seated and standing people. Etched markings are hard to see and should be avoided. It is important that the edges of glass doors are marked so that they can be seen when open. All-glass doors should be avoided.

In an emergency it is vital that people with disabilities have the same opportunity to escape as everyone else. All designated fire escape routes should be wheelchair-accessible; if this is not possible, areas that are protected from fire (such as enclosed staircases) should be marked as refuges for people who cannot use the stairs. In creating a refuge it is important that fire escape routes are not blocked. The advice of the local fire officer should be sought in every instance.

Toilets

The first questions that wheelchair-users ask when they are invited to a building is “Can I get in?” and “Can I use the toilet?” If there are no toilets in a building then everyone is in the same boat but if there is toilet provision then it is important that at least one cubicle is wheelchair accessible. If the toilets are of a single cubicle design then it may be possible to designate all of them as ‘Toilet’ (rather than ‘Ladies’ and ‘Gents’) and to convert one to be wheelchair-accessible. It is important to have a unisex toilet because some people may need help in the toilet from a spouse, parent, or carer of the other gender.

Wheelchair-accessible toilets **must** be kept free of obstruction and **not** used as storage areas. An alarm should be fitted to all accessible toilets and people should know how to respond to alarm calls. Toilets should be clearly signed with pictograms – it is important that signs are read and understood by everyone. Floors should be of a non-slip material and in good condition. All toilet fittings should be of a contrasting colour to the surroundings as some people have limited colour vision. Toilet cubicles should be of sufficient size to allow users to enter, sit and rise without difficulty. All door locks should be fitted with a coin-release indicator bolt.

It is valuable to offer facilities for baby-changing; sometimes these are included in the unisex toilet; this should only occur if no other space is available. A sign may be necessary to suggest that baby-changing facilities must be folded away after use. All toilets should be serviced on a regular basis.

Seating areas

When people are in church much of their time is spent in seating areas; it is therefore preferable that seats are suitable for everyone. When looking at what type of chairs are appropriate, it is worth reminding that some people require a firm support (chair or pew) in front to pull themselves up on rather than needing arms on chairs.

Pews can create real isolation for people who use wheelchairs. Where fixed seats or pews are provided there should be a number of spaces within the seating area for wheelchair users. It is preferable if wheelchair spaces offer a choice of positions and allow one's companions to sit alongside. Wheelchair spaces should not be just at the front or rear of a seating area. Some people have difficulty in rising from a seat and so some seating should be provided with arms. Some people with hearing impairment will lip-read a speaker; it is important, therefore, that places from which people speak can be clearly seen, are well-lit, and are not silhouetted by a window from behind. Seating should be located to avoid glare; lighting should be at a good level and flicker-free.

Hearing impairment

Many people who use hearing aids can switch their aid so that it listens only to specific sounds from a microphone; this cuts out background noise. In order to use this facility an 'induction-loop system' is required; these are usually fitted permanently to a building although portable systems are available.

It is enormously helpful if all meeting and reception areas are fitted with an induction loop system that is constantly in use and is clearly signposted at the main entrances to the building. Everyone who speaks to groups in the building should be required to use the system. All systems should be tested at least once a month. The requirement for an induction loop applies to both the church and the hall. It is crucial that all people who speak use the microphones - even if they do have loud voices!

Some profoundly-deaf people use sign-language; if sign-language interpreters are in use they should be located in a position that is clearly visible from the seating area and in good lighting. Speakers should be encouraged to speak in a way that is sympathetic to the interpreter's task and to provide notes in advance of the event.

In general, everyone who uses a microphone in the building should be trained in the correct use of the equipment which should be switched on whenever a meeting takes place. Some floor and wall surfaces create echoes which lead to difficulties for people with hearing impairment; surfaces should be finished in such a way as to avoid confusing noises or loud bangs.

Visual impairment

People with visual impairment do not just have 'poor sight'; often they see things differently, are sensitive to bright light, have difficulty in distinguishing colour or low-contrast, and have severely reduced vision in the dark. Lighting in all areas should be of high quality and set in such a way to avoid glare or silhouetting. Natural lighting should be shaded where glare occurs and reinforced where dim.

All floor and wall surfaces should be of sympathetic colours; there should be differences in floor, wall and ceiling colours in order that partially-sighted people can assess the dimensions of a room. It can be useful to take a black-and-white photograph of a room or area to enable an assessment of the quality of colour contrast; reduce the contrast of the photograph a little and you will obtain a good indication of any areas which require attention.

Signs should be in contrasting colours and always in upper and lower case lettering; signs in all capitals are difficult to read for everyone. Visual signs should be supplemented by tactile signs; a tactile map of the building can be very useful, especially if your building attracts tourists.

Literature should be available, as a routine alternative, in large print or electronic format. Many people who have only slight visual impairment will appreciate a larger print version of service and notice sheets. Large print material should be printed in black on lemon-yellow paper. Many people with more-severe visual impairment have computer programmes that convert written material into speech; it can be very valuable if literature for general use is available on computer disc or by e-mail so that it can be used on such a system. The sound from a computer can then be recorded onto audio tape for use with a portable tape player. Very few people read Braille and versions of books in this medium are expensive and not appropriate to everyone.

It is important that everyone is able to read the information that is given to them. Literature for use by everyone should be printed in type that is no smaller than 12-point, of a sans-serif (plain) style, and on paper which provides a good contrast to the lettering; deep-tint papers with black printing are hard to read and of little use.

Learning disability

Learning disability is, perhaps, the most common area of severe disability and is a complex and challenging area which is sometimes hard to understand. People with learning disabilities do not usually require special physical facilities (unless they also have another type of disability) but can often feel unwelcome in a church.

People who have learning disabilities will often have difficulties in understanding information, may not remember the things that they are told, may behave in a different way in church, and may need some particular attention at times.

Some people fall into the trap of describing people with learning disabilities as “having a mental age of x”; this is wrong. People’s ages are based on the amount of time since they were born; everyone has a wealth of experiences and insights that have been collected over the years. Sometimes people with learning disabilities are regarded as “children”; this too is wrong (unless they are a child). It is not right to treat an adult as if he or she is a child.

It is true that the way in which some people with learning disabilities react in society can appear to be childlike, but this is not a sign of immaturity; people with learning disabilities will simply do things in a different way to others. Some people with learning disabilities will be of high intelligence, have considerable capacity to use information, but, at the same time, they not be able to join in with some activities of the church family or remember information from one week to another.

It is vital that the church community is welcoming to people with learning disabilities and their families. In this area of disability there is no call to build ramps or install loops; rather it is our attitudes that are being challenged. When making an appraisal of our church and its approach to learning disability there is nothing physical which can be inspected; rather, there is a need to look at the way in which the church and its congregations welcome people who are different.

Do we understand that some people do not sit quietly all through the service?

Do we remember that not everyone understands the notices each week as they are given out either verbally or on paper?

Do we recognise that some people will not be able to remember the information about changes in the service that were announced last Sunday?

People with learning disabilities should be involved in all aspects of church life. It may not be possible for them to become members of the Church Council but their views should be sought when issues are under discussion.

There are many ways in which someone with a learning disability can contribute to the life of the church – perhaps by hosting a Bible study group in their home, helping with the choice of hymns, or assisting with general tasks; they can offer valuable help around the church if the correct level of support is given.

It is important to regard people with learning disabilities as Christians in their own right, to not patronise, and to ensure that everyone has a full place in our church life.

General considerations

People with disabilities will, generally, wish to join in the life of a church in as ‘normal’ a way as possible. This means that provisions which are made for people with disabilities should be seen as part of the every-day provision and not something that is brought out especially when certain people appear.

It is worth remembering that some disabilities can be 'invisible' (e.g. hearing difficulties or an inability to stand for extended periods). Induction loops should be in use at all times, large-print literature should be routinely set out. If it is absolutely necessary to have a temporary wheelchair ramp it should be in place during the whole of the building's opening hours. As a ‘rule of thumb’ it should be assumed that people with disabilities will wish to use the building on every occasion.

It is important to remember that the life of the church is not just that which happens on a Sunday morning. In conducting this access appraisal it is important to look at the events that go on during the week and which take place at venues other than the church.

Meetings for Bible study, of the Church Council, and for other purposes often take place in people's homes and it is important that our practice in this respect does not exclude someone with a disability.

In some churches the children will leave the service at some point for their own instruction and this should take place in an accessible environment.

If someone with a disability is using the building it is useful if others are available to assist if necessary. However, one should always ask if assistance is required and listen carefully to any answer that is given; never assume that help is needed. It is a natural response to seek to help but always only do that when one is asked to do.

Never allow the desire to help to lead to lifting someone as this could result in injury to both parties.

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No. 1

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

A Approach and car parking

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is the building within convenient walking distance of: a) a public highway? b) public transport? c) car parking?							
2		Is the route clearly marked/found?							
3		Is the route free of kerbs?							
4		Is the surface smooth and slip-resistant?							
5		Is the route wide enough?							
6		Is it free of such hazards as bollards, litter bins, outward opening windows and doors or overhanging projections?							
7		Is the route adequately lit?							
8		Is the route identified by visual, audible and tactile information?							
9		Is there car parking for people with reduced mobility?							
10		Is it clearly marked out, signed, easily found and kept free from misuse?							
11		Is it as near the entrance as possible?							
12		Is it suitably surfaced?							
13		Is the route to the building kept free of snow, ice and fallen leaves?							
14		Is the route level (i.e. no gradient steeper than 1:20 and no steps)? See checklist B, sheet 2.							

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No. 2

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

B Routes and external level change, including ramps and steps

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is there a ramp, with level surfaces at <i>top/intermediate/bottom</i> ?							
2		Is it wide enough and suitably graded? (Max 1:12, 1:15 or less preferred.)							
3		Is the surface slip-resistant?							
4		Are there kerbs and are their edges protected to prevent accidents?							
5		Are there handrails to <i>one</i> or <i>both</i> sides?							
6		If a permanent ramp (or regraded levels) cannot be formed (perhaps to a Listed Building), is a portable ramp available?							
7		Are there (alternative) steps?							
8		Identified by visual/tactile information?							
9		Are there handrails to <i>one</i> or <i>both</i> sides?							
10		Are ramps and steps adequately lit?							
11		Are treads and risers consistent in depth and height?							
12		Are all nosings <i>marked</i> and/or <i>readily identifiable</i> ?							
13		Are landings of <i>adequate size</i> and are they provided at <i>intermediate levels</i> in long flights?							
14		If safe and convenient ramps and steps cannot be provided, is vertical movement by powered means an alternative? See checklist E, sheets 7, 8 and 9.							

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No. 3

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

C Entrances, including reception

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is the door clearly distinguishable from the facade?							
2		If glass, is it visible when closed?							
3		Does the clear door opening or one leaf when opened permit passage of a wheelchair or double buggy?							
4		Does it have a level or flush threshold, and a recessed mat well?							
5		Is there visibility through the door/way from both sides at standing and seated levels?							
6		Is there a minimum 300 mm wide wheelchair manoeuvre space beside the leading edge of the door to clear the doorswing?							
7		Can the door furniture be used at both standing and seated height?							
8		Can it be easily grasped and operated?							
9		If the door has a closer mechanism, does it have: a) delayed closure action? b) slow-action closer? c) minimal closure pressure?							
10		If the door is power-operated does it have visual and tactile information?							
11		If the door is security-protected, is the system suitable for use by and within reach of people with sensory or mobility impairments?							

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No. 4

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

C Entrances, including reception
(continued)

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
12		If there is a lobby, do the inner and outer doors meet the same criteria?							
13		Does the lobby layout enable all users to clear one door before passing through the next?							
14		Are signs designed and positioned to inform those with visual impairments, and wheelchair users with reduced eye-levels?							
15		Does the lighting installation take into account the needs of people with visual impairments?							
16		Are floor surfaces:							
		a) slip-resistant, even when wet?							
		b) so hard that they cause acoustic confusion?							
		c) firm for wheelchair manoeuvre?							
17		Do junctions between floor surfaces present tripping hazards or cause visual confusion?							
18		Is any reception point suitable for approach and use from both sides by people in standing and seated positions?							
19		Is the reception point fitted with an induction loop?							
20		If a public telephone is available (for example, in a church hall), is it, and its instructions:							
		a) at a height suitable for all users? b) equipped with inductive coupling?							
21		For those progressing to other parts of the building, is information provided by signs and supported by tactile information such as a map or model?							

Accessibility Audit report
 Access Audit Checklist:

Sheet No. 5

Date:

**D Horizontal movement
 and assembly**

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is any corridor/passageway/aisle wide enough for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre and for other people to pass?							
2		Is any corridor, etc., free from obstruction to wheelchair users and hazards to people with impaired vision?							
3		Do any lobbies allow users (including wheelchair users) to clear one door before approaching the next with minimal manoeuvre?							
4		Is turning space available for wheelchair users?							
5		Do natural and artificial lighting avoid glare and silhouetting?							
6		Are there visual clues for orientation?							
7		Do floor surfaces: a) allow ease of movement for wheelchair users?							
		b) avoid light reflection and sound reverberation?							
8		Do textured surfaces convey useful information for people with impaired vision?							
9		Are direction or information signs (including means of escape) visible from both sitting and standing eye levels, and are they in upper and lower case, and large enough type to be read by those with impaired vision?							

Accessibility Audit Report
Access Audit Checklist:

Sheet No. 6

Date:

**D Horizontal movement
and assembly (continued)**

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
10		Are there tactile signs and information for those with impaired vision?							
11		Is the maintenance of these items checked regularly?							
12		Is lighting designed to meet a wide range of needs?							
13		Is sufficient circulation space allowed for wheelchair users?							
14		Is it maintained clear of obstructions which could create hazards for people with visual disabilities?							
15		Are seating arrangements/spaces available for use by people with visual disabilities?							
16		Are all areas for assembly/meeting equipped with an induction loop system?							
17		If the use of an induction loop system is precluded, is an infra-red system available?							
18		Is the functioning and operation of the induction loop or infra-red system checked regularly?							
19		Are telephones fitted with inductive loop couplers?							
20		Is a minicom available for use by people with hearing disabilities?							

Accessibility Audit report
 Access Audit Checklist:

Sheet No. 7

Date:

E Vertical movement and internal level change

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is the location of any <i>steps/stairs/ramp</i> clearly indicated by use of <i>sign/colour/contrast/texture/lighting</i> ?							
2		Does any <i>step/stairs/ramp</i> have a handrail to <i>one/both</i> side(s), and do(es) <i>it/they</i> extend 300 mm beyond the top and bottom of any flight?							
3		Is any level change clearly lit?							
4		Is the pitch (risers and treads) of <i>steps/stairs</i> or any <i>ramp</i> consistent, and are nosings clearly identifiable?							
5		If there are landings, are they large enough to permit passing and turning manoeuvres, and are they provided in any long flight?							
6		Is any short rise within a single storey ramped; if so is the ramped surface indicated, and is it slip-resistant?							
7		Does any ramp pitch steepness exceed <i>1:12 /1:15 /1:20 /1:20 + ?</i>							
8		If a permanent ramp cannot be provided, can a movable ramp be made available?							
9		Are steps available as an alternative to any ramp or ramped surface?							
10		Where level change is less than a full storey in height is a power-operated system appropriate? (<i>platform lift/stairlift/lift</i> – see 11, 12 and 13).							

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No. 8

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

E Vertical movement and internal level change (continued)

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
11		<i>Platform Lift</i>							
		a) Are the controls at <i>both</i> levels identifiable, and reachable from <i>sitting</i> and <i>standing</i> levels?							
		b) Is the platform adequate for wheelchair use and manoeuvre?							
		c) In the event of a power failure does the platform return to lower level?							
		d) Is the equipment maintained and its operation checked regularly?							
12		<i>Stairlift</i>							
		a) Are the controls at all levels identifiable and reachable from <i>sitting</i> and <i>standing</i> levels?							
		b) Is the platform adequate for wheelchair use and manoeuvre?							
		c) Is approach convenient and safe at all appropriate landings?							
		d) Does the stairlift have a 'soft-start' action?							
		e) When not in use, is the platform powered to fold away to avoid obstruction?							
		f) In the event of a power failure, does the platform return to lower level?							
		g) Is the equipment maintained and its operation checked regularly?							

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No. 9

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

E Vertical movement and internal level change (continued)

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
13		Lift a) Is the lift's location clearly defined by <i>visual</i> and <i>tactile</i> information? b) Are controls at all floors visible, identifiable and reachable from <i>sitting</i> and <i>standing</i> levels? c) Is there adequate, unobstructed space at each floor lift entry for wheelchair manoeuvre? d) Does the lift door open widely enough for wheelchair user access? e) Does door operation allow slow entry and exit? f) Do the lift car internal dimensions allow sufficient space for a <i>wheelchair user</i> and a <i>carer</i> ? g) Does the car have appropriate support rails? h) Are the lift car controls, including emergency call, located within reach of all users and with visual and tactile information? i) Is there audible floor indication? j) Is the lift an evacuation lift ? (See Means of escape, Sheet 15). k) Is the lift regularly maintained and its functional operation routinely checked?							

Accessibility Audit report
 Access Audit Checklist:

Sheet No. 10

Date:

F Doors

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Do the doors serve a <i>functional/safety</i> purpose?							
2		Can they be readily distinguished?							
3		If glass, are they visible when shut?							
4		Can people <i>standing</i> , or <i>sitting</i> in a wheelchair see each other, and be seen from either side of the door?							
5		Does the clear opening width permit wheelchair access?							
6		On the opening side of the door is there sufficient space (300 mm) to allow the door handle to be grasped and the door swung past a wheelchair footplate?							
7		Is any door furniture/handle at a height for <i>standing/sitting</i> use?							
8		Are door furniture/handles clearly distinguished?							
9		Can the door furniture/handles be easily <i>operated/grasped</i> ?							
10		If <i>door closers/mechanisms</i> are fitted do they provide the following: a) hold open (alarm linkage)? b) security linkage? c) delay-action closure? d) slow-action closure? e) minimum closure pressure?							
11		Is door/mechanism function checked regularly?							

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No. 11

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

G Lavatories

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is WC provision made for people with disabilities?							
2		Do all lavatory areas have slip-resistant floors?							
3		Are they easy to distinguish by colour contrast from the walls?							
4		Are all fittings readily distinguishable from their background?							
5		Are all door fittings/locks easily gripped and operated?							
6		Can ambulant disabled people manoeuvre, and raise and lower themselves in standard cubicles?							
7		Is provision made for wheelchair users? If so:							
8		Is wheelchair approach free of <i>steps/narrow doors/obstructions</i> , etc.?							
9		Is the location clearly signed?							
10		Is there sufficient space at entry to the compartment for wheelchair manoeuvre and door opening?							
11		Are the door fittings/locks and light switches easily reached and operated?							
12		Is there an emergency call system and is someone designated to respond to it?							
13		Can the emergency call system be operated from floor level?							

Accessibility Audit report
 Access Audit Checklist:

Sheet No. 12

Date:

G Lavatories (continued)

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
14		Is the wheelchair WC compartment large enough to permit manoeuvre for <i>frontal/lateral/angled/backward, with or without assistance?</i>							
15		Are the fittings arranged to facilitate these manoeuvres?							
16		Are handwashing and drying facilities within reach of someone seated on the WC?							
17		Is the tap appropriate for use by someone with limited dexterity, grip or strength?							
18		Are suitable grab rails fitted in all the appropriate positions to facilitate use of the WC?							
19		Is the manoeuvring area free of obstruction, e.g. boxed-in pipework/radiators/cleaner's equipment/disposal bins/occasional storage, etc., and is a difficulty caused by the activity of service contractors?							
20		If there is more than one standard layout WC compartment provided, are they handed to offer a left-sided approach and a right-sided approach?							

Accessibility Audit report
 Access Audit Checklist:

Sheet No. 13

Date:

H *Fixtures and fittings*

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is any baptistry/font accessible to all users, including those with hearing impairments?							
2		If the church has pews are there also spaces for wheelchair users amongst the seating of the congregation?							
3		Is it possible for wheelchair users and people with other disabilities to approach the communion rail and receive the sacrament?							
4		Is it possible for people with disabilities to serve as members of the choir?							
5		Are all fittings readily distinguishable from their background?							
6		Where there are bookstalls are they <i>visible/reachable/accessible</i> for people with disabilities?							
7		In any church hall do tables and chairs and their layout allow for use by wheelchair users and people with sensory disabilities?							
8		In any church hall kitchen is it suitable for use by people with disabilities, including wheelchair users, with <i>slip-resistant floor, reduced level kitchen units</i> and <i>sink</i> and <i>lever/toggle</i> action taps?							
9		Are the relevant locations clearly signed?							

Accessibility Audit report
 Access Audit Checklist:

Sheet No. 14

Date:

J Information

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is the <i>church/church hall</i> equipped to provide hearing assistance?							
2		Does the lighting installation of the <i>church/church hall</i> take into account the needs of people with visual disabilities?							
3		Is there a tactile plan of the <i>church</i> and/or <i>church hall</i> ?							
4		Are there large-print versions of information about the church and activities available?							
5		Is there Braille information available for people with visual disabilities?							
6		Is there an 'audio' version of information about the church available?							
7		Where there are staff available in the church and at sales and refreshment facilities are they trained in communication with people with physical and sensory disabilities?							
8		Where a payphone is provided does it have a hearing aid coupler?							
9		Are relevant locations clearly signed?							

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No. 15

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

K Means of escape

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1		Is there a <i>visible</i> as well as <i>audible</i> fire alarm system?							
2		Are final exit routes as accessible to all, including wheelchair users, as are the entry routes?							
3		Is evacuation from <i>upper</i> and <i>lower</i> levels possible using an <i>evacuation lift/platform lift</i> with a protected power supply?							
4		If people with disabilities cannot evacuate from the building independently are designated and signed refuges available for them?							
5		If refuges are available are they equipped with 'carry-chairs'?							
6		Is there a 'management evacuation strategy' for staff, congregation and visitors, and are staff trained in evacuation procedures?							
7		Is the evacuation strategy checked regularly for its effectiveness?							
8		Are evacuation routes checked routinely and regularly for freedom from combustible materials/obstacles/locked doors ?							
9		Are all fire warning devices and detectors checked routinely and regularly?							

Accessibility Audit report

Sheet No.

Access Audit Checklist:

Date:

S Supplementary (1-10)

Location:

Q	✓ X		Wheelchair	Ambulant	Dexterity	Visual	Auditory	Comprehension	NOTES (+ REVERSE)
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									