

ACCESS GUIDELINES

**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**



Church services, meetings and events in the Diocese, activities, and publications, shall be as accessible as possible to everyone who wishes to take part or be informed, taking into account each individual's physical, sensory and cognitive requirements.

*future
faithful*



Letter from the Bishop

As I travel around the Diocese I am delighted to meet a wide range of people with a variety of abilities and disabilities. This wonderful diversity gives me great joy. However it is sad when it is not always possible to fully include people with particular disabilities and enable them to participate in all aspects of church life and make it possible for us to receive their gifts and ministry.

Hopefully, this document will give you all the encouragement and many practical suggestions to allow this to happen.

The Rt Revd David James

Bishop of Bradford

Theology on Inclusion

Including people with disabilities in the Church is not just a matter of justice or moral imperative, it is inherent in the very nature of a healthy community. Rather than focus on the healing of individuals to fit into communities, we need to consider the healing of communities to include people with disabilities.

The parable of the householder illustrates how the kingdom of God is not complete without disabled people: “But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed.” (*Lk 14:13-14*).

The World Council of Churches declared that, “When the disabled are missing, the Christian community itself becomes disabled.” Including people with disabilities in the Church will enrich the Church’s life. It is not, ‘What can we do to help disabled people?’ It is, ‘What can we do to help each other; how can we enrich the lives of each other?’ All groups can make a contribution.

For example, Deaf people give us sign language with its beauty in worship, and its enhancement of the meaning of a Bible reading or the Eucharist, and the creative use of space and movement, all of which are of value to the whole Church. Likewise, people are deeply moved by the different dimension of worship that occurs in a special celebration for people with learning difficulties. In a community of equality we recognise one another’s differences and that helps us to flourish as different people.

The Church needs people with disabilities; Deaf people, people from different ethnic groups and other ‘different’ people, to give it a richer life, and to help its members understand what it means to be a true community.

The Revd Bob Shrine Minister in the Deaf Community

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Part 1 The Document

All events, activities and publications should be as accessible as possible to everyone who wishes to take part or be informed, taking into account their physical, sensory and cognitive requirements.

Key Points

- We recognise that including people with disabilities in the life of the church is a Biblical mandate.
- We acknowledge that this is an area the church needs to address proactively.
- We offer it as an encouragement for churches to examine existing practices and re-evaluate those practices in the light of this document.
- We offer it as guidelines for practical outworking to create welcoming and accessible spaces for people with disabilities within the church to be fully included in any church related activities within the Parish, Deanery and Diocese.
- This document should never be a substitute for good listening and sensitivity to the various needs of our diverse congregations. If in doubt always ask and never assume.
- We also provide references and contact details for agencies and organisations working among people with disabilities who would help you in your mission and ministry.

Part 2 Why are we doing this?

The Christian Church is the Body of Christ, called to be Christ in the world. The Body of Christ must therefore be accepting and welcoming, inclusive and open to all people. This includes people with disabilities.

However, experience indicates that people with disabilities have been and are prevented and/or restricted from full participation in the life of the Church.

Under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act, the churches, along with other providers of services, are required to make every reasonable effort to ensure that people with disabilities can play a full part in all their activities on equal terms with others, whatever their disability.

Bradford Diocese formed the Disability Task Group in response to this requirement inviting people to join the group from a wide range of experience in different areas of disability. This Access Document is intended to affect all meetings, events, worship, training and publications.

Part 3 The language we use

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
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
Specify the need.	Special needs person (too vague to be useful)
A wheelchair user	Wheelchair-bound/dependant/confined
Accessible toilet	Disabled toilet (doesn't work?)

See appendix and website for further information

Part 4 To whom does the document apply?

- This is a Diocesan document and applies to all buildings and any events or activities arranged at a Diocesan, Deanery or Parish level and to any publications or other written or electronic material produced.
- Each individual parish and Diocese Committee is responsible for using this document when working out its own access document taking into account its own buildings and activities.
- Organizers of services, meetings and events are encouraged to refer to this document and apply it within the constraints of their circumstances.
- Other church-related organisations (e.g. Mother's Union) may find this useful.

Part 5 Guidelines for arranging events

General principles

- All events where possible, should be held in buildings accessible to people with disabilities, including accessible toilet

facilities and a loop system.

- Plan use of room(s) which are accessible to all.
- Provide in advance, all publications, minutes and publicity material for events in large print and, upon request Braille, audio tape or computer disc. including supplementary material.
- When using BSL/English Interpreters written material should be provided in advance. Allow breaks every 30 minutes. For periods longer than one hour, two interpreters are normally booked.
- The following guidelines are to help with the planning of meetings, training events or acts of worship so that the requirements of people with disabilities can be met. Most are common sense and if followed will ensure that all are included and everyone has access.

The Venue

Approach

- Parking facilities adjacent to building?
- If yes, designated wider spaces near entrance?
- If no designated parking, set spaces aside (two spaces per vehicle) for those with impaired mobility.
- Clear sign-posted access from road for wheelchair users needing level access or a ramp?
- Approach paths well lit?
- Designated and clearly signed drop off points for those with visual or physical impairment?

Entrance

- Entrances well lit?
- Main entrance wheelchair accessible?
- If a different entrance is necessary, is it equally welcoming?
- Steps, hand-railed and marked clearly with contrast along edges?
- A greeter to welcome and direct those needing assistance?

Inside - Mobility

- Is sufficient space provided for those with impaired mobility?
Wheelchairs need turning circles.
- Internal doors wide enough for wheelchair access?
- Floor area ramped or on one level?
- Seating choice for wheelchair users?
 - Sit with companions?
 - Sit on aisle?
 - Sit up front?
- Lift access to different floors for event?
- Accessible toilet facilities in building? Clearly signposted?
- If no (wheelchair) accessible toilets, are there clear signposts to the nearest one?
- Furniture placement with generous spaces?
- In an emergency, e.g. fire, are there ways of evacuating the building that are accessible to people with disabilities?

Inside - Sensory

- For small group work, rooms available to reduce noise level?

- Colour/tactile contrast e.g. between door handles and surround to assist people with visual impairments?
- Heating system adequate?
- Adequate amplification system? Someone to operate?
- Light levels adequate?
 - For reading printed materials?
 - For lip reading
 - For seeing BSL/English interpreters?
- Working audio loop system in all rooms used? Someone to operate?
- If loop system not available in ALL rooms, can a portable loop system be made available as needed (see Part 8)?
- Provision for special dietary needs?

Planning the Event

- Do visiting individuals, groups, speakers, etc have disability requirements?
- Can chosen venue provide what is required?

Planning – Communication

- Does written or electronically produced material comply with recommendations below?
- Are posters in large print and easy to read typeface?
- Can you incorporate an appropriate tactile display of artefacts?
- Are hard copy versions of power point presentations, acetates, etc available?

- Do visual media have sub-titles? If not, can you provide transcripts?
- Is audio description of visual media available for visually impaired?
- Microphones provided for speaker?
- Microphone provided to repeat and answer questions?
- Speakers well lit for lip readers, with no glare?
- Speakers reminded not to cover mouth, for lip readers?

Planning – Interpreting

- Will you book BSL/English interpreters by request? If yes, state in publicity material.
- If using BSL/English interpreters, where will they stand? Are users` seats with clear line of vision reserved?
- If using BSL/English interpreters, can they be provided with transcripts of all talks prior to the event?

Planning – Worship

- Can hymns/songs be announced by first line as well as numbers? Large print or Braille copies available?
- If event includes the Eucharist, are there special dietary needs? Gluten free wafers?
- Can you sit for hymns or prayers? Not everyone will be able to stand and those still sitting may not be able to see. Lip readers and those needing a BSL/English interpreter may not be able to see if they and others are standing.

- Is provision made for those who require lip reading, e.g. a specially trained 'Lip-Speaker'?

Written and Electronically Produced Information

- Under Section 21 of the Disability Discrimination Act we have a legal obligation to make any information that is normally available to other people also available to any person who has a visual impairment and who wants to access it.
- We need to state in every publication produced by the Diocese or in any publicity material for a Diocesan or deanery event that this material can be made available in alternative formats i.e. large print, audio cassette, Braille or on computer disc. We need to tell people what to do to obtain material in an alternative format.

Publicity

- Good colour contrast is important – black or dark blue on pale yellow or cream is best.
- Use only matt paper, not glossy.
- Use thick paper. (90 gsm is recommended).
- Avoid using pale coloured type on a dark coloured background.
- Use sans serif typeface. Arial 14 pt. is recommended. (This document uses Arial 14 point)

- Use bold typeface to highlight, not colours.
- Do not use shadow graphics behind print
- Keep words simple and to a minimum
- Avoid headings in capital letters, italics and underlining
- Use correct disability symbols for the services you provide e.g. audio loop. (see Appendix)

- Think about where you are going to distribute your publicity – will people with disabilities be able to find it?

Purposeful Inclusion

- Arrange for publicity material to be available on request in large print, Braille, on audio cassette or computer disc. Indicate this clearly on the publicity document.
- Provide space on the application form for people to say if they need extra facilities – e.g. a BSL/English interpreter, written material in Braille, a parking space, a special diet.
- List some of the facilities it might be possible to provide and include a space for “other – please specify” for those you may not have thought about.
- Make it clear if these facilities can only be made available by prior request.

- If you are unable to provide a service that is fully accessible, please say what gaps there are (e.g. no wheelchair accessible toilets on the premises) and make that very clear in the publicity material.
- Ask for good sized print for your advert in “Newsround” and other places.

Evaluation

It is important to give participants an opportunity to feed back their experience of an event. It is particularly important to enable people of all abilities to provide their evaluation.

Publicity material needs to make provision for this evaluation and feedback.

Part 6 Information Technology and best practice

E-text

- People who are blind and partially sighted access computers in a number of different ways.
- People who are partially sighted may use large screen or programs that enlarge the text on the screen.
- People who are blind may use a program called “Screen Reader” which literally reads what appears on the screen, either by using Braille or speech.

- Most information is designed to be read from left to right, line by line, and this is the way a computer program will try to read it. If you use a graphic or image that the screen reader does not recognise, the blind or partially sighted person may hear the word “graphic” with no more information than that.
- If you do include any information other than straight text, make sure that there is a text equivalent. For example, using a different font or colour to highlight a piece of text will have no effect on a reader who is blind. You need to use words.
- Tables can be particularly difficult for readers who are blind and partially sighted. Their computer will try to read across the columns or down them. You could convert the table to text or present it as a spreadsheet and send it as an Excel file.
- One of the easiest ways for people who are blind or partially sighted to fill in a form can be on a computer. However, if you include lines and boxes, they cannot tell if they are in the right place to make an entry. The best electronic forms are simple text files, where the reader can simply see the question, press end and fill in their details.

Accessible Web Design

- Many people with sight problems have some useful vision and read web pages in exactly the same way as fully sighted people.

- Different eye conditions will affect a person's sight in different ways. Some people will require large text and most partially sighted people need a highly contrasting colour scheme.
- To cater for everybody websites should be flexible in design, so that individual users can use their own browser to adjust the text and colour settings.
- People with little or no vision may read web pages with the help of special computer software.
- Some programs read the content of web pages aloud while Braille software translates the page into Braille so it can be read by touch. Good design is essential for people accessing the web in these ways – poor design can make a site completely inaccessible.

The Web Accessibility Initiative has published some web contents accessibility guidelines. These can be found at:

www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT.

More information from the RNIB Campaigns Officer for Access to Digital Information on 020 7391 2191 or visit the website:

www.rnib.org.uk/digital/wtw.htm

Further information

The RNIB “See it Right” pack provides fuller information and advice on making material more accessible to people who are blind and partially sighted. It is available from RNIB Customer Services on 0845 702 3153.

Part 7 Including people with Learning Disabilities

There are a number of things to bear in mind when inviting people with learning disabilities to participate in worship or other activities:

- many people with learning disabilities have limited or no reading ability, so avoid too much dependence on written material
- signpost facilities using pictorial signs as well as words
- offer help if people seem to be experiencing difficulties
- take extra time to explain if necessary
- be aware that people may not always immediately pick up on what is being offered
- check if people might need help in case of a fire or other emergency
- be patient if some people are noisy or move about when it seems inappropriate
- provide information which is simple, clear and concise, focusing on a single subject
- avoid long wordy sessions, limit each spoken session to five minutes interspersed with something visual or participatory

- assume nothing, always ask.
- A buddy may be very helpful for people with Learning Disabilities especially those in the Autism Spectrum disorder. See **Oxford Diocese Guidelines on Autism for further information**
- Remember, buddies will need to be CRB checked

Part 8 Resources

Deaf and Hearing Impairment Services

Advice and information about BSL/English interpreting from:

Signs of God is an organisation which among other things holds a national list of Christian interpreters.

Website: www.signsofgod.org.uk

Other useful Deaf Christian websites are:

www.GOSIGN.org.uk; and www.christiansigns.co.uk

Ministry in the Deaf Community

Rev Bob Shrine Tel (via Typetalk) 18002 01274677691

Email: bob.shrine@tiscali.co.uk

Monthly services of Holy Communion in sign language, Bible Study groups. BSL/English interpreters available for Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals.

Information about the availability of a portable loop system from the Diocesan Office: 01535 650555. More information about portable loop systems www.hear4u.com.

Visual Impairment Services

Advice about Braille and other accessible formats from:

Torch Trust for the Blind, Torch House, Torch Way,
Northampton Road, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 9HL

Tel. 01858 438260

Email: info@torchtrust.org Website: www.torchtrust.org

RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind) helpline:

08457 669999

Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk

Website: www.rnib.org.uk

For advice about alternative formats: 01733 37 53 70

Yorkshire Braille Service 0113 268 4863

Learning Disabilities

L'Arche 10 Briggate, Silsden, Keighley BD20 9JT

tel. 01535 656186

Website: www.larche.org.uk

Email: info@larche.org.uk

L'Arche is an international federation of communities for people with learning disabilities

Causeway Prospects, 69 Honey End Lane, Reading, Berks RG30 4EL, tel. 0118 951 6978

Website: www.prospects.org.uk/causeway

Email: causeway@prospect.org.uk

A mission to people with learning disabilities providing advice, training and resource material. A number of causeway groups meet in the Yorkshire area.

Faith and Light

Website: www.faithandlight.org.uk

A Christian organisation for people with learning disabilities. friends and parents, they hold monthly meetings for friendship, help, outings and holidays together.

Oxford Diocese Guidelines on Autism

http://www.oxford.anglican.org/files/documents/autism_guidelines_pdf.pdf

SPRED

20 Robroyston Rd., Glasgow G33 1EQ Scotland

Tel. 0141 770 5055

Website: www.spred.org.uk

The mission of SPRED is to form small communities of faith in parishes to welcome children and adults with learning disabilities; to provide an appropriate method of catechesis; to foster full inclusion in assemblies of worship.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has a helpful publication available online entitled “Organizing Accessible Events”.

Other useful Christian addresses

The Carers Christian Fellowship

National coordinator Sue Jones 14, Cavie Close, Nine Elms, Swindon, Wilts SN5 5XD Tel 01793 887068

Email: sjones.ccf@ntlworld.com

Though the Roof and Disabled Christian Fellowship

P.O. Box363, Epsom KT18 5W01372 749955

Email: info@throughtheroof.org.

Website: www.throughtheroof.org

Care for the Family – Another Way

Freepost(CF4636)Cardiff CF15 7GZ tel. 02920810800

Email: anotherway@cff.org.uk

Website: www.careforthefamily.org.uk

Helping families who care for children with additional needs

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE DISABILITY FORUM

Website: www.eauk.org

186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT tel. 020 7207 2100

Umbrella organisation for Christian Disability organisations

Appendix

Examples of the correct disability signs:

The following (or similar) symbols can be obtained from your local Council for Voluntary Service, or from the Access Officer of your local authority



Accessible Car Parking



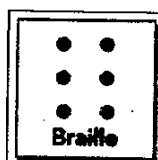
Ramped Entrance



Accessible Lavatory



Induction Loops



Facilities for Blind and Partially Sighted People



Gluten Free sign



Signed Proceedings

Glossary of disability-related terms

Term	Explanation
Blind person	A person with little or no useable sight
Braille	A reading/writing system for blind people using patterns of raised dots to form letters
BSL	British Sign Language: A visual-gestural language with its own grammar using hand shapes, facial expressions, gestures, and body language to convey meaning
Dog for disabled people	Dog trained to pick up things for wheelchair users
Flashing/strobe light	Indication of emergency evacuation for deaf people

Footplates	Foot-rests on a wheelchair
Grab rails	Support rails in bathrooms/toilets for mobility impaired people
Gradient	Slope of ramp
Guide dog	Working dog trained to guide a blind person
Hard of hearing	Person with impaired hearing due to loss of frequency/volume
Hearing aid	Device to amplify sound for hard-of-hearing people
Hearing dog	Working dog trained to alert a deaf person of sound
Induction loop	Continuous loop of wire around a defined area, within which there is a magnetic field, which helps people with hearing aids by excluding peripheral sound
Large Print	Print format for visually impaired people – minimum size 14 point in 'sans-serif' typeface
Learning difficulty	Specific learning difficulty e.g. dyspraxia
Learning disability	Disability formerly known as mental disability handicap – a functional difficulty involving education
Lip reading	Interpreting speech by reading lip-pattern
Lip Speaker	Person who interprets a speaker without sound but using clear lip-patterns (used by hard-of-hearing people)
Loop	See induction loop
Maketon	Sign language used by some people with learning disabilities

Minicom	Trade name for a text-telephone used by Deaf people to communicate using the telephone. Messages are typed and transmitted to a visual display on the receiving text telephone
NKS key	National Key Scheme (sometimes called RADAR key) – key for universal lock used on most accessible UK public toilets
Partially sighted	Having limited or residual vision
Platform lift	Small lift for changing levels, which may be used by wheelchair-users or pedestrians
Profoundly deaf	A person with little or no useable hearing
RADAR key	See NKS key
Service dog	Working dog for blind, deaf or physically disabled people
BSL/English interpreter	Person qualified to translate spoken words into sign language and vice versa
Task lighting	Angle-poise lamp or adjustable spotlight that gives localised light in places like reception areas
Teletext	Text service on television providing subtitles for deaf people
Text telephone	See Minicom
Transfer board	Board used by wheelchair-user to transfer between wheelchair and other furniture
Typetalk	Service run by BT/RNID enabling a deaf person to communicate using a text telephone via the operator
Visually impaired	Term including both blind and partially sighted people
Walking frame	Stable lightweight device with four leg used to aid mobility impaired people to walk more comfortably and easily

Wheelchair User	Person using a wheelchair constantly or for limited periods
White stick	Cane carried by visually impaired people to locate obstacles and alert others passing by. If the stick has a red band, the person has additional disability – usually hearing impairment
Zimmer	See walking frame

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