

# Summary of Best Practice, Special Needs, Access Audit and Action Plan

## Summary of Best Practice (To implement the Equality Act, 2010)

**Each church should:**

- Be aware of all attendees with special needs
- Carry out a special needs audit
- Provide access to liturgical celebrations
- Arrange special liturgies as appropriate
- Encourage people with special needs to participate in lay ministry and other activities
- Ensure access to buildings, worship and all other Christian activities in the parish
- Arrange appropriate sacramental preparation where appropriate
- Appoint a special needs advocate
- Offer support to those affected by special needs
- Co-operate with local authorities, voluntary organisations, local businesses and other churches to promote the interests of people with special needs

## Summary of Special Needs

	Worship		Lay Ministry		Other Activities	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Are any of the following involved in worship, lay ministry or other parish activities? (a) People who use wheelchairs (b) People with other mobility disabilities (c) People with hearing impairment (d) People with visual impairment (e) People with learning disabilities (f) People with other disabilities (g) The disabilities are:						
					<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
2. Is there a transport and/or escort scheme to assist those who have difficulty in getting to church? If YES, (a) Who is it? (b) What activities are covered?						
3. Is the church aware of local groups and centres which support and/or offer facilities to people with disabilities?						
4. Does the church arrange, for people with disabilities, any special: (a) Services (b) Activities						
5. Does the parish/church community offer any support for the parents/carers of people with disabilities?						
6. Are there any special arrangements to enable those with disabilities to participate fully in the life of the church e.g. special liturgies, catechesis, sacramental preparation?						

7. Are the nine characteristics of the Equality Act (2010) being protected?	Yes	No
(a) Age		
(b) Disability		
(c) Gender re-assignment		
(d) Race		
(e) Religion/belief		
(f) Sex		
(g) Sexual orientation		
(h) Marriage and civil partnership		
(i) Pregnancy and maternity		

### Access Audit

	Yes	No
1. Is there designated disabled parking outside the church? <b>Comments:</b>		
2. Is the path suitable for a wheelchair user or is an alternative well signposted? <b>Comments:</b>		
3. Does the path cause no confusion with textures and colour changes for people with a sight Impairment? <b>Comments:</b>		
4. Is the path clearly lit? <b>Comments:</b>		
5. Is the porch or entrance well lit? <b>Comments:</b>		
6. Are Disability information signs well positioned? <b>Comments:</b>		
7. Where needed, is a ramp available? (a) At the entrance (b) To other stepped areas in the church <b>Comments:</b>		
8. (a) Are there floor surfaces even? (b) Would any floor coverings present problems to those using wheelchairs? (c) Are main access routes covered in a way which would help those with visual impairment identify? (d) Changes of direction, levels, junctions of corridors, doorways etc? <b>Comments:</b>		
9. (a) Are hand-rails fitted by flights of steps? (b) Are the edges of steps clearly marked? (c) Are passageways/corridors uncluttered? <b>Comments:</b>		
10. Can an assistance dog be somewhere safe and comfortable next to its owner? <b>Comments:</b>		
11. Are there places within the general congregation where people using wheelchairs or pushchairs can sit? <b>Comments:</b>		
12. Is there access to seating with ample leg space near the door for those who have difficulty with walking? <b>Comments:</b>		
13. (a) Are parking spaces reserved in any church car park for those who have difficulty with walking? (b) Are they clearly marked? (c) Are any kerbs between the parking area and the building ramped? <b>Comments:</b>		

	Yes	No
14. Are bibles/service books/notices/hymn books and sheets/other leaflets and magazines available in large print and Braille and/or on CD? <b>Comments:</b>		
15. Is an induction loop fitted for hearing aid users? <b>Comments:</b>		
16. (a) Is anyone available to provide signed interpretation? (b) If so, does he/she cover all activities? (c) If no signing is available, does someone know the nearest church which offers the facility? <b>Comments:</b>		
17. (a) Does any sound system in the buildings provide good, clear sound with adequate voice levels? (b) Are users trained to use microphones and in public speaking? <b>Comments:</b>		
18. If visual technology is used (eg overhead projector/data projector) are printed copies also available? <b>Comments:</b>		
19. Are facilities for people with disabilities clearly indicated somewhere which is visible from the road and in the entrance? <b>Comments:</b>		
20. Has attention been given to the requirements of those with special needs? Are our attitudes to others appropriate? (a) Within the service? (b) Within children's work? (c) Within other activities? <b>Comments:</b>		
21. Is there an accessible toilet? <b>Comments:</b>		
22. (a) Is there disabled access to the church hall? (b) Meeting rooms? (c) Church Vicarage? <b>Comments:</b>		

Name of Church ..... Date of Audit .....

Person(s) conducting audit ..... Position .....

Person(s) conducting audit ..... Position .....

Person(s) conducting audit ..... Position .....

If you would like help to use this form in an Audit, please contact me via the Diocesan Office and either myself or a member of the Equality and Diversity Committee will be pleased to help in any way we can.

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