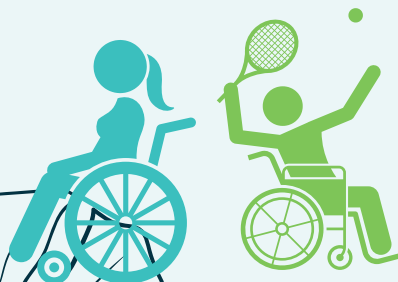# Physical Access Checklist
for Churches

This Physical Access Checklist for Churches has been designed to help you consider some of the physical barriers which can prevent people with disability from enjoying full inclusion and participation in our church communities. This checklist is designed **to be completed in conjunction with other steps towards inclusion** - for example, developing a Church Inclusion Committee which will then supervise issues of disability and accessibility in your church community.

This checklist is not designed to be a detailed, measured review. It is meant to serve as a starting point for you to consider issues of accessibility in your church community. It is recommended that churches consult a **professional access consultant** who can undertake a complete accessibility audit of your church grounds and buildings.

How to use this checklist

This checklist should be completed by a church leader or warden and/or members of the church community, preferably including those who live with different kinds of disability (e.g., what might create a barrier to inclusion for someone who is a wheelchair user is going to vary from the barriers that impact a person with a vision impairment). It is recommended that those completing the checklist move around the spaces of the church grounds and buildings checking items in order and physically measuring the relevant spaces. If the checklist is completed without viewing each of the areas mentioned, it is possible to misjudge the height or width of dimensions.
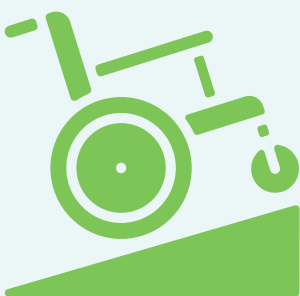
Getting into our church

External paths

Are there step-free paths of travel from the:

- [ ] street/footpath to the church grounds?
- [ ] carpark and accessible parking spaces to main entry?
- [ ] main church entry to other buildings (e.g. hall, toilets, etc)?

- [ ] Is the slope of the paths not greater than 5% (approx. 1:20)?
- [ ] Are the ground surfaces slip-resistant?
- [ ] Do ramps and stairs have handrails and kerb rails on both sides?
- [ ] Are there tactile ground surface indicators at the top and bottom of stairs and ramps?

Vertical access, parking and exits

- [ ] Is there a step-free access to the main church building (e.g. ramps or lifts)?
- [ ] Is there accessible parking? Do accessible space(s) include a flat adjacent space to allow a person to enter and exit the vehicle?
- [ ] Does our church have adequate emergency exits that can be used by people with disability?

Building entries

- Is there at least one major entrance to the church which is accessible to people who use wheelchairs and mobility devices?
- Are there signs identifying where the accessible entrances can be reached?
- Does the entry door include a clear door opening of minimum 850mm?
- Can the accessible door entrance be opened by a person using a wheelchair?
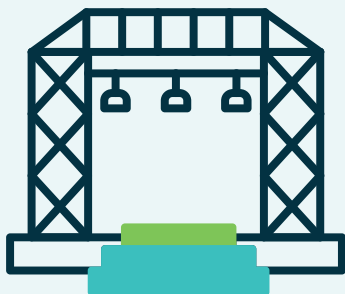- Are the door handles located between 900-1100mm above the floor?
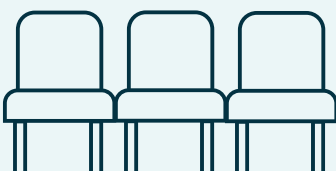
Inside our church

Toilets

- Is there a step free path of travel to the toilets?
- Is there a unisex accessible toilet that includes circulation space to allow a person using a wheelchair to enter the room, use the toilet and basin?

Internal paths of travel

- Is there step-free access to the spaces within the building, including to any stage or elevated area?
- When inside the church buildings, are there step-free paths of travel, with circulation space to manoeuver into a wheelchair seating space and allow others to pass by?
- Do the allocated spaces for people using wheelchairs have good sight lines to the front of the building and can the person using the space sit adjacent other people?

Seating

- Where fixed seating is provided, are wheelchair seating spaces provided with circulation space to facilitate access?
- Are there seats with arm rests and seats with extra legroom for those who require it?

Worship space

- [ ] Can the musicians/speakers be clearly seen and heard from all parts of the worship space?
- [ ] Are our PowerPoint slides in large clear font on a plain background to increase visibility?
- [ ] Can people take communion without climbing stairs?
- [ ] Does the fixed PA system link to a hearing augmentation system for people using hearing aids?
- [ ] Are there signs to alert people to the type of system available and the area it covers?

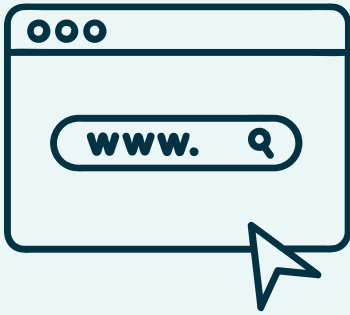# Accessibility of communication

Printed materials

- [ ] Are there large print pew Bibles available?

  [Large print must be **at least 18-points in a sans serif font.**]

- [ ] Are there large print versions of any printed materials such as bulletins/notices, orders of service, event flyers, prayer letters, etc?

Digital communication in services

- [ ] Are all videos used in services captioned?

  [**Captions** assist people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, etc.]

- [ ] Are all PowerPoint (or alternative) slides accessible for people with low vision?
  - [ ] use a 36-point sans serif font
  - [ ] maximum of 6 lines of text per slide
  - [ ] use contrasting colours between text and background

Website

- [ ] Are our sermons downloadable for people unable to make physical church (audio, video, transcription)?
- [ ] Is our accessibility information available on our website (e.g. toilets, parking, entrance, etc)?
- [ ] Is our website compliant for use with assistive technology for people with low vision who use screen-reading devices?
- [ ] Do all videos on our website and social media channels use captions?
- [ ] Do all images on our website include alt-text for people who use screen-reading devices?
- [ ] Does our website include images of our church including parking, entrances, internals?

Notes | Ideas | Planning