

St Peter's Church, Chester

EQUAL ACCESS REPORT

A church has been on this site since at least 1009 and despite many alterations over the centuries currently there are limits in its facilities for disabled people. This access statement is aimed at helping you to know what to expect if attending a service or visiting the church.

This report has been written in line with the Equality act (2010) and Church Care (Church of England guidance).

Our aim is for all Church services and activities to be accessible for everyone. We need to consider mobility, hearing & visual difficulties, dementia, and other disabilities and special needs.

Access to the premises

There is no on street parking near St Peter's on a Sunday but the church has an arrangement with Chester Racecourse and permits are available via the church office for free parking at Linenhall Street Carpark. This is a 0.3 mile, 5 minute walk from the church. There are disabled parking spaces behind the church on Hamilton Place and there is multi-storey parking available, including in the Market car park. On week nights after 6pm there is a range of on street parking on Bridge Street, Watergate Street and Hamilton Place.

Front access to the church is up a set of steep steps with a single hand rail. A more gentle approach can be gained from a slope up onto the rows from Hamilton Place. Disabled access avoiding steps is accessed from this row, down St Peter's Church alleyway and through the rear door. It is necessary to ring a bell to gain access through this door.

To enter the church through the main entrance there are 2 external doors which are left open during Sunday services and then a glass internal door. Someone with mobility issues may need help to open these doors. During a church service or church event there will always be a member of the welcome team available to open the doors. A visitor coming to the church when there is no service may need to bring someone with them to help with the doors or can let us know in advance they are planning to visit so someone from the church can be there to assist.

Access within the church

The church is on a variety of levels and people with mobility issues may need some support to access some areas. The area within the café is and worship area is on one level. Anyone wanting to take Holy Communion who cannot manage the steps to the altar can receive the Sacrament where they sit; it will be brought to them.

The church has moveable chairs, some of which have arms. Chairs can easily be moved accommodate wheelchairs, pushchairs & other mobility aids.

Toilet

The toilet is large and accessible for a wheelchair. There is a baby changing facility within the toilet.

Induction loop

There is an induction loop which can be accessed by hearing aid users.

Visual disabilities

Care is taken to ensure that anything displayed on the screen is in line with Torch Trust guidelines for accessibility. The church has large print versions of the Communion service which are available on request from the welcome team.

Dogs

Assistance dogs for the disabled are allowed inside the church.

Other needs

We actively consider the needs of those with dementia, learning needs and physical impairments and will do all we can to accommodate anyone who comes into the building. If there is anything you think we need to know in advance of your visit, then please get in touch via the church office.

St Peter's has recently been awarded Makaton friendly status as part of the 'Makaton Friendly Chester' initiative. We are seeking to develop and embed this. Some members of the congregation have some BSL training but we are not yet able to offer full BSL interpretation.
