Accessibility Checklist

This simple checklist is designed to highlight areas you need to consider when thinking about making your church an accessible environment for all people. Take this checklist and walk around your church compiling information. This is a great first step. Next, look at what you have discovered and make a realistic plan to begin making changes.

Many of the questions about the physical environment are based on NZ Standard 4121:2001 which is the requirement for any plans, specifications and/or alterations after 2001.

Worship Area

☐ Is the worship area on the accessible route?

☐ Is it possible for someone using a wheelchair to deliver a sermon from the lectern/pulpit?

☐ Is it possible for someone using a wheelchair to access the altar (eg. Is serving as Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist)?

☐ Is there an adequate sound system for people to hear the service?

☐ Is there an induction loop or similar system for hearing aid users?

☐ Is there a clear sign to indicate there is such a loop/hearing system?

☐ Are sermons printed out?

☐ Is there adequate lighting for people to read?

☐ Is there lighting arranged in a way that there are no shadows on those speaking or interpreting?

☐ If a screen is used for PowerPoint or overhead projector, are there print copies for those who cannot see the screen?

☐ Are there large print copies of all words on screen, hymns, service sheets, newsletters and other written materials?

☐ Is there space for people who use wheelchairs/walkers to sit with others in the congregation?

☐ Are there seats with arms and extra room for people with a mobility impairment who are using walkers?

☐ Is there a family/quiet play area in the church?

☐ Is there a quiet/semi private area for someone who is distressed or needs a quiet space?

Accessible Journeys

☐ Is there a continuous accessible route, without steps, from the street and car parking area to the main entrance and throughout this building?

☐ Is there provision for mobility parking?

☐ Is mobility parking located as close as possible to the main entrance and footpaths?

☐ Are paths made of a continuing common surface, not interrupted by steps or other barriers such as kerbs, inclines, uneven ground, loose gravel, etc?

Ramps

☐ Do ramps have a slope no greater than 1:12 gradient?

☐ Is the ramp width of no less than 1.2m?

☐ Are edges of ramps clearly visible?

☐ Are there handrails on both sides?

☐ Are they easy to grasp for people whose hands/arms may be impaired?

Wheelchair and Walking Frame Access

☐ Is there room for a wheelchair to turn safely at the top of the ramp?

☐ Can people who use a wheelchair or a walking frame access the main entrance?

Entrances and Exits

☐ Is at least one main entrance to each building usable by wheelchair users?

☐ Are these entrances clearly identified?

☐ Are there symbols to help people who cannot read English?

☐ Is the signage large enough to be seen from a distance?

Floors

☐ Is there a level approach space on both sides of all doors including the entrance?

☐ Are floor surface finishes (carpet, tiles, vinyl, etc.) stable and slip resistant? (Mats and rugs are not recommended.)

Doors and Doorways

☐ Do doors have a clear opening of 810mm or more?

☐ Are door lips low enough for both power and manual wheelchairs.

☐ Are door handles easy to use for people with limited hand movement and/or using wheelchairs/walkers?

☐ Can door handles be operated by one hand? (Consider the weight of the doors for all users. If the tension of the door closing is too strong it makes the door too difficult to open.)

☐ Do doors have colour contrast with their surroundings?

☐ Do glass doors and large windows have visual indicators such as colour strips on them to show that they are glass?

Stairs

☐ Do stairs have continuous handrails on both sides?

☐ Do stairs have contrasting strips on the leading edge/nose?

☐ Are the risers between steps closed in?

Toilets

☐ Is there an accessible toilet?

☐ Does the toilet meet the standard?

☐ Does it have the international symbol for access?

Tea/Coffee Area

☐ Are there tables in the area where food and drinks are served?

☐ Are there mugs with handles available for people who have limited hand movement?

☐ Are there straws available for people who need them?

Information/Communication Technology

☐ Does the church have an email address?

☐ Does the church have a website?

☐ Is it accessible?

☐ Does the church send out newsletters and other communications by email?

☐ Does the church print out newsletters and other communications by email?

☐ Does the church print out hard copies of written communications for people who are not on email?

Other things to consider

☐ Is there a wheelchair on site?

☐ Is there anywhere for someone to lie down if they need to?