



*A Christian presence at the heart of Norfolk
A place where all are welcome
A place to share learning
A place to grow in holiness*

Access & Inclusion Policy

Our Mission Statement seeks to summarise our role today. It is based on the unbroken tradition of worship, learning and hospitality first introduced by our Benedictine founder over 900 years ago. These Benedictine principles inform all that we seek to do day by day.

Extending a Christian welcome to all has been an integral part of the Cathedral's mission since 1096 long before the term 'accessibility' was first used. We aim to build accessibility into everything we do and to make continuous improvements as our resources permit. We seek to anticipate the differing needs of our visitors, volunteers and staff as far as can be reasonably expected. Where we cannot respond to a particular need, reasons will be given.

Our ancient fabric is governed by strict heritage legislation and some physical adaptations are impossible to undertake. Mindful of those constraints, we strive to be as inclusive as we can be, to enable all who wish to reach and appreciate all areas of the Cathedral and to take part in all our services and activities.

Our commitment to accessibility and inclusion extends to visitors, volunteers and our staff.

All our staff and volunteer roles are open for people with disabilities to apply. The Cathedral will make reasonable adjustments as appropriate. Disability awareness training is part of our induction process for staff and volunteers, including addressing the needs of visitors with specific requirements; appropriate use of language, and assisting those with disabilities throughout the evacuation procedure.

Putting Access and Inclusion into practice

There is good level access throughout the Cathedral for wheelchair users and others with mobility difficulties. The only areas currently not accessible are St Catherine's Chapel, St Andrew's Chapel, the Treasury and Broderers' Workshop. A ramp can be provided to the Presbytery if you ask a vergers on your arrival. *NB Please note this ramp is steeper than is ideal and assistance may be required in using it. This ramp is, regrettably, not suitable for the larger and heavier motorised wheelchairs or buggies.*

Parking

Limited parking is available for vehicles bearing an official Blue Badge. Disabled parking

permits will be issued by the gatekeepers for a duration of two hours on a first-come, first-served basis.

A space is provided at the South Door for a minibus carrying disabled passengers. Minibuses must book this space in advance through the Cathedral Estates Manager (01603 218300).

Wheelchairs

Level access into the Cathedral is available through the Hostry, which is open 0930 to 1630 Monday to Saturday. At all other times level access is through the Cathedral South Door and a lift gives access via the North West Door.

There is wheelchair access to the Refectory Café, Library, Hostry, Education and Gift Shop.

Regrettably, due to levels of anti-social behaviour, we have had to introduce key codes to all our toilets including our accessible toilet. The code for the toilets can be obtained from the Welcome Team in the Hostry, from the Donations Desk and from the Refectory staff. We are very sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

We have a small number of wheelchairs available for free loan to visitors for use within the Cathedral and Close. Please contact the Vergers (01603 218325) in advance of your visit.

Wheelchair accessible lifts

One lift in the Refectory building serves the upper Refectory Café and the Library, and the wheelchair accessible toilet in the Refectory lower floor corridor. The dimensions of the lift are as follows: width of door 900mm; width of cabin 1100mm; and depth of cabin 1400mm, conforming to the regulations when the building was built. The lift may not be accessible to the larger motorised buggies.

Another lift in the Hostry Education and Visitor Centre links the Cloister and Hostry ground floor. This lift has the same dimensions as the Refectory lift mentioned above. It provides level access to the Cathedral, and also the Exhibition and Education Room, along with the Hostry first floor with the Weston Room and Song School.

Those with impaired vision

If the light levels in the Cathedral appear too low for your visual needs please speak to a Verger, who can be contacted via the Donations Desk or the Cathedral Shop. If possible, and appropriate, the Verger will raise the lighting levels for you.

Visitors with impaired vision are encouraged to touch the many different shapes and surfaces around the Cathedral and precincts. Some of the more interesting carvings, such as the misericords (monks' seats) in the Choir, are behind ropes, which can be moved on request to a verger.

Care is needed on the uneven floors (including some tombstones) and steps. Wherever possible we have edged the steps with a contrasting colour.

Large print versions of the Cathedral Welcome Leaflet can be borrowed from the Welcomers.

Tactile tours can be arranged. Please contact The Chapter Office (01603 218300) for adults, or the Education Department (01603 218320) for schools. Guides that are experienced in offering tours to those who are blind or partially sighted are also available for pre-booked tours on request.

Worship

All are welcome to all of our services. Large print copies are available for all orders of service and an induction loop is installed. With the exception of St Andrew's and St Catherine's Chapels, space can be made for wheelchairs.

At services of Holy Communion, please inform one of the stewards or vergers if you are unable to go up to the altar, so that we can make arrangements to bring communion to you. Similarly, inform the stewards or vergers if you will require a gluten-free wafer. The vergers (01603 218325) can be contacted in advance.

Incense is used at major Christian festivals including at Festal Evensongs and will linger in the atmosphere for some time after the service. If you think this may impact you then please speak to our Vergers and they will be able to confirm at which services incense is being used.

People who are hard of hearing or Deaf

An induction loop has been installed in the Cathedral; hearing aid users should adjust their aid to T. The loop system covers the Nave, Choir and Transepts. This is unlikely to be of use to visitors except during services and when the sound system is in use.

As yet, none of our guides are trained in sign language, although some special worship events provide this service. However, many of them have experience of guiding with an interpreter. Although the Cathedral is a place of prayer, it can at times be quite noisy, especially when the organ is being practised or tuned. Cathedral guides and stewards will endeavour to compensate for background noise.

An induction loop has also been installed in the Weston Room in the Hostry Visitor and Education Room; hearing aid users should adjust their aid to T.

Assistance dogs

Assistance dogs are welcome and can be provided with water on request.

Intellectual disabilities

We aim to ensure that people with learning disabilities can engage with the Cathedral, and will enjoy coming here as visitors and attending our services and activities.

We work to identify and develop partnerships with a range of other educational and community organisations to ensure that our activities cater for the widest possible audiences.

We are committed to providing a wide range of free talks, activities and education events to which everyone is welcome.

Explorer Backpacks and a range of trails are available to help people explore the building in different ways.

Social and Financial

All those who come to the Cathedral as visitors or worshippers receive a warm and friendly welcome from staff and volunteers. This is a key part of our Benedictine heritage and Christian mission.

We aim to consider the needs of people whose knowledge of the doctrines, practices and history of Christianity may be limited, alongside the needs of people for whom English is not a first language, or whose knowledge of English history and culture may be limited.

Admission to the Cathedral is by donation at the discretion of the visitor. Where possible, special exhibitions will not incur charges. We are committed to providing a wide range of free talks, activities and education events to which anyone is welcome. Our Gift Shop always stocks a range of low cost souvenirs.

The Cathedral does not give money to individuals in need but the Donations Desk team can signpost individuals to places in the city where free meals, and other help and advice, are available.

Technological

Access to information about the Cathedral, its contents and history, and engagement with its life and worship, is available via the website. The Cathedral has endeavoured to follow current Web Accessibility Initiative (W3C WAI) guidelines and looks to ensure that Conformance Level "AA": all Priority 2 checkpoints are satisfied. The BBC's website "[My Web My Way](#)" offers help with adjusting these and other features in specific operating systems and browsers.

We also provide a number of electronic resources at the Cathedral, including interpretation displays and AV equipment and an app to explore the roof bosses. We are exploring other ways that technology may assist and enhance the visitor's experience. We aim to ensure that electronic material provided meets current best practice and guidelines.

Dietary Requirements

Whilst some regular provision is made for different dietary needs in the Refectory, the Cathedral's café, it is advised that visitors speak to a member of the Refectory staff, who will do their best to help. For those with particular dietary needs attending Cathedral events it is recommended that the hospitality team is contacted in advance of the event. (01603 218321)

Once on site

In the Cathedral and precincts, Cathedral staff and volunteers are identifiable by their Cathedral Name badges. Additionally, Cathedral Welcomers, Guides, Shop and Donations Team wear a blue sash whilst on duty. Please contact a member of staff or a volunteer if you have any particular needs, via Norwich Cathedral Office, 65 The Close, Norwich, NR1 4DH (01603 218300).

This policy

Cathedral staff and volunteers are committed to considering all the aspects of access listed above in carrying out their duties and in developing projects and services.

This policy is available to visitors, volunteers and staff either from our website www.cathedral.org.uk or on request from the volunteer welcomers, or by contacting Norwich Cathedral Office, 65 The Close, Norwich, NR1 4DH (01603 218300).

It is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is in line with national guidelines and standards.

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Chapter: May 2020