



Becoming a Welcoming Place for Disabled People

Welcoming is an important Christian ministry in a world where disabled people often find a lack of inclusion. A warm welcome embodies the Christian message.

Never assume anything; always ask the disabled person

- Speak directly to the disabled person, not to someone with them
- Introduce yourself by name as one of the welcome team
- Offer to help; don't be offended by refusal, or help without asking
- Reserve your own accessible bays for blue Badge holders
- Reserve seats (with arms if possible) by the entrance for people who can't walk far
- If there is a queuing system, please be aware that some people may have difficulty standing and may need to 'jump the queue'
- Enable disabled people to sit where and with whom they wish
- Ask people whether they would like any assistance. Remember – not every disability is visible
- Ensure people know where the toilets are and don't need to ask
- Stand in good light for lip-readers & partially sighted people
- Give eye contact where possible, although be aware that for some people eye contact is not possible, or will be avoided
- Be patient – some people take longer to respond, especially if they have difficulty speaking
- Give help discreetly. Don't make the person feel conspicuous
- For visually impaired people, offer assistance in finding a place to sit and introducing them to neighbours.
- Don't guide a visually impaired person from behind – let them take your arm
- Offer visually impaired people large print/braille literature
- Don't hurry a speech impaired person, be relaxed and positive
- Don't finish people's sentences
- Speak clearly, not loudly to hearing impaired people
- Ensure your face and mouth can be clearly seen
- Look at hearing impaired people directly and speak normally
- Shouting or exaggerating speech is not helpful to lip-readers

- Don't lean on a wheelchair or move it unless the user asks you. Sit down to talk at eye-level if possible
- Try to ensure a wheelchair user can sit where they wish and with whom they wish
- If people block a wheelchair user's view, politely ask them to sit down
- Use plain, not childish language with learning disabled people

Don't assume. Always ask.



www.throughtheroof.org

info@throughtheroof.org

01372 749955

Through The Roof, Alpha House

Alpha Place, Garth Road, Morden,

Surrey, SM4 4TQ.

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