

Making your More Than Gold activities truly inclusive

The '2012 Games' include both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. This should challenge us to make sure all our activities are inclusive for disabled people.

That includes not only our events in relation to the Games but in every aspect of church life.

Thanks to the More Than Gold Paralympics Team, we bring you the following checklist to make sure you're welcoming and open to people who are disabled, so they truly feel they belong.

It's all as easy as –

- Offering reserved parking or a drop-off point
- Having 'step-free' access giving level/ramped entry to a building
- Providing accessible toilets
- Having a loop system in operation and, when required, providing sign language interpreters and/or speech-to-text (captioning)
- Using straightforward, jargon-free language to meet all levels of ability
- Supplying written information (including that on a screen) in large print (font size 18 point) and other alternative formats (eg. audio, electronic, Braille)
- Making sure there are clear/pictorial signs for people with learning disabilities
- Having a quiet space available during the main meeting for those who may need time-out (for people on the autistic spectrum)
- Having good, even, glare and flicker-free lighting to benefit people with sight loss or autism
- Offering seating (some with arms) near the entrance/exit
- Providing a named contact to 'champion' issues and initiate training on disability
- Speaking directly to disabled people, assuming nothing and asking them how they are best supported and included
- Providing commentary/audio description for purely visual content to those unable to see the screen/stage
- Making the website accessible and including information that helps disabled people access the building and activities
- Adopting a can-do culture with an inclusive ethos, valuing all and addressing each person's needs on an individual basis
- Intentionally encouraging and enabling disabled people to contribute to church life using their God-given gifts

Resources, training and support for churches to implement the above is offered by organisations who are part of the Christian disability network, Churches for All - www.churchesforall.org.uk