

# ACCESS ALL AREAS

Spotlighting Inclusivity in Gloucestershire



## For the community

With a diverse congregation, including individuals with physical and learning disabilities the layout of each service is designed to accommodate those with vision or hearing impairments at the front for a richer experience.

With spacious seating and a standing area to the rear for those who prefer to be free to move. Large font materials are available for all services. So as to include the whole community retired clergy, ministry-trained volunteers will take communion out to homebound or hospitalised.

## Challenges

Being a medieval church building the Abbey's commitment to accessibility faces unique challenges. Plans to modernise the Victorian entrance with accessible, large fronted glass doors and push-button access were paused for architecturally aesthetic reasons and also security concerns for the sacred artefacts inside. CCTV-monitored side entrances now ensure safety while maintaining access.

## Improvements

Much has been done to create a warm welcoming environment at the Abbey. The cafe has an accessible entrance and a spacious atrium hosting a gender-neutral accessible toilet, complete with user-friendly features like lever-style taps, an easy-to-use toilet flush, and grab rails.

Double doors provide wheelchair friendly access to the cafe area with user-friendly door furniture and a bell for assistance.

## Future thinking

To shape a more inclusive future the Abbey team, are embracing sensory experiences and training their staff in mental health and disability awareness. There are plans in the pipeline for the volunteers to give the website an accessibility boost and with their new vicar in place from September 2023, commitment to accessibility and inclusivity will be a focused priority.

## Transport

Tewkesbury Abbey is easily accessible via a train station two miles from the town, with connecting bus services dropping off at a 2 min distance away. The Abbey team has paved the way for accessibility around the Abbey grounds, smooth tarmacked or level paved pathways welcome everyone whether on foot, or using mobility devices. For those arriving by car or taxi there are designated drop-off points and a car park by the abbey grounds with access maps strategically placed to guide people to the most accessible routes.



## Euan's guide

“4.5 / 5

“Impressive Abbey that is easily accessible in a wheelchair.

No entry charge but donations very welcome. Cafe in separate building up a ramp.

Also accessible toilet. Close to other cafes and shops (accessibility mixed) and pathways next to part of the river Avon.

Transport & Parking 4.5 / 5

Car parks close to the Abbey with some designated disabled spaces.

Access 5 / 5

Wheelchair access straight through many door from Church Street

Toilets 4 / 5      Staff 5 / 5”

Wheelchair User