

York Minster Access Statement



Figure 1 International Access Symbols



01904 557200

Figure 2 Telephone Picture

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Introduction

In 2015/16 a review of facilities and services to people with disabilities was carried out as part of “York Minster Revealed”, and access improvements were made and enhanced to complement existing facilities and services.

Staff and Volunteers Disability Access Awareness Training

Staff and volunteers have received disability access awareness training, which has equipped them to support blind and visually impaired visitors, deaf and hearing impaired visitors, people living with dementia and, in partnership with Autism Plus, people on the autistic spectrum. The training programme will be refreshed and updated from time to time, to meet a social model of disability at the Minster.

Getting to the Minster

York is well served by the road network and public transport. The main railway station, which has barrier free access, is about 1 kilometre from the Minster. There are safe crossing places along the way. Bus services run to Museum Street close to the Minster and there are on-street accessible parking bays close to the Minster.



Figure 3 International Wheelchair Disability Symbol

Entrance to the Minster

There is a choice of ramped or stepped access with handrails from Precentor's Court, which leads through an outer doorway and glass porch to the information desk. The Minster is open Monday-Saturday from 09:00 until 17:00 and from 12:45 until 17:00 on Sundays. There is a charge to enter the Minster, although a concessionary price is offered to disabled visitors, and their assistants are not charged for entry. Guided tours are free to visitors afterwards.

Minster Interior

York Minster is a very large gothic building with high ceilings, magnificent stained glass windows and mostly stone floors. Although it is a place of reverence it can also be quite busy and noisy when visitors are present or, for example, when the organ is playing. Light levels vary in different parts of the Minster, particularly where sunlight impacts on the stained glass windows or in the Undercroft, which is the lowest part of the Minster and a darker area. The main features of the Minster, except the Tower, have level, ramped or lift access to them.

The Tower

The Tower does not have wheelchair access and visitors need to climb the two hundred and seventy five stone steps of a spiral staircase, which does have a handrail of the left going up, to reach the top. There is an additional charge to visit the Tower.

Main Minster Floor

On entering at the West End the Minster is set out in the form of a cross, with the Nave in front and the North Transept to the left and South Transept to the right, with the East End beyond. The raised Quire occupies a central space with walkways on either side leading to the East End. The West End, Nave and North Transept and South Transept and the East End of the Minster are on one level, with paved stone floors throughout.

Organ and Quire

There is stepped and ramped access to Quire from the Nave next to the Kings Screen. The Quire area where the organ is positioned is mainly single level. About halfway down the Quire there are three sets of shallow steps which lead up to the high altar. For this reason, only the first section of the Quire is accessible for wheelchair users.

Chapter House

There is convenient sloped access from the North Transept leading to the Chapter House.

Undercroft, Treasury and Crypt

There is stepped and lift access to the Undercroft, Treasury and Crypt from the South Transept. There is ramped access in the Undercroft, which tells the story of the Minster and has historic books and artefacts on display.

Toilet Facilities

There are male and female toilet facilities, baby changing and an accessible toilet facility located after the North Transept towards the East End of the Minster.

Minster Shop

There is flat-level access to the Minster shop from the South side of the Nave towards the South Transept, and stepped or ramp access from the shop through the South Transept and out the South Door into the Minster Piazza. Any visitors who require ramp access to the shop, please ask at the North West door of the Minster and a member of staff will show you the way through. There is no ramp access directly into the shop from street level.



Figure 4 International Blind Partially Sighted Symbol

A range of services are provided at the Minster for people who are blind or partially sighted.

Tactile Model of York Minster

A tactile model of York Minster is offered to enable visitors to get an idea and orientation of the Minster. PENfriend™ audio description and Braille text is also provided to help interpret the design.

Tactile Plan and Adaptive Information about the Minster

A tactile site plan, with PENfriend™ audio description and Braille information is provided to assist blind and visually impaired visitors to learn about and navigate the Minster. The tactile plan may be borrowed in advance of visiting to enable blind and partially sighted visitors to learn something of the Minster before visiting. If you would like to request the plan to be sent to you, please email reception@yorkminster.org, or call 01904 557200.

Self-Guided Route

The tactile plan enables blind and visually impaired visitors to find, and learn about, a series of interesting and informative tactile features around the Minster, on a self-guided journey.

Assistive Rucksack

A rucksack containing items and artefacts, such as scents and textured materials and an example of stained glass to help people with sensory impairments and learning disabilities learn about the Minster can be borrowed. The packs also contain a magnifying glass and torch to improve visibility when travelling around the Minster.



Figure 5 International Hearing Support Symbol

Audio induction loops to assist hearing aid users are provided in parts of the interior of the Minster. Minster staff and volunteers have also been trained in welcoming and communicating with deaf and hearing impaired visitors.

For further information about your visit, please contact the Minster team.