

# Accessibility Guide

## Introduction

This document is the Warksburn Old Church Accessibility Guide. By following this Accessibility Guide, we aim to create an inclusive environment where all guests can enjoy their stay. If you have any specific questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us, either during the booking process or during your stay.

Whilst the physical constraints imposed by our heritage building mean that we unfortunately cannot offer wheelchair access to the property, we are committed to ensuring that all guests, regardless of their abilities, enjoy a comfortable and inclusive experience during their stay.

This guide is designed to provide information about the accessibility features and services we offer to make your visit as enjoyable as possible.

## Contact Information:

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## Physical Accessibility

### Entrance and Exits:

**We regret that Warksburn Old Church is not wheelchair accessible.** There are three stone steps up to the to the main and side entrances to the building. Physical constraints of the building mean that ramped wheelchair access sadly cannot be provided. However, from practical experience, elderly guests and others with limited mobility can manage these stairs with assistance by others in their party.

The main access to the building in the front door porch offers protection from the elements, and has automatic lighting which illuminates when guests arrive. Access to the property is then gained by entering a code into a keypad, which has large buttons and is well illuminated. The large Passivhaus front door is designed for ease of use, requiring a simple push to open, with no complicated keys or handles to operate.

By prior arrangement, we can offer guests with an app to download to their smart phones and a code which will automatically unlock the door when it simply senses proximity of the guests phone. This can make accessing the building even simpler for guests.

## **Parking:**

Ample parking for guest cars is available immediately adjacent to the building. The parking area is connected to the main and side entrances of the building by a wide and level stone path, entirely free of trip hazards.

## **Interior Spaces:**

Whilst the physical configuration of the stepped entrance to the former church building means that we cannot offer wheelchair accessibility, the ground floor accommodation at Warksburn Old Church is suitable for guests with limited mobility.

Once inside the building, the entire ground floor is step-free.

One double bedroom with a generous proportioned en suite bathroom with a fully enclosed shower is available on the ground floor. The completely level hallway links this bedroom to the main living space, comprising the kitchen, dining area and lounge. The utility room is also on the ground floor, again with level access from the main living space.

Sliding doors between all bedrooms and their en-suite bathrooms offer better accessibility than conventional opening doors.

Please be aware that all three showers in the building are not level entry. A small step up is required.

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## **Visual Accessibility**

### **Lighting:**

The smart lighting system in the main living area enables high-brightness lighting to be set by guests requiring greater visibility. The smart lighting system is also configured to allow all lighting in the main living area to be controlled from a single location, removing the need to physically walk to light switches. The smart lighting control is itself illuminated to assist location and identification of buttons.

### **Contrast and Colour:**

High-contrast colour is used for important information, such as fire and medical emergency instructions, enhancing visibility for guests with low vision.

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## Hearing Accessibility

Guests with hearing impairments may enjoy the extraordinarily quiet interior of this Passivhaus accommodation, which results from the ultra-thick insulation eliminating almost all external noise, as well as providing extremely efficient thermal performance.

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## Services and Amenities

### **Communication:**

During the reservation, enquiry and follow-up phases, we communicate with guests in the format that best suits their needs. We are happy to communicate by voice to assist visually impaired guests; or by text or email with those who are hearing impaired.

Our website is design with a dynamic format, which allows text and images to be zoomed up to 400% to assist legibility. This Accessibility Guide itself can also be zoomed in any compatible PDF reader.

### **Accessible Accommodations:**

Please see “Interior Spaces”, above.

## **Food allergies and intolerances:**

We provide information for guests with dietary restrictions or allergies, advising on which local shops to use to source appropriate food during their stay. We have gluten and lactose intolerant persons in our own family. We are therefore acutely aware of these issues.

Our pre-arrival communications process enables guests to pre-advise us of any dietary requirements. We alter the contents of our welcome pack to accommodate any pre-advised allergy or intolerance.

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## **Assistance and Support**

### **Training & Awareness:**

We use the resources made available by Destination North East England to keep our business fully informed on accessibility and inclusivity.

### **Feedback and Suggestions:**

Following your stay, we proactively contact guests to seek feedback on their stays, as part of our policy of continuous improvement. We specifically request guests to bring to our attention any way in which we could better meet accessibility needs.

## **Additional Resources:**

For guests with mobility issues we provide information on the local disabled taxi service operated by EcoCabs in Hexham, the main transport hub for our local area. Operated by well trained and experienced staff Ecocabs can provide easy ramp accessible and wheelchair accessible taxis.

EcoCabs have 2 wheelchair accessible taxis available; one has an accessible ramp and has enough room for one wheelchair and four other passengers. Their wheelchair taxi is a people carrier and can accommodate two wheelchairs and eight passengers and has a wheelchair lift fitted.

Link: <https://hexham.ecocabs.com/wheelchair-taxis/>

We also provide information on the local bus service (680 Bellingham to Hexham & Return), which is normally operated with low-floor wheelchair- and buggy-friendly buses. By prior arrangement, it is normally possible to request the driver of buses travelling in the Hexham to Bellingham direction to stop directly at the entrance to Warksburn Old Church

Through our partnership with Visit Northumberland, we are able to advise guests on accessible attractions, experiences and destinations.

<https://www.visitnorthumberland.com/inspire-me/blogs/accessible-places-to-stay-and-visit>