

Website Accessibility Overview

Site url: www.disabilitycambridgeshire.org.uk

This is an overview of some issues identified when reviewing your website for accessibility. It is not a full accessibility audit. AbilityNet can perform a full code audit, or disabled user testing, on request.

Please see appendix A for the rationale behind each issue.

Layout

- Home page is not too cluttered. Good use of white space between elements.
- Pages consistently laid out with links across the top and down left hand side and main text in centre of the page.

Text

- Text size is generally clear and easy to view under normal viewing conditions.
- No text too small to read comfortably.
- Text resizes.
- All text is sans serif.
- No instances of fully justified text.

Colours

- Contrast is fine. Mostly black text on turquoise background or black text on white background. Links on left hand side change colour when mouse goes over them. Text links at the top also change colour when mouse goes over them.
- Website is fine when non standard colours are used such as Windows High Contrast. Only bit which was slightly difficult to read was the jump to content/jump to navigation links top right which are blue on black.

Graphics

- Alt tags are well used throughout, including on links.
- No pictures of words.
- No distracting moving images
- No Flash movies.

Keyboard

- Highlight is easy to see whilst tabbing around.
- No combo boxes which are auto-fired by down arrow.
- Website can be used easily with keyboard only.

Frames

- Site doesn't use frames.

JavaScript

- Nothing affected by disabling JavaScript.

Text Only/Accessibility Version

- No text only or accessibility version of website.

Accessibility Help/Statement

- Site has a comprehensive section on accessibility – see <http://www.disabilitycambridgeshire.org.uk/about/accessibility/index.htm> which details what has been done to make the site accessible (such as jump to content/ jump to navigation links at the top of the page) as well as explaining why they don't use access keys. They also have a contact us link so that if there are any changes needed they can address them.

General Comments

- Easy site to navigate, understand and use.
- Comprehensive explanation of how they have tried to make the site accessible for all and also useful to have statement on what they have not done and why (such as access keys).
- Found accessibility section by clicking on both 'site map', 'about this website', 'contact us' and also 'join us in developing this website' but maybe a link from the home page which clearly said accessibility might help people find it more easily. [**Note: 9/5/06: added a link from the homepage**]

Home Page Check with WebXact

Although this report is not a code audit, we include a WebXact accessibility report (<http://webxact.watchfire.com/>) of the code of your home page. An automated tool such as this can check around a third of the checkpoints in each of the three priority levels of the world standards (www.w3.org/wai) and the information may be of some use.

Nothing under Priority 1

Priority 2 Checkpoints



Errors

1 tests, 2 instances on page

	Guideline	Instances	Line Numbers
3.5	Nest headings properly.	2	38, 91

Priority 3 Checkpoints



Errors

2 tests, 2 instances on page

	Guideline	Instances	Line Numbers
5.5	Provide a summary for tables.	1	62
10.5	Separate adjacent links with more than whitespace.	1	96

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Appendix A

Layout

It is very important that the content on your pages is well spaced out to assist those with a vision, cognitive or literacy impairment. You can have a reasonable amount of information on any given page, including scrolling 'below the fold', but ensure that it is not cluttered.

Spacing out links and buttons can also help those with fine motor control difficulties who may click on an adjacent link if it is too close.

Pages must also be consistent in their presentation – make sure the navigation, search box and home link for example are all in the same place on every page.

Try to limit the number of navigation bars you have to top or top and left. Be consistent.

Text

It is very important that text is easy to read. You should ensure that text is a decent size under common viewing conditions – i.e. a 12" (standard laptop) screen at 1024x768 (the default resolution) as many people will be using this combination.

It is also vital to use a sans serif font such as Arial or Comic Sans MS – and not Times New Roman. People with a vision impairment or dyslexia find these fonts much easier to read.

As well as this it is important that all text on your site resizes using the View menu/Text Size option (in Internet Explorer).

Don't use fully justified text. Many people are unable to read paragraphs of text that have been fully justified as they see rivers of white running through the text.

Colours

Text and background colours should be of sufficient contrast to assist those with a vision impairment or dyslexia. Also avoid combinations of red/green or blue/yellow.

What happens if the user sets different colours in their Windows preferences (for example white text on a black background much favoured by those with a vision impairment)? If you have defined some colours but not all (i.e. text has been coded as black whilst the background has been left undefined) – this may lead to text disappearing.

Graphics

The most vital accessibility issue is well labelled images. People who are blind or those with literacy or dyslexia who rely on speech output depend upon text descriptions of all images on your website. The only exceptions to this are for spacer or decorative images that are not important.

If you use lots of images that contain text then many users will find them hard to read as they will not be able to change their size or colours or font. Avoid using pictures of words in all cases except for your company logo.

Avoid using moving images as these will distract users with a cognitive or vision impairment. If you must use moving images make them stop after looping a small number of times.

If you use Flash presentations there are many groups who will not be able to access the content. Offer an equivalent alternative and also try to make your Flash content as accessible as possible using Macromedia's guidelines.

Keyboard

Many visitors will be using the keyboard alone – either because of a motor difficulty or because they are blind and cannot see the pointer on screen.

It is important that all content is accessible from the keyboard and that the user can see where the highlighted link or control is at all times.

Also avoid making drop down boxes fire automatically when the user arrows down.

Frames

Using frames and inline frames can cause difficulties for many users with specialist or older browsers. They also cause difficulties for bookmarking which is often used by those with memory difficulties.

JavaScript

Many specialist browsers or access technologies either cannot support JavaScript or only partially do so. It is vital that all aspects of your site and its functionality are independent of JavaScript (i.e. when JavaScript is disabled does everything still work?)

Text Only/Accessibility Version

Some websites also offer a 'text only' or 'accessibility' alternative. It is our opinion that the addition of such parallel sites to the exclusion of, or in preference to, addressing the accessibility/usability issues of the main site is neither necessary or in the spirit of inclusion or the W3C WCAG standards.

Accessibility Help/Statement

Does your site include any accessibility help or info section telling visitors how they can alter the colours and text size of your site? At the very least you should include a statement on accessibility stating what you intend to do to improve any issues that may exist. All such info should be well signposted on your home page.