
The Must-Have Accessibility Handbook

2017 Edition

Siteimprove



This eBook provides everything you need to know to make your website accessible, including: a simple and thorough explanation of accessibility theory, where to begin, low hanging fruit, use cases, best practices, and tips and tricks.

How to use this handbook

This handbook aims to give you an introduction to the area of accessibility from various perspectives, helping you define roles and responsibilities and understanding the list of tasks at hand.

It also gives you an introduction to Siteimprove Accessibility from various user cases.

Therefore the handbook has two main sections:

- A beginner's guide to web accessibility
- A beginner's guide to Siteimprove Accessibility

You can use both sections as learning material reading through the entire document or as a reference work looking up specific areas of interest.

Who should use this handbook?

Accessibility is something that is relevant for everyone working with websites regardless of whether you are a web designer, a web developer, a web manager or a web editor. Generally speaking though, web accessibility is very technical and many aspects are ensured in the development phase.

Takeaways from this handbook

- Learning about web accessibility in general
- Knowing about the roles and responsibilities of ensuring website accessibility
- Giving you priority areas and quick wins
- Learning how to use Siteimprove Accessibility to work on fixing accessibility issues and prioritising

CLICK to open the corresponding section

PART 1



**A BEGINNER'S GUIDE
TO WEB ACCESSIBILITY**

PART 2



**A BEGINNER'S GUIDE
TO SITEIMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY**

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A beginner's guide to web accessibility

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A beginner's guide to web accessibility

Why web accessibility?

Surveys show that up to 20% of internet users experience accessibility issues when using the internet. This means that by having a website with accessibility issues, up to 1 in 5 users will encounter difficulties.

One of the good things about ensuring web accessibility is that not only are you increasing your number of users, you also have a number of extra benefits in the form of increased search engine optimisation (SEO) and improved usability. This is why ensuring web accessibility on your website is worth the investment.



Who is accessibility for?

By optimising web accessibility you ensure that as many users as possible can use your website. You ensure that people with disabilities and reading difficulties can read your web pages and also that the website has a robustness that allows for most user agents to render content in a consistent and sensible way.

What are assistive technologies?

People with disabilities such as low vision, hearing or motor impairments, and people who have reading difficulties often use assistive technologies when using IT. These technologies assist the user in writing, spelling, reading and navigation, as well as having software and content read aloud. In order for these assistive technologies to be able to compensate in a meaningful way it is important that software and websites comply with the standards that make the assistive technologies able to interpret and render content properly. The Web Accessibility Initiative provides information on how different types of users browse the web and the technologies used: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/people-use-web/browsing>

What is web accessibility?

If you look at all aspects of user experience (UX) on the internet, accessibility is one of many areas. Accessibility can be considered a fundamental technical foundation on which you build other aspects such as usability.

The term accessibility is used widely but there is a clear definition of what we mean when ensuring website accessibility and ensuring that as many users as possible can navigate and comprehend a website.

Most of ensuring web accessibility is about technical provisions. It is very much about how websites are implemented and about the tools that are used to publish content on websites. But accessibility is not just about techniques. The way you communicate on web pages can also affect accessibility. This is described in detail in the section 'Mostly for web editors / content creators'.

How does one ensure an accessible website?

In the UK the Equality Act states that websites are to be accessible to everyone. This means that if the responsibility of a website or part of a website lies with you, then you are also responsible for ensuring its accessibility.

Who defines what web accessibility is and where can this definition and guidelines for this be found? The organisation that standardises the internet is called W3C and they have a working group called WAI. WAI defines web accessibility and they compose guidelines on how to ensure good web accessibility. The work that W3C does is globally recognised and you can feel secure in using these guidelines as a definition of the area. The set of guidelines that cover websites are called Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and generally helps to ensure that as many web users as possible can use a website. The guidelines are formulated in such a way, that if a website complies you also ensure a robustness resulting in most user agents (such as browsers and assistive technologies) being able to show and interpret your web pages in a consistent way. WAI are happy to have comments and suggestions and takes these seriously.

There is an original version in English as well as a number of translations in different languages.

In December 2008 the current version of WCAG was released. This is version 2.0 making the former 1.0 version obsolete.

WCAG 2.0 is divided into four main principles: Perceivable, Operable, Understandable and Robust. Each of these main principles is divided into a number of guidelines that are again divided into individual success criteria. It is the success criteria that are most often used as requirement for conformance. The criteria are divided into three levels: A, AA and AAA. Level A is considered the most severe. In most countries websites should be compliant on level AA. It will be difficult to be completely AAA compliant. It is recommended to pick out criteria on this level based on web pages addressing a mainstream audience and

where the website has special target groups. On level AA there are 38 criteria in all to comply with. These are the framework for the rest of this handbook.

There are four interrelated documents to work with in connection with WCAG 2.0. You have the main document giving some background information and compromising all the criteria and their levels. Then you have a document describing how conformance is ensured. This document refers to a document containing specific techniques often with coding examples. Finally there is a document giving a detailed description of the individual criteria, why it is relevant and who it is relevant for.

When working with WCAG however one quickly comes to realise that the structure and the communication in the documents are somewhat complex. For this reason it takes a lot of work to understand and interpret the meaning of the different criteria. But in most cases whatever your role is in a web project, you do not have to relate to all of the criteria. You have to pick out the areas that are relevant for your specific role. If you are a developer a high number of criteria are relevant to you. If you are a CMS provider another set of criteria are relevant for you. And if you are a web content editor a third set of criteria are relevant to you.

There are a large number of tools that in an automated way can check if a website is in compliance. But there are a number of criteria that cannot be checked in an automated way. For these, a number of assisting toolbars are available to help with the manual assessment of whether content is in conformance. This is described in more detail in the section 'Mostly for web managers'.

The roles and responsibilities of web accessibility

Mostly for web managers

If you have the responsibility of ensuring accessibility on a website, then all the criteria in WCAG are relevant to you (usually on level AA). It is then necessary to have a fundamental understanding of the subject in order to be able to ensure for instance that through

a development project and by an acceptance test what is delivered conforms to the guidelines. It is also important that you as the responsible party make the right requirements in the requirement specifications and understand how meeting them is ensured. It is also important that you train your web editor colleagues on how to publish content the ‘accessible way.’ This way, when content is added it furthers your site’s accessibility rather than introducing new accessibility issues.

If you have policies in your organisation for communication and design it is a good idea to integrate the relevant accessibility criteria here.

If your job is to ensure accessibility on an existing website it is often a question of what can realistically be fixed now. It is always better to be 70% accessible rather than 60% accessible for instance because it makes the website accessible for more users.

Start out by using tools that can assist you in getting a quick overview of issues. For large websites the effort most likely needs to be prioritised. A good starting point is your main pages, for example the front page and a selection of your template pages. Often it requires minor adjustments in the CSS or in a template and an issue will be fixed and take effect across all pages. If there is special content on some web pages such as video, dynamic content or self-services it is a good idea to include these pages also.

There can be areas where it is not possible to do a fix on the current website or that should be directed to development. Write these down so they are not forgotten and bring them up in the next relevant meeting.

Make a strategy for testing accessibility on a regular basis. It can be quarterly for instance as a part of the organisation’s web strategy.

Mostly for web designers



As a web designer, several accessibility criteria are especially important to help you ensure as many users as possible can use your web application.

Consistent design

Some users may not be accustomed to using the internet at all, and other users may have a disability that makes it hard to get an overview of a webpage or navigate a website. Therefore, it’s important that the navigation is consistent across all your web pages, and global elements like menus and help facilities are in the same order across the site. It’s also important that elements with the same function (such as icons and references) are ordered in the same way on every page (Success criteria 3.2.3 and Success criteria 3.2.4).

Navigation

In order to make it easy for users to find information it’s important to have more than one way of finding specific content on a web page. A user can find content on a page by navigating through the intended page hierarchy, but it should also be possible to find the page in another way through a sitemap, an index or a search function (Success criteria 2.4.5).

Headings

When designing the look and feel and the architecture of a website, it’s important to keep in mind that some users cannot get a visual overview of a web page; they have to do this structurally. Make sure pages are divided into logical sections each having a heading (coded as a heading tag) describing the content, so that assistive technologies can render them as section headings (Success criteria 1.3.1 and Success criteria 2.4.6).

Use of colour

In order to make sure that all users are aware that an element on a web page has a certain function or status, it is important not to give information solely by the use of colour. For users who cannot see colours, that information can be lost. An example of conveying information through colours could be to show links within a text by giving links a different colour than the text. Supplement this with another non-colour specific way of indicating the links (such as underline, a symbol etc.) (Success criterion 1.4.1).

In order for visually impaired users to be able to read

all the text on web pages it is important that the colour of the text and the colour of the background are in sufficient contrast to each other. This can be ensured by conforming to the requirement of keeping a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 for regular text and 3:1 for large text. There are a number of tools available to quickly assist in measuring the contrast ratios (Success criteria 1.4.3).

Links

When an element on a web page is to be a link or something clickable, it's important that the element text/description makes sense when read out of context. Part of this is ensured by the technical implementation but the design should consider using descriptive link texts also. Link texts such as: 'Read more,' 'here,' 'Click here,' and 'publication' are examples of poor link text if read out of their context (Success criteria 2.4.4).

Interactive elements

When designing for interactive elements, i.e. content that the user can interact with, there should be a clear explanation of what is to be entered/chosen/checked. The design should make sure that when text fields, drop downs, check boxes and radio buttons are used, they have text connected to them describing their purpose (Success criterion 2.4.6 and Success criterion 3.3.2).

Mostly for web developers

Page titles

Make sure that all web pages have a descriptive title reflecting the page content. Also make sure that web editors can enter page titles via the authoring tool (for example CMS).

Keyboard navigation

All content on a web page should be navigable both with a computer mouse and from the keyboard alone. This applies to forms, buttons and links for instance.

Some users are not able to use a computer mouse. They can use the keyboard only to navigate by tabbing through content on a web page. These users need to be able to see where they are located on the

page. For this reason it should always be visually evident where on the web page the tab indicator is located. Most browsers automatically show this with a dotted line around the content. You can also implement your own way of showing this. Note: some Reset Stylesheets remove this highlighting. Be sure to address this highlighting within the Reset CSS.

Content sequence

When content for web pages is coded, make sure that the content has a meaningful order, not only visually but also in the coding sequence. Some users navigate pages by this order. Ensure that the order of content is sensible when styles are disabled and when tabbing through content.

Enlarging

Make sure web page text can be resized up to 200% as a minimum, and still be usable and look sensible and without loss of content (newer browsers can zoom content and this is usually the way that assistive technologies do it as well).

Language

In order for user agents to be able to render content in the correct language it is important that the pages have a correct language definition in the HTML tag for a web page. The language tag should be 'en' for English pages, 'da' for Danish pages, and so on.

Also the CMS should give web editors the ability to highlight text that is in a different language than the rest of the page, and choose language for this part. The highlighting should add the lang="" attribute in the code.

Coding

In order to make sure that the website is shown consistently across different platforms (such as operating systems and browsers) and at the same time that assistive technologies can render content in a meaningful way, the standard for the format one publishes in should be complied with. If, for instance you are publishing in XHTML 1.0 or HTML 5.0 the syntax rules for this format should be followed. You can check your web pages for syntax errors at: <http://validator.w3.org/>

Also make sure that elements are marked up with the code that is intended for the purpose. For example, HTML headings should be tagged as <H> (H1...H6).

Data tables should be tagged as <table> and web editors should be able to give description to data tables via <caption>. Headings for columns and rows should be defined by the use of <th> and perhaps 'header id' and 'scope'. If a complex data table needs explaining for screen reader users, then this should be done via 'summary'.

When writing text, web editors should be able to emphasise with and .

When form elements are used, a label should be explicitly connected to each control and form elements that belong to the same group should be assembled. For instance a group of radio buttons should be grouped with <fieldset> and <legend>. There are a number of techniques to ensure this: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/#qr-content-structure-separation-programmatic> and <http://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/#qr-ensure-compat-rsv>

User input

If the user must enter information in a text field, make sure that if the user does not enter text in the right format they are notified with text that helps them correct the mistake. When filling out a form that is part of a financial transaction or a legal commitment where data is changed, the input must be checked by the system to avoid errors or the user should have the option of reading through the input before sending it. A third option is that the user can always reverse the submission.

Graphics

When web pages contain elements that are non-text it is important to give a text alternative describing the purpose of the non-text element. For example, images use the "alt text" HTML attribute (alt=""). It is important to note that the alternative text reflects the purpose of the image and not necessarily what the image is of. See information on images in the section 'Mostly for web editors' for a detailed description. In

order for web editors to be able to give the alternative text correctly it is important that the authoring tool -such as a CMS- allows for entering alternative texts on images that are entered on web pages. The alt attribute should always be included in the code, regardless of whether or not any descriptive text is needed. It should be up to the web editor either to leave the field empty or give a description for an image. An alternative text is context specific. For this reason it can be poor accessibility practice to enter an alternative text for an image once and for all when uploading to the media library. It should be possible to enter a new alternative text every time an image is used on a web page.

If a web page contains a media file, it should also be given a descriptive text either as an alt attribute or in the object tag on inline elements or similar.

Audio and video

When audio and video is published on a web page there are a number of relevant criteria, such as giving an alternative format, and having captions and audio description. These are described in detail in the section 'Mostly for web editors'.

Throughout development it is important to ensure that all buttons and navigation in the player can be used both with a computer mouse and from the keyboard alone. At the same time buttons and navigation are given text descriptions to help screen readers.

For a video it should be possible to enter a dedicated track for audio description as well as add captions. If a passage of audio starts automatically, the user should be able to pause, stop or control the sound volume.

User control

Some users need a long time to read and navigate web pages. Therefore, if some sort of time limit is present on pages, such as a time out, the user must be able to change the limit either by adjusting it, extending, or disabling it.

If content for moving, blinking or scrolling is added it

is also important that the user can pause, stop or hide this content.

In order for screen reader users to avoid having to listen to the same content every time they load a new page, provide the option of skipping blocks of repeated content. Repeated content can be a global menu (and local menu) and help functions. There are several techniques for ensuring this; the easiest way is to provide a link at the top of all pages that takes the user to the main content of the page (for instance the heading 1 on the page in the content section). There are other options as well: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/#qr-navigation-mechanisms-skip>

When an element is to be altered by the user, such as a drop down menu, a radio button, etc., it is important that it acts as the user expects. Elements should not react solely when receiving focus or when the user lands on it from the keyboard. It should react when the user has had the time to choose and confirm.

Blinking content

Content should not blink more than three times per second, or else it may cause an epileptic episode for those suffering from epilepsy.

Mostly for web editors content creators 

Page titles

In a CMS you give a web page a title or name when you create it. In some systems there is also a specific field for this called 'Title'. It is important that this title is descriptive of what the page is about. It is the page title that is shown in the top of your browser and is read as the first thing on a web page by a screen reader.

Text

When writing text for web pages, consider the fact that some users cannot get an overview of a page visually, as opposed to structurally. Make sure that pages are divided into logical sections each given a heading that is descriptive of the section. You can use several levels of headings: Heading 1, Heading 2, etc. (in the code <h1>, <h2> etc., so that assistive technologies can

render them as headings).

Because of low vision some users will perceive a web page very differently to the way other users would visually perceive it. Therefore make sure not to give important information solely by the use of colour or with an instruction requiring sensory skills. For example, avoid writing only things like: '...you can read more about the event in the blue box to the right'.

It is fine to write something like this if you supplement it with something that all users can find, such as an additional text: '...you can read more about the event in the blue box to the right by the heading Events in March.' This way you are also giving text that all users will be able to find.

If you change the language in the text make sure you state the language of that piece of text. In the code this is done with the attribute lang="" for the text unit. If you have a good CMS it will allow you to highlight the piece of text and choose language from a drop down menu.

Links

When you add links on a page write link texts that make sense when read out of context. For instance avoid using link texts such as 'Read more,' 'Here,' 'Click here,' 'Publication,' etc. An example could be a text: 'You can read more about the Assistive Technologies event here.' Another example could be writing: 'You can [read more](#) about the Assistive Technologies event [here](#).' It will be better to write 'You can read more [about the Assistive Technologies event here](#)' for example. This way you are giving a link text that in itself is a good indicator of what the destination page is about.

Images

When you add images to a web page consider the fact that some users cannot see images. They need a text alternative. In most CMSs this is stated as "alternative text" or "alt text." The text given here is not visually displayed on the page but is hidden in the code to be accessed by screen readers. (The alternative text is not the same as a tooltip: The text displayed when

you hover over the image from the 'title' attribute).

Close your eyes and visualise what information you need if you cannot see the image. Describe the purpose of the image and not necessarily what the image is of. If the image is linking, it is important to describe where the link goes to/what happens when clicking on the image. If the image is solely used for decorative purposes such as creating an ambience or a visual context, then it should have no alternative text. (but your CMS should automatically insert the tag alt="" to the image in the code as this is important for decorative images). If the image contains information that information should be given in the alternative text.

Avoid using images of text. This means that you should avoid writing text in an image editing program and saving it as an image. Many of the types of software that reads text aloud (for instance used by dyslexics) cannot read images of text. This is because you cannot highlight text within an image to have it read out to you. (Some of these types of software can read alternative texts, but far from all. And they should not be confused with screen reader software used by the visually impaired. These are much more advanced). Images of text also tend to pixelate and become blurry upon magnification making them difficult to read.

Video and audio

If you are using video or audio clips on a web page there are several criteria to consider, such as captioning and audio description on video. Audio description is an extra track explaining what happens on the screen to visually impaired users. If you are not able to provide your videos with audio descriptions then give an alternative in the form of a transcript that is uploaded or linked to from the page. But be aware that without audio descriptions you cannot be AA compliant, but only A-compliant.

If the content is solely visual (no sound) or only audio (no visual) then a text version is an accepted alternative on both levels.

When using data tables with information it is important to indicate headings for rows and/or columns. The way

to do this is very CMS specific. In some cases the editor provides an accessibility tab where this information can be entered when using data tables.

Lists

When using a list of items make sure to use the function for this that is built into the editor in the CMS. This will ensure that accessible code is entered for lists. Avoid just making dots that looks like a list (such as asterisk, dash etc.).

Documents

Many of the same principles that apply to web content are relevant for documents. There are several sets of guidelines that are relevant when talking about accessible documents and especially accessible PDF. Most of this is covered by WCAG 2.0. Also an international standard ISO 14289-1 (PDF/UA-1) defines how to create accessible PDF. A way of testing for conformance is included in the Matterhorn Protocol.

Our whitepaper 'How to create accessible PDFs': <http://go.siteimprove.co.uk/how-to-create-accessible-pdfs> covers all these areas.

The process of ensuring website accessibility

Web accessibility isn't something that is ensured solely through a website development project. To be successful, accessibility has to be a part of the overall web governance strategy.

Accessibility is often a neglected part of making a website strategy. The project manager usually has too much on their plate, and accessibility slips through the cracks. It isn't neglected as a result of not caring or a lack of interest, but rather because there is too much trust put in the vendors. The tendency is to assume that they know what to do, and that adding accessibility to your requirements specification means it will be taken care of. Unfortunately, this is far from the case.

Another problem is that many web managers do not know enough about accessibility to know that ensuring good web accessibility is a process, rather than just a coding task during development.

In many web projects an executive in the organisations says: 'Our website must meet WCAG, the web accessibility guidelines on all conformance levels,' but they have no idea what this entails. Accessibility isn't something that can be simply added into the current web project and the new website budget. For example, if you want to add a video to your website and want it to conform to the guidelines on level AA (which is mandatory for many public websites) there are many aspects to consider. You must provide captions, audio description and a number of other things. If you wish to conform on level AAA you must also provide sign language of the content. Do you have the resources for this every time you upload a video to the website?

Accessibility is relevant as an on-going process during the lifetime of the website. Every time you integrate a third party solution or you upload video or audio content and similar situations. The publishing process of web editors and the CMS that the website is based on also has influence on the ability and the situation of whether the publishing work flow supports

accessibility or whether it introduces new accessibility issues.

It's a good idea to have a separate strategy for ambitions on accessibility and what strategy to have in order to ensure it. It is also important to integrate the number of accessibility criteria relevant in the organisation's communications policy, design guide, policy for purchase and the like. Create a matrix of the stakeholders in the process.

Helpful Tips

It's also a good idea to divide it into a set of areas of responsibility and subsidiary goals:

- Who will ensure that the right requirements are made at the right time with the vendors?
- Who will ensure that accessibility is integrated in the different policies for the organisation? (Communications policy, design guide, policy for purchase and the likes).
- Who takes responsibilities for accessibility during design and development?
- How do we ensure that the requirements are met? Remember the CMS, video and audio players, forms and all the technical tools that are connected to and integrated with the website.
- Who ensures that web editors and authors of documents are trained to have an accessible publishing work flow?
- Who ensures that there is an on-going process of checking if the guidelines are met and that no new accessibility issues are introduced on the website?

It's important to have established the division of ownership and responsibilities on all the different areas, and you should have an accessibility coordinator. This person is consulted when new decisions are made for the website. This could be restructuring, new purchases and integration, change of existing policies and the like. And this person has a written network of contacts inside and outside the organisation that in some way can affect the website and its content.

Level of ambition and resources spent

It is important to define a level of ambition that is in correspondence with the resources you have available.

First of all the ability to assess a website and its compliance with accessibility guidelines requires a considerable amount of work and knowledge. Initially it is a good idea to clarify the roles and responsibilities and which parts you are able to do within the organisation and which ones require outside help. This is relevant both for testing for accessibility issues and fixing accessibility issues.

Often the case is that a number of issues are something that you are able to fix within the organisation and some issues (often related to style sheets and templates) is something you need outside help to fix. It is recommended you sort through the list of issues and divide them into these categories. Also remember that issues on level A are considered most important and issues on level AA considered second most important. Level AAA is a level you pick from, depending on types of pages and target groups.

Some criteria do not require a lot of work to meet and other require a lot of work. For instance the criteria on media content are quite extensive and time consuming. Therefore it is important to have a realistic approach and level of ambition for meeting these requirements.

Getting a new website

If you are about to redesign your website, now is a good time to focus on getting a website that can be used by as many people as possible. As soon as you think 'new website' you should think 'accessibility'. By considering and implementing accessibility early on, the process will be much more manageable than if you think 'accessibility' in the late stages of developing a new website.

Requirements Specification

When you are writing your accessibility requirement specifications for your web development team, it is important that you use the right standards (The best standards are the international guidelines

for accessibility outlined by WCAG). In web design projects, it's fairly common for the buyer to request that the website be designed in conformance with WCAG 2.0 on level AA, however this requirement may not be as straightforward as it would appear at first glance. In the middle of the project, how will you determine whether or not the website meets your expectations? My recommendation is that you explicitly state the individual success criteria that you wish to have compliance with. Have your website developer state if and how this is going to be complied with. Define the following (in a table or similar):

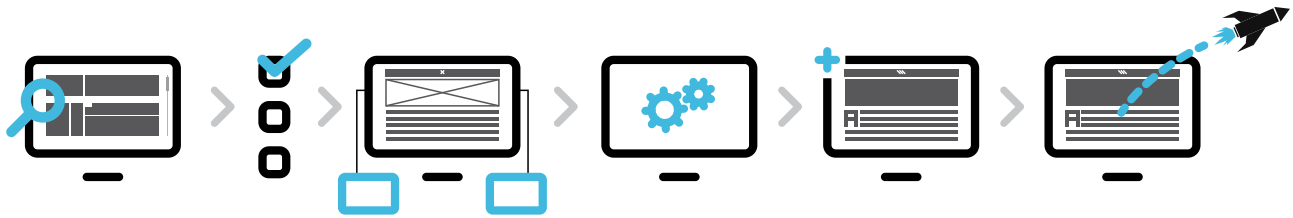
- Reference to criteria: 1.1.1
- Description of criteria: Non-text Content: All non-text content that is...
- Notes on criteria: This is relevant for images...
- Developer's field for description of solution (leave blank for developer to fill out)

Do the same for all the criteria. You can also state, if a criteria is an ultimate requirement or a desirable requirement.

It's also important that the CMS used to build the website helps web editors publish accessible content. Make requirements on how this should be ensured. You can pick the necessary check points from the guidelines on accessible authoring tools ATAG (these guidelines dictate that the tool generates accessible web content, helps web editors to publish accessible content, and that the tool itself is accessible). In my experience, you'll want to explicitly state requirements for how to:

- Handle alternative texts for images
- The use of headings
- The ability to create accessible data tables
- How to make quotes (<q> and <blockquote>)
- How to enter page titles
- How the html code created by the CMS complies with the W3C standards
- How to tag change of language in the text entered

Consider also the organisation's design manual and



Existing design: Evaluate > Specification: Make requirements > Design / mock ups: Evaluate > Templates and structure: Test > Content: Training and testing > Live: Strategy for training and testing

if there are any contradictions with the accessibility guidelines. For example there are specific accessibility guidelines on the contrast ratio between background and text colours. For this reason it is important to use 'accessible' colour combinations.

Design and Development

A handful of the accessibility criteria are relevant when starting the phase of designing and doing wire frames. Think about navigation, the use of headings, colours, link texts and descriptions where the user is to click on, fill out or choose content on web pages.

When it comes to the process of development most of the accessibility criteria are relevant. Therefore it is important that the people developing the solution have a solid understanding of accessibility. Make sure you test the solution during the process from start to finish. Do not wait until the acceptance test. By then it's nearly an impossible task to correct possible errors and shortcomings before the site goes live. It's especially important that the templates for different pages are tested as early as possible before building on them, to avoid spreading mistakes to hundreds or thousands of pages.

Publishing content

Make sure you train web editors on how to publish content the 'accessible way'. This way, when content is added both in the development phase and after you've launched, it furthers your site's accessibility rather than introducing new accessibility issues.

Media players, forms, and old content

Areas which are often being neglected occur when third party solutions are integrated, such as media players and forms. Remember these in the process.

They should also be accessible!

Also think about content being migrated from the old system into the new. If you change the html/ xhtml version the syntax specifications from W3C are different. There might also be content from the old system that is not accessible. After all your hard work, the last thing you want is to carry old problems over to your new website.

Accessibility Top 5

Text for everyone

- Make sure all text can be highlighted and read aloud so that screen readers and reading tools can access them (try turning off style sheets and images, and make sure no important information is missing. Another way to test is to access the website with reading tools or to test with real users of assistive technologies)
- Avoid images of text where possible. Where not, make sure that text alternatives are equivalent
- Provide alternative text for images: These must reflect the purpose of the image:
 - Decorative: no alternative text
 - Having a function: Describe this
 - Linking: Describe destination

Versatility

Create a website that can be used by as many as possible, in as many ways as possible according to user needs.

- All functionality can be used with a mouse
- All functionality can be used without a mouse – from the keyboard alone.
- Users can adapt colour and font according to

specific needs.

Association

- Text, headings, buttons, fields etc. that are logically connected must also be visually connected.
- Make sure it is also connected in the code.
- Make sure not to give instructions based solely on a location of content, such as ‘In the box to your right...’. Supplement with a heading also
- Make link texts that can be read out of context. Avoid ‘Click here’, ‘Read more’, ...

Colour for everyone

- Make sure that the colour of the background and the colour of the text are in sufficient contrast to each other. That way people with low vision can also read it.
- Make sure that you do not give information to the user only by use of colour (such as saying ‘In the green box you will find...’). Otherwise it can create problems for both users with low vision or no vision, or people with colour blindness.

Robustness

- Have a consistent design throughout the website
- Follow known conventions
- Follow the standard for the format you are publishing in (for example html 5 syntax) – this will optimise your website for many different platforms and user agents

Accessible PDF Top 3

- Structure documents
 - Headings
 - Lists
 - Tables
 - Alternative text for images
 - Columns
- Ensure reading order
- Save as pdf – do not print as pdf

Common accessibility issues

Images

A common misunderstanding is that all images need an alternative text. This is not the case, but all images need an alt-tag (the code alt=””). Whether the image should have an alternative text depends on the context and purpose of the image. Ask yourself these questions:

“Do I use the image as a decoration to create a visual context?” If this is the case, the image should not have an alternative text.

“Do I use the image to provide information?”

Then you need to describe what a visually impaired user can’t see on the image (and this is not necessarily the same as describing what the image shows).

“Does the image link?” Then you need to describe the destination of the link in the alternative text.

Headings

Most people believe their CMS automatically puts in headings in fixed places on the pages and therefore they need not worry about headings. A website’s main areas need to be categorised by headings. Places on the site where you wish to logically and visually highlight an area by using bold font/large font/another colour etc. then this heading should also be highlighted code-wise so the heading not only functions visually, but also structurally. This means that it largely depends on page types/templates. The web editors also need to be able to enter headings (H1, H2...) in the content part of the pages.

Forms

Most people think that if a search field has a placeholder text indicating the purpose, this is sufficient instructions for users. If you need to be sure that all users can identify and use the search field, and at the same time comply with the guidelines, then you need to explicitly add text to the field through a label (the code label for=””). If this is not possible, use title=””).

Read aloud functionality

Many believe that if they link to a read aloud functionality all disabled users are able to use the website. This is not necessarily true. An audio reading tool might help some people with dyslexia, but most people with impairments or dyslexia use specialised assistive technologies. They need significantly more help than what a simple audio reading tool can provide. The web standards and guidelines for accessibility are created in order for user agents (browsers, assistive technologies etc.) to be able to interpret a website and render it in a meaningful way to the user. That is why the most important element when working towards ensuring accessibility is to follow the standards and guidelines.

Resources on Web Accessibility

The international resource on web accessibility is the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) with W3C: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>. On their website you will find an extensive collection of information on how to work with accessibility.

WAI working group created the international guidelines on Web Accessibility Web Content Accessibility Guidelines: <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>.

Siteimprove provides a library of blog posts covering accessibility from different angles: <http://blog.siteimprove.co.uk/topic/accessibility>.

If you are particularly interested in accessibility in terms of documents such as PDF you can download our whitepaper on how to create accessible PDF: <http://go.siteimprove.co.uk/how-to-create-accessible-pdfs>.

AbilityNet has gathered a list of great resources when working on accessibility: <http://www.abilitynet.org.uk/advice-info/web-accessibility-resources>.



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A beginners guide to Siteimprove Accessibility

How Siteimprove Accessibility helps your work

There are many areas within accessibility that can be detected by an automated or semi-automated tool and our Siteimprove accessibility tool does this by giving you an overview of the issues and the pages they affect. Furthermore you are provided with different filter options that allow you to choose how you wish to work with accessibility. These options will be described in detail further on within this document.

There are two scenarios in which it is particularly beneficial to use the tool:

- On an existing website – use the tool to work through current issues and assign them based on issue type, where they occur, or by who should fix them. Monitor if new issues are introduced and address them promptly
- When getting a new website – have the development site crawled to quickly catch any accessibility issues being introduced, before it becomes too extensive and requires a lot of time to fix

Full compliance and accessibility tools

A number of accessibility issues can be found through automated testing. The Siteimprove Accessibility tool will cover these. A number of areas need to be evaluated through human assessment however, as it is impossible to test all issues via automated testing. On the guidelines page these areas are given.

Who should use the tool

Webmaster

The person(s) in charge of the website may choose to assign themselves as an administrator which means that they can go through the issues reported and assign them to lists: Webmaster, Developer or Web Editor. The webmaster can also choose to add issues to the list of ignored issues in decisions.

The webmaster has a list in the tool that gives all the issues to be worked on for this role.

Developer

A list of issues in this category is displayed in the tool. These issues are typically related to style sheets and CSS. Often this list is for a website provider and not the website owner.

Web Editor

In the tool a list is available for web editors. It lists issues that are introduced in the content creation process.

First time using the tool and main features

If you are new to the accessibility tool it is recommended that you explore the site and get an overview of the areas available to you.

If you are interested in what issues your websites has it would be beneficial to look at the issues page.

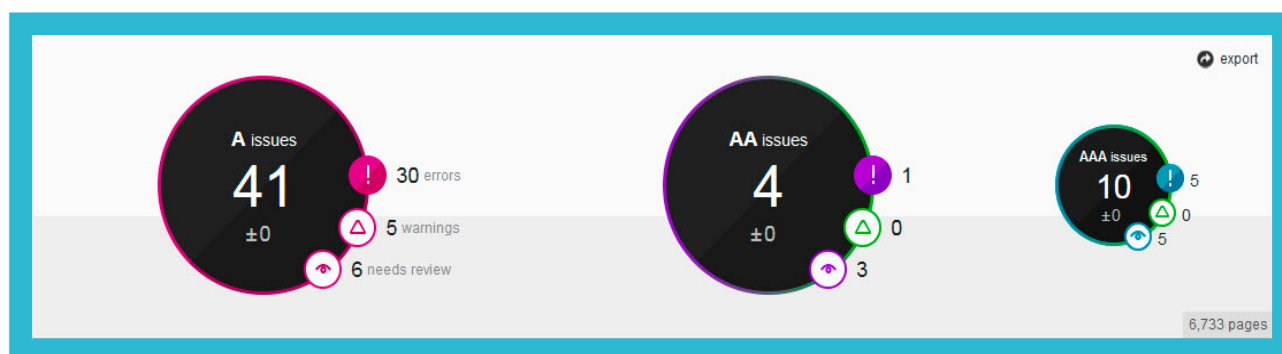
If you would like to learn about the WCAG 2.0 guidelines, and the issues your website has in accordance to these, it would be beneficial to look at the guidelines page.

Front page

The front page of the accessibility tool will provide you with an overview of a number of areas:

The various circles indicate the number of issues present on the website / within the chosen group – aka. A, AA or triple AAA issues.

Depending on organisational responsibilities, an overview of issues within the categories of webmaster, developer



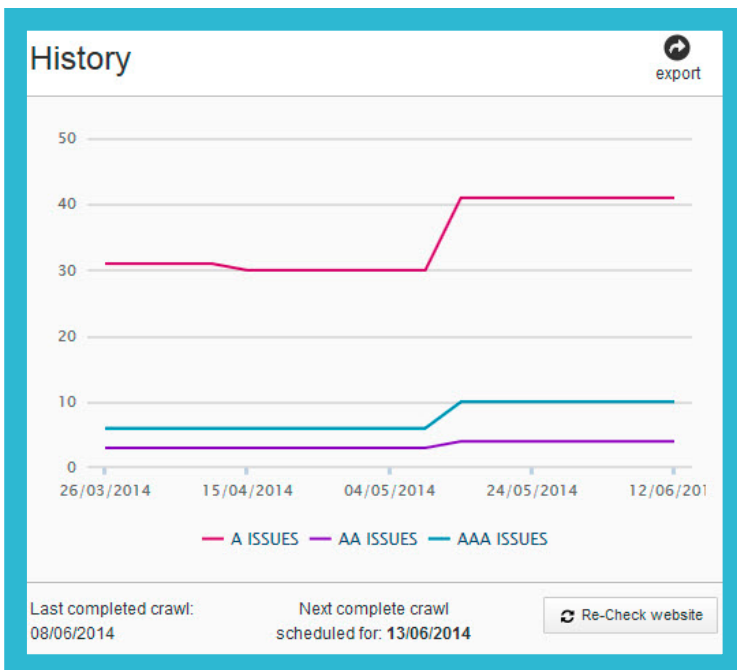
or web editor are available. Additionally you are provided with a group of high priority issues:

- issues with headings
- issues with images
- issues with forms
- issues with links

Webmaster		Developer	
Links should be combined	6,536 pages	Link identified only by colour	6,358 pages
Layout issue	475 pages	Missing button in form	6,281 pages
Image with no alt attribute	361 pages	Set the language of the page	553 pages
Use correct styling of text	85 pages	Input field is missing a description	2 pages
View all 12 issues		View all 18 issues	

Editor		Issue Categories	
Non-distinguishable links	4,561 pages	h1	3 issues with headings
The link text is not sufficient	1,853 pages		7 issues with images
Image link has no alternative text	243 pages		5 issues with links
The heading is missing text	153 pages		12 issues with forms
View all 23 issues			






To monitor your progress and see whether the numbers of issues are decreasing the tool also provides you with a history graph.



As PDF files are often a big part of your web content the tool also gives you a list of the PDF-files with the highest number of errors, and a direct link to the PDF-file section.

PDFs with Accessibility issues

Inaccessible PDFs can greatly affect the user experience of visitors using a user agent such as a screen reader to interpret the document.

PDF	Issues	Clicks on PDFs
 http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id...	4	52
 http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id...	3	35
 http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id...	3	30
 http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id...	4	29
 http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id...	2	21

[View all](#)





Single Page Check

If you add a new page to your website and want to check it right away you can use the single page check (instead of waiting for the next scheduled crawl).

Single Page Check

Check individual pages at anytime to ensure new pages are error free. Pages are checked across WGS services - Quality Assurance, Accessibility & SEO. [help](#)

URL

	Page title / URL	Title URL Both	Added by / Added on	
	Braintree District Council Homepage - Telephone: 01376 552525 http://www.braintree.gov.uk		Siteimprove User 04/02/2014 09:21:52	
	Apply for planning permission - Braintree District Council http://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200226/apply_for_planning_permission		Siteimprove User 03/10/2013 08:51:00	

Issues Page

The issues page provides you with a full list of issues with your website and can be filtered according to focus areas, level of conformance and responsibilities. On this page you also have the ability to move issues between the areas of responsibilities.

The screenshot shows the 'Issues' page interface. At the top, there's a header with 'Issues' and a subtitle: 'Accessibility issues on your website in accordance with the WCAG 2.0 Guidelines. Issues can introduce problems for the users of your website.' There are 'help' and 'export' icons. Below the header are filter buttons for 'Responsibility', 'Category', 'AAA Conformance', and 'Severity'. A red 'A' badge is visible. The main content is a list of issues, each with a red exclamation mark icon, a description, a question mark icon, and a page count. The issue 'Set the language of the page' is highlighted, and a modal window is open showing details for this issue.

Issue Description	Page Count
Links should be combined	6,536 pages
Link identified only by colour	6,358 pages
Missing button in form	6,281 pages
Non-distinguishable links	4,561 pages
The link text is not sufficient	1,853 pages
Set the language of the page	553 pages
Layout issue	475 pages
Image with no alt attribute	361 pages
Image link has no alternative text	243 pages

Set the language of the page

The webpage is missing a definition of the natural language.

How to fix it:
Development task: Provide a 'lang' attribute for HTML documents or an xml:lang attribute for xhtml documents to indicate the natural language of the page.

3 Understandable 3.1 Readable **3.1.1 Language of Page**

Guidelines Page

The guidelines page provides you an overview of all the WCAG 2.0 success criteria, and allows you to see which criteria you have issues with and which ones you don't (based on automated testing). You will also be able to view all the individual issues for each success criterion.

The screenshot shows the 'WCAG 2.0 Guidelines' page. The header includes 'WCAG 2.0 Guidelines' and a subtitle: 'WCAG 2.0 Guidelines and Success Criteria where issues have been identified on the chosen site. Specific issues can be viewed by expanding each Success Criteria'. There are 'help' and 'export' icons. A filter for 'AAA Conformance' is present. The main content is a table with columns for 'No.', 'Guidelines and Success Criteria', 'Errors', 'Warnings', and 'Reviews'.

No.	Guidelines and Success Criteria	Errors	Warnings	Reviews
1	Perceivable			
1.1	Text Alternatives			
1.1.1	Non-text Content	3	1	0
1.2	Time-based Media			
1.2.1	Audio-only and Video-only (Prerecorded)	0	0	1
1.2.2	Captions (Prerecorded)	0	0	1
1.2.3	Audio Description or Media Alternative (Prerecorded)	0	0	1
1.2.4	Captions (Live)	0	0	1
1.2.5	Audio Description (Prerecorded)	0	0	1
1.2.6	Sign Language (Prerecorded)	0	0	1

1.1.1 Non-text Content		?	3	1	0
					export
Issues	Pages				
Links should be combined	6,536				
Image with no alt attribute	361				
Alternative text for the image is a duplicate	41				
Decorative images	2,347				

Pages Page

If you wish to work with individual pages you always have the option to access these and at the same time have an overview of the number of issues identified for each page.

Pages with WCAG 2.0 Accessibility Issues							?	export
All pages that have validation errors and pages that contain accessibility errors and/or warnings on level A, AA and AAA in accordance with WCAG 2.0.							help	
						URL	Search	Q
Page title / URL	Title	URL	Both	A	AA	AAA	Page views	
Braintree District Council Homepage - Telephone: 01376 552525 http://www.braintree.gov.uk				44	21	45	5,240	1
Library/ Site clear sack request form - Braintree District Council https://www.braintree.gov.uk/forms/form/395/en/library_site_clear_sack_request_form				11	5	0	4,027	5
Search and track planning applications - Braintree District Council http://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200225/search_and_track_planning_applications				11	13	0	2,118	2
Planning - Braintree District Council http://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200221/planning				11	11	0	1,031	3

Page reports

Each website has its own page displaying all the issues present on that page. We provide filters for prioritisation and detailed descriptions of all issues as well as a visual highlighting of the issue on the actual page (where possible). We also provide links to techniques on how to fix issues.

The screenshot displays the Siteimprove Page Report interface for the Braintree District Council homepage. The left sidebar shows an 'Accessibility Issue (AA)' for '1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum)'. The issue description states: 'Colour contrast is not sufficient'. It provides design tasks, notes, and techniques for meeting the criteria. A table lists three instances of the issue on the page, all with a contrast value of 3.0627. The main content area shows a preview of the website with a 'Free workshop' button highlighted in green. Below the preview, technical details are provided: Text: rgb(255,255,255), Background: rgb(85,165,70), Text size: 12px, Contrast: 3.0627 (required for AA: 4.5, AAA: 7), and the corresponding HTML code for the button.

PDFs Page

We do a crawl of all the PDFs on your website and provide you with an overview page of all the PDFs that have accessibility issues. We provide a summary of issues for each PDF and a link to a detailed document report with detailed descriptions of each issue, as well as a visual highlighting of the issue on the actual page (where possible).

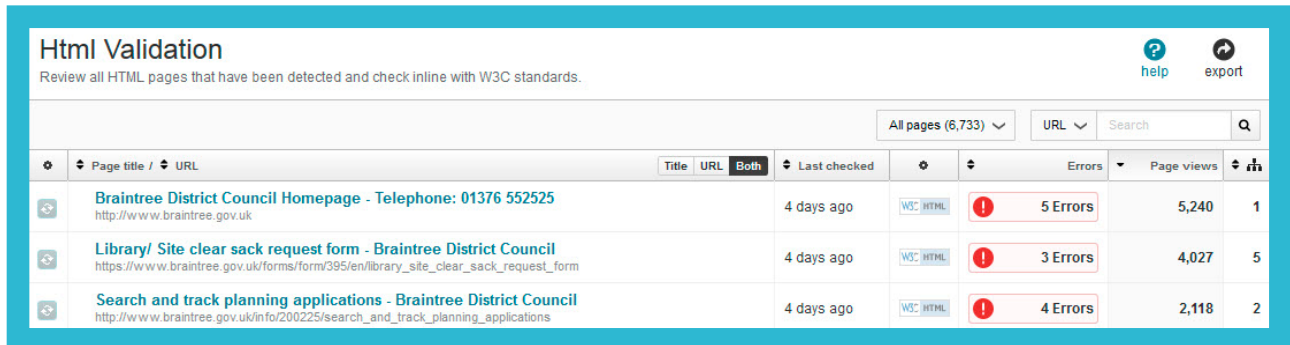
The screenshot shows the Siteimprove Document Report for a PDF document titled 'e54 core strategy submission draft-sa and sea environmental report-annex b baseline information april 2010'. The left sidebar lists several issues: 'The document is missing a language definition', 'The document has no title', 'The first heading is not a Heading 1', 'The document contains untagged content', and 'The image has no alternative presentation'. The main content area shows the PDF text, including sections on 'Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)', 'Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)', and 'Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs)'. A map titled 'FIGURE 1 - SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST IN ESSEX' is highlighted with a red box.

Validation

If you would like to know how your website is performing in accordance to the W3C syntax requirements for html and CSS we provide you with two pages: HTML validation and CSS validation.

HTML validation

We provide you with an overview of all your web pages and the number of errors each page has with a link to the W3C validation service providing detailed descriptions of each error.



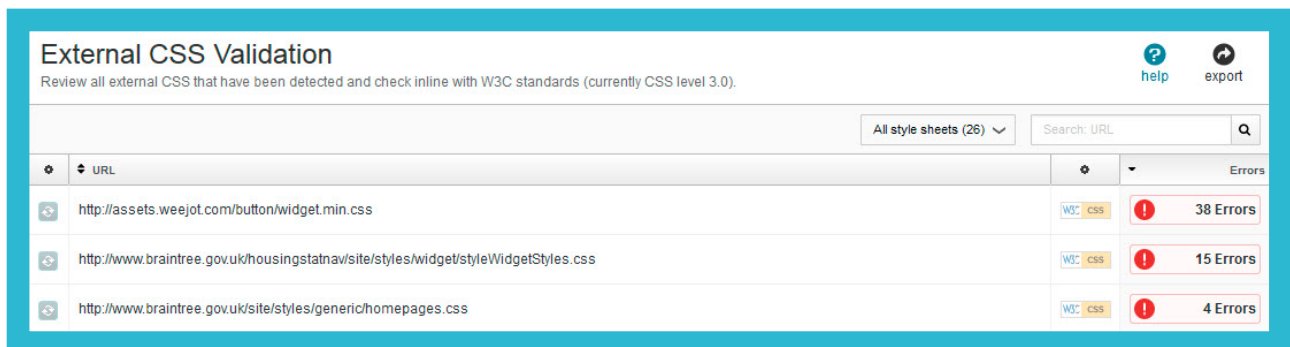
Html Validation
Review all HTML pages that have been detected and check inline with W3C standards.

All pages (6,733) | URL | Search

Page title / URL	Title URL Both	Last checked	Errors	Page views
Braintree District Council Homepage - Telephone: 01376 552525	4 days ago	W3C: HTML	5 Errors	5,240
Library/ Site clear sack request form - Braintree District Council	4 days ago	W3C: HTML	3 Errors	4,027
Search and track planning applications - Braintree District Council	4 days ago	W3C: HTML	4 Errors	2,118

CSS validation

We provide you with an overview of all your style sheets and the number of errors each style sheet has with a link to



External CSS Validation
Review all external CSS that have been detected and check inline with W3C standards (currently CSS level 3.0).

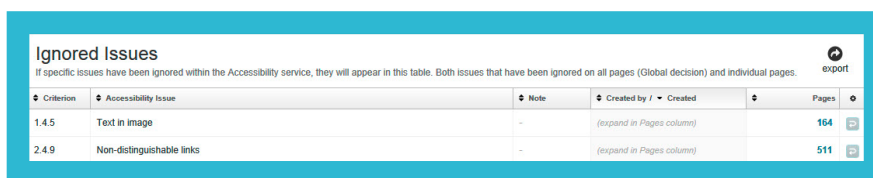
All style sheets (26) | Search: URL

URL	Errors
http://assets.weejot.com/button/widget.min.css	W3C: CSS 38 Errors
http://www.braintree.gov.uk/housingstatnav/site/styles/widget/styleWidgetStyles.css	W3C: CSS 15 Errors
http://www.braintree.gov.uk/site/styles/generic/homepages.css	W3C: CSS 4 Errors

the W3C validation service providing detailed descriptions of each error.

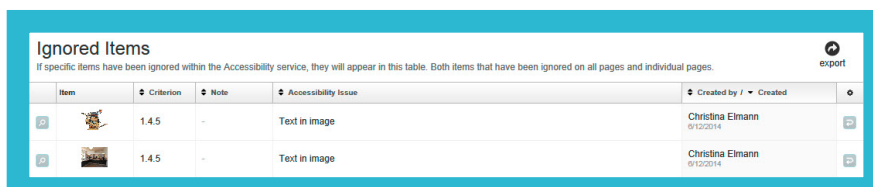
Decisions

When you choose to ignore an issue either for the entire website, on individual pages, or for individual items, your decisions are saved in a section which contains two pages: Ignored issues and Ignored items.



Ignored Issues
If specific issues have been ignored within the Accessibility service, they will appear in this table. Both issues that have been ignored on all pages (Global decision) and individual pages.

Criterion	Accessibility Issue	Note	Created by / Created	Pages
1.4.5	Text in image	-	(expand in Pages column)	164
2.4.9	Non-distinguishable links	-	(expand in Pages column)	511



Ignored Items
If specific items have been ignored within the Accessibility service, they will appear in this table. Both items that have been ignored on all pages and individual pages.

Item	Criterion	Note	Accessibility Issue	Created by / Created
	1.4.5	-	Text in image	Christina Elmann 9/12/2014
	1.4.5	-	Text in image	Christina Elmann 9/12/2014

Getting started

A beneficial way of using the tool is for the person(s) who is predominantly in charge of the website to sort through the list of all issues reported. Afterwards they can make sure that they are assigned to the right list in terms of responsibility (webmaster, developer, web editor), or that they are ignored and as such no longer show in the list of issues.

The following strategy can be applied when aiming at AA conformance.

Start with level A issues as they are considered the most severe. Another way to prioritise issues is to consider starting with the errors flagged by the error icon.



Move on to AA errors.

When you have worked through errors on levels A and AA, then there is the possibility to move onto warnings, flagged with the warning icon.



You can start by looking at A warnings and then AA warnings.

Finally you can work through the issues within the category of needing your review.



The three categories reflect the following:

- Error = Accessibility error.
- Warning = A possible problem has been identified. It needs to be validated by you.
- Review = We cannot investigate this potential issue in an automated way. Your review is needed.

If you wish to pick areas from AAA compliance please note the following: The issue of 'colour contrast is not sufficient' is flagged as an AA error. The contrast ratio requirements are stricter on level AAA. If you are working on fixing issues related to contrast ratio between background and text you may benefit from considering level AAA where possible and AA where not.

If you have limited resources another way of prioritising is to use the filtering option for high priority areas: issues with headings, issues with images, issues with forms and issues with links.

If there are issues that you are not able to fix because of limitations in your technical implementation or CMS you can choose to ignore these issues with the ignore functionality so they no longer occur in your issues list.

You can also ignore issues that you do not currently have the resources to fix. All ignored issues will appear in the decisions section of the tool and at any time you can chose to revert the decision.

Quick wins

Most of the quick wins are issues introduced via style sheets or templates. These issues are usually a matter of fixing a bit of code in one area and the fix will then take effect on all pages where the issue occurs. A good way of working on issues is to look for those issues that are present on a large number of pages, as this indicates a CSS / template issue.

Examples:

- Issues with contrast ratio
- Issues with forms such as global search field
- No definition of language for web pages
- The ability to bypass blocks of repeated content

These issues are most often to be fixed by the developer / web provider.

Accessibility & SEO

A number of accessibility issues relate to both accessibility and visibility in search engines. It would be beneficial to work on fixing these issues. Examples:

- Pages with missing or bad page titles
- Pages without headings – especially without any H1(s)
- Link texts that do not make sense when read out of contexts and are repeated on a page (such as 'Click here', 'Read more', etc.)

Use cases

Looking for full compliance

If you are working on making sure that a website is fully compliant with the accessibility guidelines it is advisable to start by going to the guidelines page. This will give you an overview of all reported issues within their respective success criteria, and will allow you to see which areas are covered by the tool, and which are not. Where a success criterion is greyed out, it means that the accessibility tool cannot check this area and that it needs human evaluation as it cannot be tested in an automated way. You can filter issues by level of conformance (A, AA, AAA). Each issue has a page dedicated to it with a detailed description of the issue and a list of pages where the issue

No.	Guidelines and Success Criteria	Errors	Warnings	Reviews
1	Perceivable			
1.1	Text Alternatives			
1.1.1	Non-text Content	3	1	0
1.2	Time-based Media			
1.2.1	Audio-only and Video-only (Prerecorded)	0	0	1
1.2.2	Captions (Prerecorded)	0	0	1

Issues	Pages
Links should be combined	6,536
Image with no alt attribute	361
Alternative text for the image is a duplicate	41
Decorative images	2,347

occurs. By clicking on any issue from the guidelines page you will be given this overview.

Image with no alt attribute

Image with no alt attribute
The image does not have an 'alt' attribute (alt="").

How to fix it:
Development task: It's important all images have the attribute for alternative text regardless of whether an alternative text is added. A screen reader knows how to handle both an empty attribute and one with a text. If there is no attribute some screen readers will compensate and read the path to the image instead, which will often give no value to the end user.

Page title / URL	Occurrences	Page views	Reviews
Greenfields Community Housing - Braintree District Council http://www.braintree.gov.uk/directory_record/682/greenfields_community_housing	21	46	4
Great Notley Discovery Centre - Braintree District Council http://www.braintree.gov.uk/directory_record/4510/great_notley_discovery_centre	15	26	4
Braintree Community Centre - Braintree District Council http://www.braintree.gov.uk/directory_record/4485/braintree_community_centre	15	25	4

Read the description of the issue and the recommendation on how to fix it. You should now be able to assess whether this is an issue with your website or not. With errors there will be an issue. With warnings and reviews your assessment is needed.

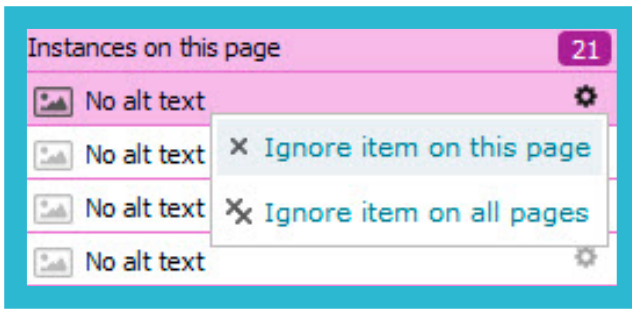
Perhaps you will need to see some examples of the issue before making a decision. You can then click through to the page report and view actual examples highlighted on the web page.

The screenshot displays the Siteimprove Page Report for 'Greenfields Community Housing - Braintree District Council'. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Header:** Siteimprove Page Report, Greenfields Community Housing - Braintree District Council, URL: http://www.braintree.gov.uk/directory_record/682/greenfields_community_housing, User: Siteimprove User.
- Navigation:** Accessibility, Quality Assurance.
- Accessibility Issue (A):**
 - 1.1 TEXT ALTERNATIVES
 - 1.1.1 Non-text Content
 - Image with no alt attribute** (Warning icon)
 - Development task: The image does not have an 'alt' attribute (alt="").
 - It's important all images have the attribute for alternative text regardless of whether an alternative text is added.
 - A screen reader knows how to handle both an empty attribute and one with a text. If there is no attribute some screen readers will compensate and read the path to the image instead, which will often give no value to the end user.
 - Instances on this page: 21
 - List of instances: 21 items, all labeled 'No alt text'.
 - How to meet these criteria?
 - Techniques:** In order to sufficiently meet this criterion, one of the following techniques can be applied.
 1. [H37](#) Using alt attributes on img elements
 - Failures:** The following examples show typical mistakes that cause this error.
 - IGNORED ITEMS (SHOW)
- Content Area:**
 - Recycling and Refuse
 - Housing and Environment
 - About Braintree District
 - Community
 - Advice and Benefits
 - Business
 - Popular tasks
 - Contact Us
 - Telephone number: 01376 535400
 - Email: csc@greenfieldsCH.org.uk
 - Website: www.greenfieldsCH.org.uk
 - Information: General needs and supported housing.
 - Map: A Google Map of Braintree with a red pin on a location. The map shows streets like South St, Noley Rd, and Ley Wood. A yellow box highlights the map area.
- Image Section:**
 - Image:** A smaller version of the map image.
 - Alternative text:** No alt text
 - Image location:** <http://maps.googleapis.com/maps/api/js/StaticMapService.GetMapImage?1m2&12103551&21138770>

Once you are sure of what the issue is and how to fix it you can get to work. If there is no issue, say in the case of a warning or issue that needs your review, then you choose to ignore the issue. Additionally if you do not have the ability or the resources to fix it you can also ignore the issue.







This can be done from the page report on a page level or item level. If you wish to ignore the issue for a specific image on the page you can click the cogwheel and chose to either ignore the issue for this image on this page only, or on every single page where the issue is flagged for this image.



The item will then appear in the decisions section of the tool.

Ignored Items

If specific items have been ignored within the Accessibility service, they will appear in this table. Both items that have been ignored on all pages and individual pages. export

Item	Criterion	Note	Accessibility Issue	Created by / Created	
	1.4.5	-	Text in image	Christina Elmann 9/12/2014	
	1.4.5	-	Text in image	Christina Elmann 9/12/2014	
	1.4.5	-	Text in image	Christina Elmann 9/12/2014	

You can also choose to ignore the issue entirely, as well as all instances on a specific page by clicking the cogwheel next to the issue reported.

1.1 TEXT ALTERNATIVES

1.1.1 Non-text Content

⚠ Image with no alt attribute ⚙️

Development t... attribute (alt="").

✖ Ignore issue on this page

It's important all images have the attribute for alternative text regardless of whether an alternative text is added.

A screen reader knows how to handle both an empty attribute and one with a text. If there is no attribute some screen readers will compensate and read the path to the image instead, which will often give no value to the end user.

The issue for this specific page will then be added to the decision section of this tool for ignored issues. If you wish to ignore the issue for the entire website then go back to the overview listing of all the pages with the

Criterion	Accessibility Issue	Note	Created by / Created	Pages
1.4.5	Text in image	-	(expand in Pages column)	164
2.4.9	Non-distinguishable links	-	(expand in Pages column)	511
1.3.1	The table does not have a description	-	(expand in Pages column)	4
1.3.1	Providing table heading association	-	(expand in Pages column)	5
2.4.4	Non-distinguishable links	-	(expand in Pages column)	555

issues and click the ignore issue on all pages button.

It is important to note however that the issue will no longer be reported in your lists of issues. The issue will be

Image with no alt attribute

Change assigned responsibility
If you are working with the three areas of responsibility as a way of filtering your issues (reflected on the front page) you have the option of assigning issues to another area of responsibility at any time.

Webmaster

Ignore this issue
Ignoring this issue will remove it from the issues list, and the issues count on the front page.

Ignore issue on all pages

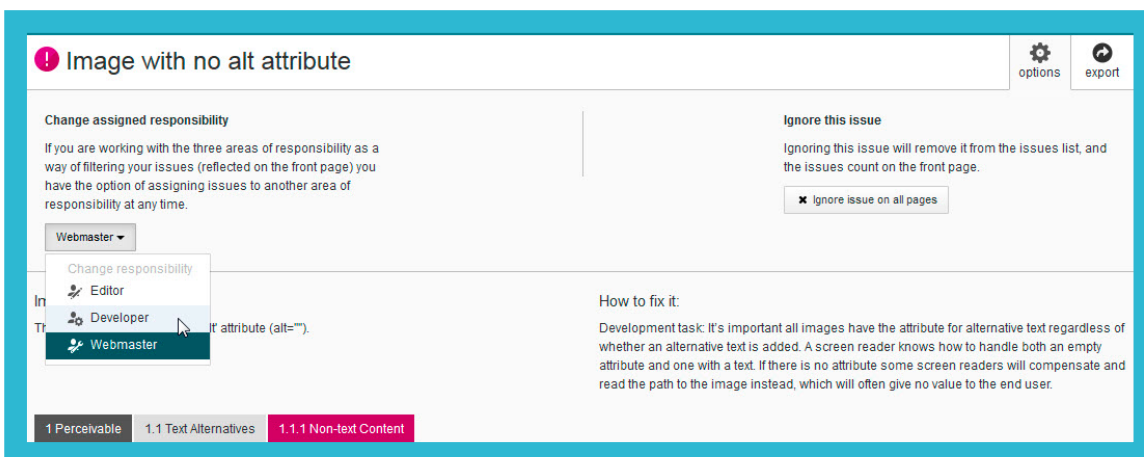
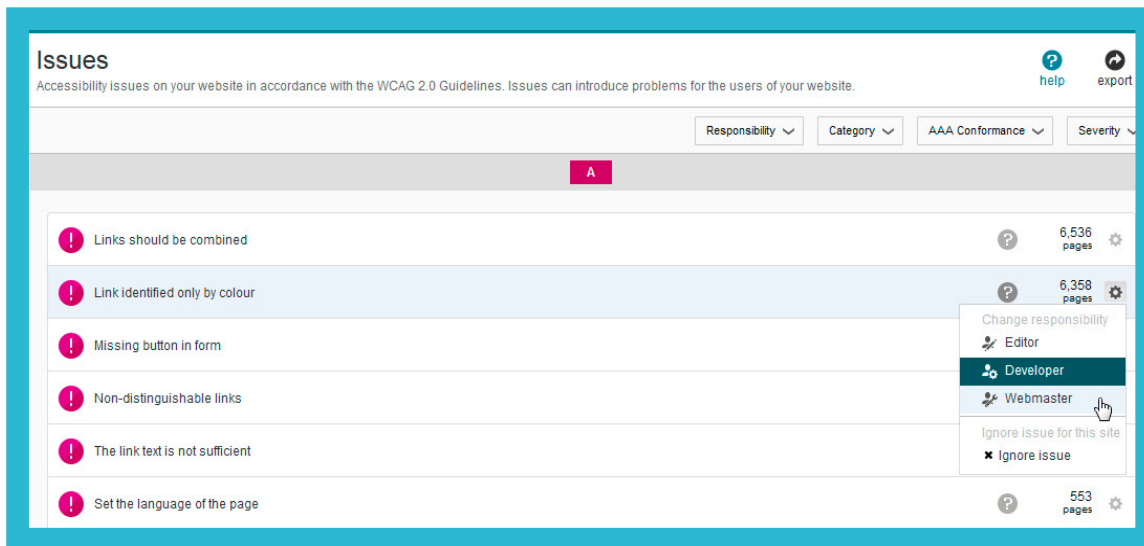
added to the decisions section of the tool.

Criterion	Accessibility Issue	Note	Created by / Created	Pages
1.4.5	Text in image	-	(expand in Pages column)	164
2.4.9	Non-distinguishable links	-	(expand in Pages column)	511
1.3.1	The table does not have a description	-	(expand in Pages column)	4
1.3.1	Providing table heading association	-	(expand in Pages column)	5
2.4.4	Non-distinguishable links	-	(expand in Pages column)	555
3.2.2	Missing button in form		Siteimprove User 5/19/2014	

Once you start fixing issues you should run a crawl of the affected page to check if the issue was fixed. When you are done for the day it is recommended to order a crawl of the website to have fresh results when you come back. A crawl can be ordered from the bottom of the front page of accessibility.

Working through reported issues

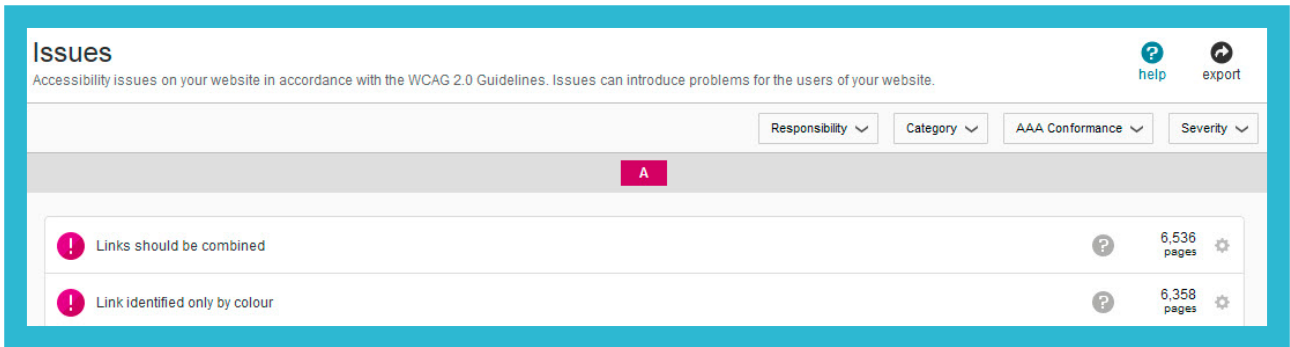
The first time you use the tool you should go through all reported issues and assess if this is something to be fixed and if the issue is assigned to the correct role: webmaster, developer, web editor. If not, you can move issues between these roles of responsibility. This can be done from the issues page.



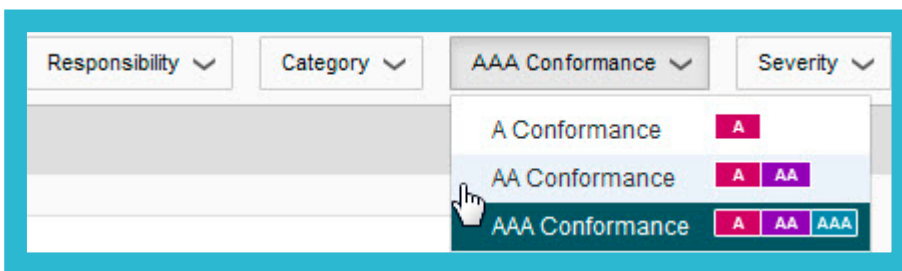
It can also be done from the page showing individual issue.

The assessment can also result in you deciding to ignore the issue if there is no accessibility problem (for warnings and reviews), or if you don't have the resources to fix a specific issue. By using the ignore issue feature your ignored issues will be placed in the decisions part of the tool.

Start on the issues page.



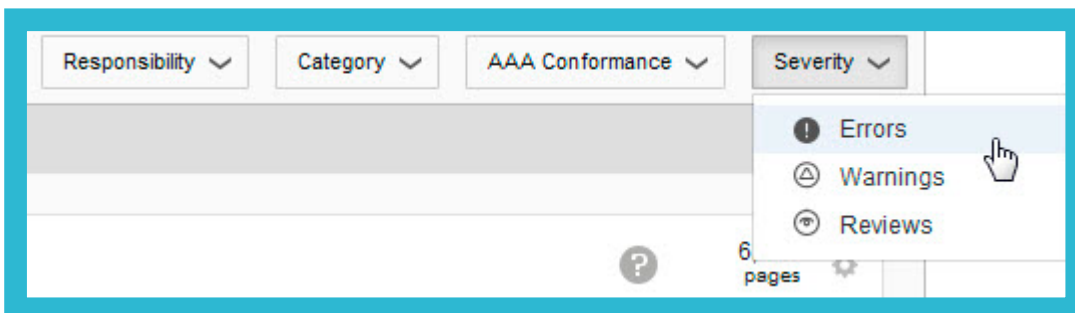
If you are focusing on a specific level of conformance (A, AA or AAA) use the filtering option to display only the



desired level.

Another useful filtering option is to start by working on errors first. Take warnings after that and finally those that need your review.

When you have worked your way through the issues one by one you should end up with three task lists: a list for the



website provider/developer to fix, a list for the webmaster to fix, and a list for the web editors to fix.

For those issues that don't fall under one of those categories you can choose to select to ignore them so that they are not showing up on any task lists.

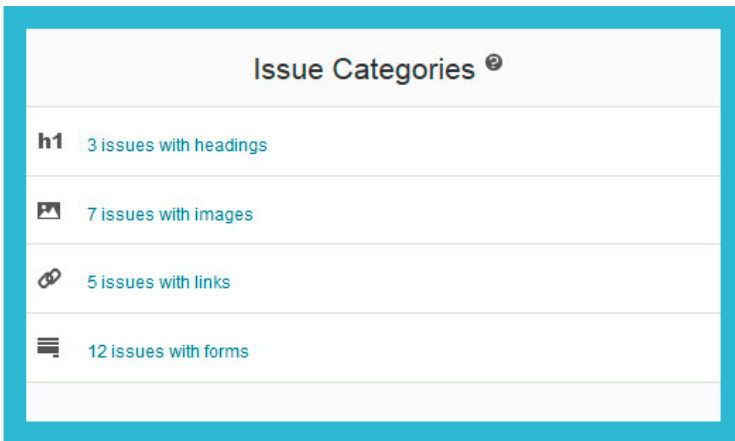
Once you start fixing issues run a crawl of an affected page to check if the issue is fixed. When you are done for the day it is recommended to order a crawl of the website to ensure you have fresh results ready for when you come back in. A crawl can be ordered from the bottom of the front page of Accessibility.

Working with specific focus areas

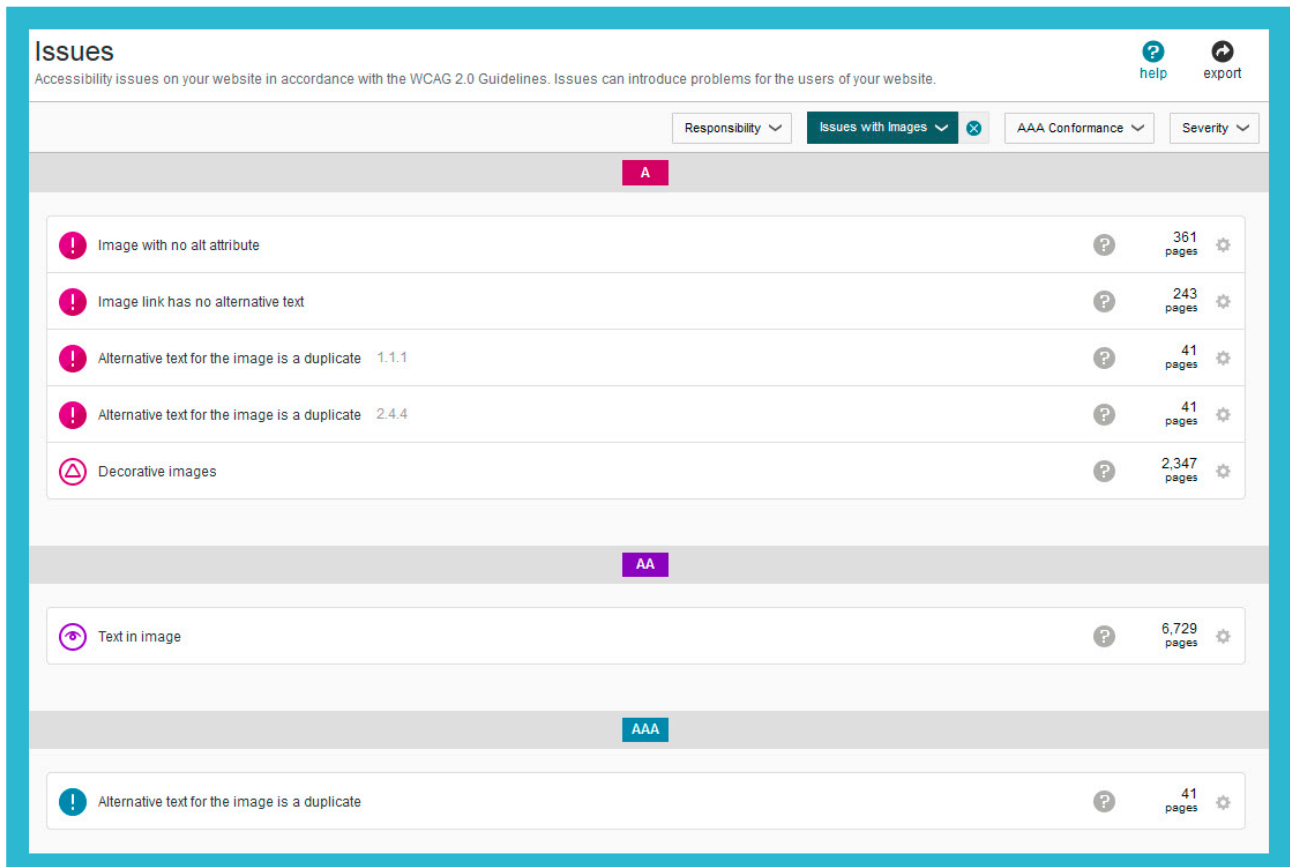
As the possibility of having many accessibility issues reported often occurs, it can become necessary to choose specific focus areas if you don't have the resources to fix everything.

We have pre-chosen four categories for you based on typical focus areas: issues with headings, issues with images, issues with forms and issues with links. We provide you with these options from the front page.

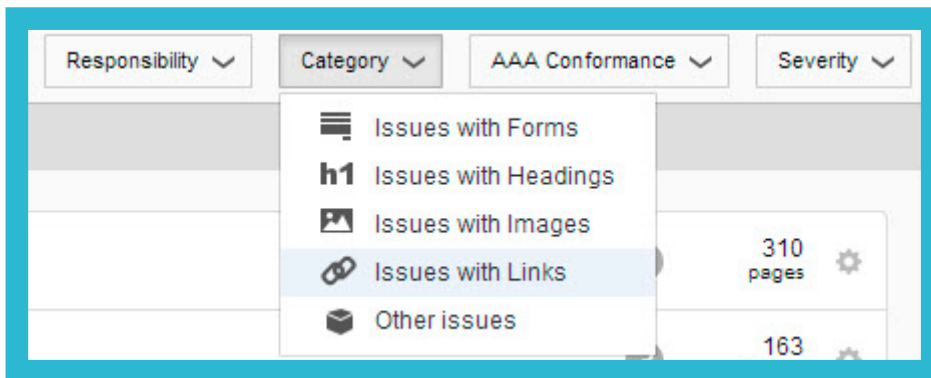
You can choose any of these categories and the link will take you to the issues page showing only issues within that



category. For example you can choose to view only issues with images.



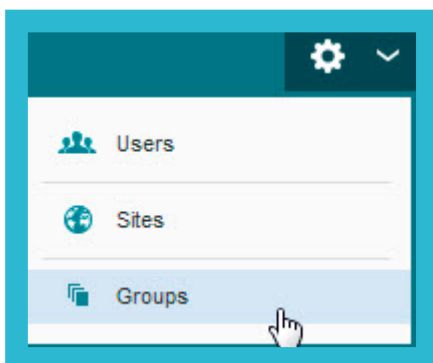
At any time you can choose to remove this filter and choose another category from the filter at the top of the issues page.



Once you start fixing issues run a crawl of an affected page to check if the issue is fixed. When you are done for the day it is recommended to order a crawl of the website, in order to have fresh results ready for when you come back in. A crawl can be ordered from the bottom of the front page of accessibility.

Working on specific web pages

If you wish to only work on a specific set of pages you can create a group for this and work through issues within this group. In the general settings of the tool you can create groups via the cogwheel in the upper right corner called users and service specific settings. You can then choose groups.



If you wish to only work on fixing accessibility issues on a specific page you can find your individual page via pages in the menu. This is a list of all your web pages. You can find a desired page on this list. A count of issues for each page is given and you can also search for a specific page to identify the one you wish to work on.

Pages with WCAG 2.0 Accessibility Issues

All pages that have validation errors and pages that contain accessibility errors and/or warnings on level A, AA and AAA in accordance with WCAG 2.0.

[help](#) [export](#)

URL Search

Page title / URL	Title	URL	Both	A	AA	AAA	Page views	
Braintree District Council Homepage - Telephone: 01376 552525 http://www.braintree.gov.uk				44	21	45	5,240	1
Library/ Site clear sack request form - Braintree District Council https://www.braintree.gov.uk/forms/form395/en/library_site_clear_sack_request_form				11	5	0	4,027	5
Search and track planning applications - Braintree District Council http://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200225/search_and_track_planning_applications				11	13	0	2,118	2
Planning - Braintree District Council http://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200221/planning				11	11	0	1,031	3

When you click on a page link you will be presented with the page report showing you all the issues flagged on this specific page. You can then work through issues and decide what is to be fixed and what is not. You can then click through to expand and have each issue explained in detail, as well as having it highlighted on

the actual page (where possible).

If you wish to ignore an issue with a specific image on the page you can click on the cogwheel and chose to either

1.1 TEXT ALTERNATIVES		
1.1.1	Non-text Content	27
!	Image with no alt attribute	21
!	Links should be combined	6

Siteimprove Page Report

Greenfields Community Housing - Braintree District Council
http://www.braintree.gov.uk/directory_record/682/greenfields_community_housing
 Siteimprove User

Accessibility | Quality Assurance

Accessibility Issue (A) Close

1.1 TEXT ALTERNATIVES

1.1.1 Non-text Content

Image with no alt attribute

Development task: The image does not have an 'alt' attribute (alt="").

It's important all images have the attribute for alternative text regardless of whether an alternative text is added.

A screen reader knows how to handle both an empty attribute and one with a text. If there is no attribute some screen readers will compensate and read the path to the image instead, which will often give no value to the end user.

Instances on this page 21

- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text

How to meet these criteria?

Techniques

In order to sufficiently meet this criterion, one of the following techniques can be applied.

- [H37](#) Using alt attributes on img elements

Failures

The following examples show typical mistakes that cause this error.

IGNORED ITEMS SHOW

Telephone number: 01376 535400

Email: csc@greenfieldsCH.org.uk

Website: www.greenfieldsCH.org.uk

Information: General needs and supported housing.

Map

Image:

Alternative text: No alt text

Image location: <http://maps.googleapis.com/maps/api/js/StaticMapService.GetMapImage?1m2&12103551&21387707>

ignore the issue for the image on that page only, or on every single page where the issue is flagged for this particular image.

The item will then appear in the decisions section of the tool.

Instances on this page 21

- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text
- No alt text

Ignore item on this page

Ignore item on all pages

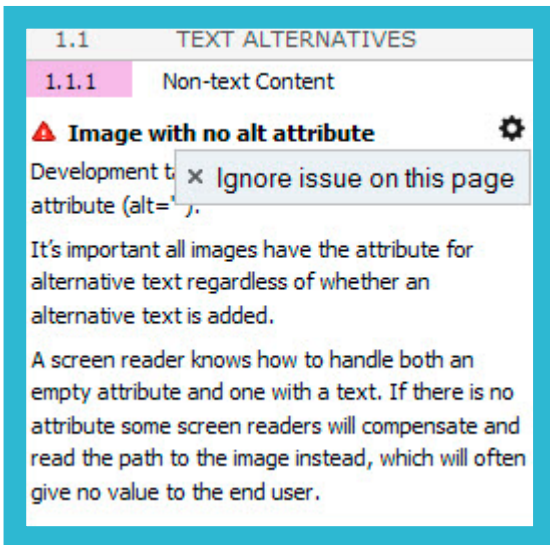
Ignored Items

If specific items have been ignored within the Accessibility service, they will appear in this table. Both items that have been ignored on all pages and individual pages.

export

Item	Criterion	Note	Accessibility Issue	Created by / Created
	1.4.5	-	Text in image	Christina Elmann 9/12/2014
	1.4.5	-	Text in image	Christina Elmann 9/12/2014
	1.4.5	-	Text in image	Christina Elmann 9/12/2014

You can also choose to ignore the issue entirely and all instances on that page by clicking the cogwheel next to the issue reported.



The issue for this specific page will then be added to the decision section of this tool for ignored issues.

Ignored Issues export

If specific issues have been ignored within the Accessibility service, they will appear in this table. Both issues that have been ignored on all pages (Global decision) and individual pages.

Criterion	Accessibility Issue	Note	Created by / Created	Pages
1.4.5	Text in image	-	(expand in Pages column)	164
2.4.9	Non-distinguishable links	-	(expand in Pages column)	511
1.3.1	The table does not have a description	-	(expand in Pages column)	4
1.3.1	Providing table heading association	-	(expand in Pages column)	5
2.4.4	Non-distinguishable links	-	(expand in Pages column)	555
3.2.2	Missing button in form		Siteimprove User 5/19/2014	

If you wish to report an issue to someone it is possible to send a link to the page report with that specific issue opened, also to non-users of the tool. Simply copy the url from the navigation bar and paste it into an email or document.

Once you start fixing issues run a crawl of an affected page to check if the issue is fixed. When you are done for the day it is recommended to order a crawl of the website to ensure you have fresh results for when you come back in. A crawl can be ordered from the bottom of the front page of accessibility.

Working with PDFs

PDFs may be a big part of your web content, and by fixing accessibility issues you can greatly increase the accessibility of these documents for many users.

In the PDFs page, which is available from the left hand menu, you are given a list of all the PDFs on your website (or within a chosen group) that have accessibility issues. PDFs that do not have issues will not appear in this list. You have several filtering options available. One option is to look at only PDFs that are not tagged. Tagging is a

PDF	Tagged	Last modified	Issues	Referring pages	Clicks on PDFs
http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/3449/tour_de_france_route_i...	No	09/01/2014	4	1	52
http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/3749/strategic_housing_mar...	No	30/05/2014	3	1	35
http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/365/proposals_map_septem...	No	23/08/2012	3	1	30
http://www.braintree.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/3654/further_changes_to_pr...	Yes	08/05/2014	4	2	29

fundamental prerequisite for accessibility. Tagging allows user agents such as screen readers to know how to render content in a meaningful way, and if there is no tagging then there is no information on text types such as paragraph, headings, lists, tables and so forth.

Prioritising fixing PDFs that are not tagged is one good way of optimising your efforts. PDFs that have a high number of issues can also be good to prioritize. If you have analytics integration you can also prioritise your efforts on those PDFs that have had a lot of clicks.

You can have a quick overview of the types of issues each PDF has by expanding the issues column.

Issue	Number of issues
The document has no bookmarks	Entire document
The document has no title	Entire document
The document contains no headings	Entire document
The image has no alternative presentation	1

Showing all 4 items

Show 50 rows per page

If you click on a PDF link, this will take you to a document report for that specific PDF, which gives you an overview of all the issues it contains, and where possible will highlight the individual issues on the actual page. For each issue you are given a help text on what the issue entails and suggestions on how to fix it.

The screenshot shows the SiteImprove Document Report interface. The top navigation bar includes the SiteImprove logo, the document title "e54 core strategy submission draft-sa and sea environmental report-annex b baseline information april 2010", and the user name "SiteImprove User". The left sidebar displays a list of accessibility issues under "The entire document" and "Page content with issues". The main content area shows a text snippet about Ramsar sites and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in Braintree District, followed by a section titled "2.3.2 Sites of Specific Scientific Interest" which includes a map of Essex. The map, titled "FIGURE 1 - SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST IN ESSEX", shows various sites across the county, with a legend indicating "Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)", "Rivers", "Urban and Borough", and "Other".

Once you start fixing issues run a crawl of an affected page to check if the issue is fixed. When you are done for the day it is recommended to order a crawl of the website to ensure you have fresh results for when you come back in. A crawl can be ordered from the bottom of the front page of accessibility.

The image has no alternative presentation

An image is present.

If the image is used for decoration, background or another purpose where it has no function it should be defined as an 'Artifact'.

If the image conveys information or has a function of some sort, an alternative text description should be provided for the image. This way a screen reader will be given information about the image.

How to fix it:

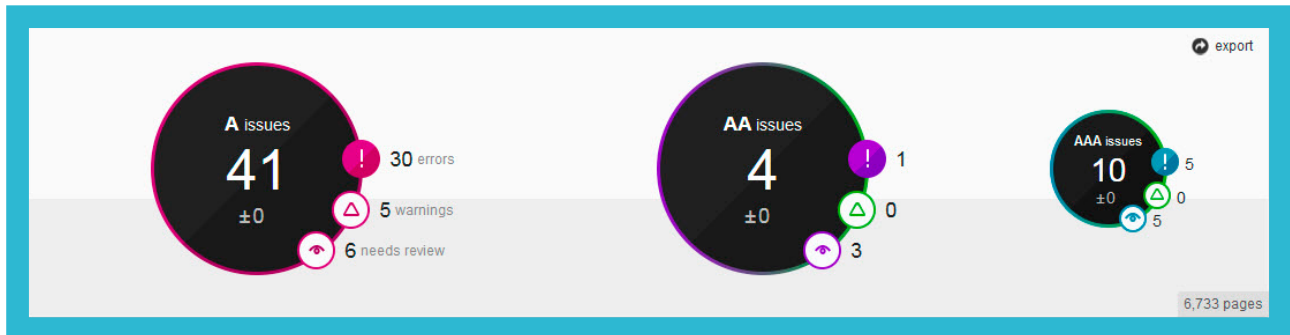
Provide alternative text or 'Artifact' definition for the image in the original document (such as MS Word or Adobe InDesign) and save it as pdf with tagging.

If this is not possible the alternative text or Artifact definition can also be added in the pdf with a remediation tool.

Monitoring progress

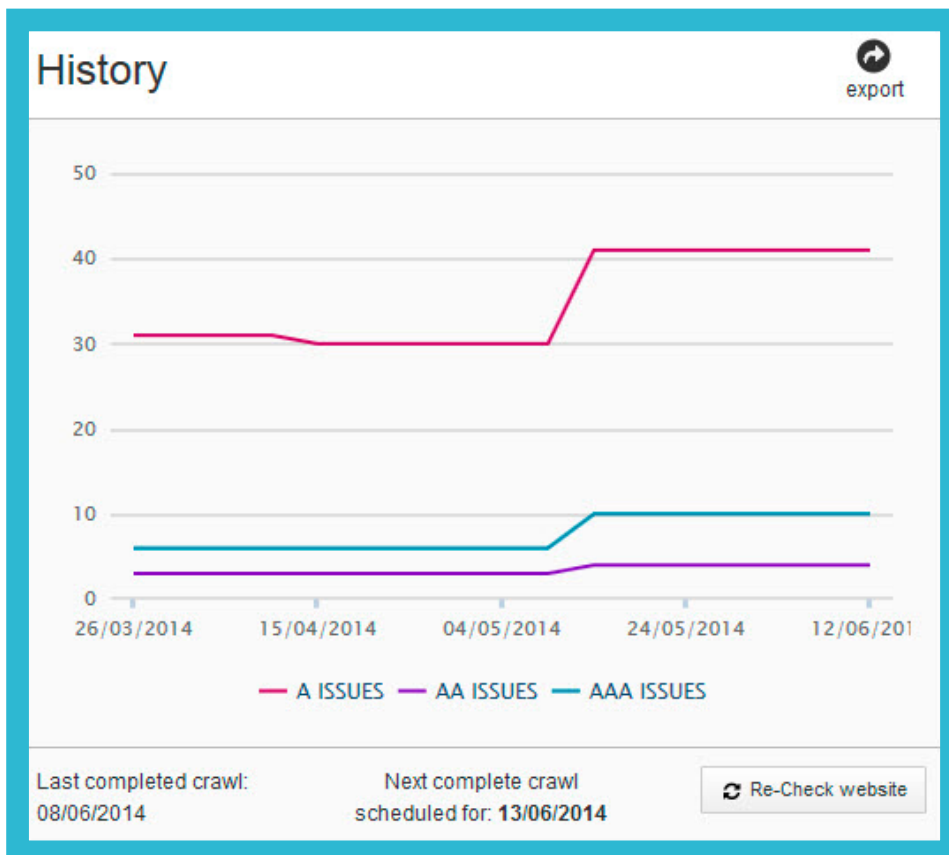
On the front page of the accessibility tool you have the ability to follow progress in two different ways. One way is to look at the circles at the top of the page giving you the number of issues on each level of conformance (A, AA and AAA) and also the severity level of these issues (error, warning, needs your review).

When the number of issues goes up or down, this is also reflected. From these numbers displayed in the circles you



can click through to the issues page taking you to these.

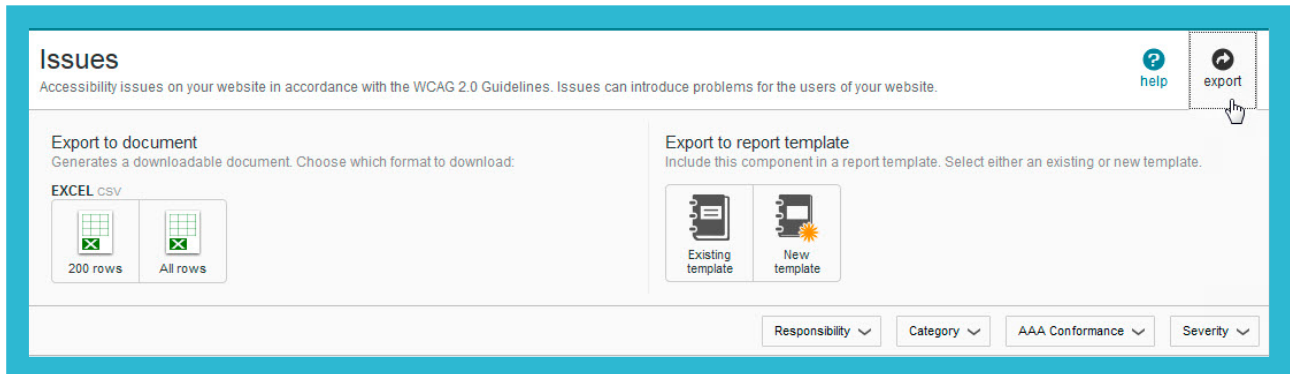
Also at the bottom of the accessibility front page you are given a historical graph of these numbers and how the issues have increased or decreased in numbers.



Creating a printable report & email reports

Most overviews are exportable, and can be added to a printable report or to an excel file. You can choose between these options via the export icon and link:

You can also choose to have a report sent with the components you chose to any given user once a month.



You can also choose to have a report sent with the components you chose to any given user once a month.

Siteimprove helps organisations of all sizes maintain the integrity of their website content with a suite of hosted reporting tools. The company makes web governance easy for thousands of teams in 10 countries around the world, ranging from global corporations to one-person departments. Siteimprove is dedicated to being a good neighbor to the communities around them, and have offices located in Denmark, United Kingdom, Ireland and the United States.

To learn more, visit [siteimprove.com](https://www.siteimprove.com)



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