



Accessibility Statements

Craig Abbott - Head of Accessibility, Digital
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@abbott567



***What is an
accessibility
statement?***



**It's not scary,
it's just content**

Accessibility

The GOV.UK Design System website and the codebase it uses, GOV.UK Frontend, is maintained by a team at the Government Digital Service (GDS).

This page explains how the team works to ensure the Design System and Frontend are accessible.

Accessibility statement for the Design System website

The GOV.UK Design System team wants as many people as possible to be able to use this website. For example, that means you should be able to:

- change colours, contrast levels and fonts
- zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen
- navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
- navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
- listen to most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver)

The team has also made the website text as simple as possible to understand.

[AbilityNet](#) has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability.



Why do you need an
accessibility statement?

You need an accessibility statement because it:

1. shows people how we are confident our services are accessible
2. allows people to open a dialogue if they get stuck
3. stops people wasting their time if parts of the website are not accessible.
4. empowers the user to hold us accountable if we are not fulfilling our responsibilities
5. is the law!

You need an accessibility statement because shows people how confident our services are accessible

How this website has been tested for accessibility

This website was last tested on 7 October. The test was carried out by the [Digital Accessibility Centre \(DAC\)](#).

DAC tested a sample of pages to cover the different content types in the GOV.UK Design System website. They were:

- [the homepage](#)
- [a short content page](#)
- [a long content page](#)
- [an overview page](#)
- [a styles page](#)



You can do a freedom
of information request
for accessibility audits

Digital Accessibility Centre

Accessibility Audit Report

	Company	Government Digital Services (GDS)
	Date	7 th October 2019
	DAC Ref.	000228
	Version	Retest
	Standard	WCAG 2.1

You need an accessibility statement because it allows people to open a dialogue if they get stuck

Reporting accessibility problems with this website

The GOV.UK Design System team is always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems that are not listed on this page or think this website is not meeting accessibility requirements, email the GOV.UK Design System team at govuk-design-system-support@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk

The GOV.UK Design System team will review your request and get back to you in 2 working days.

You need an accessibility statement so people don't waste their time

“Speaking as an assistive technology user, if I saw something was only partially compliant, I would feel like that I was entering at my own risk... I’d tend to telephone the organisations instead.”

- Chris Moore MBE - Screen reader user

You need an accessibility statement because it empowers the user to hold us accountable if we are not fulfilling our responsibilities

Enforcement procedure

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for enforcing the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the ‘accessibility regulations’). If you’re not happy with how we respond to your complaint, [contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service \(EASS\)](#).

You need an accessibility statement because it's the law

The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018

UK Statutory Instruments ▶ 2018 No. 952 ▶ PART 2 ▶ Regulation 8

Table of Contents

Content

Explanatory Memorandum



More Resources



◀ Previous: Provision

Next: Provision ▶

Plain View

Print Options

What Version



Status: This is the original version (as it was originally made). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.

Latest available (Revised)

Original (As made)

Opening Options



Accessibility statement

8.—(1) A public sector body must provide an accessibility statement in accordance with the model accessibility statement, and keep that statement under regular review.

(2) For a website, the accessibility statement must be—

(a) provided in an accessible format, and



What information needs to be in an accessibility statement?

The law says an accessibility statement must:

- be in an accessible format
- be published on the website
- outline any parts of the website that are not accessible and why
- explain how to get the information in an alternative format
- provide contact details to report accessibility issues
- explain on the enforcement procedure if people are not happy with the response



**As with most things in Gov, most
of the hard work has already been
done!**



There's a template for GOVUK services, and a template for other public sector websites.

Page contents:

- [Accessibility for \[service name\]](#)
- [Using this service](#)
- [How accessible this service is](#)
- [What to do if you have difficulty using this service](#)
- [Reporting accessibility problems with this service](#)
- [Enforcement procedure](#)
- [Contacting us by phone or visiting us in person](#)
- [Technical information about this service's accessibility](#)
- [Non accessible content](#)
- [How we tested this service](#)
- [What we're doing to improve accessibility](#)

Accessibility for [service name]

[Note: This is a sample accessibility page for a fictional service on GOV.UK. It contains sample wording and guidance on what to include.

Don't duplicate information in the main GOV.UK accessibility statement.

This service is part of the wider GOV.UK website. There's a separate [accessibility statement for the main GOV.UK website](#).

This page only contains information about the [insert service name] service, available at [insert name of .service.gov.uk subdomain].

Using this service

[Note: use this section to provide a brief, general overview of what

Guidance

Sample accessibility statement (for a fictional public sector website)

Updated 2 April 2020

Contents

[Accessibility statement for \[website name\]](#)

[Contacting us by phone or visiting us in person](#)

[Technical information about this website's accessibility](#)

[Non-accessible content](#)

[What we're doing to improve accessibility](#)

[Preparation of this accessibility statement](#)

This is a sample accessibility statement for a fictional public sector website. It contains sample wording and guidance on what to include in your statement.

[Note: if the statement is for an app, say ‘mobile application’ instead of ‘website’.]

For websites, publish the statement as a normal HTML page. Make sure it’s linked to from the home page, or from every other page on the website in a prominent place like the website footer. For mobile apps, make the statement available in the app store, on your website or both. Make sure it’s in an accessible format that everyone can use.]

A ‘compliant’ statement

- Remember that compliance doesn't guarantee accessibility
- Don't be precious if somebody can't use your service
- Treat it as the minimum you need to do, not as checkbox exercise



**Even if something is
compliant, it could still
be tricky to use.**

It's helpful to outline any known usability issues even if they're not technically fails

Some people may find parts of this service difficult to use:

- at one point we ask you to list your conditions using a JavaScript solution that allows you to keep adding additional fields. This can be tricky. However, with JavaScript turned off the service will default to a large amount of blank fields which some people might find easier to fill out.

A ‘non-compliant’ statement

- It’s helpful to list which WCAG criteria your service fails
- Outline when you’re expecting to fix it
- Explain the issue in a way that is easy to understand

Non-accessible content

The content that is not accessible is outlined below with details of:

- where it fails the success criteria
- planned dates for when issues will be fixed

Some tables in content do not have table row headers when needed. This fails WCAG 2.1A 1.3.1 success criterion (Info and Relationships). This is a limitation of the publishing tool which we plan to fix by October 2019.

Focused links and buttons sometimes do not have enough contrast. This fails WCAG 1.4.11 AA (Non-text Contrast). We plan to fix this by October 2019.

It's helpful to explain which WCAG criteria it fails

Outline when you're expecting to fix it

Explain the issue in a way that is easy to understand.

Your accessibility statement should be reviewed regularly

- Minimum of once per year
- Agile teams should review it more regularly
- Big iterations or new features should trigger a review



When do you need an
accessibility statement?

The Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018 apply:

- immediately for new websites (or big iterations)
- on 23 September 2020 if the website was published before September 2018

Disproportionate burden

Example: Your budget for the year is £5,000 and an accessibility audit costs £8,000.

You cannot claim disproportionate burden without an assessment

- you need evidence as to why it is disproportionate
- citizens ***will*** do freedom of information requests for that evidence
- disproportionate burden is not indefinite, it will be reviewed (at least) annually

Is it disproportionate?

Or... could you not be bothered?

- 60 organisations.
- 60 freedom of information requests
- 59 burdens found not to be disproportionate

24 said the claim for disproportionate burden was an accident

Some of the reasons were:

- we used the GDS template and forgot to take that bit out
- we changed our minds and forgot to amend the statement
- we meant we had some exemptions (such as PDF's) and we didn't understand the difference

Some asked the supplier to find evidence of disproportionate burden *after* the request came in

Some claim “a conversation was had” but that they did not record anything in writing

‘it’s the suppliers problem’

Spoiler: it’s not

Some organisations refused the freedom of information request

Presumably to buy some time to figure out a story...

One organisation claimed it can't test for accessibility, and therefore should be exempt. They argued they shouldn't be held to standards if they can't find or fix the issues.

George Rhodes

@Access_Rhodes

Disproportionate Burden Thoughts



Enforcement procedure

- GDS are the reporting body
- they will sample services to audit
- non-compliant services will be reported to the European Human Rights Commission

Policy paper

Memorandum of Understanding

Published 10 October 2019

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Parties to this MOU

- Government Digital Service (GDS) leads the digital transformation of government and is part of Cabinet Office. GDS will host the monitoring and reporting body for the regulations.
- The Equality and Advisory Support Service (EASS) is an advice service for discrimination issues and works with the Government Equalities Office. EASS will handle complaints received on public sector website and mobile application accessibility in Great Britain.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) regulates the Equality Act 2010 in Great Britain. It is sponsored by the Government Equalities Office. EHRC is the named enforcement body in the web accessibility regulations.
- The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) protects equalities in Northern

Be transparent in your statement. If you're not compliant, be honest about the work you're doing to get there.

**There is too much focus on 2.1
compliance and not enough focus on
people.**

Your users don't usually care if you're 2.1 compliant. They just want to be able to do the thing they need to do.



Thanks

Craig Abbott
Head of Accessibility, Digital

@abbott567