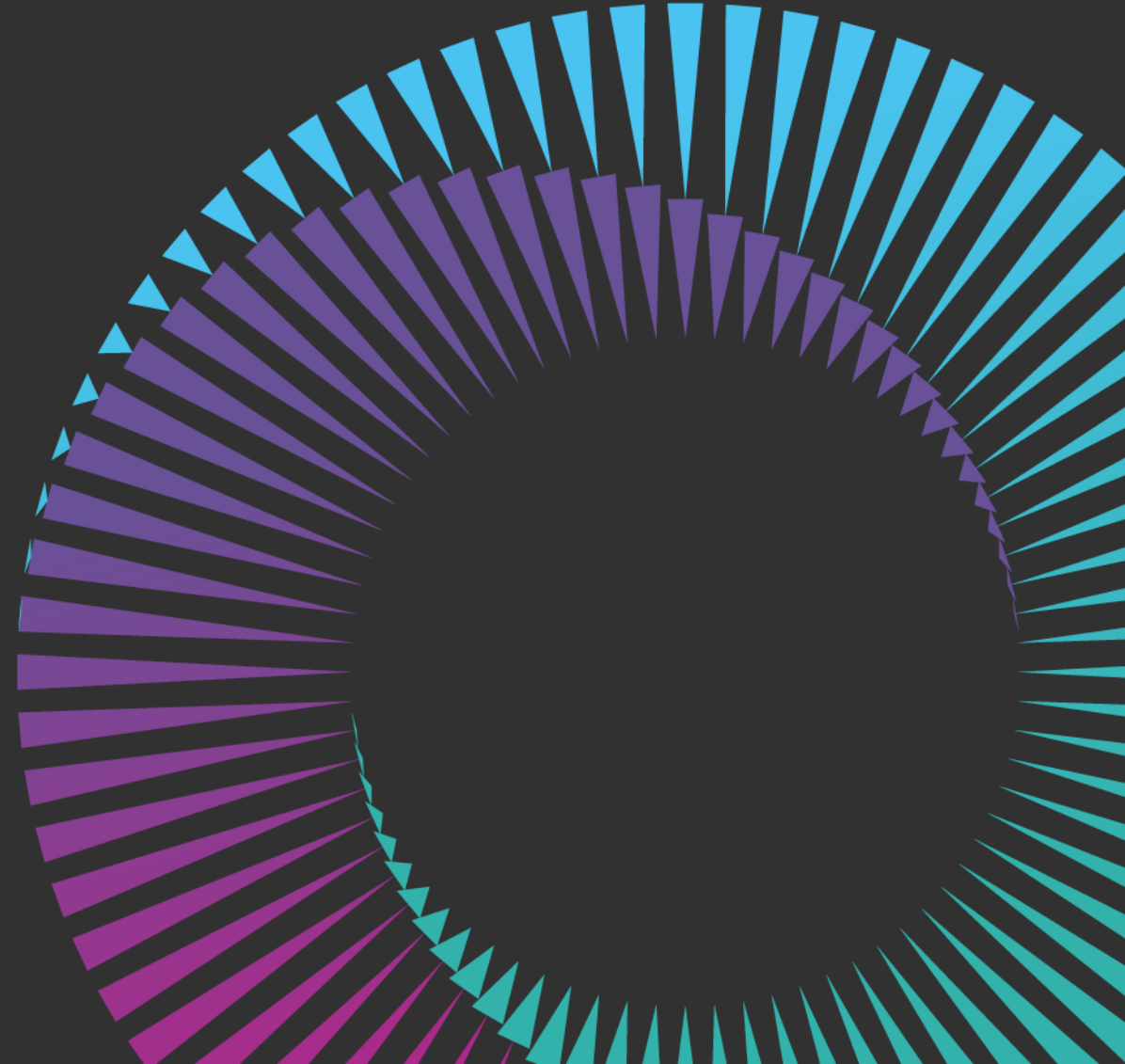


Accessibility for public sector websites, intranets and shared documents

Delivered by the Digital and Creative Team



What's happening with Accessibility?

Did you know: 90% of websites in the UK are still not fully accessible for those with specific disabilities, such as loss of hearing or visual disabilities.

About Accessibility

Ensuring best practices for creating content which is more inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities.

The **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2** are the golden standard of web accessibility for websites and intranets within the public sector.

The guidelines cover a wide range of recommendations for making web content more accessible. The website accessibility regulations apply to websites and intranets, within the public sector.

"At least 1 in 5 people in the UK have a long-term illness, impairment or disability. "

Office for National Statistics

Why is it so important?

In an ONS survey, it was revealed that more than 71% of disabled people will exit a website if they find it difficult to use.

By making your website accessible, you are ensuring that:

- All of your potential users, including people with disabilities, have a good [user experience](#) and can easily access your information
- By implementing accessibility [best practices](#), you are improving the usability of the site for all users.



What's your legal responsibility?

The accessibility regulations came into force for public sector bodies on **23 September 2018**.

Public sector organisations have a legal duty to make sure websites and mobile apps are accessible.

If your service isn't accessible to everyone who needs it, you may be breaking the 2010 Equality Act and receive a fine.

Main principles of accessibility

Four main principles of accessibility:



Perceivable

Content is presented in ways that can be accessed by all



Operable

Content is presented in ways that can be operated by all



Understandable

Content is presented in ways that can be understood by all



Robust

Content is reliable and compatible with assistive technology and standards

Who is responsible?

We all have a different role but everyone has a part to play!



Accessible Design

Colour Contrast

It is important to note that all text must have a good contrast to the background colour it appears on.

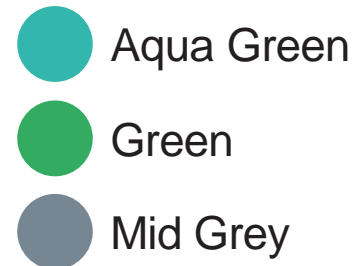
For colour contrast, you can use a colour contrast checker such as: webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker

Accessibility checker (in Word) can also help with this: go to > Hard-to-Read Text Contrast

Colours from the NHS colour palette that are safe to use for text at any size on a white background:



Colours from the NHS colour palette that are safe to use no smaller than 14pt bold or 18pt regular on a white background:



Colours from the NHS colour palette to **avoid** for use in text are:



Please note you will need to do additional colour contrast checks to use any of the safe colours listed above if they are appearing on a background other than white.

Best Practice Design...

- Use a pre-designed branded template – this will include predefined colours and styles, as well as correctly positioned logos etc.
- Use the pre-set text styles (in Word) for **all text** including headings, sub headings, main text etc.
- Make sure all images are in line with text (in Word) - (Choose Layout > Wrap Text > In Line with Text)
- Add Alt text to all images (Right click on image > View Alt text > add an image description)
- Make sure all hyperlinks are underlined
- Use the built-in accessibility checker in Word and PowerPoint to check your document prior to exporting as PDF – this will help to eliminate a lot of issues that may arise in the Acrobat accessibility checker
- Make sure all tables have header rows and try to avoid using split/merged cells as they can make it difficult for screen readers to navigate and read the table
- Think about colour contrast for text e.g. only use white text on dark backgrounds
- [Useful hints and tips for accessibility in Word.](#)

Best Practice Design - Canva

- There is limited options for adding Alternative Text to images.
- There is no option to create a document structure.
- Consider colour compliance.



Accessibility – what to consider?

We need to accommodate for the range of tools which those with disabilities use when visiting a website:



Screen magnifiers allow the user to make pages bigger



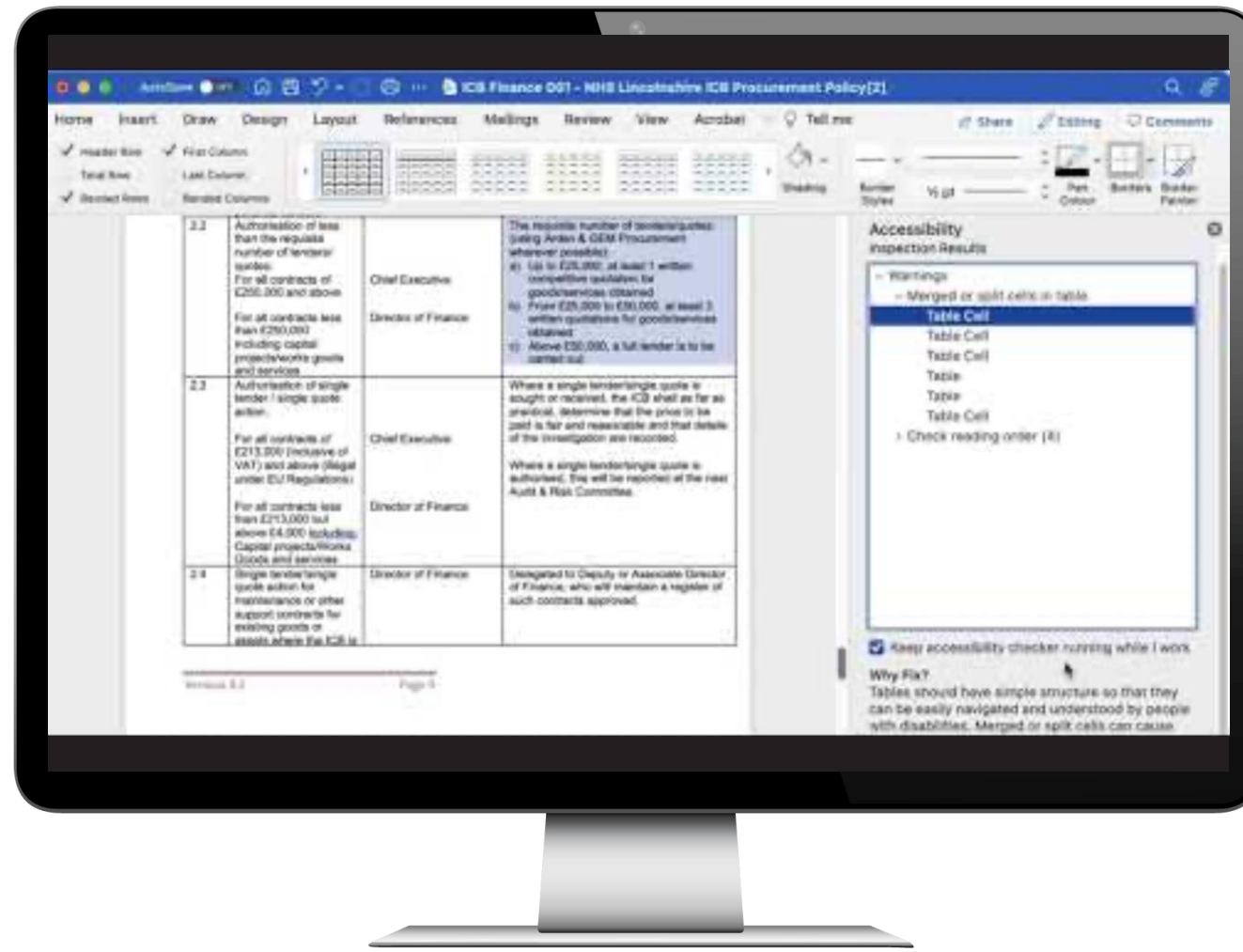
Screen readers convert text to audio to enable people who are visually impaired to hear content instead; e.g. alt tagged images



Speech recognition software enables people to operate a computer by having it speak out to them e.g. ReachDeck.

Accessible Documents

The Accessibility Checker in Microsoft Word



Creating accessible documents

An accessible document needs to be easily readable. All of the documents that we publish should be screen reader-friendly, as well as dyslexia and colour-blindness friendly.

There are a few basic steps that should be followed to help ensure that your content is accessible. These are the same regardless of whether your document is in Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF or another document format.

These include:

Use headings

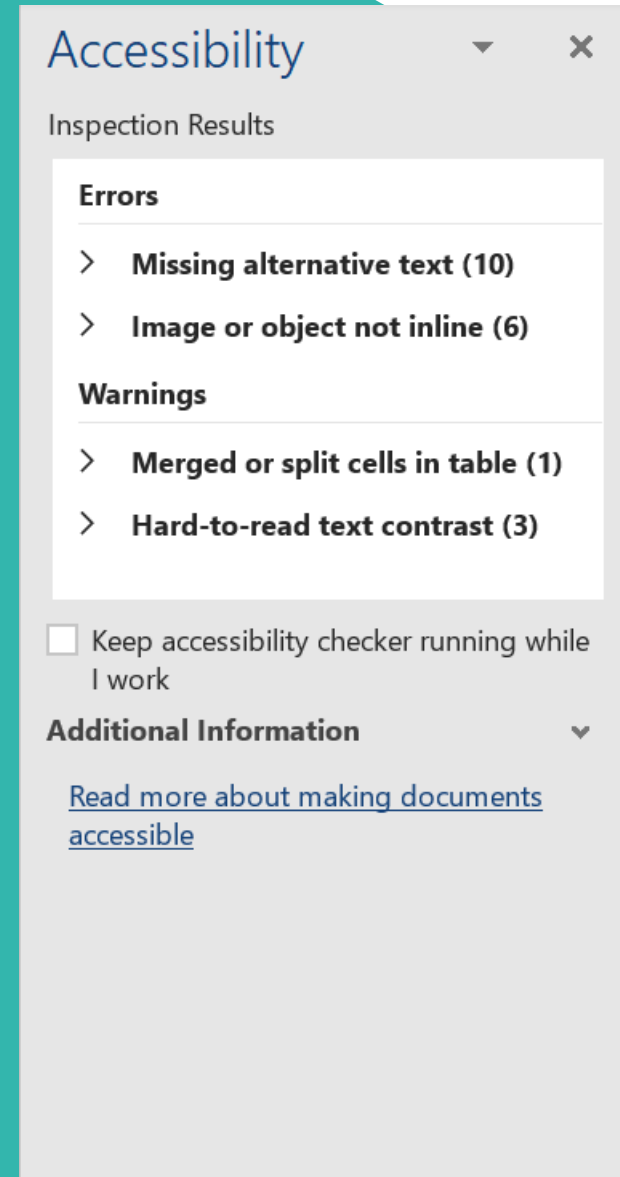
Use meaningful hyperlinks
(not 'click here')

Adding alternate text
to images

Use appropriate colours

How to make a document 'accessible' in Word

- The 'Accessibility Checker' button brings up a side panel which highlights errors the user must fix
- Errors are highlighted within the inspection results under clear headings
- Common errors are missing image tags, unidentified headings, alignment, font size and colours
- The user may choose to work with the 'Accessibility Checker' running so that errors can be picked up as they are working
- When all errors have been addressed the document is saved in the same way
- An Adobe Pro DC licence is required to re-formatting PDFs



Creating Accessible Content

Writing accessible content

Plain language benefits everyone. Writing content that is short and easy to read makes text easier to skim.

The following is not an exhaustive list, but bearing these tips in mind will help you to write more effective web content:

- Use short paragraphs and sentences
- Avoid jargon
- Get to the point - your most important information should be at the top of the page
- Use active sentences
- Use plain language to describe – easier to understand
- Split your text into chunks using bullet points and hard breaks
- Avoid needless repetition
- Expand any acronyms the first time they appear on a page.
- List resources in order of importance (and don't just use hyperlinks to resources)



1. Accessibility checklist



When writing copy, we recommend:

- Aim for average reading age of 7 – use simple, clear messages
- Use line breaks when possible, to spread out your copy
- Stick to 25 words per sentence and avoid long chunks of text
- Link text (hyperlink) should be meaningful and make sense - avoid click here, or read more
- Tell users where they are going and why
- Avoid using bold, italics, capital letters
- Avoid underlining (apart from hyperlinks if that's the pre-set style)
- Use title tags, headers and sub headers to provide structure for screen reader (H1, H2, H3 – in order)

2. Accessibility checklist



To make sure your visuals are accessible, we recommend:

- Always** make sure you **add ALT text to images, tables or diagrams** or ensure that the body copy provides a reasonable explanation. Briefly describe images in your ALT text and mark logos as decorative images so readers know to skip past.
- Images with text on them are not accessible – avoid where possible
- Follow a logical layout which is easy to navigate
- Infographics should not be used unless a full description is provided which can be accessed by a screen reader
- Tables are difficult to include in terms of accessibility.
- Videos must include option to turn on captions, subtitles.

3. Accessibility checklist



To make sure your website is accessible, we recommend:

- HTML website pages should be maximised where possible
- Where PDFs are used, they should ideally be embedded into a page for easier viewing
- Where documents and resources are loaded directly onto the website, they should be ‘accessibility checked’ with Adobe Acrobat Pro first to resolve any formatting issues – see your IT dept for a licence.
- Use appropriate font size and colours. For example, use 12 point for body text but a minimum size of 16 point is recommended for people with a visual impairment.

Reviewing Information Summary



1. When you are ready to publish a document, check that it is formatted to the best level of accessibility available to you.
2. Scan your documents to try out some of the read aloud tools. This will help you to understand how documents are read by a user with a disability.
3. Audit your current accessibility practices and consider where improvements could be made across your communication channels.
4. Have a conversation with your team, to share ideas on where accessibility can be approved within their own roles and across your organisation.

Extra resources

The full name of the accessibility regulations is the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#)

The accessibility regulations build on your existing obligations to people who have a disability under the [Equality Act 2010](#)

[Adobe Accessibility Check Guide](#)

[How to accessibility check a Word doc - video](#)

[Accessibility Statement Guide](#)

[Colour contrast checker](#)

[How Alexa helps disabled users](#)

[Hemingway checker for plain English](#)

Any questions?