

Website accessibility: Dentdale.com

First step is to undertake an audit to evaluate how accessible website is.

Outcome is to publish an Accessibility Statement on the site by 23rd September 2020 at the latest based on the audit.

A **full audit** is ‘best left to either: an accessibility expert within your organisation or a third-party accessibility auditor’.ⁱ

I would not consider myself at all qualified as an expert to undertake the task.

‘Some organisations will not have the expertise to do a detailed check themselves and paying a third party would place a **‘disproportionate burden’** on them. This means a burden or cost that is too much for the organisation to reasonably bear.’

My personal opinion is that Parish Council would probably be able to claim ‘disproportionate burden’.

However, ‘if you want to establish whether an audit is a disproportionate burden, you’re legally required to carry out an assessment. You need to weigh up: the cost that paying for an audit would put on your organisation the benefits of making your website accessible. You should not take things like lack of time or knowledge into account in your assessment - or argue that an audit is a disproportionate burden because you’ve not given it priority.’

My proposal is that we approach one or more businesses for a quote to undertake the audit. If the PC decide it is a ‘disproportionate burden’ we can then proceed to a **‘basic accessibility check’**.

There are government guidelines (see link in footer) for undertaking the basic check. I would suggest that an audit document is created going through each area and recording the outcome. This would then be retained as a record of the audit process.

As the guidance notes, ‘it’s likely the checks will take at least a few days, so make sure to give yourself enough time to work through them.’

Once the audit has been completed a plan will need to be drawn up to fix any of the problems.

It is not clear whether these have to be completed by the Accessibility Statement deadline or not.

My interpretation is that we could publish a statement stating that work is being undertaken to improve accessibility as the guidance mentions that,

‘Your statement needs to cover:

whether your website or mobile app is ‘fully’, ‘partially’ or ‘not’ compliant with accessibility standards

if it’s not fully compliant, which parts of your website or mobile app do not currently meet accessibility standards and why (for example, because they are exempt or it would be a disproportionate burden to fix things)

how people can get alternatives to content that’s not accessible to them

how to contact you to report accessibility problems - and a link to the website that they can use if they’re not happy with your response.’

My proposal would be that the aim would be to undertake the audit prior to the 20th September deadline and publish a statement. Work on the plan to fix any problems would then proceed after the deadline.

ⁱ All quotes from Government Digital Services guidance on accessibility audits

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/doing-a-basic-accessibility-check-if-you-cant-do-a-detailed-one/doing-a-basic-accessibility-check-if-you-cant-do-a-detailed-one>