

Wendling Parish Council

(<https://www.wendlingpc.info>)

WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW - FEBRUARY 2020

SUMMARY

All councils must comply with the new *Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018* by September 2020. There are two key requirements for the Parish Council:

- the site must be Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) version 2.1, standard 'AA' compliant
- the site must display a Website Accessibility Statement

The Parish Council's website was tested in February 2020 and found not to be compliant. The following changes were made as a result:

- the design of the site was modified
- some small amendments to content were made to fix simple errors
- a Website Accessibility Statement was added

The site was subsequently re-tested and found to be compliant. To ensure continuing compliance the website's editor (the clerk) needs to:

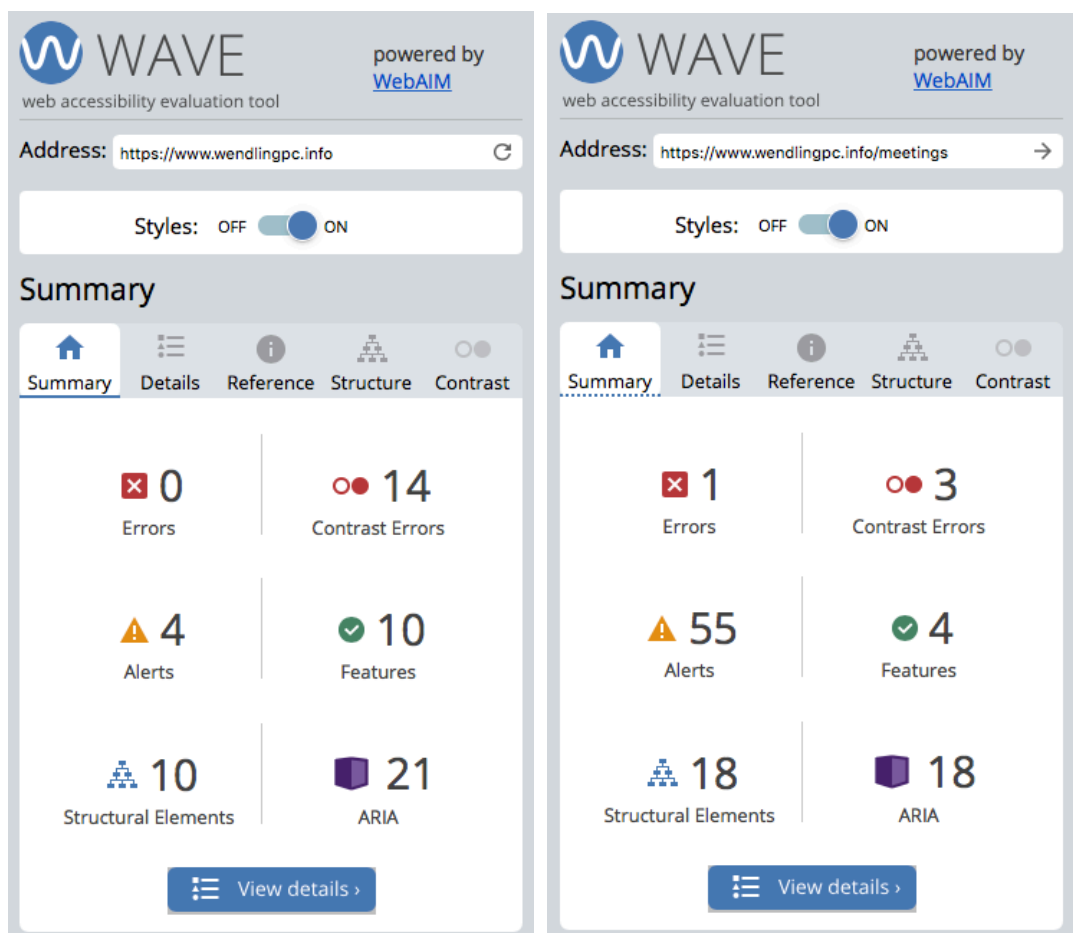
- ensure that all documents created or reviewed in the future are Accessible PDFs (see below)
- ensure that good web design practice is observed in respect of images, links and structure (see below)
- repeat the test and review the Accessibility Statement annually

This report sets out the findings, actions and future guidance in more detail. There are commitments for the Council/clerk that will need to be incorporated into future content production.

TESTING AND COMPLIANCE

WCAG 2.1 AA-Standard Compliance Testing

The website was tested using the Website Accessibility Evaluation Tool (WAVE) found at <https://wave.webaim.org>. For the test, the homepage and the minutes & agendas page were tested. The results were as follows:



The errors and many alerts found relate to issues with the underlying structure of the page that are not always visible to the (sighted) user.

In particular there were wrong heading labels as shown in the examples below. Some text was labelled as Heading text when it should be Paragraph text. Blank lines (by putting in extra carriage returns) should not be used to assist with the layout of the document, but these were found on the Minutes page. A screen reader will interpret this by referring to it as "blank".

The Contrast Errors relate to text that does not have a sufficient contrast to the background it is viewed against. This is typically an underlying design issue and is easily fixed by altering text and/or background colours.

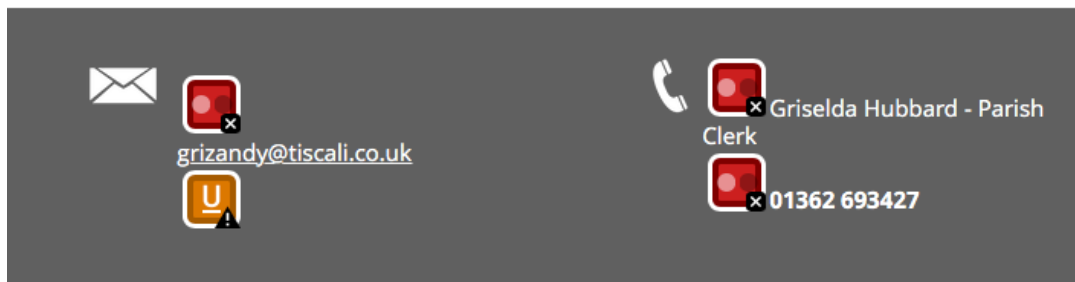
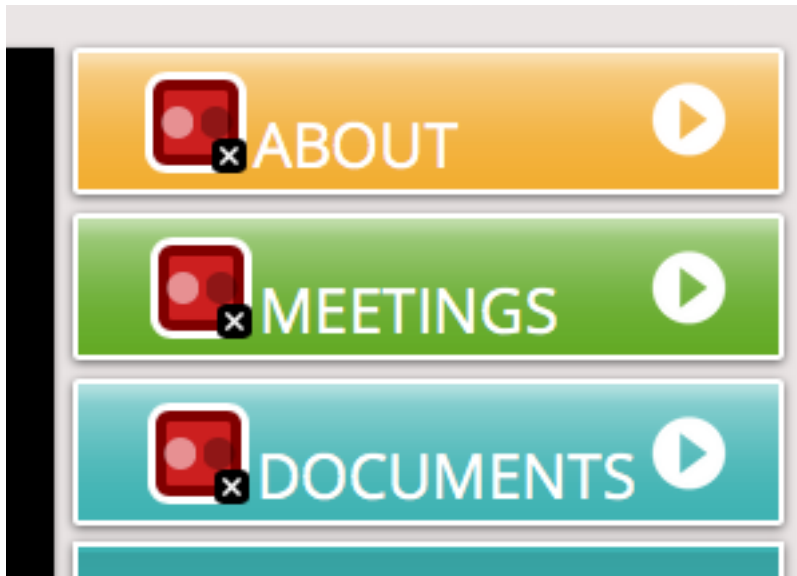
Alerts are things that require manual checking - they may indicate text that is too small to read, or missed headings or links - things that need addressing.

Often though Alerts highlight the use of underlined text (which must only be used for a link) or that the link is to a PDF document or a Word document. It's okay to link to a PDF (as long as it's Accessible) but Word should not be used. Alerts relating to links to PDFs are considered acceptable and no action is necessary.

Here in the contact details panel on the homepage, the Heading levels used jumped from Heading 1 (the site title) to Heading 5 and 6, and there was a blank line that was nonetheless labelled (by virtue of the text type used) as Headings - in this case Heading 6.



The same type of issues could be found on the Minutes and Agendas page, along with various contrast issues (indicated by red square icons):

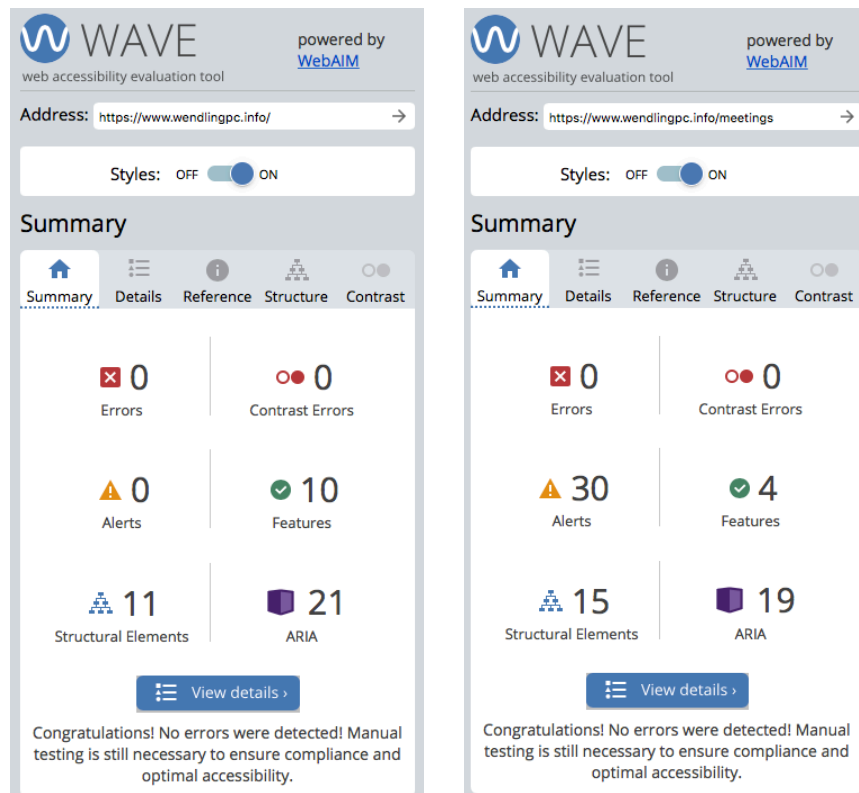


Website Design Alterations

In order to satisfy the requirements of WCAG 2.1 to 'AA' standard, the following changes were made on the homepage and minutes page:

- The text of the Parish Council name and drop-down menu was changed to a darker colour, in order to contrast with the background to an acceptable level (which was lightened)
- The text in the footer was changed to a darker colour, in order to increase the contrast with the background to an acceptable level
- The text on the buttons was enlarged and the contrast improved
- The sub-heading text on each page was altered to be Heading 3 instead of Heading 5 or 6
- The text on the minutes page (and others) was amended so that no heading levels were skipped, and so that the year headings were Heading 3 instead of Heading 6. Blank heading lines were removed
- Images with missing Alt tags were amended to ensure meaningful Alt tags were present on each page

The WAVE tests were then re-run, demonstrating that those pages (and the site in general) are now WCAG 2.1 AA-compliant:



Website Accessibility Statement

A Website Accessibility Statement was added to the site as an extra page (not a PDF document - this is best practice as the Statement itself must be as accessible as possible), at the following address:

<https://www.wendingpc.info/website-accessibility-statement>

This page does not appear in the menu structure of the site (it is Hidden) but is linked instead to the footer, so that it appears on every page of the site. The Statement contains various tailored boilerplate statements as set out in the gov.uk guidelines.

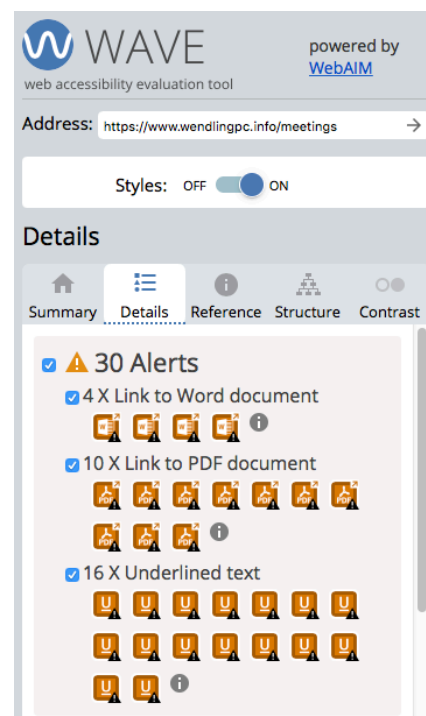
It also contains necessary commitments for the Parish Council that will need to be acted upon by the clerk as follows:

- "From 2020 we plan to gradually replace policy and procedure documents with accessible PDFs or HTML pages"
- "Any new PDFs or Word documents we publish will aim to meet accessibility standards" [including minutes and agendas]
- [The Parish Council] "will next review [this Statement] in February 2021"

Best Practice

Following this review, the site passes the WAVE Accessibility test with no Errors or Contrast Errors present. All remaining Alerts are benign (principally links to PDFs and underlining).

It is important that when the site is edited or new content is added, the accessibility of the site is maintained, and it is therefore incumbent upon the website editor (the clerk) to keep accessibility in mind when revising or adding content to the site in future.



Specific areas of advice are:

- ensure that any links (including buttons) are meaningful, even out of the context that they are found in. For example, a link within the text to 'click here' or 'further information' or a button saying 'more' would not be meaningful in isolation. Better examples would be 'further information about planning' or 'view minutes and agendas'
- ensure that underlining is NEVER used on the website itself, nor in any document that is destined for the website, unless the underlined text is a link to a web address
- ensure that each line of text is properly labelled as Paragraph 1, Paragraph 2, Heading 2, Heading 3 and so on. (The name of the PC - the title of the site - is always Heading 1). Use the Themes option within the text editor in WIX to select the appropriate para/heading type and ensure that blank lines are not labelled as headings
- ensure that every image on the site has an appropriate Alt tag - i.e. a description of what the image shows. In WIX, click the image, then the Settings (cog) icon, then enter a Description for the image
- ensure that there is always a significant contrast between any text and its background. Choose the darkest colours for text and the lightest colours for the background
- ensure that every document on the site is a PDF document (no Word documents) and that every new PDF added is an Accessible PDF. Further guidance on producing and testing for Accessible PDFs is given in Appendix 1

Further guidance on general principles of best practice for creating accessible content - issued by the Home Office via gov.uk - is provided in Appendix 2.

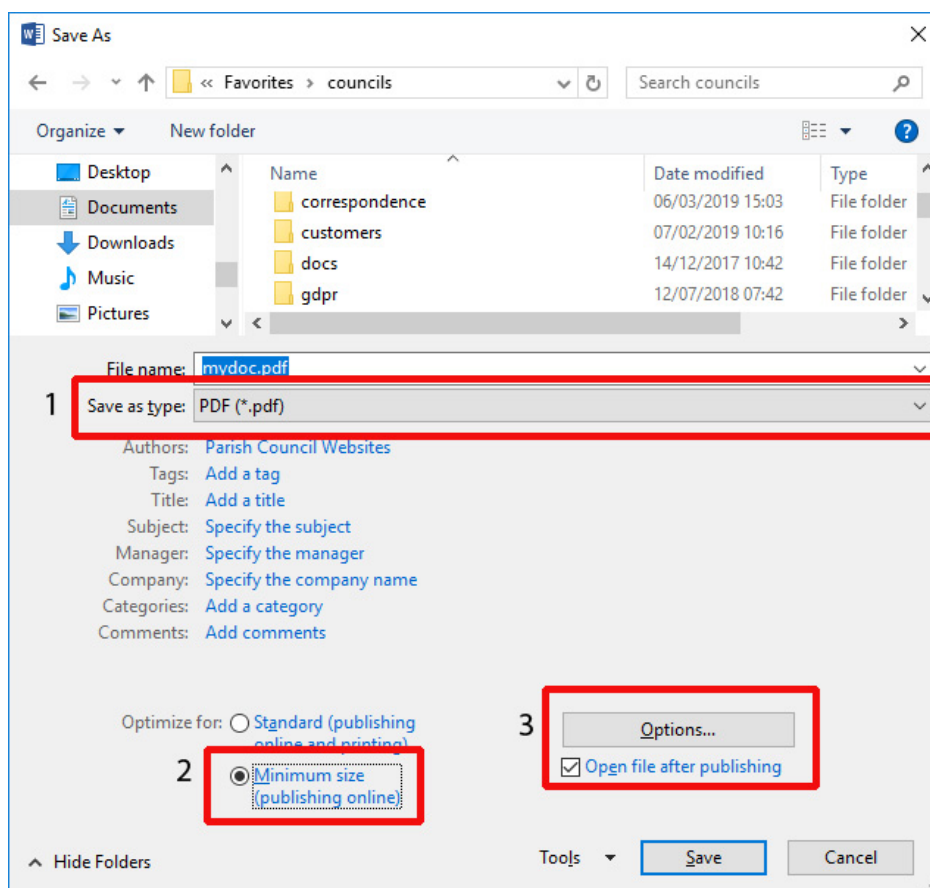
For further advice or for support with editing particular features within WIX, please contact Steve Jackman on 07468 907446 or steve.jackman@me.com

APPENDIX 1 - MAKING AN ACCESSIBLE PDF

An accessible PDF is one that can be easily interpreted by, for example, screen reader software. The worst kind of PDF is just a scanned image that has been converted to PDF, which contains no actual text at all. But badly formatted PDFs can be inaccessible too.

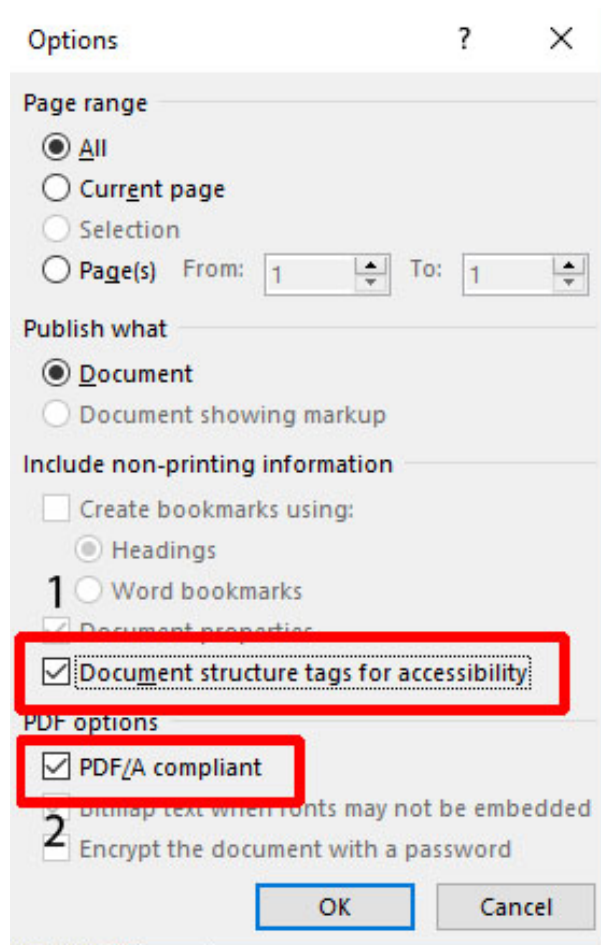
The root to solving this lies in using Word properly. WikiHow has a useful document on this at <https://m.wikihow.com/Create-Accessible-Word-Documents>. Within Word, look under the Review menu for the Check Accessibility menu option - run this as a first test.

To create the PDF, within Word, save your document using Save or Save As. The screenshots below may vary between versions of Word, but the principles will be the same.



1. Under 'Save as type' select PDF (*.pdf)
2. Select the checkbox for Minimum size (publishing online)

3. Click on the Options button for more options. This will launch the Options window (shown below)



1. Check the box 'Document structure tags for accessibility.'
2. Check the box PDF/A compliant
3. When you have done this, click OK and Save your document.

You can test a PDF for Accessibility using a free online testing tool at <https://www.pdf-online.com/osa/validate.aspx>

APPENDIX 2 - GENERAL ACCESSIBILITY GUIDANCE

The following images contain general **Do** and **Don't** advice for creating documents or web pages that are accessible, provided by the Home Office via gov.uk.

Designing for users of screen readers

Do...	Don't...
describe images and provide transcripts for video 	only show information in an image or video 
follow a linear, logical layout 	spread content all over a page 
structure content using HTML5 <h1> <nav> <label>	rely on text size and placement for structure 36pt, bold  Header
build for keyboard use only 	force mouse or screen use 
write descriptive links and headings Contact us	write uninformative links and headings Click here

Designing for users with low vision



Do...

use good colour contrasts and a readable font size



publish all information on web pages



use a combination of colour, shapes and text

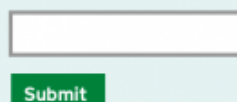
Start >

follow a linear, logical layout

200% magnification



put buttons and notifications in context



Don't...

use low colour contrasts and small font size



bury information in downloads



only use colour to convey meaning



spread content all over a page

200% magnification



separate actions from their context



Designing for users with dyslexia



Do...

Don't...

use images and diagrams to support text



use large blocks of heavy text



align text to the left and keep a consistent layout



underline words, use italics or write in capitals

DON'T DO THIS

consider producing materials in other formats (for example, audio or video)



force users to remember things from previous pages - give reminders and prompts



keep content short, clear and simple



rely on accurate spelling - use autocorrect or provide suggestions



let users change the contrast between background and text



put too much information in one place



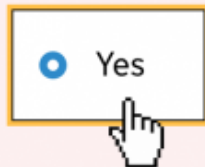
Designing for users with physical or motor disabilities



Do...

Don't...

make large clickable actions



demand precision



give form fields space



bunch interactions together



design for keyboard or speech only use



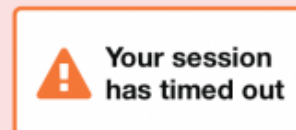
make dynamic content that requires a lot of mouse movement



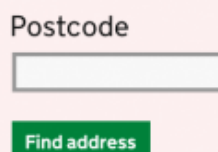
design with mobile and touchscreen in mind



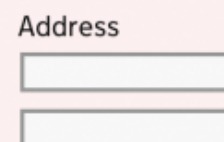
have short time out windows



provide shortcuts



tire users with lots of typing and scrolling



Designing for users on the autistic spectrum



Do...

Don't...

use simple colours



use bright contrasting colours



write in plain English

Do this.

use figures of speech and idioms



use simple sentences and bullets



create a wall of text



make buttons descriptive

Attach files

make buttons vague and unpredictable

Click here!

build simple and consistent layouts



build complex and cluttered layouts



Designing for users who are Deaf or hard of hearing



Do...

Don't...

write in plain English

Do this.

use complicated words or figures of speech



use subtitles or provide transcripts for videos



put content in audio or video only



use a linear, logical layout



make complex layouts and menus



break up content with sub-headings, images and videos



make users read long blocks of content



let users ask for an interpreter when booking appointments



don't make telephone the only means of contact for users

