

Accessibility statement for Great Aycliffe Town Council

This website is run by Great Aycliffe Town Council, developed and provided by Urban River.

Existing websites such as ours does not have to meet the accessibility standards until 23 September 2020 but we are aiming to get there sooner.

These statements are made in good faith and we accept that this is a work in progress and there are still many areas that will require further work. For example we are concentrating on the Town Council website pages and will then move to the OakLeaf Sports Complex then the OakLeaf Golf Course pages.

We are not responsible for making external content accessible which has been provided to us by a third party.

We are making our best efforts to ensure as many people as possible are able to use this website. For example, that means you can:

- change colours and contrast levels to suit your needs but you may need to use a plug in such as mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk/
- zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen
- the text will reflow in a single column when you change the size of the browser window
- navigate most of the website using just a keyboard but this could be improved
- listen to most of the website using text to speech and working towards improved navigation
- all relevant images have alternative text or captions
- modify the line height or spacing of text but may need to use a plug in for example reader view available for chrome

We are also in the process of making the website text as simple as possible to understand and we are working towards screen reader navigation. Any links to external websites will open in another window.

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

How accessible this website is

We know some parts of this website are not fully accessible:

- there is no skip link to the main body text of a page once you have navigated to a page;
- you cannot navigate parts of the website using speech recognition software;
- some photos do not have alternative text or captions;
- some of our online forms are difficult to navigate using just a keyboard;
- the contrast when navigating using just a keyboard could be improved, if you need to improve focus for keyboard users you may need to use a plugin;
- when at high magnification only the top menu is accessible by keyboard, the sub-menu cannot be accessed without a mouse.

If you are having trouble, please request an alternative version of information you cannot access and we will try and help you anyway we can.

There are a number of plugins that may help you for example -

mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk/

[AbilityNet](#)

chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/reader-view

chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/mercury-reader

[Reader for FireFox](#)

[HighContrast](#) for Chrome or

[NoSquint](#) for FireFox

[Spread](#) for Google Chrome

Mac/iOS VoiceOver

Android TalkBack

NVDA for Windows

roboaille.org

We know we have problems on the following pages:

- Jobs page – we are having problems making our job application form accessible.
- Burial Records page – this is currently only a non accessible PDF document.
- Financial Records – are currently non accessible.

We have a roadmap which shows how and when we plan to improve accessibility on this website but have listed some key information below.

What to do if you cannot access parts of this website

If you need information on this website in a different format we can quickly provide the following accessible PDF, large print or audio recording other formats may take substantially longer:

- email - info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
- call – 01325 300700 for the Council Offices

We'll consider your request and get back to you in 10 days.

If you cannot view the information on our 'contact us' page;

- email - info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
- call – 01325 300700 for the Council Offices

If you need information on burial records please contact Mr Williams, Grounds Maintenance Co-ordinator

- email – lee.williams@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
- call – 01325 300700 for the Council Offices

If you need information on any financial records please contact Mr Austin, Finance Manager

- email – dan.austin@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
- call – 01325 300700 for the Council Offices

We are working on our accessibility issues but we:

- Will continue to work with our website provider Urban River and get an up to date assessment of where we are at;
- Will ensure all relevant images have alternative, descriptive text;
- Will make all future documents accessible;
- Will update our Accessibility Statement each year;
- Will undertake a full audit of the website;

- Will continue to make links to documents more understandable rather than 'click here' descriptions.

Reporting accessibility problems with this website

We're always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems not listed on this page or think we're not meeting accessibility requirements, contact: Chrissy Walton, Corporate & Policy Officer, call 01325 300700 or email Christine.walton@great-aycliffe.gov.uk and provide us with as much information as possible about your problem and it will be investigated.

Please note some problems can only be resolved by the website provider Urban River and will take longer.

Try using a service such as robbraile.org to assist with any issues.

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 \(EASS\)](#).

Contacting us by phone or visiting us in person

We provide a text relay service for people who are D/deaf, hearing impaired or have a speech impediment.

Our offices have audio induction loops, or if you contact us before your visit we can arrange a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.

Find out how to contact us www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk/contact.

If you are visiting our offices we have disabled parking (17 metres from entrance), disabled access with ramps and lifts where needed and toilet facilities (27 metres from reception).

Technical information about this website's accessibility

Great Aycliffe Town Council is committed to making its website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

This website is partially compliant with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1](#) AA standard, due to the non-compliances listed below.

Non accessible content

The content listed below is non-accessible for the following reasons. Archive material is exempt from the regulations.

Non compliance with the accessibility regulations

Some images do not have a text alternative, so people using a screen reader cannot access the information. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.1.1 (non-text content).

We plan to add text alternatives for all relevant images by September 2020. When we publish new content we'll make sure our use of images meets accessibility standards.

Disproportionate burden

As we have until September 2020 to comply with the accessibility requirements, we will continue to work on our website but it would be a disproportionate burden at this time to purchase a new website or employ, on a short-term temporary contract, a dedicated officer to fix our problems.

Navigation and accessing information

There's no way to skip the repeated content in the page header (for example, a 'skip to main content' option). This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 2.4.1 (bypass blocks).

It's not always possible to change the device orientation from horizontal to vertical without making it more difficult to view the content. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.3.4 (orientation).

Interactive tools and transactions

Some of our interactive forms are difficult to navigate using a keyboard. For example, because some form controls are missing a 'label' tag.

Our forms are built and hosted through third party software and 'skinned' to look like our website. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.3.1 (information and relationships).

We've assessed the cost of fixing the issues with navigation and accessing information, and with interactive tools and transactions. We believe that doing so now would be a [disproportionate burden](#) within the meaning of the accessibility regulations. We will make another assessment when the supplier contract is up for renewal, likely to be in March 2020.

A list of plugins you can use have been listed previously which may help your accessibility of the website.

Content that's not within the scope of the accessibility regulations

PDFs and other documents

Some of our PDFs and Word documents are essential to providing our services. For example, we have PDFs with information on how users can access our services, and forms published as Word documents. By September 2020, we plan to either fix these or replace them with accessible HTML pages.

The accessibility regulations [do not require us to fix PDFs or other documents published before 23 September 2018](#) if they're not essential to providing our services. For example, we do not plan to fix old minutes, reports or agendas.

Any new PDFs or Word documents we publish will meet, as fully as possible at this time, accessibility standards.

The exemptions

Following the government guidance and legislation websites and 'active admin content' need to be accessible by Sept 23rd 2019 **UNLESS**

- Its an old website since before 23 Sept 2018. You have till Sept 2020.
- Older documents (pre Sept 2018) that are not in active admin use are exempt for ever.
- Video is exempt till Sept 2020.
- Disproportionate burden can be used to explain non compliance but this needs to be audited, costed and justified. Lack of time due to lack of priority is not considered a reason. See additional [guidance on disproportionate burden claims](#) (Part 2 section 7)

Many of our older PDFs and Word documents do not meet accessibility standards - for example, they may not be structured so they're accessible to a screen reader. These are exempt as they were prior to the September 2019 implementation date.

How we tested this website

As we have till September 2020 to comply we have not undertaken a full test. However, staff have been testing the site for compliance and will continue to test periodically.

This website was last tested on Friday 27 September 2019. The test was carried out by Chrissy Walton, Corporate & Policy Officer and Sharna Stretch, Mayors Secretary/Administrative Assistant, Great Aycliffe Town Council.

We used the following approach using a PC to decide on a sample of pages to test –

- Likely visited web pages
- Pages built around the same template
- Meetings and agenda pages
- Pages we knew had images

We tested:

- our main website platform, available at <https://www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk/>

As we undertook our own testing we do not have an accessibility test report. A full report will be provided when we undertake testing prior to September 2020.

What we're doing to improve accessibility

We plan to have all our Agendas, minutes and reports accessible by March 2020. Most information is currently accessible, but some financial information and appendix are more complicated.

We are working on removing any 'click here' links for documents and additional information which we plan to complete by March 2020.

We will ensure all photographs/images have alternative text or captions from March 2020.

We are working on our on-line forms to ensure they are accessible and will have this completed by September 2020.

We are working with our website provider to ensure label tags and navigating the website is compliant by September 2020.

We have ensured all key members of staff have undertaken accessibility training to better understand our users needs.

This statement was prepared on Monday 30 September 2019.

It was last updated on Tuesday 3 December 2019.