Accessibility across UK & IE Universities

Introduction

Digital accessibility regulation is challenging to manage and is negatively impacting those for whom the rules should be assisting. Public sector bodies must deal with accessibility, against a timetable.

Now with a specific timeline in relation to the public sector achieving accessibility compliance for their websites, we have summarised our Q4 / 2019 results, reporting the position across the sector.

Sitemorse®

In Summary.

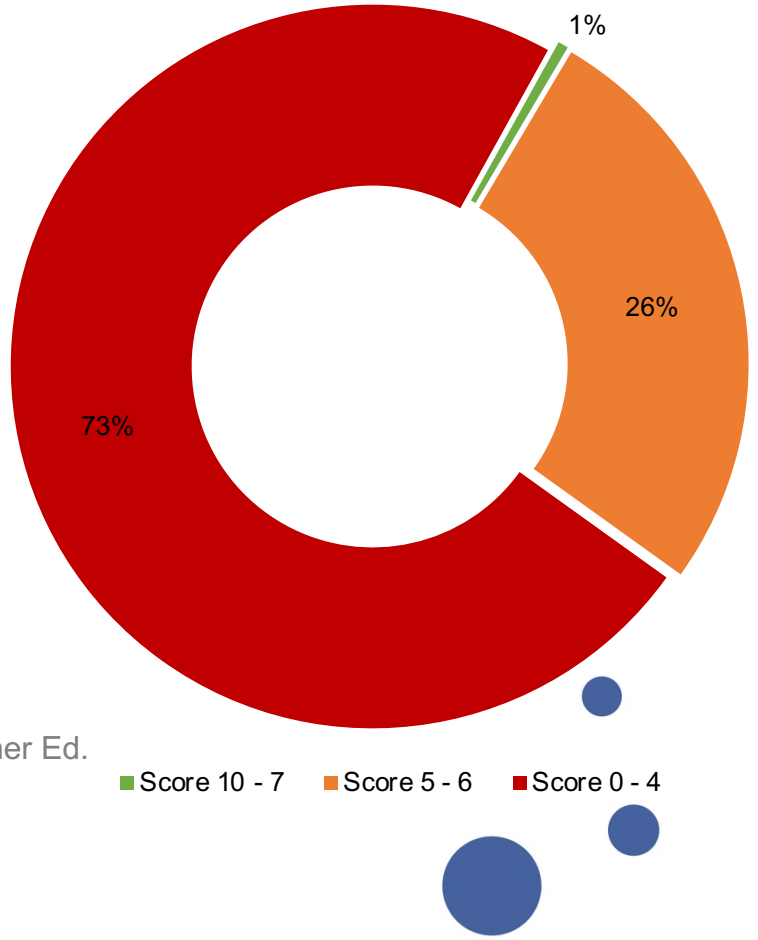
For the Sitemorse 2019 Q4 UK & IE Universities INDEX we assessed over 215 university websites for adherence to WCAG 2.1. The INDEX was compiled following some 217 million tests, checks and measures across nearly 670,000 URLs.

Comparing the Q4 to the Q3 results; 19 improved, 32 dropped, with the balance remaining the same.

The highest score for accessibility was 7 (out of 10), achieved by only one university.

Overall the top 10:

1. University of Derby
2. King's College London Maths School
3. University of Worcester
4. Manchester School of Architecture
5. The University of Stirling
6. University of Lincoln
7. Anglia Ruskin University
8. South Essex College of Further & Higher Ed.
9. Newman University, Birmingham
10. University of Wales Trinity Saint David

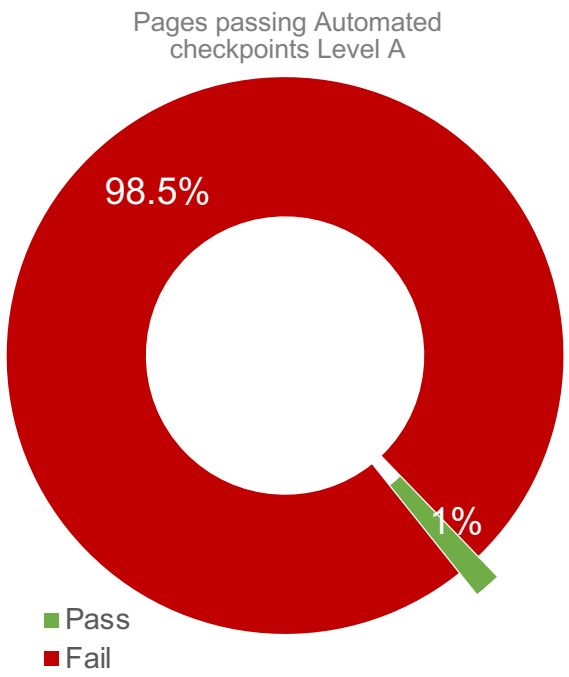


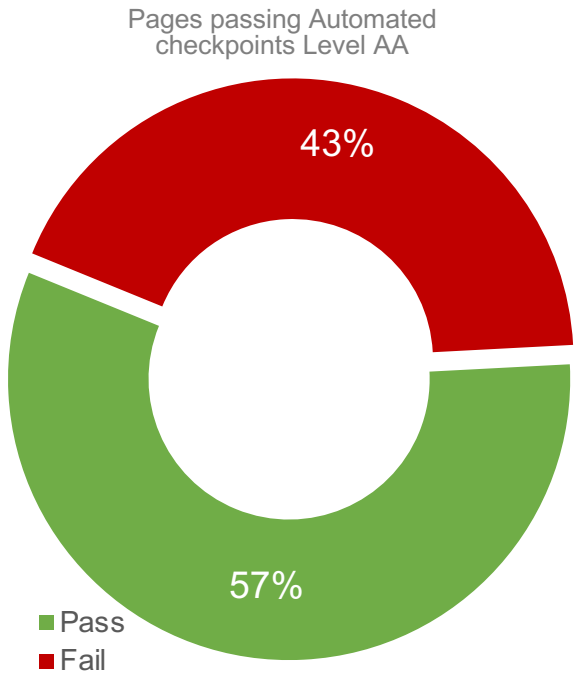
It is important to note that this score is for automated tests; there are still manual tests that need to be performed however, a score of 10 demonstrates a thorough understanding of what needs to be done and it is highly likely that the manual tests will pass too.

Overall %

It’s important to note that the INDEX covers the main website of each university. The law applies to all websites operated, directly or on behalf of the university.

- Pages passing accessibility level A: 1.5%
- Pages passing accessibility level AA: 57%





What are the Regulations?

The EU Directive on the accessibility of public sector websites and mobile apps *(Directive (EU) 2016/2102 using European standard EN 301 549 V1.1.2 (2015-04)), came into force for in the UK on 23 September 2018. The aim of the regulations is to ensure public sector websites and mobile apps can be used by as many people as possible.

The Directive lists 3 dates for compliance to be achieved:

- 22 September 2019
  - New public sector websites *(those published after 22 September 2018)*
- 22 September 2020
  - All other public sector websites
- 22 June 2021
  - Public sector mobile apps

*https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016L2102
https://www.etsi.org/deliver/etsi_en/301500_301599/301549/02.01.02_60/en_301549v020102p.pdf

PDF documents.

Along with the compliance assessment of web pages, we also reviewed the PDF documents from each university's website.

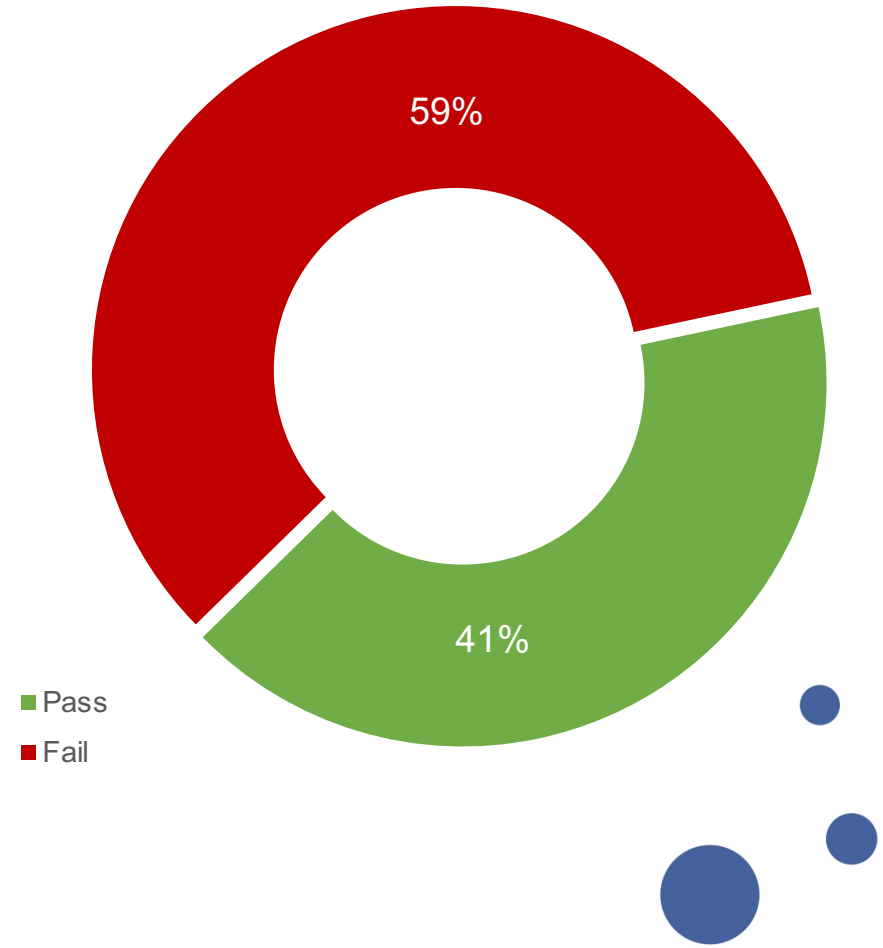
In total there were 1,898 PDF's assessed of which 59% were not tagged for accessibility.

2 of the most common actions required to improve levels of compliance;

- Content Tagging
- Document Titles

Ensuring accessible documents is an increasingly challenging task for public sector bodies, as it introduces new work procedures and requires extra attention during document creation.

The key to solving this challenge is supplying end users with tools that minimises the added workload and are easily adopted. We have found one such tool to be **accessibility**fixer by [1]dania software, which is covered later in this report.



[1] http://www.daniasoftware.com

PDF management.

The *regulation has allowances for historic PDF documents. The full text of the regulation can be viewed online, in relation to PDF's;

Citation and commencement 1.—
(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.
(2) These Regulations come into force on 23rd September 2018.

Revocation 2.
The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018(1) are revoked.

Application 4.—
(2) These Regulations do not apply to the following content of a website or mobile application of a public sector body—

(a) office file formats published before 23rd September 2018, unless such content is needed for active administrative processes relating to the tasks performed by the public sector body;

(3) In this regulation—

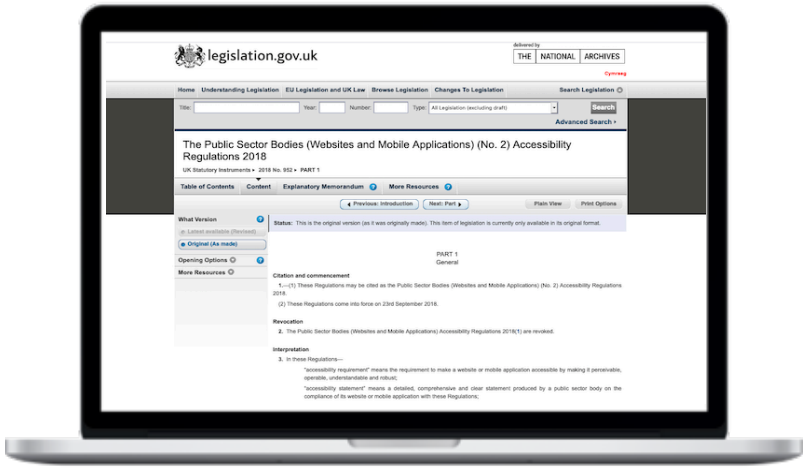
(a) "archives" means a website or mobile application which—

(i) only contains content that is not needed for active administrative processes; and

(ii) is not updated or edited after 23rd September 2019;

……

(d) "office file formats" means a document in a format that is not intended primarily for use on the web and that is included in web pages, such as Adobe Portable Document Format, Microsoft Office documents or their open-source equivalents.



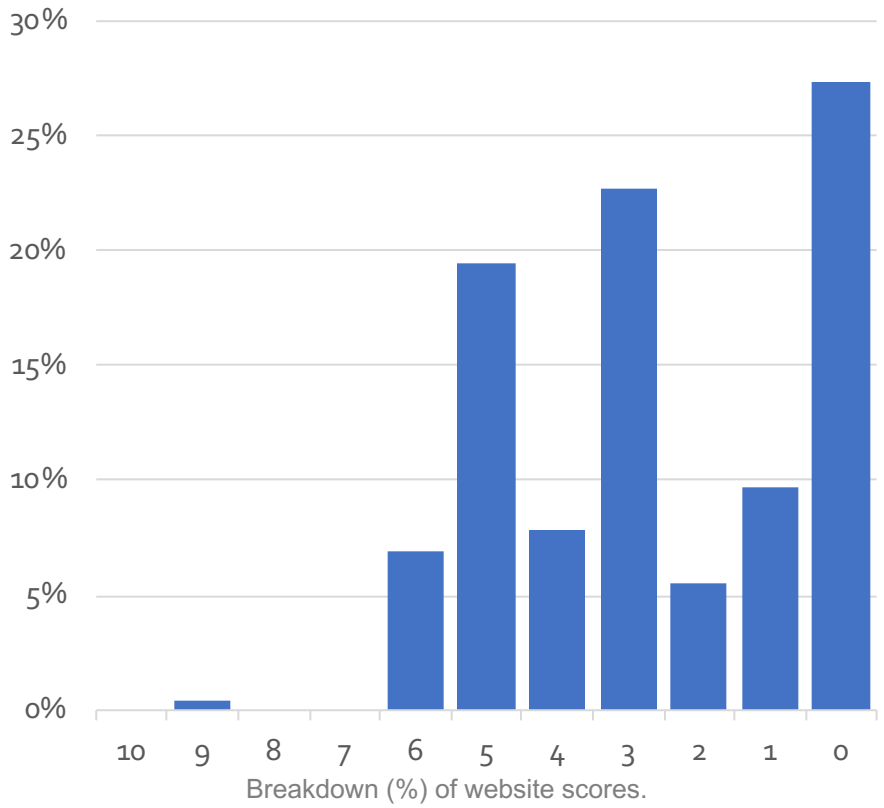
"standard" has the meaning set out in Article 2(1) of **Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European standardisation

**http://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/1025/contents

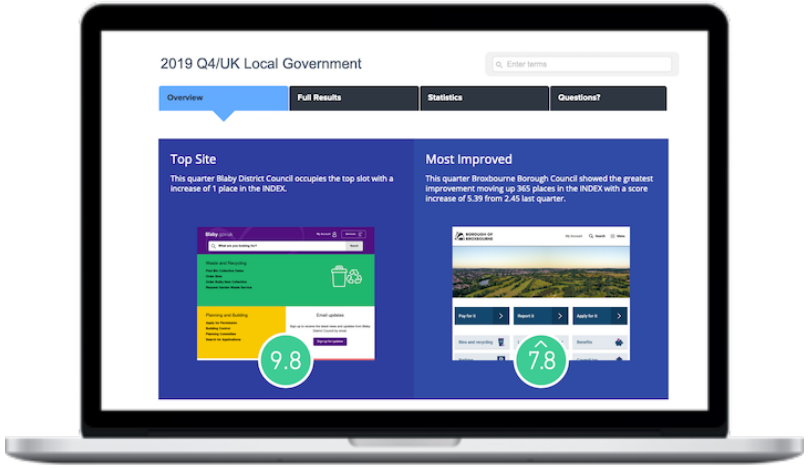
*http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/952/part/1/made

Full Results – breakdown by university.

The score is based on assessing the first 125 pages of a website – those closest to the home (first) page of the website.



Breakdown (%) of website scores.



The full results can be seen at:
https://sitemorse.com/index/uk-ie-universities/2019-q4

Following sites we excluded;

- Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
- Committee of University Chairs (CUC)
- BPP University

The detail of individual exclusions is available on request.

UK & IE Universities Scoring 10 (out of 10) **for Accessibility**

Scoring 9 (out of 10)

University of Derby

Scoring 8 (out of 10)

Scoring 7 (out of 10)

Scoring 6 (out of 10)

King's College London Maths School
University of Worcester
South Essex College of Further & Higher Education
University of the West of England, Bristol
Hull York Medical School

Brighton and Sussex Medical School
University of South Wales (Prifysgol De Cymru)
University of Brighton
University of Southampton
University of Wales (Prifysgol Cymru)

Heythrop College
The University of Manchester
Regent's University London
The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)
Keele University

UK & IE Universities Scoring 5 (out of 10) **for Accessibility**

- The University of Stirling
- University of Lincoln
- Newman University, Birmingham
- London South Bank University
- University of Hertfordshire
- University Campus Suffolk (UCS)
- Unidays
- University of Suffolk
- Plymouth University
- The Henley College
- University of Bristol
- Oxford Brookes University
- Falmouth University
- Solent University
- NUS Connect
- Birkbeck, University of London
- King's College London
- University of Glasgow
- Goldsmiths, University of London
- University of Bath
- University of Sussex
- UCAS
- University of Ulster
- University of West London
- Lancaster University
- The University of Sheffield
- Imperial College, London
- The Open University
- University of Aberdeen
- Nottingham Trent University
- Bournemouth University
- Middlesex University
- University of London
- Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
- University of Greenwich
- University of Roehampton, London
- Trinity College Dublin
- Aston University
- The Glasgow School of Art
- University of Kent
- Bath Spa University
- Universities & Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA)

Scoring 4 (out of 10)

- University of Sunderland
- Harper Adams University
- University of Birmingham
- University of Oxford
- University of Portsmouth
- Associate of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)
- The University of Warwick
- Loughborough University
- University of Exeter
- Cass Business School
- University of Central Lancashire
- University of St Andrews
- Cardiff University (Prifysgol Caerdydd)
- University of Wolverhampton
- Birmingham City University
- ifs School of Finance
- London Institute of Banking and Finance

UK & IE Universities Scoring 3 (out of 10) **for Accessibility**

- Anglia Ruskin University
- Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (Coleg Brenhinol Cerdd a Drama Cymru)
- St George's, University of London
- Leeds College of Music
- Royal Northern College of Music
- Norwich University of the Arts
- Royal Agricultural University
- York St John University
- University of Gloucestershire
- London School of Economics and Political Science
- NUS
- Ravensbourne
- Cranfield University
- University College of Estate Management
- University of Edinburgh
- Student Record Officers' Conference (SROC)
- British College of Osteopathic Medicine
- University of Reading
- Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (University of London)
- London School of Commerce
- Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
- Royal Veterinary College (University of London)
- Brunel University London
- Staffordshire University
- Wilson Stuart University College Birmingham Partnership Trust
- University of the Highlands and Islands
- University of Nottingham
- University of Chichester
- University of York
- Bradford College
- Queen Mary, University of London
- Glyndwr University (Prifysgol Glyndwr)
- University of Dundee
- Central School of Speech and Drama
- Cardiff Metropolitan University (Prifysgol Metropolitan Caerdydd)
- University of Essex
- Nazarene Theological College
- University of Northampton
- University of St Mark and St John, Plymouth
- Edge Hill University
- Royal Holloway, University of London
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Somerset College of Arts and Technology
- HESA
- University of Leeds
- Guildhall School of Music and Draa
- University of Liverpool
- Liverpool Hope University
- Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

Scoring 2 (out of 10)

- University for the Creative Arts
- JISC
- University UK
- University of Wales Trinity Saint David (Prifysgol Cymry Y Drindod Dewi Sant)
- AECC University College
- The University of Salford
- Leeds Becket University
- Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance
- Leeds Trinity University
- The Institute of Cancer Research
- Courtauld Institute of Art
- Richmond, The American International University in London

UK & IE Universities Scoring 1 (out of 10) **for Accessibility**

Heriot-Watt University
Canterbury Christ Church University
De Montfort University
University College Isle of Man
University of Hull
Coventry University
University of Bedfordshire
Newcastle University
New College of Humanities
Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA)
Writtel University College
Manchester Metropolitan University
Glasgow Caledonian University
Teesside University
University of Cambridge
The University of Buckingham
University of Bolton
University College of Osteopathy

Scoring 0 (out of 10)

Manchester School of Architecture
Robert Gordon University
University of Westminster
Leo Baeck College
Bangor University (Prifysgol Bangor)
St Mary's University, Twickenham
University of Bradford
Hartpury University
Ashridge Business School
University of Huddersfield
Swansea University (Prifysgol Abertawe)
Higher Education Strategic Planners Association (HESPA)
Aberystwyth University (Prifysgol Aberystwyth)
University of Cumbria
Association of Heads of University Administration (AHUA)
University of East London
Cambridge Judge Business School
Academic Registrars Council (ARC)
Institute of Education, University of London
University of the Arts, London
Russell Group
University of Law
Leeds College of Art
Liverpool John Moores University
Arts University Bournemouth
Royal College of Art
Durham University
FutureLearn
ALRA
University College London
University of the West of Scotland
University of East Anglia
London Metropolitan University
University of Leicester
Queen's University Belfast
University of Winchester
London Business School
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh
Northumbria University Newcastle
Islamic College for Advanced Studies
Universities Human Resources (UHR)
British Universities Finance Directors Group (BUFDG)
Kingston University
University of Strathclyde
Royal Academy of Music
European School of Economics
European School of Osteopathy
University of Surrey
Buckinghamshire New University
University of Chester
Royal College of Music
Edinburgh Napier University
Abertay University (former University of Abertay Dundee)
City University London
The London College, UCK
London School of Science and Technology
Association of Research Managers & Administrators (ARMA)
School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London

More information?

Watch the video about the results: https://youtu.be/msZNgbje__o

Have a look at the results online: https://sitemorse.com/index/uk-ie-universities/2019-q4

We have 2 webinars about the results:

- **10am on 7th January 2020**
- **2pm on 14th January 2020**

We also run 3 webinars, every Tuesday:

- The INDEX – a general introduction to the Sitemorse INDEX for universities
- Pragmatic Accessibility
- Making Compliance Achievable with Sitemorse – a service overview

Webinars	Time	January	February	March
The INDEX	10:30am	21	4, 18	3, 17
	2pm	28	11, 25	10, 24
Pragmatic Accessibility	2pm	7, 21	4, 18	3, 17
	10am	14, 28	11, 25	10, 24
Making Compliance Achievable	3pm	7, 21	4, 18	3, 17
	11am	14, 28	11, 25	10, 24

Sitemorse

Sitemorse is a UK-registered privately-owned company, with no external investors – our shareholders are our staff. We provide Content Quality & Digital Governance automation to clients around the world.

Sitemorse was probably the first company to bring automation to the digital governance market (with our first services running nearly 15 years ago and our oldest current client joining us 13 years ago) along with being the first to introduce Data Science and Machine intelligence capabilities.

Most importantly we make compliance achievable for all with a proven 3 stage process – its principles being; understanding, prioritisation and continuous improvement.

For more information, visit www.Sitemorse.com

Sitemorse®

Join a webinar, request etc
please email Adam Turner
aturner@Sitemorse.com

dania software

dania software improves the quality of written communication with tools that frees end users of cumbersome tasks and eliminates error-prone manual processes.

A digitalisation veteran
With more than 15 years of involvement in the digitalisation of the Danish public sector, dania software is an experienced supplier with unique insights into the inner workings of public organisations. With this knowledge, we are able to develop highly specialised tools to improve outbound communication and simplify work procedures in councils across UK and Scandinavia.

Making accessibility easy
When the EU Web Accessibility Directive was announced, we were approached by a council wanting to collaborate on a tool to aid their document improvement. Our joint efforts resulted in **accessibility**fixer, a solution tailored to the specific needs of councils challenged with meeting the increased compliance requirements.

With **accessibility**fixer it is easy to create high quality, accessible documents and PDF files. The tool is plug and play and enables all users to make compliant documents directly from the Microsoft Office suite.

dania software

For more information;
Kim Erbo Christensen
kec@daniasoftware.com

Disclaimer

This document is offered as an overview and a starting point only – it should not be used as a single, sole authoritative guide. You should not consider any aspect of the service, or its provision as legal guidance.

The services provided Sitemorse (UK Sales) Limited [Sitemorse] is based on an assessment of the available areas of a website at a point in time. Sections, areas of the site that are not open to public access or are not being served (possibly be due to site errors or downtime) will not be covered by our findings.

Where matters of legal compliance are concerned you should always take independent advice from appropriately qualified individuals or firms.

This document does not constitute a contractual agreement; service detail, prices and / or offers are subject to change or may be withdrawn without notice.

Copyright

This material is proprietary to Sitemorse and has been furnished on a confidential and restricted basis.

Sitemorse hereby expressly reserves all rights, without waiver, election or other limitation to the full extent permitted by law, in and to this material and the information contained therein.

Any reproduction, use or display or other disclosure or dissemination, by any method now known or later developed, of this material or the information contained herein, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of Sitemorse is strictly prohibited.

Sitemorse is a registered trademark.