

Website accessibility



If you own a shop, you have to make sure it meets disabled access legislation and health and safety regulations. Websites have something similar. They are set and monitored by a web standards body called W3C (World Wide Web Consortium). Like shops, websites are also subject to the Disability Discrimination Act, which means 'reasonable adjustments' must be made to ensure disabled people can access them.

"Organisations that offer goods and services over the Web already have a legal duty to make their websites accessible to disabled people."

There are three levels of W3C standards:

A – the minimum standard which all websites **must** meet. If your website does not meet these standards it means that many disabled people cannot access it which is **breaking the law**.

AA – this is good practice where many of the barriers that may stop a disabled person using your website have been removed.

AAA – this is the level all organisations should be aspiring towards where all barriers have been removed.

For more information on website accessibility:

NCVO ICT Hub -
www.icthub.org.uk

Web Accessibility Initiative -
www.w3.org/WAI/

ICT Knowledge Base -
www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk

Making your website as accessible as possible means that you are not only making sure you do not fall foul of the law, but that you are also opening up your organisation to the maximum number of people – e it service users, volunteers, donors or funders.

The best websites (like bbc.co.uk) are built using a **Content Management System (CMS)** - something that lets you update your website at anytime from anywhere in the world with very little IT skills and without having to install expensive software on your PC and in a way that meets W3C quality standards.

The most up to date CMS tools were designed to support blogging and social networking. The better ones will take care of the important techie stuff for you without you having to worry about it.

Content Management Systems used to be really expensive. They aren't anymore.

Colebridge Communications

A social enterprise owned by SUSTAIN can provide simple to use websites built using the best cutting-edge technology that meets the required quality and accessibility standards from as little as £250 +VAT.

Contact David Rapson on **0121 711 3148** or email webmedia@solihull-sustain.org.uk for more information.