New council website proposal

Berkswell Parish Council

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Snapshot - Berkswell Parish Council

You have asked us to prepare a proposal and quotation for the provision of a new, fully compliant and accessible website and supporting .gov.uk services for your council. Thank you. This document sets out an explanation of the legal requirements for compliance with accessibility regulations, how our system meets the requirements – both in terms of compliance as well as the features and functions of the website and then the costing and inclusions, which are on the next page.

The background to website accessibility

Since the introduction of The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (to give its full title) came into force on 23 September 2018 you have identified your Council needs a new compliant website. The aim of the Regulation is to ensure public sector websites and mobile apps are accessible to all users, especially those with disabilities. This means that all new public sector websites will need to meet accessibility standards and publish an accessibility statement unless they are exempt. Those affected include:

- Central and local government organisations (including City, community, town and parish councils)
- Some charities and other non-government organisations

The breadth of WCAG (Website Content Accessibility Guidelines) compliance in respect to a website covers many areas, some relate to how it is technically constructed, how the information is presented and the alternative options for users if they cannot access the website's information in a way that works for them. You can read a helpful article here: '*Website W3C & WCAG 2.1 accessibility compliance: What it means for councils & public sector websites and what you need to do*'.

WCAG has 3 ratings, A, AA & AAA. The following proposal outlines the provision of a WCAG 2.2 AA rated compliant website, the costs involved, what's included and what's not. It also outlines your responsibilities moving forward.

Meeting Accessibility Requirements

Since the release of the WCAG 2.1AA guidance, we have developed a website package solution that meets the compliance requirements that is both cost effective and provides clerks and those who manage a public body website with the tools needed to run the website.

In October 2024, the regulations rose to the requirement being WCAG2.2AA standard – which our platform already meets, along with Assertion 10 compliance elements.

The Aubergine W3C & WCAG compliant website package service meets the requirements in terms of providing an AA-rated compliant framework and website at the point of launch. Once live, we also maintain your site to ensure the underlying code is supported correctly and kept up to date with all software requirements. Optionally, we can provide regular compliance scans of your website pages.

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What you get with our service:

- ✓ A W3C & WCAG2.2AA compliant website built on the easy-to-use WordPress-based CMS.
- ✓ A well-designed, professional and fully mobile-friendly website.
- ✓ Website admin tools to add new and update all the content on your website yourself.
- ✓ Training to get you started plus ongoing support.
- ✓ SSL-protected website hosting on our UK servers.
- ✓ We'll manage all software updates, so you don't have to.
- ✓ We will provide you with on-going support when you need it – email, online or phone.
- ✓ Access to our Website & Accessibility Learning Centre, full of helpful guidance videos on managing the website and making website content accessible.
- ✓ Free monthly drop-in Teams training sessions to top up your web accessibility knowledge.
- ✓ We will ensure your website remains GDPR compliant.
- ✓ We will manage your domain name and make sure this remains active, should you need it.
- ✓ All our team are Bedfordshire-based & hosting data centre is UK-based

Costing

Set up & year 1 consists of:

1. One-off set up and build of website: £999 + VAT (£899 + VAT for SLCC members)
2. Annual SSL-protected hosting with up to 2GB file storage & 2 hours of support
3. Uploading/Inputting and uploading of content (documents, words and pictures) to your new website. Included essential content uploaded free of charge – see opposite for details.
4. Registration and set up of new .gov.uk domain name: free for year one
5. Training on the system: free of charge, via our monthly group training sessions
6. Access to our support team & Website Learning Centre: free of charge, included in the support
7. Access to monthly drop-in Council Website Teams training refresher sessions: free of charge, included in the support

Total: £999 + VAT (£899 + VAT for SLCC members)

Additional (optional) items:

1. Upload of all other pages & content charged at £10 + VAT per page (+£2 per document to download, label/re-upload). Assumes count is made post-sitemapping stage.

2. Online forms/polls/consultation builder module: £50 + VAT per year *recommended
3. Planning portal integration (where supported) £100 + VAT per year *recommended
4. Private member area: £100 + VAT per year
5. Online Payments Module (Sum Up/Gov Pay/Stripe/Worldpay compatible): £500 + VAT
6. Event Tickets Module (Online Payments module also required to sell tickets): £250 + VAT
7. WCAG compliance website compliance and monitoring scan & reports: £299 + VAT per year
8. Extended support for 12 hours: £720 + VAT

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Year 2 costs

1. Subscription to WCAG-compliant website platform, with up to 2GB file storage & 2 hours of support, ongoing training: £299 + VAT per year
2. Domain name renewal and DNS management (£100 + VAT per year for .gov.uk when due)

= Total year two renewal: £399 + VAT pa (+ any additional modules or 3rd party email services)

Website Content (linked documents, words and images)

Website content ranges from words and pictures on a page to multiple files for meeting documents and other regulatory aspects. We break the content upload down into a full year's worth of regulatory content + news, events and other local info. With the exception of AGAR, there are no legal requirements to have a certain number of years' files on a website.

Content included in upload: 2 full years of agendas & minutes, policies, councillors' details, finance & 6x years of AGAR plus 1x year of news and recent / planned events.

Email services

You will require the services of a .gov.uk email IT specialist service to provide mail services for the domain if you do not already have email/IT support services. If you do, this can remain untouched and is best to do so. Alternatively, we work with and recommend two different email options depending on requirements:

Aubergine low-cost, self-managed service

▪ Low cost (c.£60+VAT / year for 20 x addresses with 40GB total storage, attributed how you wish)

UK-based, GDPR-compliant services

"A self-managed service" - you set up email addresses and any devices with their email service control panel(We set up your default clerk@ address and provide online instructions for all other accounts) → Best for councils who want to keep costs to a minimum, and accept they will need to manage and set up emails themselves, or with the help of a local IT specialist. Does not include any Microsoft services or migrations of old email accounts. Mailbox content transfer is charged at £150 + VAT and subject to current mailserver compatibility. Larger Mailboxes can be purchased. £120 + VAT pa for 120GB total capacity)

Cloudy IT (contact: hello@cloudyit.co.uk)

Support is included, Microsoft-based email service (cost depends on the Microsoft packages)

UK-based, GDPR-compliant services

Microsoft Office Suite services can be provided at extra cost.

"A Managed service" - Cloudy help you set up email addresses and devices → This option is best for councils who are willing to spend more for the full Microsoft package and setup / installation support.

Things to note

The above costing is based on your requirement specification and includes a 1.5hr video call group training session (additional remote training can be arranged, see overleaf), full admin area access, access to our Council Website Learning Centre library and our continued support to ensure the system continually meets WCAG requirements.

We will discuss with you the pages and documents that you require on your new website and provide a quote, should you request our help with further years of content upload. If the size of your files that need uploading exceeds 2GB (enough for 15,000 typical agenda PDFs), you will be required to purchase additional server host space for the storage and future files. This is charged at £100 + VAT per year for an additional 1GB storage.

Key Council Website Features

The website framework is configured to fully support all relevant content types to provide to your community in a fully WCAG 2.2AA compliant environment. The key functionality includes **meeting information and dates, document links**, **full page creation and building tools** to support your key messaging, **announcement tools for major alerts, reporting tools** that include **forms** and **redirections to County Council & District services, contact forms, news and other features** that include **digital noticeboards**, **events**, **community areas**, **community content**, **venue & feature areas and FAQs** - all of which controlled through the Wordpress admin system.

Consideration

Website hosting
Your new website will be hosted on our UK-based, SSL-protected servers. That way we can ensure GDPR and WCAG compliance of the system.
Your domain name
We recommend becoming your domain name registrar for the .gov.uk domain and manage the domain and its DNS moving forward and are GDS & Nominet approved to manage the .gov.uk domain framework. This will also allow us to add in free anti DDOS protection against nefarious attacks.
Branding & logos
We will require your brand media pack of logos, colours and other visual assets that your council use in its online identity. If you do not have one, we can provide a logo & identity design service by our experience graphic design team.

Project timeline

Whilst every website is slightly different in the number of pages and content, we recommend you consider the following timeline for the development of your website:

Stage 1	**Discovery & scoping (sitemap/content planning):**	**2 weeks from initial enquiry**
Stage 2	**Development:**	**3 weeks from planned date**
Stage 3	**Content importing & your training:**	**4 weeks after development**
Stage 4	**Testing / snagging – then go-live:**	**1 week after content input**

Final testing and debugging on development server before launching and making live. These timings are estimates based on a typical and average site size and content but may be subject to alteration subject to sight of content required for migration. You may require additional time to review the content.

Other aspects to note

You will need full DNS control for the domain your website uses. We can act as your registrar and manage all domain types, including .gov.uk. If we are not the registrar, we will need access to whoever manages DNS to launch the site.

We can integrate Google Analytics to provide performance and usage insights, helping you understand user behaviour and improve the site. A free Google Analytics account is required, and we provide free training on how to use it.

Training Staff

Training is vital for using a new website system. We provide access to our Council Website Learning Centre, which offers short tutorial videos and remote training for you and your staff. You also receive a 1.5-hour group training session via video call with one of our experts. Our UK-based team is available during office hours for additional support.

We also run free twice-monthly Teams-based sessions for all members, offering refresher training on website admin tools and functions.

Certification & accreditations

To provide assurance of both our processes and abilities, we are **Cyber Essentials certified**, **Government Digital Service Authorised**, **Nominet Accredited** and are **Official Crown Commercial Suppliers for the UK Government**. View certification.

Credibility

- ✓ We work with both SLCC & NALC to produce both written articles and present webinars and conferences on website accessibility.
- ✓ We work with regional CALCs, SLCC Branches and Council Associations to support their members with website accessibility queries.
- ✓ We are official Crown Commercial Suppliers of WCAG digital services to public bodies.
- ✓ We are GDS (Government Digital Service) .gov.uk domain registrar group & Nominet Members.
- ✓ We are the authors of the NALC Website Accessibility & Publishing Guidebook
- ✓ We work with hundreds of town & parish councils providing support and guidance on website compliance and publishing.

Compliance testing, limitation & ongoing

Both W3C & WCAG compliance are driven by many factors, some you have control over and others you don't. In most cases, as long as the base website build has been created in a natively compliant format, any deviation from compliance will typically be as a result of content being added to a web page is not compliant and then renders it non-compliant. As such, the provision of our service to you is limited to:

1) the creation of a W3C & WCAG2.2AA compliant website plus its hosting and support

2) an optional quarterly report of your site that highlights any pages that may have rendered the website non-compliant and a recommended solution. (excludes uploaded documents)

We can also provide an optional technical support package to assist you with running the site, which you may choose to help you in meeting those ongoing support needs. Once live, it is your responsibility to ensure that any words, images or documents that you add are compliant.

We recommend you perform regular checks of the site using free online checkers or browser extension to ensure continued compliance – particularly for new pages and documents added since its launch. As part of our optional service to you we provide 4 checks and reports per year highlighting any problem areas, but recommend you review the site after each time you add content and to use any of the online free checkers as referenced by the Government's Digital Guidance department.

We will ensure that your website complies with W3C & WCAG compliance from a technical position at the point of launching and will notify you if we spot any page that is non-compliant as a result of content incompatibility for you to address prior to launch. Please note that this does not include uploaded documents.

In the event that you become aware of any part of your site that you feel falls outside of WCAG compliance, it is your responsibility to notify us so that it may be assessed by us and, should a problem be found, a solution scheduled for fixing.

Regular review

It's important to emphasise that your organisation needs to agree to a frequency of how often the website is checked for compliance and set that in your accessibility statement.

Delivering on Specification of Work

Given the requirements, it is our recommendation that the site be built on our **custom built WCAG 2.2AA compliant Wordpress framework designed specifically for councils.** It is the world's most popular website platform and allows you to have full control over the site's pages and content in the most efficient way.

The website system is **natively search engine friendly** and **well supported.** We ensure that the Core Wordpress framework and its plugins are kept up to date to ensure full functionality is maintained.

We also recommend a multiple layer of admin user permission controls so that you can have multiple administrators of the content but provide publishing, content and member control to only those you wish.

Our proposal includes:

- ✓ Project scheduling and planning
- ✓ Technical analysis of your existing set-up to ensure continuation of services
- ✓ Development of the website from your choice of our preconfigured design templates
- ✓ Review and compliance testing
- ✓ Content migration (optional)
- ✓ Analytics integration (optional)
- ✓ Website training and access to Learning Centre. In person training available at extra cost
- ✓ Pre-live WCAG compliance check and report
- ✓ Ongoing support and website hosting
- ✓ Domain registration & management

Additionally, the following "behind the scenes" features will be built into the website:

- ✓ High speed page loading
- ✓ Anti-spam features on contact forms
- ✓ WCAG, W3C & GDPR best practice guidance for the website framework

Support
We ensure that all sites are tested thoroughly prior to launch and Wordpress and plugin updates are handled by us as part of the package. Nonetheless, we recommend an additional support package be put in place to help you manage the website after it is set live. Support package options available on the 'costs' page in this document.

References

1) Sarah Sandiford, head of central services, Leighton Linslade Town Council sarah.sandiford@leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk 01525 631920: www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk

2) Sheryl Birtles, Nantwich Town Council, www.nantwichtowncouncil.gov.uk

3) Libby White, St Ives Town Council, www.stivestowncouncil.gov.uk

4) Sharon Henley, Bourton on the Water Parish Council www.bourtononthewater-pc.gov.uk

5) Joe Cooney, Keighley Town Council, www.keighley.gov.uk joe.cooney@keighley.gov.uk

Frequently asked questions

Why do you use WordPress?
WordPress is open source content management software and currently powers around 30% of all websites on the Internet. The project is contributed to by tens of thousands of developers all over the world and is growing from strength to strength. WordPress allows us to develop flexible and customisable websites to

modern standards and observes web development best practices. Furthermore, the community of web developers that use WordPress reaches far and wide and allows us to tap into this collective intelligence and bring that wealth of experience to your project. WooCommerce is an eCommerce engine and extension that integrates with the WordPress CMS.

What is information architecture?
Information architecture is the relationship of how all the different pages of a website are related to each other. This is communicated visually through a sitemap.

Where is the website hosted?
Your website needs to be hosted by a hosting company that specialises in business hosting. We provide UK-based WordPress-optimised hosting services for all our clients' websites to better able provide support and software updates.

Who do I call if something goes wrong with the website or I can't figure something out? Provided you subscribe to one of our ongoing website support packages, we will be your first point of call should something go wrong with your website. In accordance with our SLA, we will determine what the problem is and respond with a fix-time or the information for you to address the solution yourself. We will provide training and tutorials to assist you in using your website once it is launched.

What happens after the website is launched?
Once your website is launched, we will provide 3 months of support to make sure any bugs have been ironed out and that you are confident using your new website. After this you will need to subscribe to one of our ongoing website care plans to make sure your website is looked after and maintained. These website care plans include updating your software, regular backups, security checks and making sure your website is online and open for business 24/7/365.

How long will it take to appear at the top of Google?
The time it takes for your website to appear on page 1 of Google depends on a number of factors. It depends on the search people are using to find your website and the number of other websites that are also available for those searches. Nobody can truly say how long it will take for your website to appear at the top of search engine results pages (including people who actually work for Google), however there are a number of factors that can improve your chances. Building your website on WordPress is a good start as WordPress has some great Search Engine Optimisation fundamentals built-in.

Creating unique and interesting content on a regular basis for your website is also critical to increase your visibility amongst search engines. Launching your website and then forgetting about it is a surefire way to get lost amongst the noise. We are happy to talk to more about your search engine strategy (if we haven't already.)

How will I know if anyone is visiting my website?
We will install Google Analytics tracking on your new website and show you how to log into your Google Analytics account where you can see a wide range of statistics about your website including number of visits, pageviews the amount of time people are spending on your website.

Once you subscribe to one of our website support plans you can choose to receive more detailed analysis about your website performance and recommendations on how to improve. Please ask for more details about what's included in these support plans.

What happens if I want to add some features to the website while you're building it?
Whilst we like to be flexible and responsive to your needs, we also like to deliver what we promise within the timeframes and budgets we have allowed. If you ask us to add new features to your website while we are building it, we will most likely ask why? If we all agree that your new request will help us achieve our objectives then we will be more than happy to oblige. If this new feature is something you would like to add to your website but is not directly tied to your original objectives then we will suggest to schedule it for a second iteration of the website once it has been launched. This will require a new proposal.

Payment terms

Our payment terms are as follows:

All fees are due on engagement and agreement of project inclusions. Work can only begin upon cleared funds or an approved PO.

Your support and renewal date will commence from the date the website goes live.

Payment is to be made by BACs or cheque in GBP. We do not accept credit or debit card.

If we are inputting content for you and you have not supplied the correct content it does not mean we have not done our job. You will be asked to check the website and its content prior to the website going live, and your instruction to put the site live will be taken as confirmation that you have done this. If any invoice is not paid within the credit terms we have given you, we are under no obligation to keep the site on our testing server or continue with the project in anyway.

If any final invoice is not paid within the credit terms we have given you, we are under no obligation to keep the site on our testing server or continue with the project in anyway.

Renewals
Your website subscription, support and any extra services (such as domain name registrations and / or additional modules) are annually renewable and you will be sent an invoice 60 days prior to the expiration date of your annual service contract. If payment is not received by the due date, your service will be suspended until the payment is made. Please be aware that some types of domain cannot be renewed, once they have passed their renewal date.

All sound good? The next steps:

To accept the proposal by replying in writing with your acceptance of the proposal.

1) Please reply by email to the person you received the proposal from notifying them of your intention to accept the proposal.
2) We will send you our KYC (Know Your Customer) questionnaire to perform our required due diligence and gather necessary information to begin the project.
3) We will send you an invoice for the work along with an engagement letter for signing. This will set out a schedule of works.
4) Submit your payment of the project fees. We prefer a BACs payment rather than a cheque to avoid the need to go to the bank.

Once these steps have been completed, we will begin the project.

Terms, service level agreement (SLA) and definitions

The full terms & conditions of our service, to which you are agreeing, are available on our website here www.aubergine262.com/terms-of-trade, along with our Service Level Agreement (SLA) & definitions.

What Do Both Parties Agree To Do?
As our customer, you have the power and ability to enter into this contract on behalf of your company or organisation. You agree to provide us with everything that we'll need to complete the project – including text, images and other information – as and when we need it and in the format we ask for. You agree to review our work, provide feedback and approval in a timely manner too.

Prices at the beginning of this document are based on the amount of work we estimate we'll need to accomplish everything that you have told us you want to achieve. If you do want to change your mind, add extra pages or templates or even add new functionality, that won't be a problem.

However, you will be charged accordingly and these additional costs will need to be agreed to before the extra work commences. This additional work will affect deadlines and they will be moved accordingly.

We'll be up front about all of this if and when it happens to make sure we're all on the same page before proceeding. We may also ask you to put requests in writing so we can keep track of changes.

If the nature or functions of the project change significantly throughout the process, we reserve the right to deem the current project cancelled. At this point you will pay us in full for all the work we have done and may commission us to complete the new project based on the new requirements. This will require a new quote and contract.

Technical Support
You may already have professional website hosting, you might even manage that hosting in-house; if that's the case, great. If you don't manage your own website hosting, or your current hosting environment does not support the solution we are providing, we can provide you with professional, business-class WordPress hosting for your website. The basic hosting package includes 2 hours free support during the time of your hosting that can be used against general support, bug-fixing or guidance you may need. All support requirements outside of the use of these 2 hours will require you to provide us with a full specification of your requirements against which we will issue a quotation for the work. Any work we provide as part of a separate contract of service falls without our standard terms of support and service.

If you require technical support services that exceed 2 hours annually, we recommend you discuss these requirements with us and a suitable support plan can be provided at additional cost.

Service level agreement (SLA)
We provide our support services in accordance with our service level agreement. The full description of what support is provided and when, along with the definition of terms, can be found here:
www.aubergine262.com/terms

Legal stuff
We can't guarantee that the functions contained in any web page templates or in a completed website will always be error-free and so we can't be liable to you or any third party for damages, including lost profits, lost savings or other incidental, consequential or special damages arising out of the operation of or inability to operate this website and any other web pages, even if you have advised us of the possibilities of such damages. If any provision of this agreement shall be unlawful, void, or for any reason unenforceable, then that provision shall be deemed severable from this agreement and shall not affect the validity and enforceability of any remaining provisions.

GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation compliance
It is your responsibility to ensure that your website remains GDPR compliant. The website will be launched and conform to GDPR compliance guidance, but we cannot be responsible for any aspect once it is launched. You must maintain your own data protection review processes to ensure that any data you capture on the site conforms to current laws. If we are your website hosts, as Data Processors, we will share with you our Privacy Statement that explains ours and your responsibilities in relation to GDPR.

Copyrights
You guarantee to us that any elements of text, graphics, photos, designs, trademarks, or other artwork that you provide us for inclusion in the website are either owned by your good selves, or that you have permission to use them.

When we receive your final payment, copyright is automatically assigned as follows:

You own the graphics and other visual elements that we create for you for this project. If you like, we'll give you a copy of all files and you should store them really safely as we are not required to keep them or provide any native source files we used to make them.

You also own text content, photographs and other data you provided, unless someone else owns them. We own the HTML markup, CSS and other code and we license it to you for use on only this project. We love to show off our work and share what we have learned with other people, so we reserve the right to display and link to your completed project as part of our portfolio and to write about the project on websites, in magazine articles and in books about web design.

But where's all the horrible small print?
Just like a parking ticket, you can't transfer this contract to anyone else without our permission. This contract stays in place and need not be renewed. If, for some reason, one part of this contract becomes invalid or unenforceable, the remaining parts of it remain in place. Although the language is simple, the intentions are serious, and this contract is a legal document under exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the United Kingdom.

Our full terms and conditions along with the exit process can and must be read at: www.aubergine262.com/terms If you have a few questions give us a call on 07810 753878 as it makes sense to talk over the finer detail in person.

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This proposal is prepared in good faith and knowledge provided and is subject to our terms of business, EO&E.