

R N I B

See differently

Lewisham Council

Website Expert Assessment Report

February 2019

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Royal National Institute of Blind People

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1 Executive Summary

The Lewisham Council website has many issues with accessibility for speech and keyboard only users. There are interactive elements which are not in the tab order so people who are not able to use a mouse and can only use a keyboard will not be able to proceed to complete the tasks they want as they cannot reach these elements.

The forms are particularly difficult for speech users as the check boxes and radio buttons do not have associated labels and so users do not know what they are saying “yes” or “no” to unless they investigate the form more. Users have to come out of forms mode and then use the arrow keys to find the associated text which will make the form more frustrating and time consuming to complete.

In addition, on many pages in the form when a user makes a selection on a radio button or drop down the form automatically loads a new page or new information. This should not happen as the speech user is not aware of the change and has no option to review their selection.

In some forms (such as give notice of marriage) there are several steps within the form. Headings are given but do not follow a correct hierarchy on certain pages and at times the headings do not provide the contextual information needed to know at what step in the form one is.

It is often not clear visually or in speech when a form field is a required field; this means that speech users will make more mistakes that could have been avoided. Knowing that an error has occurred is not easy when using speech and the way that errors are presented on the site could be improved both visually and in speech. In speech for example errors are presented in a list at the bottom of the page not the top and as speech is sequential the user will not reach this information till they have gone through the form again. Furthermore, there is no feedback when they reach the field where the error is that there is an issue, while visually there is an error message this is not spoken in speech.

Visually there are areas where the colour contrast might be improved for graphical elements making them stand out from the page.

The report lists issues encountered when carrying out the designated user journeys with access technology, however there are issues that appear on several pages and several parts of the site and these have

not been repeated. The recommendation is applicable for each occurrence of the issue across the site.

2 Background

RNIB expert assessments of websites are undertaken by RNIB usability and accessibility staff trained in access technology and the final report is peer reviewed. This means the report incorporates their practical and expert knowledge in using and operating a wide variety of products used by people with sensory loss and age-related disabilities.

Recommendations within this report are categorised as:

- **Essential:** an element which gives immediate concern for disabled people, or others, and must be dealt with.
- **Highly desirable:** an element that gives concern for disabled people and should be dealt with. However, where there are technical difficulties that make resolving the issue very difficult, this can be discussed further.
- **Desirable:** an element which should ideally be part of the design, but could be taken into account for future or similar designs.

3 Website Expert Assessment

3.1 Methodology

The two most commonly used screen readers JAWS and NVDA were used to check if the website could be accessed and used by blind people.

The webpages were tested with JAWS on Internet Explorer and with NVDA with Mozilla Firefox as these are the combination of screen reader and browsers most commonly used by blind people using screen readers.

The website was also tested with magnification software ZoomText and with the Windows High contrast settings to change the colour of the text and the background to check if the website could be accessed and used by partially sighted people.

The expert assessment was carried on the <http://beta.lewisham.gov.uk> site that is under development and followed a number of customer journeys:

1. Task 1: Create an account (SE64RU)
2. Task 2: Find out what council tax band your property is in, who is eligible for council tax reduction and what different ways you can pay.
3. Task 3: Find your collection day (for postcode (SE6 2AL) and report a problem with your rubbish bin
4. Task 4: Apply for housing Benefit – for the account login email: webmanager@lewisham.gov.uk and password is: webmanager
5. Task 5: Book an appointment to give notice to marry:

4 Detailed Analysis

4.1 Task 1: Create an account

4.1.1 Issue: the logo label in speech is not informative enough

Description: the logo is spoken with a screen reader as “logo link” this does not provide information of what logo is showing, e.g. Lewisham council or that this is a home link and therefore the user will not know what the function of this link is. On pages on the giving notice to marry forms the logo is spoken as a web address e.g. www.lewisham.gov.uk.

Location: home page



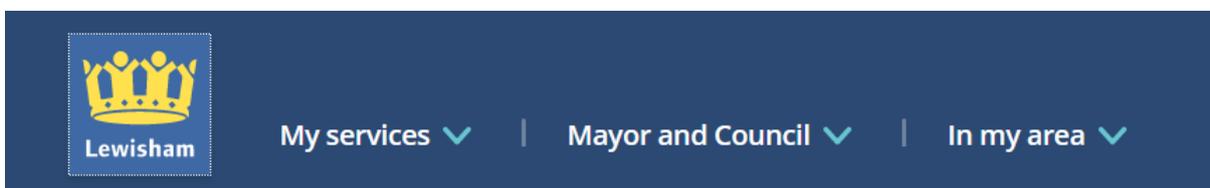
Recommendation:

Essential: the name of the link should provide information to the user as to what the function of the link is. In this case, it should be clear that the image is a link to the Lewisham home page across the site consistently

4.1.2 Issue: the main navigation is not in the tab order

Description: the main navigation menu is not accessible to people who do not use a mouse (keyboard only users). It is not possible to reach it by using keys only and therefore users who cannot use a mouse will not be able to use it.

Location: home page



Recommendation:

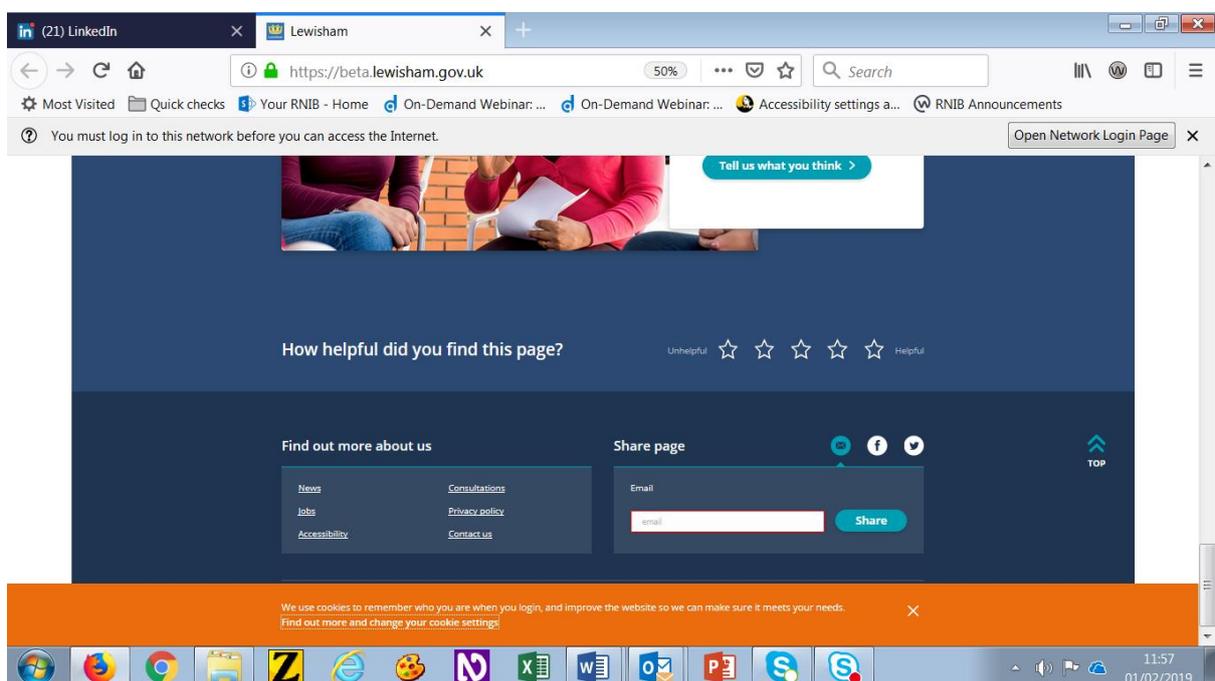
Essential: the main navigation menu needs to be accessible to people who do not use a mouse and it therefore needs to be possible to reach it with keys only

Essential: the main menu has submenus that can be expanded, this needs to be clear in speech and a screen reader user will need to know when the menu is “expanded” or “collapsed”. THIS needs to be easy to do this with keystrokes and speech

4.1.3 Issue: the cookies are in an unusual location

Description: the cookies information is reached at the end of the page after tabbing through all the other links on the page. this is against general conventions so might confuse screen reader users

Location: home page



Recommendation:

Desirable: convention is that the cookies acceptance is one of the first things that a screen reader user would come across at the top of the page, so it would be more familiar to have this there. Where possible following conventions helps screen reader users to understand the site

4.1.4 Issue: the close button on the cookies is not in the tab order, it is labelled “x” and it is not clear it is an interactive element

Description: the close button to dismiss the cookies banner cannot be reached with the keys only. In addition, it is labelled as “x” in speech and so its function is not clear. It should be called something that is intuitive and clear as to what will happen when it is selected. It is also not clear that it is a button as when the screen reader user reaches it arrowing

down the cookie banner it does not have a label to tell the user it is a button or link.

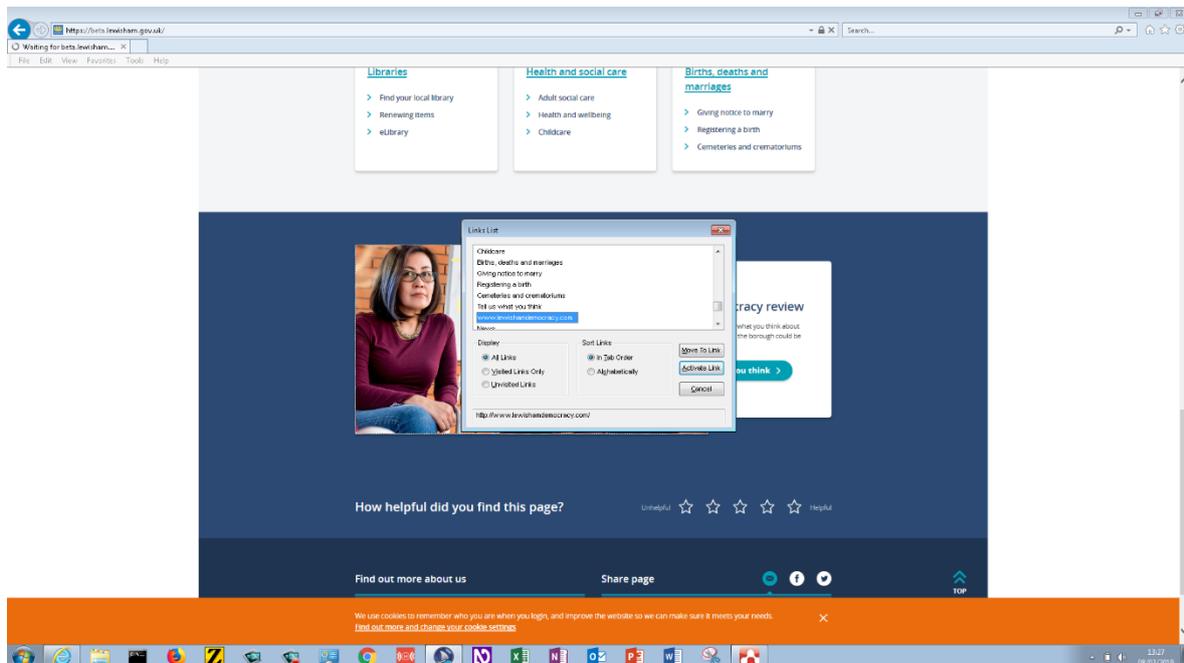
Recommendation:

Essential: a “close” label should be used for the visual “X” and it should be clear that it is a button that can be selected

Essential: the close button should be in the tab order

4.1.5 Issue: there is a link on the page that is not intuitive and does not work

Description: when tabbing though the page a link is encountered that does not correspond to any visual element and which does not work i.e. does nothing. This is confusing for a speech user and will make them less confident in using the site.



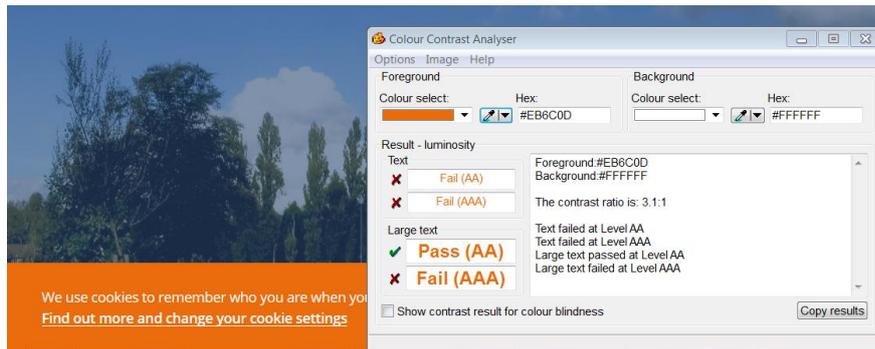
Recommendation:

Essential: all links should be worded such that the link text tells the user what its function is.

4.1.6 Issue: the colour contrast is not sufficient

Description: the colour contrast between the white text and the orange background needs to provide a minimum contrast of 4.5:1 as per WCAG 1.4.3 guidelines for text that is smaller than 18 point or 14 point bold. This does not appear to be the case for all the text in the cookie banner.

Location: Home page



Recommendation:

Essential: text that is smaller than 18 point or 14 point bold needs to have a colour contrast ratio with the background of at least 4.5:1 so that it is easier to read

4.1.7 Issue: make sure the text size is sufficient to provide sufficient colour contrast

Description: the teal text on the white background generally appears to pass WCAG minimum ratio of colour contrast between the text and the background. This ratio is at 3:1 for large text, text that is 14 point bold or 18 point. The teal and white combination is used for buttons such as the Log in or Continue buttons where the size of the text is large and therefore pass the minimum ratio required by the WCAG guideline 1.4.3. There are occasions where this combination is also used for links. The links seen on the task pages appear to be 14 point bold and this needs to be consistent across the site. It also needs to be taken into consideration that the WCAG minimum is a minimum based on the visual acuity of aging eyes of 80-year olds whose visual acuity is 50%. If we consider that an individual to be registered as sight impaired has an accuracy of less than 30% it is clear then that the ratio stipulated by WCAG is a starting point and a higher ratio would be recommended to cater for partially sighted people.

If you have a bank or building society account, [direct debit](#) is the easiest and safest way to pay.

You can choose to pay on the following dates; 1, 18 or 28 of the month, or each Friday.

You can [set up a direct debit online](#) or call 020 8690 9666.

Recommendation:

Essential: make sure that the teal and white colour combination is only used for larger text.

4.1.8 Issue: text is overlaid on an image

Description: text is shown on an image, this makes it difficult to read for partially sighted people even when the colour contrast between the text and the background is good. Non-solid and fussy backgrounds make it difficult for partially sighted people to read the text.

Location: Home page



Recommendation:

Essential: text should be displayed on a solid background

4.1.9 Issue: no skip to content link

Description: there is no skip to content link to bypass the main navigation menu (which is especially useful when there is a large navigational menu) as this helps keyboard only users jump directly to the main content of the page

Location: home page

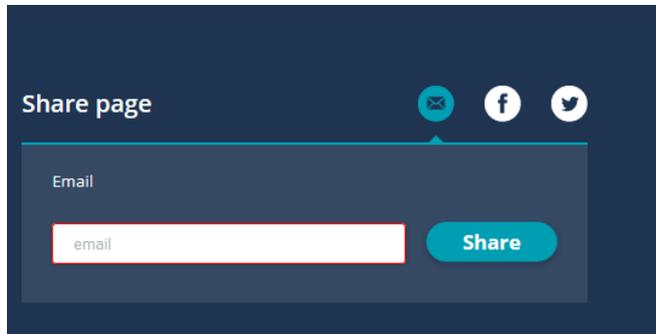
Recommendation:

Essential: provide a skip to content link to help people who can only use keyboard to navigate the site more easily

4.1.10 Issue: some interactive elements cannot be reached and are inaccessible

Description: buttons such as the Share button and the tabs for email, Facebook and Twitter that are interactive elements are inaccessible cannot be reached by tabbing by keyboard only users.

Location: home page



Recommendation:

Essential: it should be possible to reach all interactive elements by tabbing to them.

4.1.11 Issue: TOP read as T, O, P with NVDA

Description: With NVDA the TOP link to the top of the page is read as the individual letters making it more difficult to understand in speech



Recommendation:

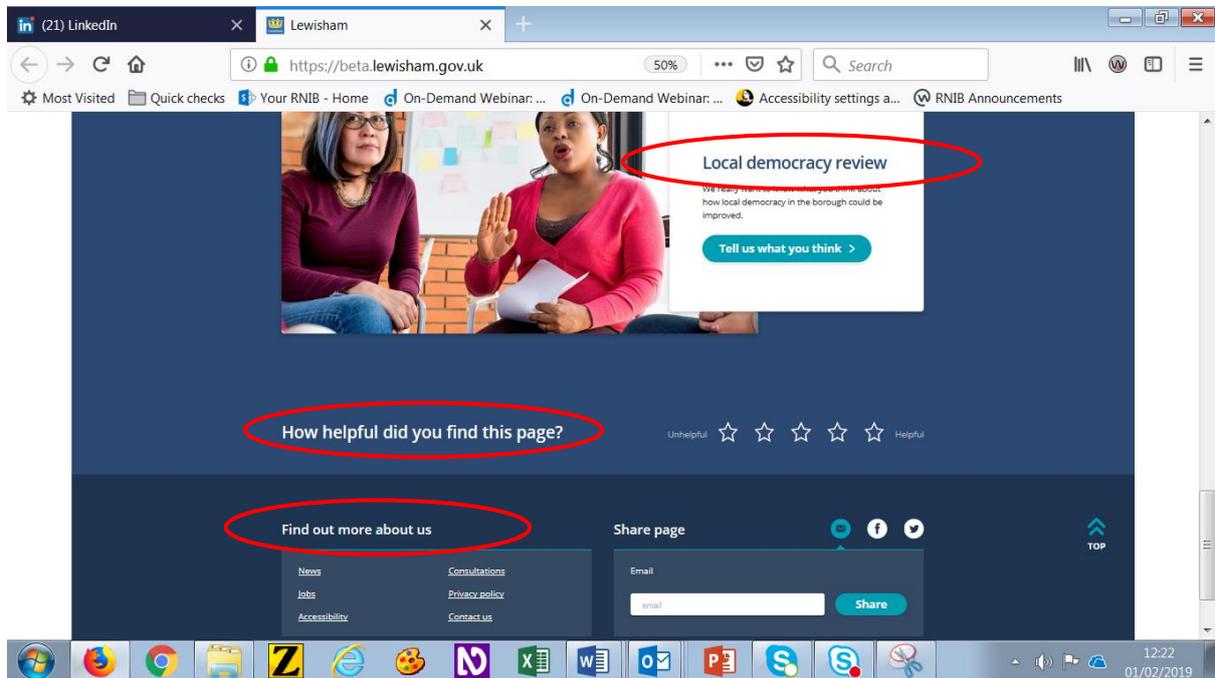
Highly Desirable: using a mixture of upper and lower case will make it clearer to the screen reader that this is a word and it will be pronounced appropriately

4.1.12 Issue: there are few headings on the page

Description: there are very few headings on some pages and in some cases there are obvious places where heading labels could be used. Headings help a screen reader user to understand the content of the page and structure. They also help a screen reader user navigate

quickly the page as screen readers allow blind users to navigate from heading to heading using shortcut keys

Location: home page



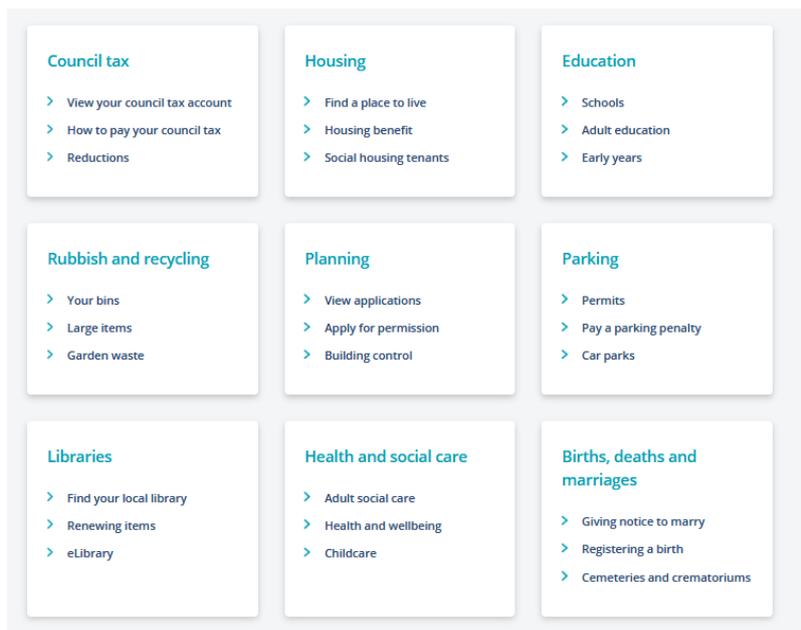
Recommendation:

Essential: label visual headings as headings in code to aid navigation and understanding of the page for screen reader users

4.1.13 Issue: the section visual headings are not headings in speech

Description: it takes a long time for a user to navigate to the section that they want as it is not possible to navigate quickly through the page going from section to section. The section headings (Council Tax, Housing etc) are only links and not coded as headings in speech and it would be useful for a screen user to have these codes as headings as this would help them firstly identify that the links belong to a certain section (as is done visually by putting them in a box) and also it would enable the user to skip from heading to heading and reach the section they are looking for quickly.

Location: home screen



Recommendation:

Essential: the visual headings should be coded as headings so that users can understand the structure of the page and also go more quickly through the page to the desired section

4.1.14 Issue: interactive elements are not labelled accurately or are not reachable

Description: some interactive elements can be reached with NVDA going down the page with the arrow keys but they do not have helpful labels to let the user know what their function is. The feedback in speech is just “clickable”. This is the case for each of the stars and the social media links.

With JAWS it is not possible to arrow to these elements at all so the user would not know that they are there. Furthermore, these elements are interactive but they cannot be reached with keys only.

Location: home page



Recommendation:

Essential: label the interactive elements appropriately so that the user knows what their function is

Essential: interactive elements should be in the tab order

Essential: it should be possible to arrow down the page with a screen reader and hear all that is showing on the page in speech

4.1.15 Issue: the check box and edit field do not stand out visually

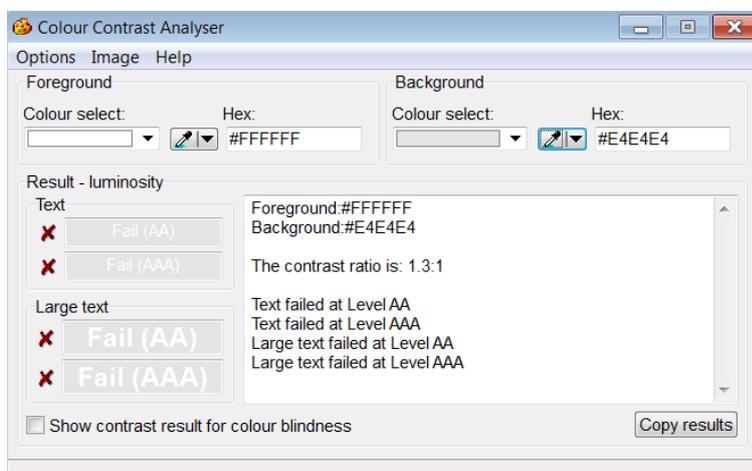
Description: the check box is not visible for partially sighted people and they will find it difficult to locate it on the page. WCAG guideline 1.4.11 states that graphical elements need to have a minimum colour contrast of 3:1 so that they can be easily identified on the page and this is not the case with the checkbox. The same lack of minimum contrast applies to the edit fields such as the one on the log in page.

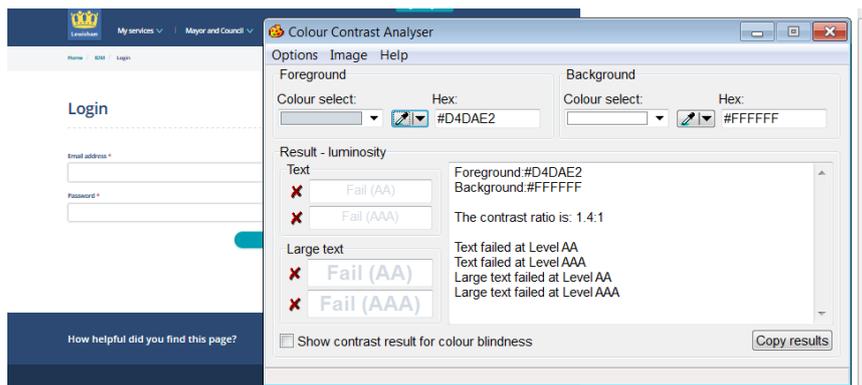
Location: Create an account page

Email address: *

 ?

I would like to get things to do, prize draws and council news by email





Recommendation:

Essential: graphical elements need to be clearly identifiable on the page and have a colour contrast of at least 3:1 with their surroundings. This applies to check boxes or any other elements such as edit fields or radio buttons.

4.1.16 Issue: The Find Address button is not in the tab order and has no label

Description: Issue for screen reader users: the “Find address” button is not in the tab order so the user can only reach it by arrowing down the page. A speech user will tab from the postcode edit field to the next element to submit the search and will miss that they need to find the address and will go directly to the “Continue” button.

In addition, there is no feedback when arrowing down that it is an interactive element, while the other interactive elements that are similarly styled on the page are labelled as “buttons” this one is not.

Different impact of the same issue for people using keyboard only:

However, a keyboard only user cannot use the arrow keys in the same way as a screen reader user and in this instance cannot use the arrow keys to reach the button to find the address.

Location: Where postcode search is used

What is your home address?

We may need to post personal information to this address.

Postcode *

Find address >

< **Back to name** **Continue to step 4** >

Recommendation:

Essential: all interactive elements should be reached via tabs for both screen reader users and keyboard only users.

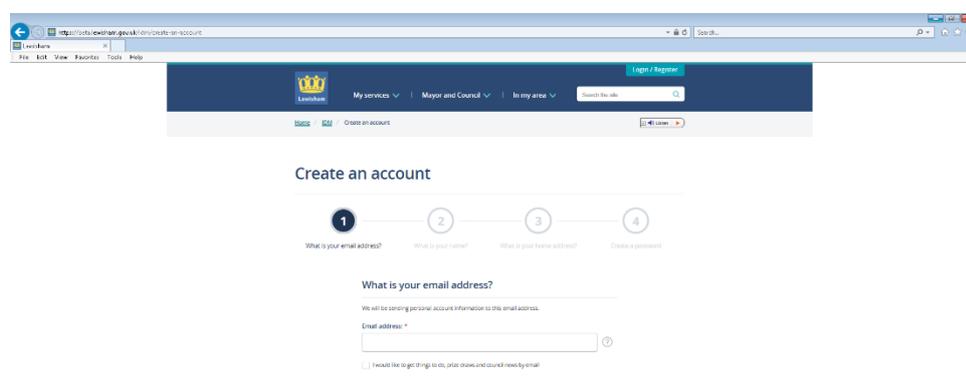
Essential: All interactive elements should have labels to tell the screen reader user both that they are interactive elements and what type of interactive element they are.

Essential: The “Find address” button should be in the tab order after inserting the postcode.

4.1.17 Issue: the feedback for which step one is on is not informative in speech

Description: there are visual indications on which step in the process one is and what the other steps are. This is not clear in speech as they are spoken all in the same way. There is no indication that some are dimmed as not yet available or any indication “you are here” for the one that is the current step you are on.

Location: Create an account



Recommendation:

Highly Desirable: the feedback in speech should make it clear to the user which is the current step and which are the following ones

4.1.18 Issue: it is not possible to select the address with JAWS

Description: the address list cannot be accessed with keystrokes with JAWS as it is not possible to reach the list either by tabbing or arrowing to it. The list to select an address is completely bypassed in JAWS. However, it is possible to reach the list with NVDA as is shown on the second image below and to arrow down to select an address and receive feedback for each address while arrowing down the list.

Location: What is your address

The screenshot shows a web form with four steps: 1. What is your email address?, 2. What is your name?, 3. What is your home address?, and 4. Create a password. Step 3 is active. The form asks for a postcode or street name and has a 'Find address' button. Below the button is a list of address suggestions, with 'The Broadway Theatre, Catford Road, London' selected. A 'Back to name' button is at the bottom left and a 'Continue to step 4' button is at the bottom right.

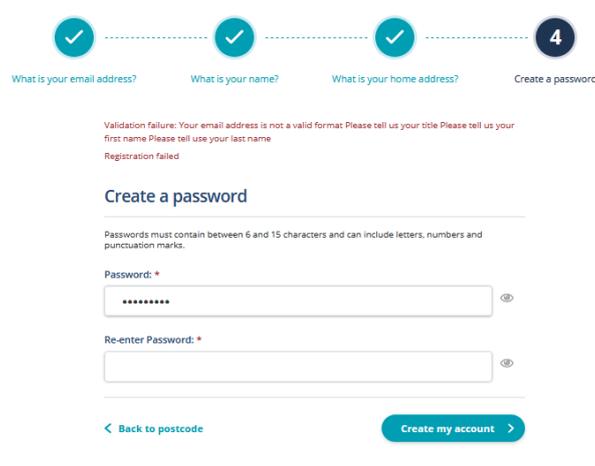
Recommendation:

Essential: it should be possible for a JAWS user to reach the list of possible addresses and hear them spoken and make a selection.

4.1.19 Issue: timeouts in forms are not correctly indicated to the user

Description: When filling in the password form, there are a number of pages and this form has a timeout. If the user does not complete the form within the time the form remains on screen. The user is able to complete the form but when it is submitted some of the information on previous pages is no longer present (this is assumed to be due to a timeout). However, the user is not told this until they submit the form and get an error message.

Location: Create a password page



The screenshot shows a four-step registration process. The first three steps are completed, indicated by green checkmarks in circles. The fourth step, 'Create a password', is active and highlighted with a dark blue circle containing the number '4'. Below the progress indicator, there are red error messages: 'Validation failure: Your email address is not a valid format Please tell us your title Please tell us your first name Please tell us your last name' and 'Registration failed'. The 'Create a password' section includes a heading, a note that passwords must be 6-15 characters long, and two password input fields: 'Password: *' and 'Re-enter Password: *'. At the bottom, there are two buttons: '< Back to postcode' and 'Create my account >'. A vertical scrollbar is visible on the right side of the page.

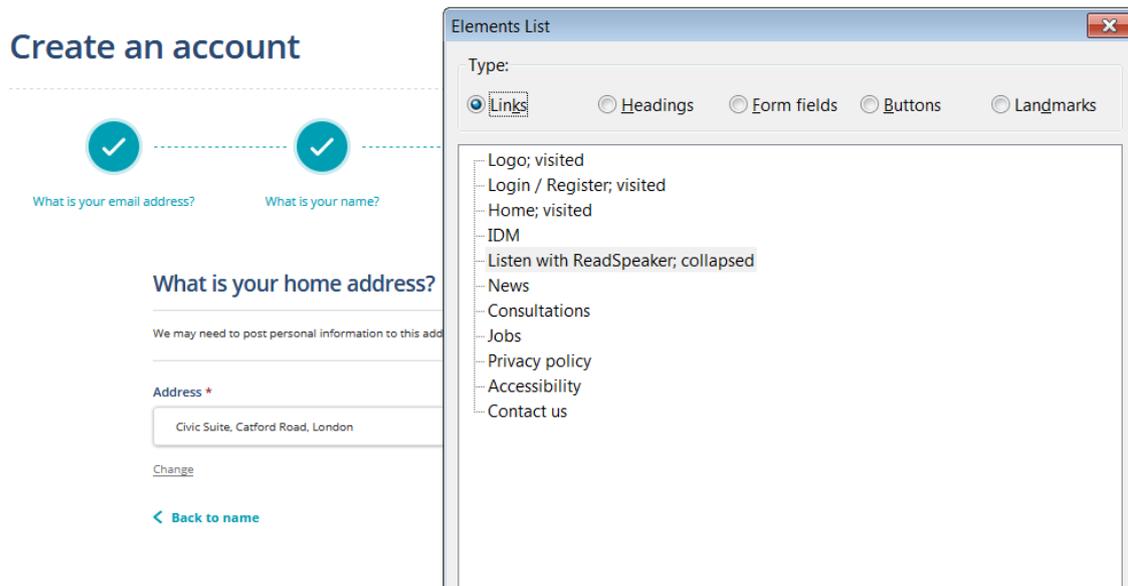
Recommendation:

Essential: if a form has timed out (or pages of a form have been timed out) then the user must be told this before they continue with the form.

4.1.20 **Issue: the link is not descriptive and cannot be tabbed to**

Description: the “change” link is not a descriptive link and it cannot be accessed via the screen reader’s list of links. It should be possible to know what the link’s function is and to reach it both on the page with the list of links and via the tab key which currently is not possible.

Location: What is your address



Recommendation:

Highly Desirable: the link should be more informative and tell the users what its function is. “Change address” would be a better label

Essential: like other interactive elements it should be possible to reach the link by tabbing to it and to have this appear in the list of all the links on the page.

4.1.21 Issue: strange feedback for Read Speaker

Description: there is an embedded Read Speaker tool to read the page for partially sighted and dyslexics users. When the user reaches the tool it is spoken as Read Speaker but then on the second tab the feedback from the JAWS screen reader as the feedback is “Alt plus 1 button collapsed open/close toolbar”

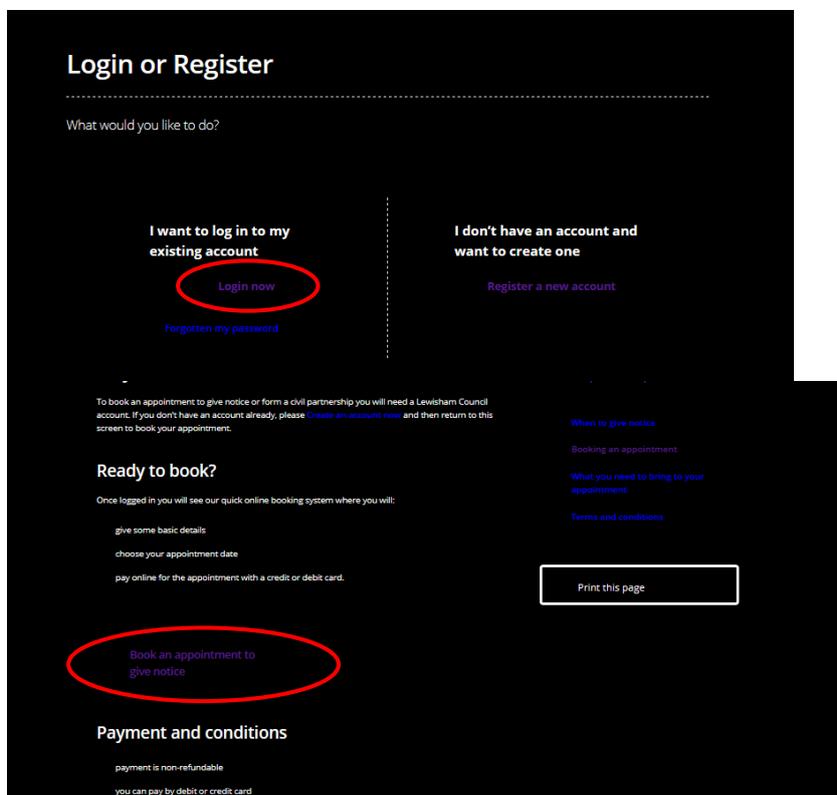
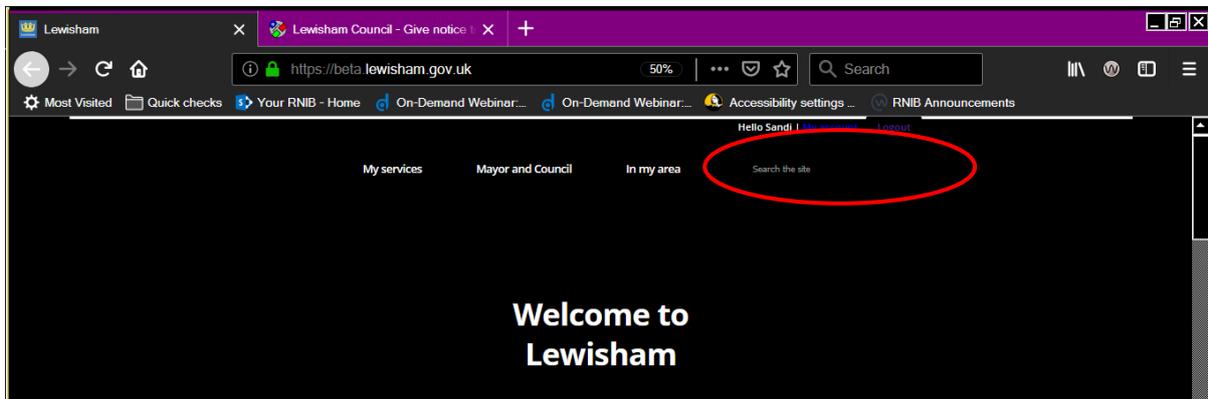
Recommendation:

Highly Desirable: provide better feedback for the embedded tool or if this is not possible provide some hidden text available only to screen reader users that tells them what the strange feedback on the second tab refers to.

4.1.22 Issue: elements are not showing when the high contrast scheme is enabled

Description: when the Windows high contrast scheme is chosen there are elements that do not stand out on the page. On the home screen the search edit field is not obvious and the Search button is not visible at all.

On other pages the buttons also do not stand out.
Location: home page and other pages



Recommendation:

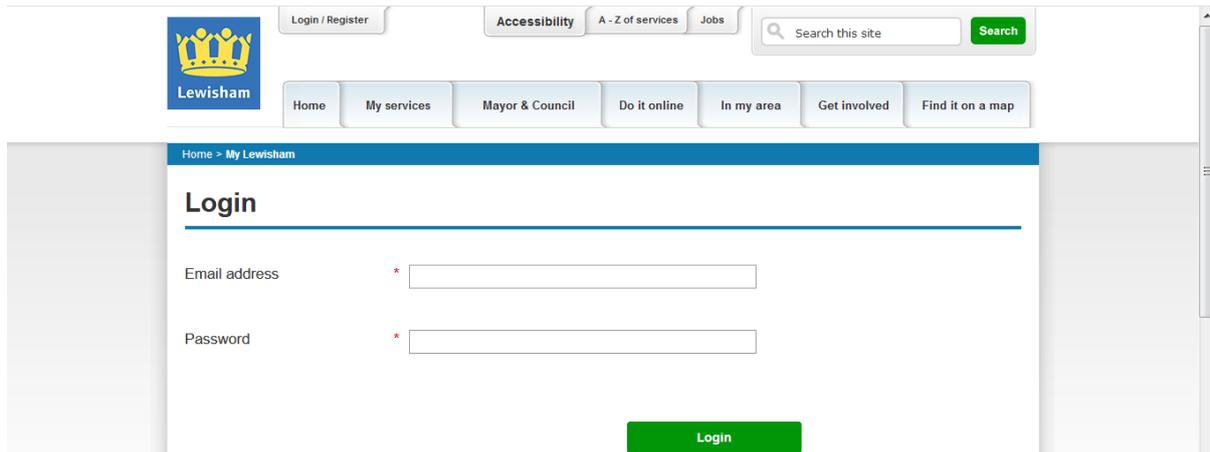
Essential: elements such as buttons and edit fields should be visible and stand out when a Windows high contrast scheme is enabled.

4.2 Task 2: Council Tax

4.2.1 Issue: log in edit fields do not have accessible form labels

Description: the edit fields when you sign in do not have accessible labels to tell the user what they need to insert. This appears to be the old form and at the moment it is not accessible as what a speech user hears is that it is an edit field and then just a random set of numbers and letters.

Location: Log in page



The screenshot shows the Lewisham Council website's login page. At the top left is the Lewisham logo. To its right are links for 'Login / Register', 'Accessibility', 'A - Z of services', and 'Jobs'. A search bar with a magnifying glass icon and the text 'Search this site' is followed by a green 'Search' button. Below these are navigation tabs: 'Home', 'My services', 'Mayor & Council', 'Do it online', 'In my area', 'Get involved', and 'Find it on a map'. The main content area has a blue header with 'Home > My Lewisham' and a 'Login' title. Below the title are two input fields: 'Email address' and 'Password', each with a red asterisk to its left. A green 'Login' button is centered below the fields.

Recommendation:

Essential: each edit field should have a label that is read out when the speech user lands on that edit field that tells them what they need to insert

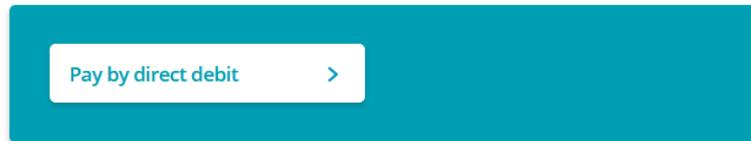
4.2.2 Issue: the user journey is not intuitive

Description: the information related to paying by direct debit is presented after the button "Pay by direct debit". The user journey does not make sense in speech as the speech user might not know that this information is presented on the page or have to navigate back to find the button. It is far more intuitive to read the information first and then reach the button that allows you to start the process.

Location: Other ways to pay

All ways to pay your council tax

Other ways to pay your council tax.



Pay by direct debit

If you have a bank or building society account, [direct debit](#) is the easiest and safest way to pay.

You can choose to pay on the following dates; 1, 18 or 28 of the month, or each Friday.

You can [set up a direct debit online](#) or call 020 8690 9666.

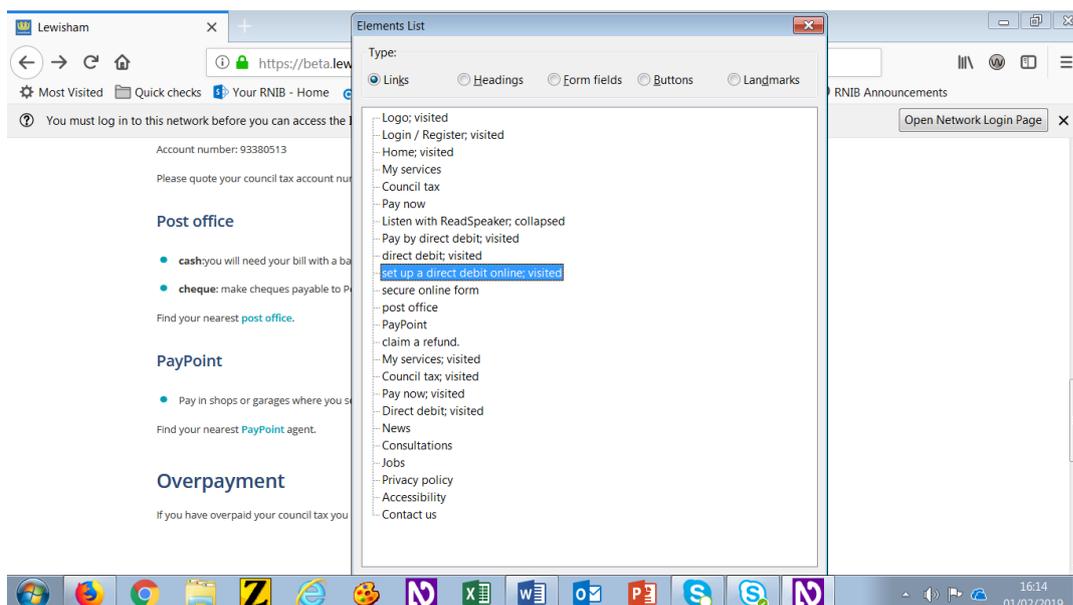
Recommendation:

Desirable: the information could be moved around to make the user journey more intuitive in speech

4.2.3 Issue: some links are not sufficiently descriptive

Description: some of the links are not descriptive enough and they will not be helpful when the user access them via the screen reader's list of links. It would be helpful if the links provided some context so that the user knows what will happen when they select the link. This is the case of the links "Post office" or "PayPoint" which actually would be better links if they provided some context such as Find the nearest Post Office.

Location: Other ways to pay



Recommendation:

Highly Desirable: the links “Post office” or “PayPoint” etc could be made clearer by adding some contextual information

4.2.4 Issue: PDFs can be inaccessible for screen reader users

Description: it is easier for screen reader users and partially sighted people to use Word documents as PDFs can be inaccessible and more difficult to navigate and also to alter to fit one’s visual preferences (such as change colour contrast or colour selections that are difficult to read).

Location: Council tax reductions

How much reduction you get

From 1 April 2018:

- If you are a pensioner on a low income you may be eligible for a reduction of up to a maximum of 100% on the whole amount of your council tax.
- If you are of working age on a low income you may be eligible for a reduction of up to a maximum of 75% on the whole amount of your council tax.



Recommendation:

Highly Desirable: consider providing the information in an accessible Word document

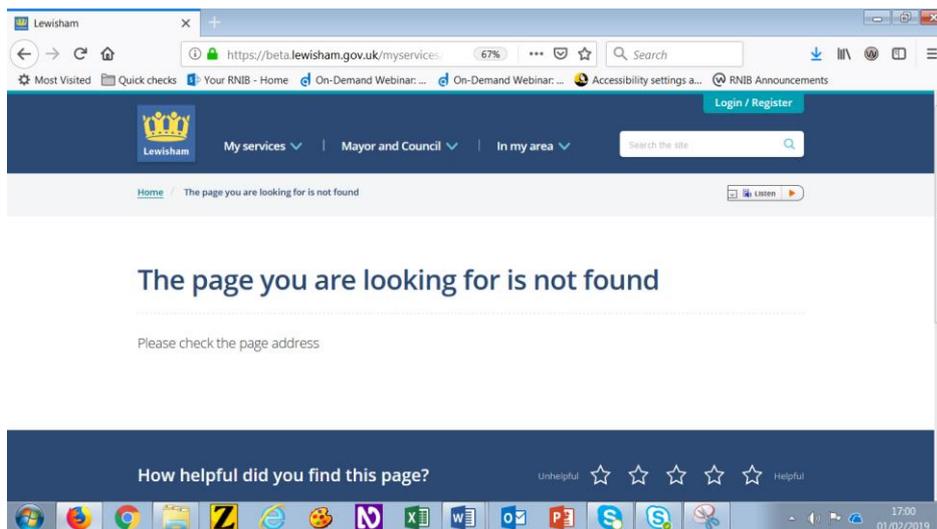
4.2.5 Issue: a link does not work

Description: the first Council Tax reduction scheme link does not work and brings up a “Page not found”.

Location: Council Tax reductions

Part-time students

Only full time students qualify for any type of council tax reduction, but you may be entitled to make a claim under the [council tax reduction scheme](#) if you are on a low income.



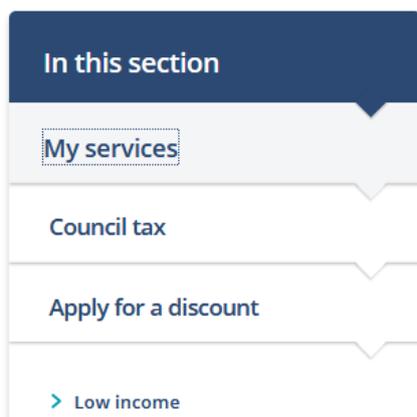
Recommendation:

Essential: links should work and not give a “Page not found” message and identical links should go to the same location

4.2.6 Issue: “in this section” side menu does not stand out in speech

Description: “in this section” side menu could be made to stand out and provide more idea of the structure of the page by having it as a heading and also allowing users to navigate to the quick links by using the heading shortcut.

Location: all pages with the “In this Section” menu



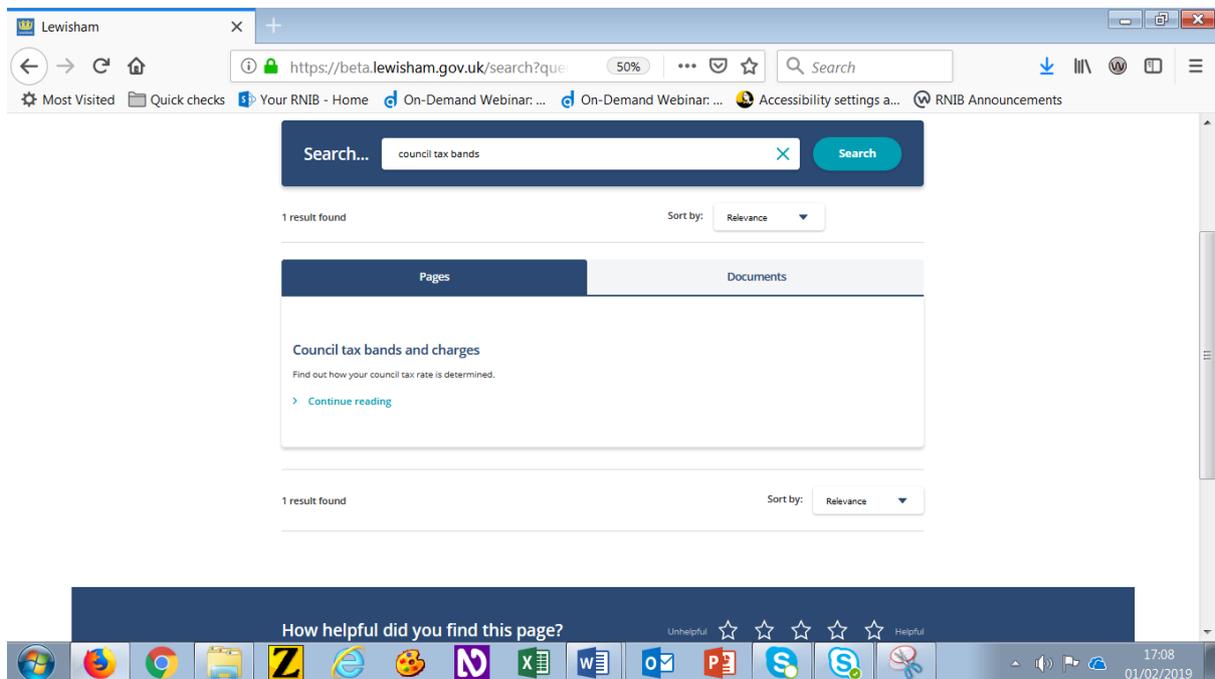
Recommendation:

Essential: code the “In this section” as a heading to provide structure and navigation aid to screen reader users.

4.2.7 Issue: it is not clear in speech which tab is selected

Description: there are tabs when the search results are presented. In speech it is not clear to which category (Pages or Documents) the results belong to as this is not announced on the page

Location: Search results



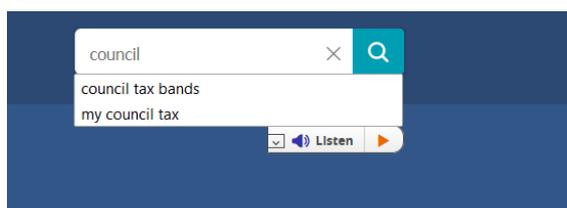
Recommendation:

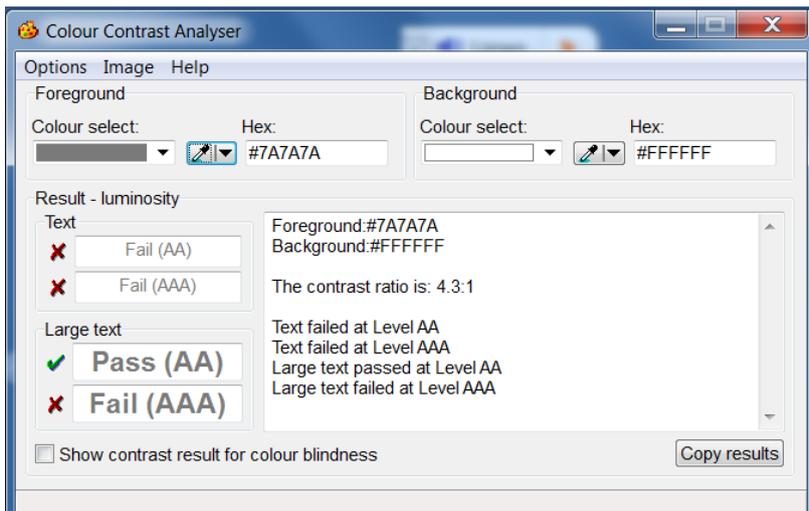
Essential: it should be clear in speech which tab is selected

4.2.8 Issue: the text in the search field is not clear visually

Description: when inserting text in the search field this does not appear to be very clear visually. The suggestions appear to be more distinguishable than the inserted text and partially sighted people will struggle to read it and will need to use higher levels of magnification to read it. The text does not appear to pass the minimum colour contrast ratio with the background for standard text as stipulated by WCAG.

Location: search edit field





Recommendation:

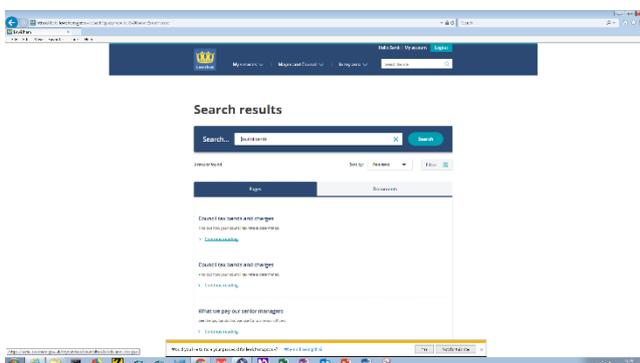
Essential: increase the colour contrast or boldness of the text inserted to make it stand out more.

4.2.9 Issue: the results are not headings

Descriptions: the search results cannot be navigated quickly. If each result were a heading a screen reader user would be able to skip from result to result with the heading shortcut without having to arrow down the page. It would also be easier to understand where each result starts and ends.

Furthermore, the link to the page to look at more details for each result is the same and so the user will tab through the page listening to the same link being spoken each time. Some contextual information should be provided for the link so that the user knows what each refers to

Location: search results



Recommendation

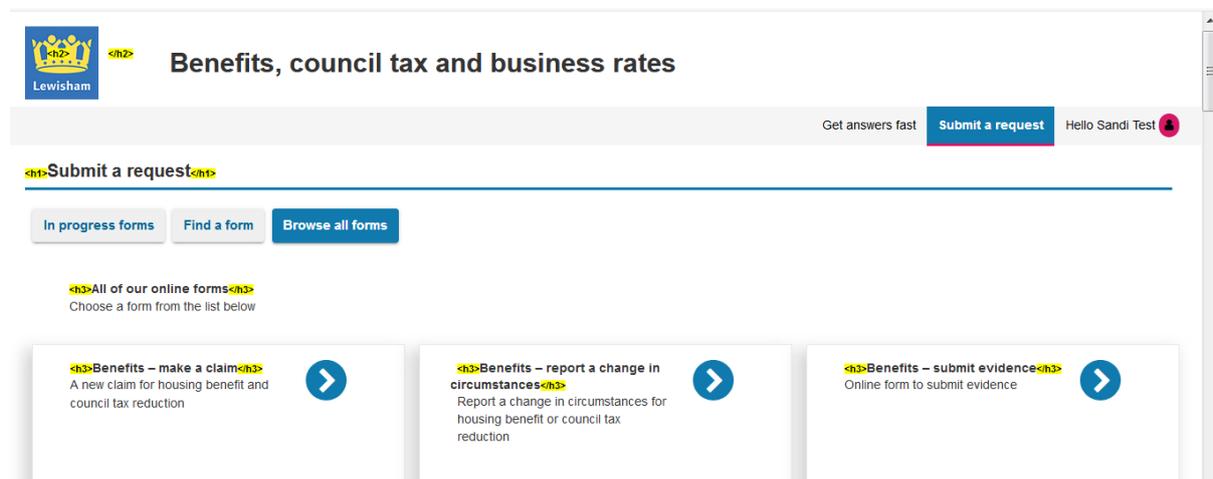
Highly desirable: each result title should be a heading

Highly Desirable: provide more context to the links either with an ARIA label linked to the headings or in the text label itself

4.2.10 Issue: the heading levels do not follow a logical hierarchy

Description: the heading levels are not following a normal hierarchy with the “Benefits, council tax and business rates” being a heading level 2 whilst the heading level 1 is “Submit a claim”. The H1 should be the main heading on the page with sub-headings following a logical order i.e. h2 then h3 for sub-headings etc. This helps a screen reader user build up a mental model of the page.

Location: Benefits, council tax and business rates



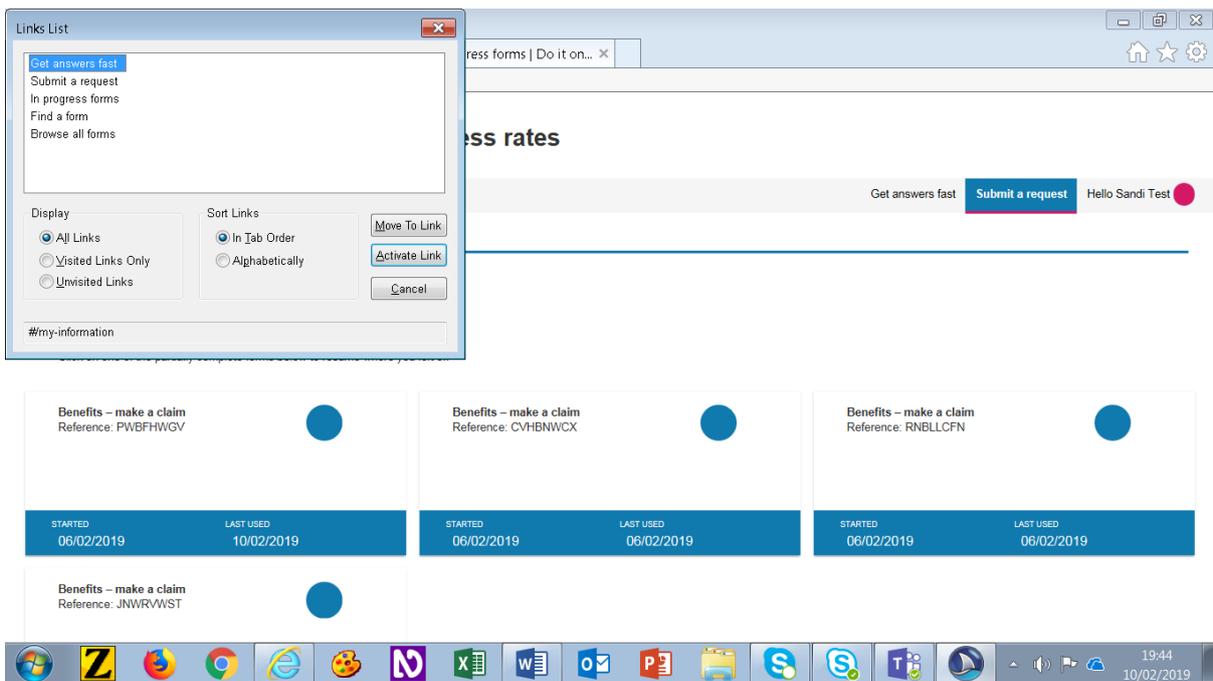
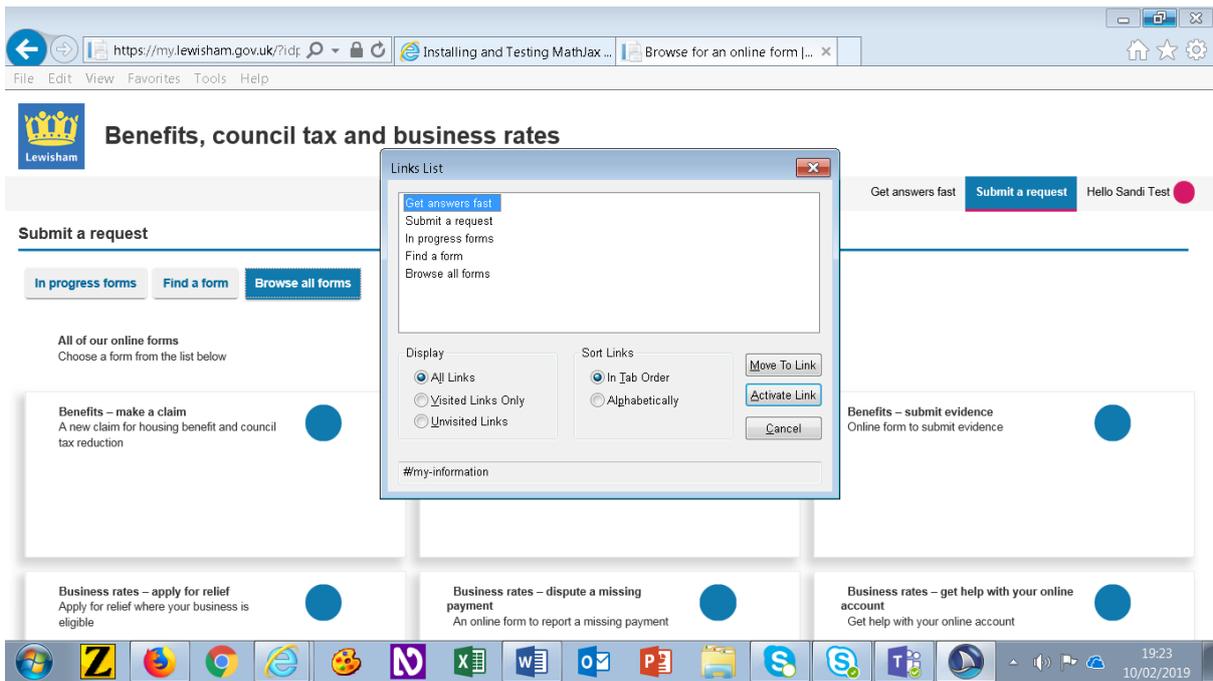
Recommendation:

Essential: the headings levels should be correct and the main title of the page should be a heading 1

4.2.11 Issue: interactive elements cannot be reached with tabs

Description: It is not possible to reach the interactive elements on the page with only keys. For example, the boxes that are links to start the process of applying for housing benefits cannot be tabbed to. In addition, when these boxes are reached with a screen reader by arrowing down the page it is not clear that they are interactive elements as there is no label associated with them.

Location: Benefits, council tax and business rates



Recommendation:

Essential: all interactive elements need to be accessible and need to be reached with keystrokes only.

Essential: if an interactive element is present this needs to be labelled correctly so that a screen reader user knows that they can select it.

4.2.12 Issue: it is not clear which tab is selected

Description: it is not clear what tab is selected and therefore what is showing on the page as far as forms is concerned and also whether one is in the form section or in the “Get answers fast” section.

Location: Benefits, council tax and business rates



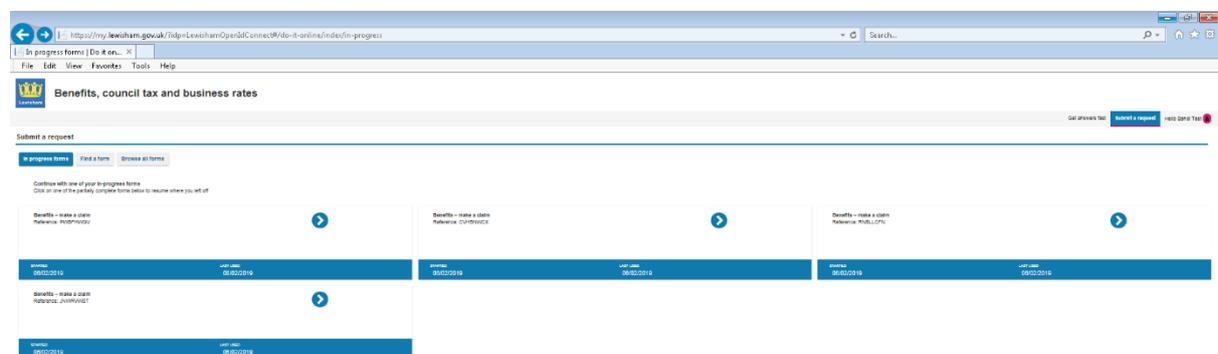
Recommendation:

Essential: it should be clear which of the tabs is selected

4.2.13 Issue: the dates linked to the claims use confusing headings levels

Description: the start label and the date when the claim was started are headings. The label is a heading level 3 and the date is a level 2. The same happens with the last used information. This is unintuitive in speech. It would make sense to have the label and the date with the same heading and linked in speech.

Location: Benefits, council tax and business rates



Recommendation:

Highly desirable: use consistent headings for label and date and link the associated information

4.2.14 Issue: there do not seem to be any radio buttons or check boxes

Description: there are no visible radio buttons or check boxes associated with the labels “yes” or “no”. It is not clear visually or in speech how one would make their selection.

Location: I need help paying my rent form

Lewisham Life eNewsletter

Would you like to receive the Lewisham Life eNewsletter?

Yes

No

The free Lewisham Life eNewsletter contains local events and news, deals, competitions and more.

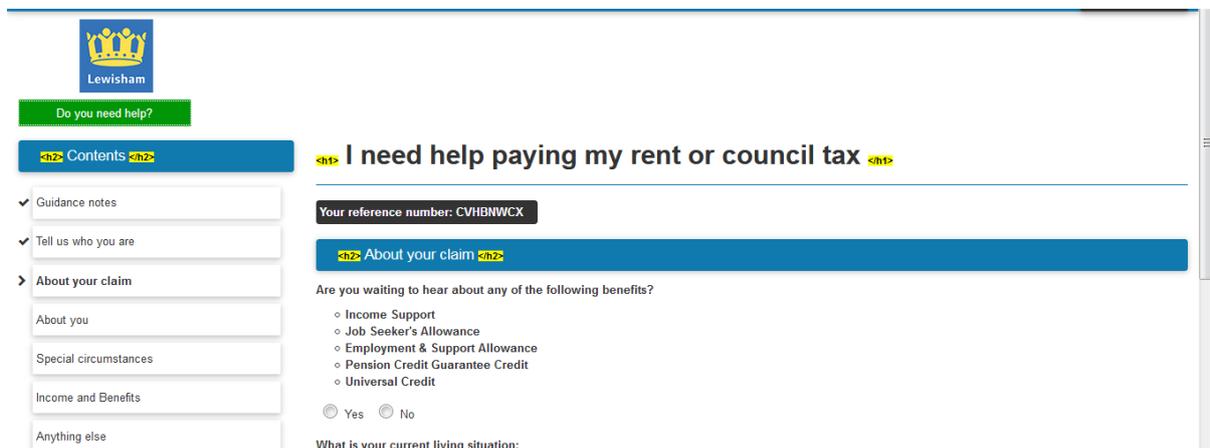
Recommendation:

Essential: the associated interactive elements with the yes and no label need to make it clear to the user how they need to interact with them to make their selection.

4.2.15 Issue: illogical heading hierarchy

Description: the contents heading is a heading 2 but it is reached before the heading 1 which is the heading that provides the user with the information of what the page is about. This is not an intuitive or conventional way of proceeding on the page

Location: I need help paying my rent form



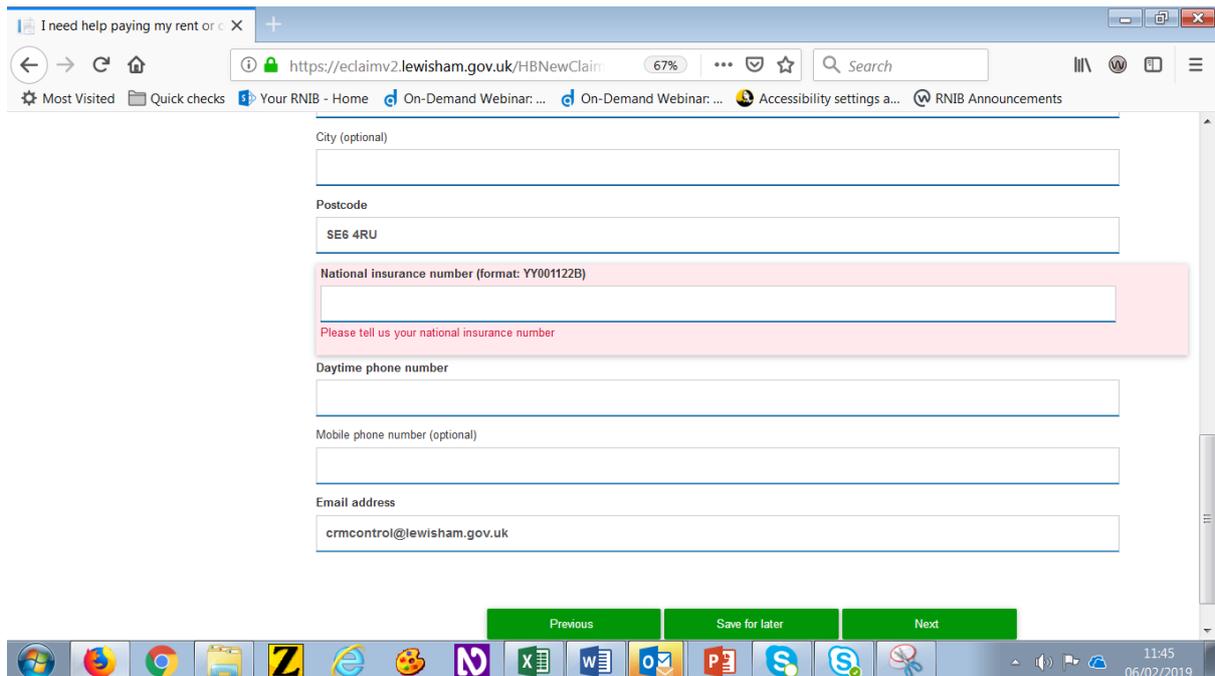
Recommendation:

Essential: the heading structure should be logical and a heading level one should be the first thing that a user reaches on the page when activating the screen reader keyboard shortcut for headings

4.2.16 Issue: required fields are neither shown visually nor announced in speech

Description: it is not clear that some fields are required as there is no indication visually or in speech that this is the case, so it will be more difficult for a screen reader user to fill in the form as there will be more errors created if they do not know what is required and what is not.

Location: I need help paying my rent form



Recommendation:

Essential: if fields must be filled in then it should be clear visually and in speech. “Required” feedback in speech should be provided.

4.2.17 Issue: the message to warn the user that there are errors on the page is not in a sensible location

Description: when there are errors in the form and the user tries to submit the form, a message listing the errors is displayed on screen beneath the form. The focus does not go to it and so the speech user does not know that there are issues on the page.

Location: I need help paying my rent form

Daytime phone number

Please provide your telephone number so we can contact you quickly if we need to

Mobile phone number (optional)

Email address

Please correct the following errors

- The date must be in the format dd/mm/yyyy and you must be between 16 and 120
- Please tell us your national insurance number
- Please provide your telephone number so we can contact you quickly if we need to

Previous Save for later Next

Recommendation:

Essential: the list of errors should be placed at the top of the page so that the user knows what they need to correct on the form as they go through it

Essential: the focus should move to the error message at the top of the page as soon as the user tries to submit the form and fails.

Highly Desirable: there could be a heading for the error list on the page so that it is easy to navigate to it as you review the page.

Highly Desirable: the error messages could be links that take the user to the field where the error is present

4.2.18 Issue: there is no feedback for the error when tabbing through the form fields

Description: if a speech user reviews the form to correct errors when they tab from edit field to edit field they do not receive the feedback that there is an error. They should be able to know that there are errors not only when in browse mode arrowing down the page but also in forms mode as this is what they will be using when filling in a form. So when they tab from field to field they should hear which field they are on but also that there is an error.

Location: I need help paying my rent form

National insurance number (format: YY001122B)

Please tell us your national insurance number

Daytime phone number

Please provide your telephone number so we can contact you quickly if we need to

Recommendation:

Essential: the error messages associated with each edit field should be spoken when the user lands on them tabbing through the form so that they know there is an issue that needs to be addressed

4.2.19 Issue: labels are not associated with radio buttons

Description: when reaching a radio button in a form there is no label associated with it so a screen reader user will not immediately know what they are saying “yes” to. It should be possible to know what the label is without having to move to the text to find out.

Location: I need help paying my rent form

I need help paying my rent or council tax

Your reference number: RNBLCFN

About your claim

Are you waiting to hear about any of the following benefits?

- Income Support
- Job Seeker's Allowance
- Employment & Support Allowance
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Universal Credit

Yes No

Do you pay Council Tax?

Yes No

Do you have a partner? [Help](#)

Yes No

Recommendation:

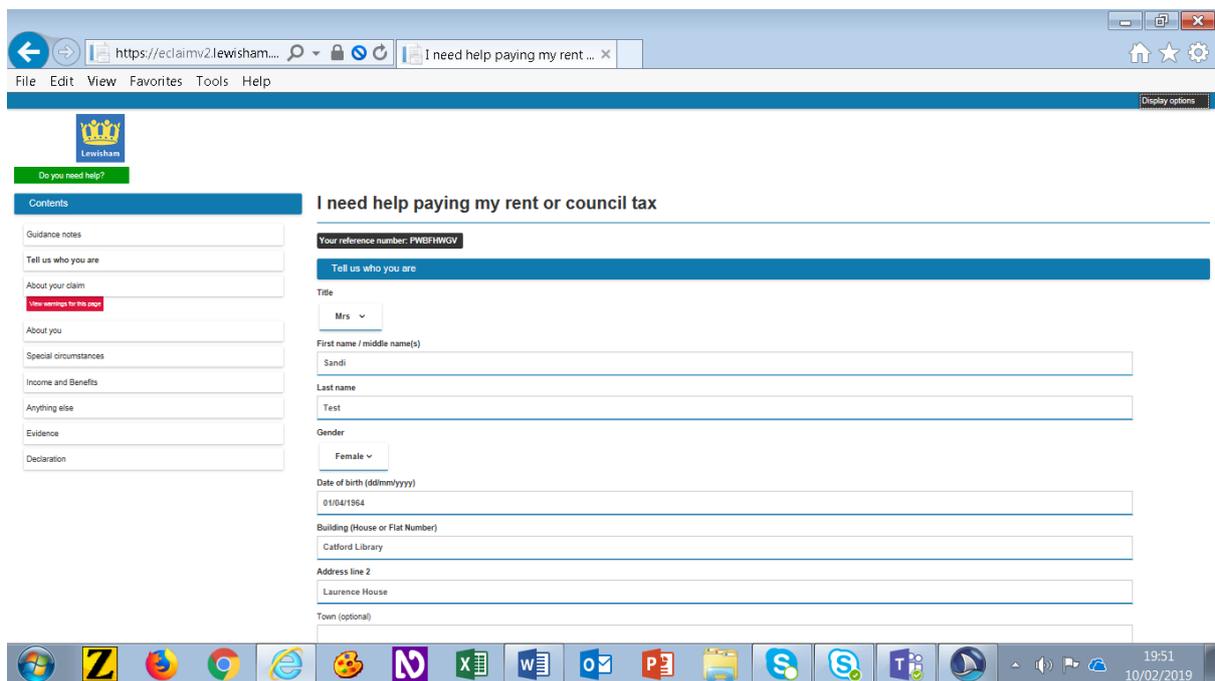
Essential: the label for the radio button should be spoken when the user reaches the radio button

4.2.20 Issue: the focus moves to the top of the page when a radio button has been selected

Description: when a user selects one of the radio buttons on the page the focus with NVDA moves to the “Display options” button at the top of the page and the screen reader user has to move down the page and find the place they were on in the form. This will become time consuming when filling in the form and frustrating for a screen reader user. They should be able to make a selection and continue filling in the form without being jumped to a different part of the screen.

This issue does not occur with JAWS.

Location: I need help paying my rent form



Recommendation:

Essential: once a selection has been made the focus should go to the next element in the form and the NVDA screen reader user should be able to continue filling in the form.

4.2.21 Issue: a selection is made without user consent

Description: when the user is navigating through the options in the case of drop downs or radio buttons this movement of focus triggers a selection and a change in the form. A speech user is not aware that this is happening and by having this automatic trigger they are not able to review what they have selected before submitting the selection

Location: I need help paying my rent form and many other forms on the pages dealing with rubbish collection and the give notice of marriage form

Recommendation:

Essential: There should not be a selection or change to a form without user action to select the change

4.2.22 Issue: the help buttons cannot be reached with a keyboard

Description: there are help button on the page. These are not in the tab order and visually they are styled as buttons but if a screen reader user tries to reach them using the screen reader’s shortcut key for buttons they cannot be found either.

Location: I need help paying my rent form

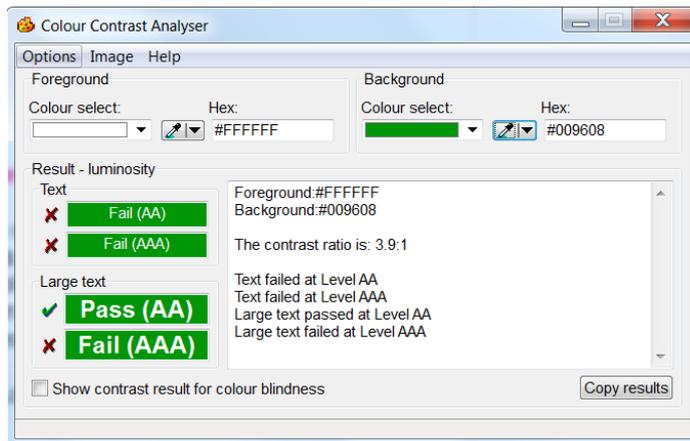
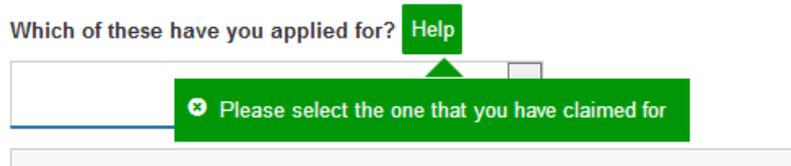
Recommendation:

Essential: as the “help” buttons are interactive elements they should be reached when tabbing otherwise keyboard only users will not be able to reach the help information

4.2.23 Issue: the colour contrast for the white text on green needs to be sufficient

Description: the colour contrast for the white text on the green background does not appear to be sufficient for standard size text as appears to be the case for the help boxes. If the colour contrast is less than 4.5:1 then the text needs to be larger at least 14 point bold or 18 point which does not appear to be the case here.

Location: I need help paying my rent form



Recommendation:

Essential: the colour contrast needs to be 4.5:1 for standard size text

4.3 Task 3: Rubbish collection

4.3.1 Issue: Required field inconsistently described in speech

Description: the required field in the bin collection form and Log in page is spoken with NVDA as "star" whereas in other parts of the site such as the account creation forms the required fields are spoken as "required". Required is the preferred feedback and while star can be understood it is good to have consistent terminology across pages on the site not to confuse the user. JAWS did not provide feedback that the field was required for the Postcode or for the Log in page.

Location: Find your collection day and Log in

Find your collection day

Find out which day we collect your rubbish, recycling, food and garden waste.

Postcode *

Find address >

Please first find and select your address above and then click on the button below for your bin collection day details.

Login

Email address *

Password *

Login >

Recommendation:

Highly Desirable: the required field should be spoken consistently across the site as “required”.

Essential: required fields should be announced with JAWS

4.3.2 Issue: the “Find address” button is not in the tab order

Description: the “Find address” button is not in the tab order so when the user moves from the postcode they do not reach it but tab to the My services link on the side bar. The speech user will find it difficult and disorienting that they cannot find the button to submit the form with tabs and a keyboard only user will not be able to complete the task

Find your collection day

Find out which day we collect your rubbish, recycling, food and garden waste.

Postcode *

Find address >

Recommendation:

Essential: the “Find address” button should be in the tab order like all other interactive elements

4.3.3 Issue: unintuitive error message

Description: when the user does not select an address the error message given is “label is required”. This is difficult to interpret and the user would not know what they need to do.

Location: Find your collection date

Find your collection day

Find out which day we collect your rubbish, recycling, food and garden waste.

Postcode *

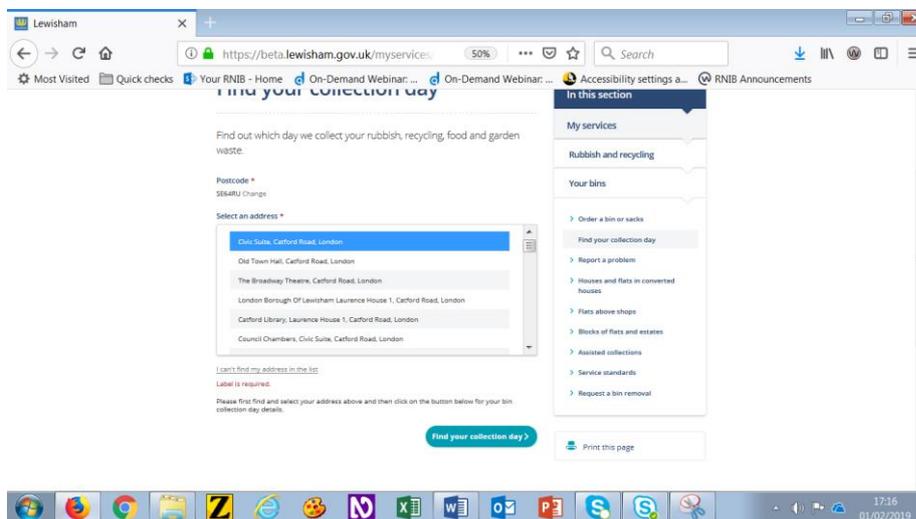
Enter full postcode

Find address >

Label is required.

Please first find and select your address above and then click on the button below for your bin collection day details.

Find your collection day >



Recommendation:

Essential: error messages should be clear so that the user knows how to rectify mistakes on the page

4.3.4 Issue: it is not clear there is an error in the form

Description: the error message is shown by using a red outline for the field that has the error. There is text beneath to tell the user about the error but this text does not stand out for somebody who has a visual impairment or might not have colour perception. The error message could just be seen as instructions and not an error on the page.

Location: Report a problem with the bin

Report a problem with your recycling bin

When did this occur?

Please give us any details you may have to report that your refuse bin was not returned to you.

[Continue](#)

Report a problem with your recycling bin

When did this occur?

Please give us any details you may have to report that your refuse bin was not returned to you.

[Continue](#)

Recommendation:

Essential: it is not clear there is an error on the page. Errors should stand out from the form, this could be achieved with a different use of layout for the error message or use of icons or shapes or markers.

Essential: In this form, visually there is no indication that the edit field is required while this is announced in speech in JAWS but not NVDA

Errors on other pages in the site are slightly easier to notice visually such as the example in the images below. The left-hand image shows shading (as actual colours and for someone with monochrome vision) and the shading stands out from the other form fields. In the right-hand image there is a thicker line at the start of the form field which again helps the user find the error.

| | |
|---|---|
| Sandi | Sandi |
| Last name | Last name |
| Test | Test |
| Gender | Gender |
| <input type="text" value="Please tell us your gender"/> | <input type="text" value="Please tell us your gender"/> |
| Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy) | Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy) |
| 01/04/1964 | 01/04/1964 |

Create a password

Passwords must contain between 6 and 15 characters and can include letters, numbers and punctuation marks.

Password *

Password must have at least 6 and no more than 15 characters.

Re-enter Password *

[Back to postcode](#)

[Create my account](#)

4.3.5 Issue: some text is difficult to read as the weight is light

Description: on several page across the site beneath the main heading there is text that is difficult to see. This appears to be because the weight of the font is light. This text will be difficult to see for partially sighted people.

Location: several pages across the site

Report a missed collection or a problem with your bin

Tell us if we didn't collect your rubbish or there is a problem with your bin.

Discounts for single occupants

Find out about council tax reductions for single occupants.

Get in touch

Council tax

Council Tax Team, Po Box 58993, Bromley Road, London, SE6 9GZ

Recommendation:

Highly Desirable: make the weight of the font stronger so that the text is easier to see.

4.4 Task 5: Marriage

4.4.1 Issue: link name is confusing

Description: the link label “when the ceremony will take place” is confusing. The link actually takes the user to a page where they need to give notice of marriage. The link seems to ask when the ceremony takes place which is not the same as when the user has to give notice and this might not be clear to users.

Location: Give notice to marry form

How to book your appointment and what else you need to do.

- You must know where and [when the ceremony will take place](#) before your appointment.
- You must bring all the [required evidence](#) to your appointment – we can only accept original documents.

When to give notice to marry or form a civil partnership

You can book your appointment to give notice online. Read this page to see when you need to do this.

When should you give notice

- the minimum period to give notice for marriage and civil partnerships is 28 days
- couples, where either one or both are subject to immigration control, may have their notice period extended up to 70 days
- you can give notice up to 12 months before your ceremony date.

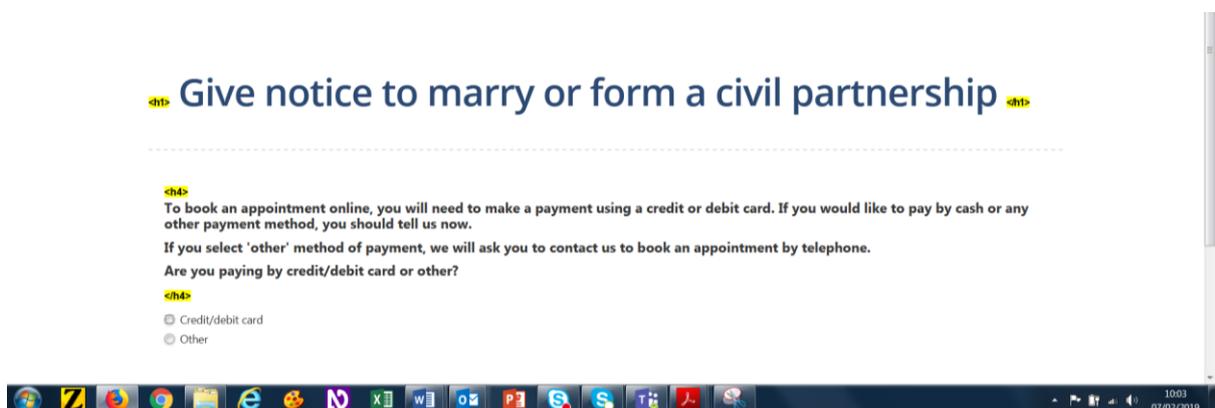
Recommendation:

Desirable: Check that the wording of the link is clear and reflects the page that will open when the link is selected.

4.4.2 Issue: heading levels not logical and inappropriate use of heading

Description: the heading levels should follow a logical hierarchy. In addition, the heading 4 which is the label of the radio button is very long for a heading and should not be a heading as it is really providing instructions.

Location: Give notice to marry form and report a problem with your bin form



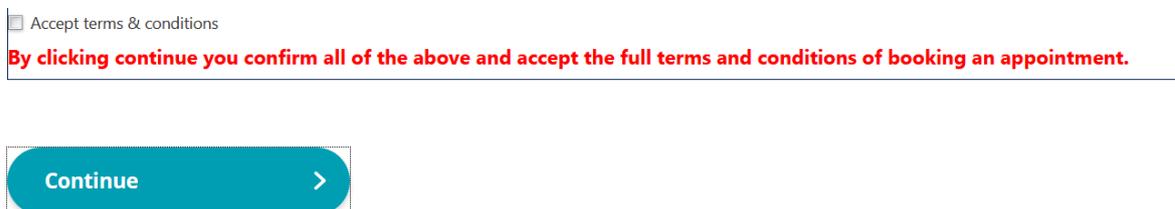
Recommendation:

Essential: the headings levels should be in a numerical hierarchy
Essential: remove the heading label from the long string of instructions.

4.4.3 Issue: the check box to accept the terms and conditions is not in the tab order

Description: the check box that the user needs to tick to proceed with the application is not in the tab order. If the user tabs through the page to get beyond the terms and conditions they reach the Continue button and not the Terms and conditions acceptance check box. This creates an error on the page that should not be necessary. In addition, a keyboard only user would not be able to proceed as they cannot reach the check box.

Location: Give notice to marry form



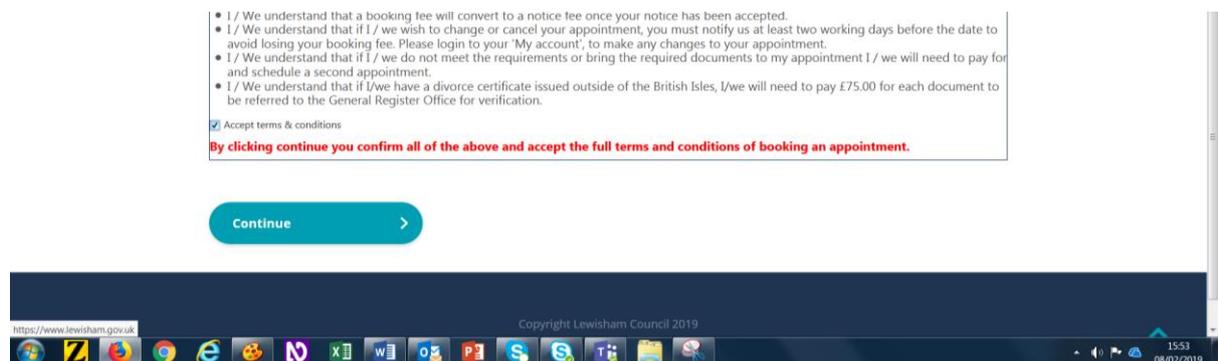
Recommendation:

Essential: the check box to accept the terms and conditions needs to be in the tab order before the Continue button

4.4.4 Issue: the “Continue” button does not follow logically in the tab order

Description: the Continue button does not come in a logical position when a user is tabbing through the page as it would be logical to move from accepting the terms and condition and find the button to continue to the next stage but this does not happen. The tab takes the user through the menu at the top of the page and the navigation breadcrumbs only then does one reach the Continue button.

Location: Give notice to marry form



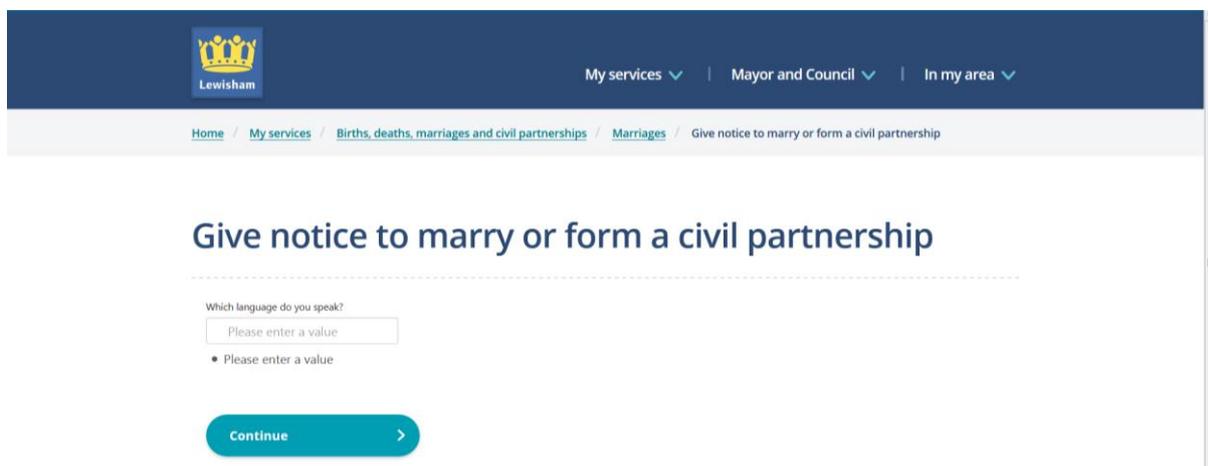
Recommendation:

Essential: the Continue button needs to be reached after the check box for the acceptance of the terms and conditions.

4.4.5 Issue: the menu can be tabbed to but there is no information that a submenu can be opened

Description: the menu on these form pages can be tabbed to unlike on the home page. There is still no information that there are submenus (NB: when the links are activated they take the user to the current site rather than the beta site).

Location: Give notice to marry form



Recommendation:

Essential: the feedback in speech should tell the user that there are submenus available and the speech user should be able to navigate to them

4.4.6 Issue: The focus goes to the interactive element on the page but this has no label associated with it

Description: the focus when the user moves through the pages of the form goes to the interactive element on the page. There is no information in speech that tells the user what they are saying “yes” or “no” to. They would need to move back through the page to find out what they need to do making the filling in of the form more difficult, time consuming and frustrating. At times the focus goes to an interactive element which is quite a way down the page for example after text related to the form. The speech user has then to retrace their steps going through quite a bit of information to know what they are answering as is the case of the second image below. In general, long labels for

checkboxes or radio buttons can cause problems for screen reader users as the long label is read out for each checkbox or radio button which can be annoying and frustrating. However, when there is only one checkbox associated with the label then the label is only read once and a long label is therefore less of an issue.

Location: Give notice to marry form

Home / My services / Births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships / Marriages / Give notice to marry or form a civil partnership

Give notice to marry or form a civil partnership

Are you both aged 18 or over?

Yes

No 16-18

Give notice to marry or form a civil partnership

Required documentation

Partner

Acceptable evidence of name, date of birth and nationality

Please tick to confirm that your partner can provide evidence of at least one of the required documents. We can only accept documents from the list below.

Valid UK Passport

Acceptable evidence if your partner doesn't have a passport (British citizens only)

If your partner was born before 1 January 1983.

Full UK birth certificate and one other current form of identification.

If your partner was born on or after 1 January 1983

Recommendation:

Essential: provide a label for the form field.

Highly Desirable: the focus should go to a sensible place on the page where users are provided with more information on what the page is about and if this is not possible then the interactive element needs to have a label in speech that provides information on what a user is selecting.

4.4.7 Issue: a selection in the form produces a page load

Description: in a lot of the pages in the form as is the case of the age page once the user selects an option the new form page loads automatically. The page should never load automatically when the user makes a selection, the user should have the option, as on the page in the form that have the “Continue” button, to review their form to make sure they are happy with it and then select to continue in the process.

Location: Give notice to marry form

Give notice to marry or form a civil partnership

Are you both aged 18 or over?

- Yes
 No 16-18

Give notice to marry or form a civil partnership

Your details

Your nationality

Your partner's details

Your partner's full name.

Your partner's nationality

Continue >

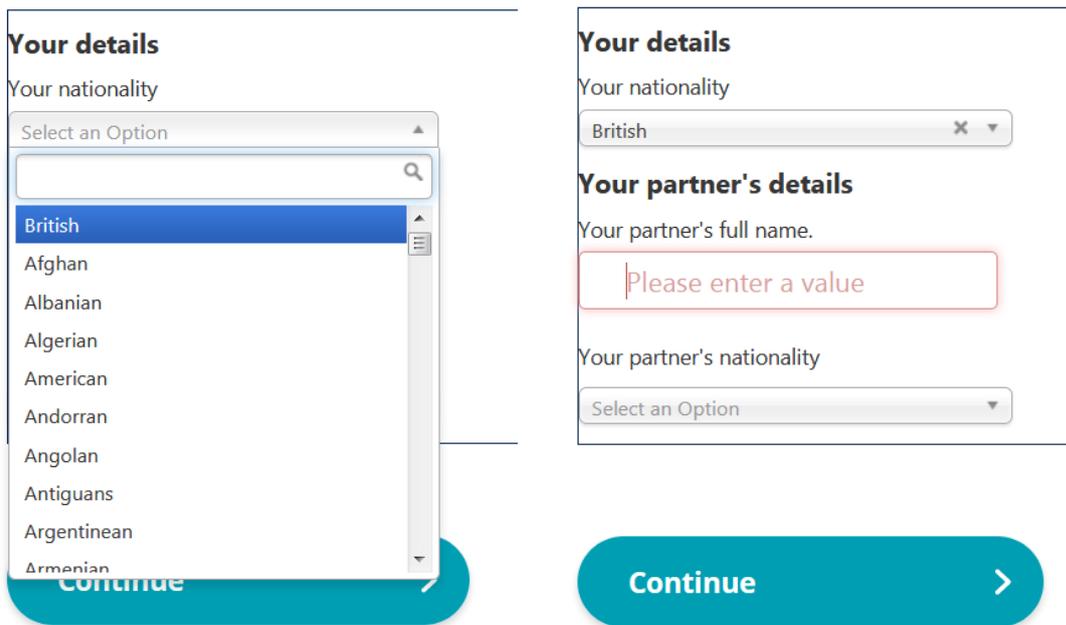
Recommendation:

Essential: the user should have control of the form and select when to continue. A selection should not automatically trigger a page load or a form change.

4.4.8 Issue: there is no feedback for the edit field to know what to inset or what has been inserted

Description: There is an edit field for the user to type their nationality but a speech user will not know this as there is no feedback for the label and it just says it is an edit field. Even when the user inserts the nationality there is no feedback for what has been inserted. The nationality can also be entered using a dropdown instead of typing. However, there is no feedback that this field is a dropdown. You can arrow down and hear the nationality with JAWS but you cannot select it as the focus remains on the first one. With NVDA there is no feedback of what users need to select as the options for the nationalities are not spoken.

Location: Give notice to marry form



Recommendation:

Essential: the dropdown/edit field should have a label to tell the user what they need to select or insert

Essential: the entries in the dropdown should provide feedback to the user as what each option is as they arrow down the options

Essential: if the user has inserted text in the edit field they should be able to hear what is showing to review it

4.4.9 Issue: timeout on completing the information in the form

Description: there is a time limit to complete the form. The user should be told when the time limit is approaching. It takes longer for people who use access technology to fill in forms and this needs to be taken into account. The user should have the possibility to extend the time to complete the form.



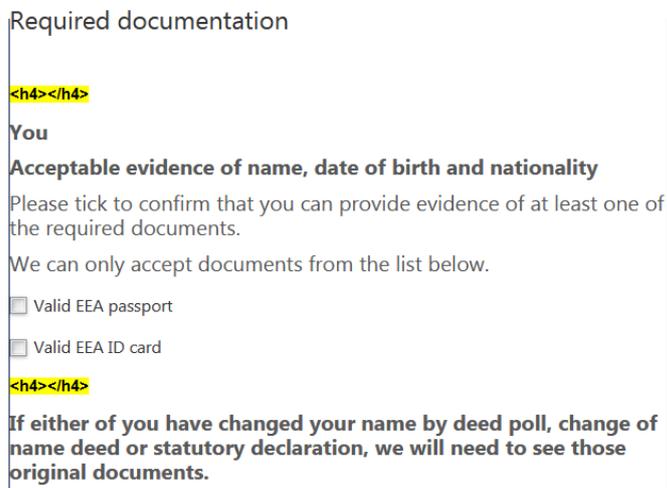
Recommendation:

Essential: the user should be alerted of the existence of the timeout and that they are running out of time to fill in the form and be given an option to extend it.

4.4.10 Issue: lack of headings in speech

Description: at times there are visual headings on the page but these are not coded to be announced in speech. For example, in the image below the Required Documentation, is visually a heading but in speech this information is not provided and it would be useful to the user to know what to expect on the page. This information should ideally be provided by the main heading, the heading level 1. In the form each page has the same heading which does not provide the user with information about what stage of the process they are on or context to the information they are going to be asked to fill in.

Location: Give notice to marry form



Required documentation

`<h4></h4>`

You

Acceptable evidence of name, date of birth and nationality

Please tick to confirm that you can provide evidence of at least one of the required documents.

We can only accept documents from the list below.

Valid EEA passport

Valid EEA ID card

`<h4></h4>`

If either of you have changed your name by deed poll, change of name deed or statutory declaration, we will need to see those original documents.

Recommendation:

Essential: code visual headings as headings so that they are announced in speech

Essential: provide more context for the level 1 heading on the page as all the heading 1 are the same in this form

4.4.11 Issue: incorrect feedback for the check box

Description: one of the check boxes in the form when checked still provided the feedback in speech that it was not checked in NVDA. This will confuse the user as they will think that they have not confirmed the selection.

Location: Give notice to marry form

Acceptable evidence of name, date of birth and nationality

Please tick to confirm that you can provide evidence of at least one of the required documents.

We can only accept documents from the list below.

- Valid EEA passport
- Valid EEA ID card

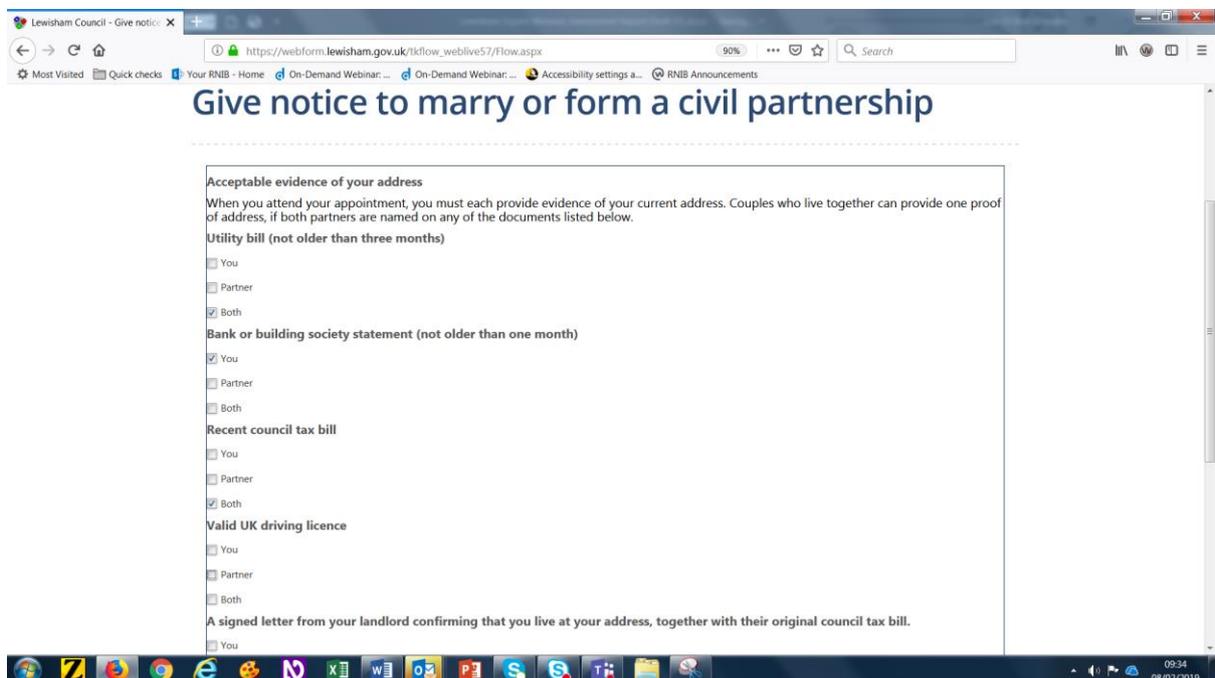
Recommendation:

Essential: feedback for the status of elements should always be accurate, the check box should say with NVDA it is checked if it has been selected

4.4.12 Issue: all radio buttons and check boxes do not have associated labels

Description: on every page of the form the check boxes and radio buttons only announce what is visually linked to each specific element. as in the image below the user will just hear “you”, “partner” or “both” as they are tabbing from element to element. They should also know what you are “providing a utility bill as evidence” for “you” etc.

Location: Give notice to marry



Recommendation:

Essential: there should always be a label associated with the form radio button or check box

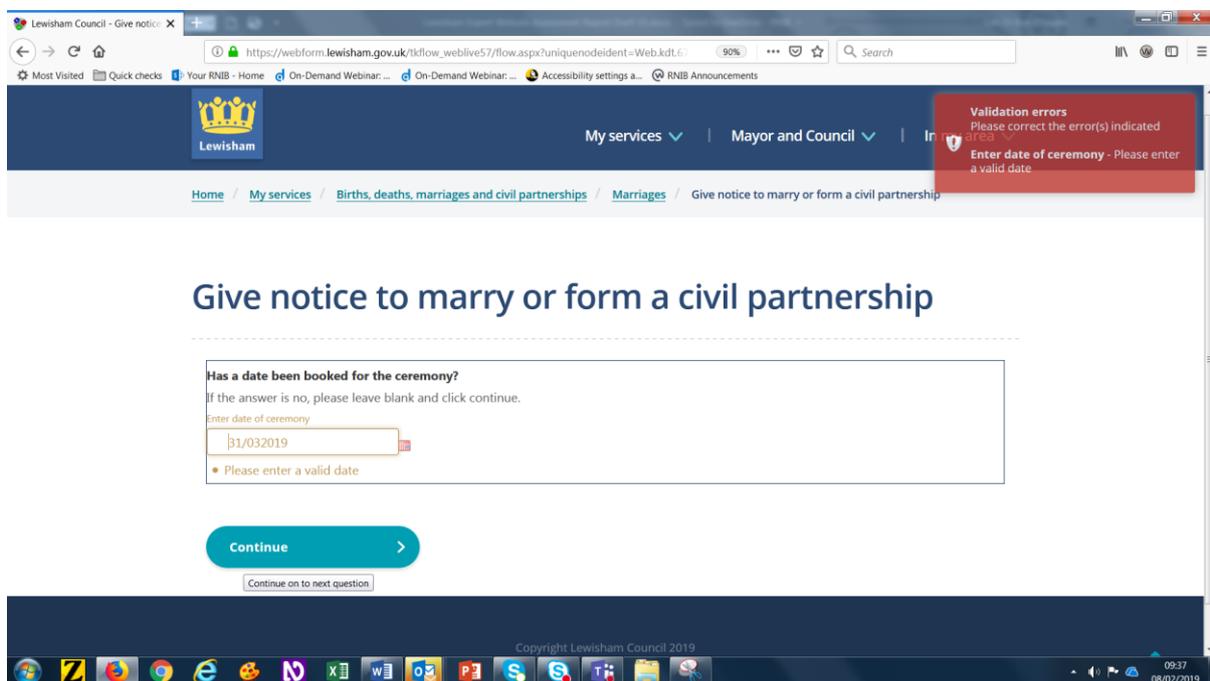
Desirable: investigate if it might be easier to redesign the form so that you ask what documents you are providing for yourself, for your partner and for both and have for each then the type of documents as the check boxes as this might be easier to render in speech with shorter labels

4.4.13 Issue: the error message appeared and disappeared without mention

Description: in speech there was no mention that there was an error on the page. Visually the message appeared at the top of the page but there was no feedback in speech. When moving on the page there was some feedback saying “alert” but this is not clear or sufficient to tell the user that there is a problem on the page that needs to be rectified. In addition, a magnification user will miss the notification because of the location of where this appears.

The error message is also not permanently displayed on screen and with high levels of magnification a partially sighted user might not even see it before it has disappeared from the screen. In addition, a screen reader user cannot go back and review the errors.

Location: Give notice a marry



Recommendation:

Essential: the error messages should be provided to the user in speech. Ideally the errors should be as static messages in a prominent position on the page such as the top of the page as well as on the edit field

where the error is present. Ideally the error messages at the top of the page should be links to the associated fields.

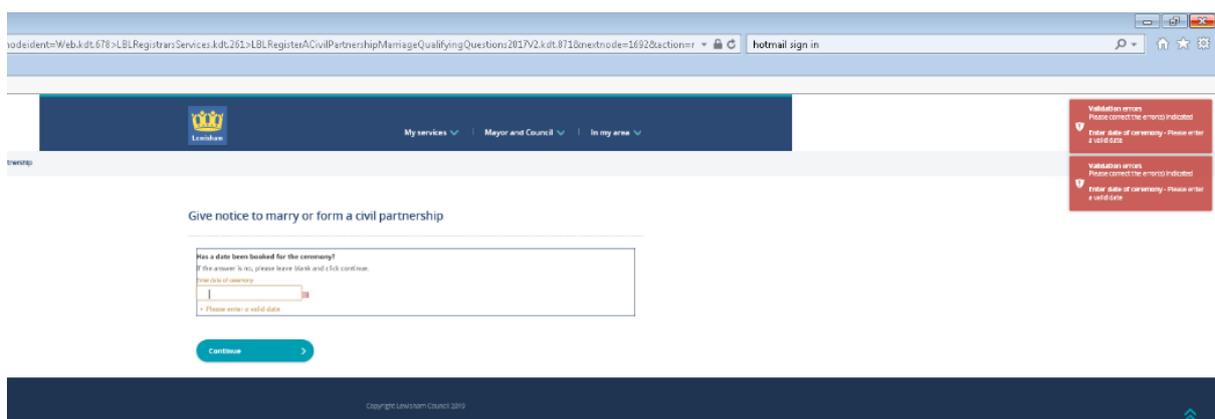
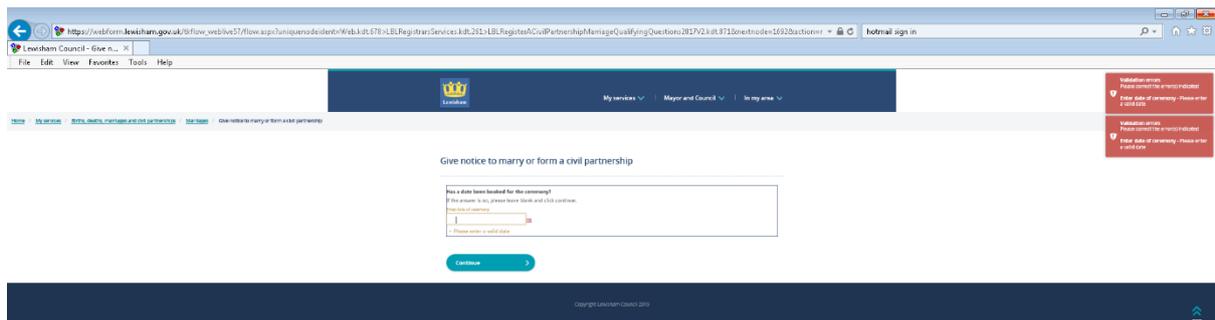
Essential: the message should be displayed where it is easier to see and closer to the element that has the error for magnification users

Essential: the error message should stay on screen till the user dismisses it or the issue is resolved

4.4.14 Issue: it is not possible to insert text in the edit fields with JAWS

Description: when inserting the name of the partner and the date of the ceremony the text did not visually get inserted with JAWS – the text was inserted and could be reviewed in speech but it was not shown visually. When on the date edit field nothing happened it was possible to enter the edit field but the form did not have the date showing. Some people use both speech and magnification and it will be confusing as to whether the information has been inserted or not.

Location: Give notice to marry



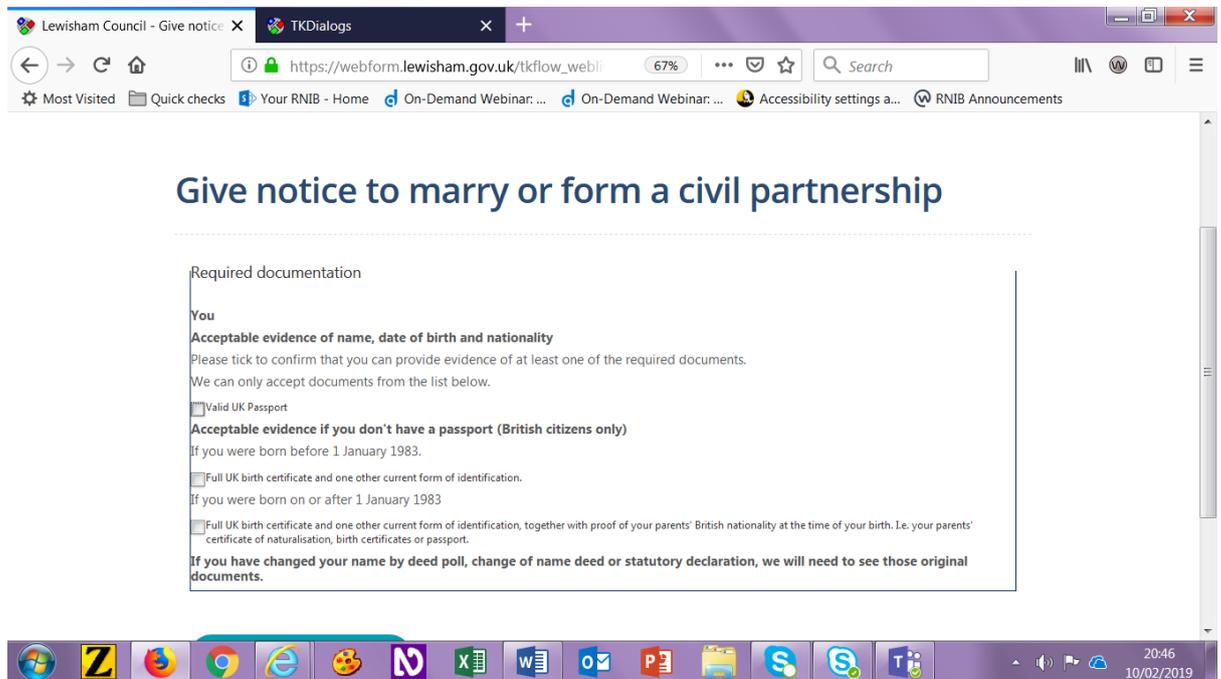
Recommendation:

Essential: it should be clear visually and in speech when text has been entered in the edit fields when using JAWS.

4.4.15 Issue: some pages are difficult to see as there is no margin between the text and the edge of the frame

Description: the text is against the edge of the frame making it difficult to read for somebody with sight loss.

Location: Give notice to marry



Recommendation:

Essential: there should be a margin between the text and check boxes and the vertical edge of the frame to make it easier to read the text

5 Appendix 1:

5.1 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1 AA)

The WCAG Guidelines are guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium, the main international standards organization for the Internet. They specify how to make content accessible for people with disabilities.

<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>

5.2 Nielsen Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design

A heuristic evaluation is a usability assessment method that helps to identify usability problems. It specifically involves evaluators examining the interface and judging its compliance with recognized usability principles (the "heuristics") which are:

5.2.1 Visibility of system status

The system should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.

5.2.2 Match between system and the real world

The system should speak the users' language, with words, phrases and concepts familiar to the user, rather than system-oriented terms. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.

5.2.3 User control and freedom

Users often choose system functions by mistake and will need a clearly marked "emergency exit" to leave the unwanted state without having to go through an extended dialogue. Support undo and redo.

5.2.4 Consistency and standards

Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing. Follow platform conventions.

5.2.5 Error prevention

Even better than good error messages is a careful design which prevents a problem from occurring in the first place. Either eliminate error-prone conditions or check for them and present users with a confirmation option before they commit to the action.

5.2.6 Recognition rather than recall

Minimize the user's memory load by making objects, actions, and options visible. The user should not have to remember information from one part of the dialogue to another. Instructions for use of the system should be visible or easily retrievable whenever appropriate.

5.2.7 Flexibility and efficiency of use

Accelerators — unseen by the novice user — may often speed up the interaction for the expert user such that the system can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users. Allow users to tailor frequent actions.

5.2.8 Aesthetic and minimalist design

Dialogues should not contain information which is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.

5.2.9 Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

5.2.10 Help and documentation

Even though it is better if the system can be used without documentation, it may be necessary to provide help and documentation. Any such information should be easy to search,

focused on the user's task, list concrete steps to be carried out, and not be too large.

6 Copyright, resources & contact details

6.1.1 Copyright

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6.1.2 Contact details

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