



## Factsheet 5: **Accessible budget**

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Planning is key to make every penny count and ensure you do as much as you can to meet disabled people's accessible communications needs. Making reasonable adjustments to your communications is a requirement of The Equality Act 2010.

There are a number of low cost/no cost communications tools and platforms you can use to deliver accessible communications on a budget.

### Planning: Create an inclusive communications policy

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No matter what your budget is, the best way to embed accessible communications across your organisation is to develop an inclusive communications policy that clearly sets out your commitment to inclusion. You should consider:

- Who do you want to reach?
- What are their communications barriers and access requirements?
- What accessible communications do they need?
- What low cost/no cost media and social channels can we use to deliver these accessible communications?
- What other accessible communications do your audience need, which you will have to pay for?

### Media

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You can use PR to promote your organisation to disabled people via local, regional and national press and broadcast media. It's worth remembering that traditional media channels are often favoured by older audiences. A well-written press release accompanied by a good action photo will often result in some good local/regional media coverage. Write and send your releases as an accessible Word document, and/or in the body of your email, to ensure more people can read it. Word has an accessibility check feature which you can run over your documents to assess potential issues.





## Social media

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Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook and Instagram offer a great free way to reach your audience. Also, social media is a good way to target younger disabled people (within age restriction recommendations). You can reach more inactive and new customers by advertising on social media too. Use a mix of boosted posts and targeted display adverts, both of which can be extremely cost effective. You can also set up groups to promote your activities and information. Remember to turn on your image description feature on Twitter. It lets you add alternative tags to images and enables people using screen-reader devices to know what images you have posted.



## E-newsletters

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Email can be a very accessible and inclusive communication channel. Accessible e-newsletters are a great tool if you have a database or contact list of potential participants.

There are many free or low cost programmes, such as Mail Chimp, Market Mailer or GetResponse, that can instantly professionalise the look and feel of your e-newsletter.

The guidance on accessibility that applies to websites should also be applied to e-newsletters.

Ensure that the layout of the template is not overly complicated. People accessing your e-newsletter via a screen-reader device will find it more difficult the more complicated the layout is. Clear, properly labelled and formatted headings are also critical and it is best practice to offer HTML and plain text versions of your e-newsletter.



## Websites

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If you already have a website, which most clubs and organisations do, then you can use it as a relatively low cost platform to deliver accessible communications. To do this you need to ensure your website is accessible. This is as relevant for coding and content. If your accessible website contains inaccessible content (e.g. no alternative text on images or no subtitles on videos) then this can make your website difficult for many users.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) are produced by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C, the web's governing body). WCAG is essentially a set of checkpoints that help ensure that websites are designed and written properly.

W3C provides an 'easy check' overview which allows you to assess whether your current website is accessible or not. There are links to organisations that can help you with web accessibility guidance and testing in the resources and further information section at the end of this factsheet.



You can also add relatively inexpensive web accessibility software to your website to make it more accessible.

Examples include:

Claro Software [www.clarosoftware.com](http://www.clarosoftware.com)

Recite Me [www.reciteme.com](http://www.reciteme.com)

Texthelp [www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com)

Use your wide range of contacts and members to form user panels. These panels can help you to test the accessibility of your website. You can give them a task list to check on the website in exchange for a fee or another incentive.

## Accessible formats

Some accessible formats are free to produce with a little bit of the right knowledge. These include accessible PDF documents, accessible Word documents and adding subtitles to your videos. You will probably need to pay for external help with some content (e.g. Easy read, British Sign Language video, Braille).

## Key points

- Create an inclusive communications policy
- Utilise low cost/no cost communications tools and platforms
- Grow your communications budget through applying for grants, fundraising, sponsorship and advertising
- Work with influencers and amplifiers



## Grow your budget

You can increase your budget to deliver accessible communications through a number of ways like grant funding, advertising and sponsorship. You should focus your message to potential donors on the benefits. For example, the money will help you to promote your activity to disabled people and work towards changing the inequality in the number of active disabled people.

You can work with Influencers and amplifiers to find free accessible communications opportunities and share the costs of other accessible communications.



## Resources and further information

### Web accessibility guidance and testing

**AbilityNet** – leading UK charity that provides extensive guidance, support and services on web and Information Technology accessibility. They offer a full range from web user testing to ‘icomply’ a comprehensive accessibility management framework: [www.abilitynet.org.uk](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk)

**Labscape** – web accessibility testing, user-testing, training and accessibility services like producing accessible PDFs: [www.labscape.co.uk](http://www.labscape.co.uk)

**Shaw Trust** – offer accessibility testing, reviews, training and consultancy: [www.shaw-trust.org.uk](http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk)

**World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative** – provides a comprehensive list of web-based accessibility testing tools: [www.w3.org/WAI/](http://www.w3.org/WAI/)

**RNIB** – offers a wide range of web accessibility consultancy and training services: [www.rnib.org.uk/rnib-business/website-and-apps](http://www.rnib.org.uk/rnib-business/website-and-apps)

**User Vision** – usability and web accessibility testing: [www.uservision.co.uk](http://www.uservision.co.uk)

For further advice on how to deliver accessible communications on a budget download our **Inclusive Communications Guide** from Activity Alliance website.



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This document is available in Word format. Please contact us if you need support. Activity Alliance is the operating name for the English Federation of Disability Sport. Registered Charity no. 1075180

