Citation for published version


DOI

https://doi.org/10.22024/UniKent%2F01.02.89936

Link to record in KAR

https://kar.kent.ac.uk/89936/

Document Version

Publisher pdf

Copyright & reuse
Content in the Kent Academic Repository is made available for research purposes. Unless otherwise stated all content is protected by copyright and in the absence of an open licence (e.g., Creative Commons), permissions for further reuse of content should be sought from the publisher, author or other copyright holder.

Versions of research
The version in the Kent Academic Repository may differ from the final published version. Users are advised to check http://kar.kent.ac.uk for the status of the paper. Users should always cite the published version of record.

Enquiries
For any further enquiries regarding the licence status of this document, please contact researchsupport@kent.ac.uk

If you believe this document infringes copyright then please contact the KAR admin team with the take-down information provided at http://kar.kent.ac.uk/contact.html
Embedding accessibility in repository and open journal services

Helen Cooper (H.Coop@kent.ac.uk) Josie Caplehorne (J.Caplehorne@kent.ac.uk) @UniKentResSupp

Context
We are a library based team responsible for the support of research at the University of Kent, we manage 3 systems:

- KAR – a publications repository on an Eprints platform
- KDR – a data repository on an Eprints platform
- Kent Open Access Journals on the Open Journal System (OJS)

Each system consists of a platform and content. The platforms are based on freeware, supported by external agents. The content is created by staff, students and publishers.

We’re committed to embedding inclusive practices across our service and we knew these systems were not meeting this ideal.

Solutions
The platforms: we’ve some freedom to improve the accessibility of the Eprints platforms. We used tools to identify accessibility issues and test fixes:

- Lighthouse identified navigation issues – fixed using Andi Bookmarklet
- Wave revealed low colour contrast – fixed with Colour Contrast Analyser

The content in all systems is created by academics and publishers:

- We link to SensusAccess from every page in the repositories
- We developed a new service to address individual requests using Blackboard Ally
- We keep Word versions of documents wherever we can for

KDR
We used the same tests and solutions for the platform. Because of the specialist content we’ll deal with accessibility requests on a case-by-case basis. We also found a conflict with some of the FAIR principles e.g. txt. file formats for text documents.

OJS
We’re working with hosts -- PKP, journal editors and Mantra to ensure the platform and the content are accessible. We are developing accessible templates for articles.

New service for Accessibility requests
A new button on open access documents in KAR, so people who need a more accessible version can request it.

- The user clicks to request a document in an accessible format...
- ...and fills out and submits a short request form...
- ... which generates a ticket in the helpdesk and an acknowledging email.
- We convert the KAR document to MSWord
- ...and check it for accessibility using Blackboard Ally

Following the tips from Blackboard Ally we address any issues we can.

If the issues are too great or too complex, we send it to OPERA to help

...if the issues affect the content, we ask the author to make the changes.

We recheck on Blackboard Ally aiming for 90%.

We stay in touch with the requestor at each stage to check if the work is accessible for them

We add the accessible document to the KAR record with its score.

Lessons learned
- We need to work with multiple internal and external partners. This complicated workflows and timescales.
- Automated tools can’t tell us everything – they provide a guide but a fully accessible and meaningful format needs us to check every work.
- We rely on our external hosts to deliver our accessible services, therefore, accessibility must be included in procurement decisions.
- We can’t control the format of published works. Even as version of record open access increases, we must keep Word versions of AAMs.
- We have much to do to create a fully inclusive process, but everything we can do now helps. We can’t get there in one giant leap.
- Retrospective conversion to accessible documents is time consuming

The future
- Training, guides and advocacy to build accessibility into content at the point of creation. Starting with PGRs, ECRs and OJS journal editors
- Embedding cultural change in all our services, so accessibility is as natural to all staff and students as correct spelling and grammar.
- Working with suppliers and colleagues and putting pressure on publishers to create born accessible platforms and content.

Links
1. Our Accessibility blogs
2. Watson, Ben, Caplehorne, Josie (2020) Open or ajar? And how can we blow the b****y doors off! In: Open and Engaged, 19 Oct 2020, Online, (Unpublished) [doi:10.23636/1232]

https://www.kent.ac.uk/library-it/supporting-your-research

Information Services, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NU, UK.