

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Web Standards for Suppliers

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Purpose of document:

This document explains what is expected from suppliers developing websites or web applications which form part of the London Borough of Richmond's internet and intranet presence, whether these are installed locally or hosted elsewhere.

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1 Introduction

This document explains what is expected from suppliers developing web sites or web applications which form part of the London Borough of Richmond's internet or intranet presence.

Where the development enhances or extends the functionality of Richmond's web presence the solution needs to be developed with close consideration of the Council's current look and feel and design principles. The Web Team can provide templates and style sheets to aid with integration of a new website's look and feel. These include images such as logos, style sheets which contain directives on font types and heading styles and html templates which can guide page construction. These need to be adhered to as closely as possible and the Web Team will approve the version which can be used.

Where the development is in conjunction with the Council for a specific campaign or promotion, other considerations are required such as branding and presenting a clear message about the Council. While the look and feel of the web site will probably differ from the Council's website corporate branding, good design practice should be followed and accessibility and usability considerations must feature. These developments require the involvement of the Corporate Communications Team from the outset who will guide on the appropriate branding of the website.

If you have any queries on the content of this document or for more information, please contact the web team: (web.team@richmond.gov.uk).

2 Scope

2.1 Suppliers of web-based solutions

The standards in this document apply to all suppliers of software and to designers, developers or contractors employed or commissioned to carry out work which forms part of the London Borough of Richmond's internet or intranet presence. Suppliers in this document refers to all those who supply such goods or services to Richmond, including design, build and implementation of websites, web applications, online forms and other web technologies.

2.2 Guide to good practice in commissioning accessible websites

The DRC and BSI produced this Publicly Available Specification [PAS 78:2006](#) which describes what features to specify when commissioning websites. This good practice, which may from time to time be updated, is incorporated into Richmond's [Web Accessibility Policy](#). These principles apply to all web-based developments and applications and will be used as part of any evaluation process. The supplier shall demonstrate how the solution complies with the policy and specification.

2.3 Conditions and guidelines

The document is divided into sections each of which covers a particular aspect of web development activity, and where appropriate is sub-divided into sections detailing conditions and guidelines.

- Conditions are compulsory for all suppliers on all projects. Any deviation from these conditions must be agreed with Web Team prior to development starting.
- Guidelines provide information about preferred standards, methods of work and choice of technical platform.

The document makes reference to other documents produced by the COI and other government agencies and to some relevant legislation. While the conditions and guidelines may provide a summary of the contents of these documents, all suppliers shall make themselves familiar with the detail of any paragraphs or sections referred to explicitly.

3 Copyright and licensing

Conditions

- 3.1.1 Copyright in all content, design, scripting and styling of web developments will rest with Richmond Council unless explicitly agreed prior to development. Where copyright rests with the supplier Council will have unlimited licence to use, modify and publish the material subject to the copyright.
- 3.1.2 A single credit and link to the contracted supplier may be included in a suitable location, to be agreed with the Web Team.

4 Conditions and guidelines for suppliers

4.1 XHTML

Conditions

- 4.1.1 All HTML documents and templates must comply with the XHTML 1.0 Transitional or XHTML 1.0 Strict or any derivative document types as specified by W3C, and declare the correct DOCTYPE declaration. The use of an xml prolog is not acceptable due to browser inconsistency.
- 4.1.2 All HTML documents must validate without errors at the W3C Markup Validation Service located at: <http://validator.w3.org/>
- 4.1.3 Document structure must be defined by use of H1, H2, H3 (etc) and paragraph tags wherever possible.
- 4.1.4 The use of deprecated tags such as and <center> is prohibited.
- 4.1.5 The use of frames is prohibited, primarily on grounds of accessibility.
- 4.1.6 All HTML documents and templates must render consistently in all of the target browsers listed in 4.3 below.

Guidelines

- 4.1.7 The use of <table> tags should be restricted to tabular data and not for layout. The use of CSS for layout and styling is recommended.
- 4.1.8 The limited use of deprecated attributes such as 'target' is acceptable where the purpose is to extend functionality or to overcome problems with major browser standards compliance.

4.2 Cascading Style Sheets

Conditions

- 4.2.1 The templates provided by the web team will be CSS only template
- 4.2.2 The styling and layout of HTML documents and templates must be handled by the use of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). Limited use of inline styles is acceptable. The use of the tag with the 'face' attribute is prohibited without exception.
- 4.2.3 All CSS files must validate without errors at the W3C CSS Validation Service at: <http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>

- 4.2.4 Any font-size declaration within style sheets must use relative sizing. Pixel font sizing is prohibited due to the inability of users of Internet Explorer to resize the text.
- 4.2.5 All CSS should provide consistent style and layout rendering in all of the target browsers listed in 4.3 below

Guidelines

- 4.2.6 All style sheets should contain comments describing the function and thinking behind style definitions.
- 4.2.7 Print style sheets should be used to provide improved print layout for users.
- 4.2.8 Styles should be named to reflect their function, not their resultant style – for example use ‘news-headline’ rather than ‘blue-bold’.

4.3 Target browsers

Conditions

- 4.3.1 All development is accessible and renders acceptably in the following browsers at a minimum resolution of 800x600 pixels:
- Internet Explorer 6.x +
 - Mozilla 1.0 + (And derivatives, e.g. Firefox)
 - Safari 2.0 +
 - Opera 8.x +
 - Google Chrome
- 4.3.2 All solutions perform acceptably when accessed using text browsers, screen readers and other assistive technology. This is demonstrated through evidence from technical and user acceptance tests carried out during the development and implementation phases.

4.4 JavaScript

Guidelines

- 4.4.1 JavaScript may be used to enhance client-side behaviour on developed sites. However, all sites must also function correctly in browsers where JavaScript may not be enabled or available.

4.5 Content

Conditions

- 4.5.1 Every publicly accessible page should contain the following elements:
- A link to the home page;
 - A link to contact details, or preferably the contact details themselves;
 - The date and time the information contained within the page was last modified.
- 4.5.2 All sites must contain a link to Richmond Council's public site – <http://www.richmond.gov.uk>
- 4.5.3 Documents provided for download must be made available in Adobe Acrobat and Microsoft Word formats in preference or addition to the source format wherever possible.

Guidelines

- 4.5.4 Documents provided for download should be made available in HTML format in addition to the source format wherever possible.

4.6 Metadata

Conditions

- 4.6.1 Metadata must be used on every page and must comply with the e-Government Metadata Standard: <http://www.esd.org.uk/standards/egms/>
- 4.6.2 The following metadata elements are mandatory:
- Creator
 - Date
 - Title
 - Subject category
 - Identifier
 - Language
 - Coverage
 - Publisher

Guidelines

- 4.6.3 Examples of populated metadata elements are available on request.

4.7 Accessibility Checklist

Conditions

- 4.7.1 Until such time as this standard is updated, all web sites and associated online services or applications must be designed to be accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities in accordance with the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 1.0 Conformance Level AA: <http://www.w3.org/wai>.
- 4.7.2 Richmond websites must be accessible by all users, including those with disabilities, whose access to information and services may be affected unless the web solution is properly designed and implemented. Any web solutions which propose alternative reasonable adjustments must first be approved by the Web Team.
- 4.7.3 To make pages more accessible by all users, suppliers should check they fulfil the following criteria:
- Avoid italic and underlined text
 - Avoid sentences in CAPITALS
 - There is no need to increase the size of your text, this can be done at the user end.
 - All images should have ALT text (alternative text)
 - Each link should contain enough text to 'stand alone' yet still make sense - 'click here' will not suffice
 - Ensure that foreground/background colour combinations (e.g. in tables) provide sufficient contrast when viewed by someone having colour deficits or when viewed on a black and white screen.
 - Use tables with care - some access technology will not read tables in the way you intend and will make a nonsense of the text. Don't use columns unnecessarily.
 - Provide documents in all formats if possible (HTML, Word and PDF). If the document is provided in PDF only provide a link to <http://access.adobe.com/> which will help any user with access problems to read the document.
 - Text links should be provided for all image links
 - Consistent navigation is essential

- All links must be clearly labelled so that the user who reads only the link text knows where the link will take them. Link descriptions such as 'Click Here' are not acceptable.
- Use relative rather than absolute units in markup language attribute values and style sheet property values and ensure that the information can still be accessed if the user changes the font size.
- Use header elements to convey document structure
- For data tables, identify row and column headers.
- Organize documents so they may be read without style sheets and ensure that information can still be accessed if the user changes the text and background colours.
- Clearly identify the target of each link.
- Ensure that pages are usable when scripts, applets, or other programmatic objects are turned off or not supported (amongst other things, that means not relying on JavaScript).
- Do not cause pop-ups or other windows to appear, and do not change the current window, without informing the user.
- Use Web-safe fonts. These are likely to present on a wide range of computer systems, and are used by web content authors to increase the chance that content will be displayed in their chosen font. If a visitor to a website does not have the specified font, their browser will select an alternative. Note the font for the Richmond websites is Arial, (as defined in font-family: sans-serif).

Guidelines

- 4.7.4 It is strongly recommended by the RNIB that frames should not be used. This is because frames create user problems especially for those using sight-adaptive browsing technologies. This is also because frames make it difficult to link to exact pages within the site and hence difficult to bookmark.
- 4.7.5 For further reference for accessibility please see:
<http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/PublicWebsite/public/accessibilitychecklist.xls>

4.8 Use ALT text

Conditions

- 4.8.1 The ALT text is alternative text, primarily for use when the image is not being displayed. Images should include *equivalent alternative text* in the markup/code. Do not omit the ALT attribute.
- 4.8.2 The html templates provided by the Web Team are CSS only. If spacer gifs are required in the content, these element should use alt="" (null) to denote that they are not important for the textual representation of the image. This markup will suffice in passing accessibility tests.
- 4.8.3 Decorative images should be assigned null alternative text, or alt=""
- 4.8.4 If the image contains text then the ALT text should simply repeat this text, word-for-word. Remember, ALT text should **describe the content of the image** and nothing more.

5 Technical Environment

5.1 Technical infrastructure

Conditions

- 5.1.1 Richmond has in place a strategic partnership with Serco to provide its ICT infrastructure i.e. network, telephony, servers, desktops as well as supporting major business systems. This technical environment is applicable for web development and applications hosted within the Richmond domain. Before any procurement decisions can be made, suppliers must provide a full specification of their system and infrastructure requirements to enable a complete product evaluation by the Web Team and Serco.

Guidelines

- 5.1.2 While different technical standards may apply to applications hosted outside the Richmond domain, compliance with accessibility and usability standards mentioned in this document is required. Hosted applications will be perceived by users as being part of Richmond's website or intranet and so must comply with corporate standards and with any legal obligations relating to the Disability Discrimination, Freedom of Information and Data Protection.

5.2 Server requirements

Conditions

- 5.2.1 IIS 6.0
5.2.2 Apache Tomcat (version 5.x)

5.3 Database requirements

Conditions

- 5.3.1 SQL Server 2000

5.4 Scripting

Conditions

- 5.4.1 ASP.net 2.0
5.4.2 Partial support of the J2EE specification – we support several J2EE elements such as jsp 1.2, jdbc, java mail etc. However we don't support Enterprise Java Beans (EJB). Please contact the Web Team for more information (web.team@richmond.gov.uk).

5.5 Hosting

Conditions

- 5.5.1 Hosting will be provided by Richmond Council in consultation with Serco unless otherwise agreed with contractors. The technical platform is based on elements mentioned in points 5.2, 5.3, 5.4
5.5.2 Remote access to the Council's network or servers requires the prior approval of Serco and should be discussed as part of the procurement phase
5.5.3 The following file extensions must be used:
- .html – HTML documents
 - .css – Cascading style sheets
 - .jsp – Java Server pages
 - .aspx – ASP.net pages

5.6 Domain naming

Conditions

- 5.6.1 All domain names required for a project will be registered by Serco on behalf of Richmond Council prior to development commencing.
- 5.6.2 Where hosting is not provided by Richmond Council details of DNS servers will be discussed with Serco prior to development commencing.

5.7 Content Management

Conditions

- 5.7.1 The Content Management System (CMS) product used for the website and intranet is Opentext's Livelink WCM

5.8 E-forms

Guidelines

- 5.8.1 Where e-forms are required the preferred solution is to use AchieveForms from Business Web Software. The web team have developed web services to integrate with third party products. For further information please contact the web team: (web.team@richmond.gov.uk).

5.9 Support

Guidelines

- 5.9.1 By default, the Corporate Web Team is often the first contact for users experiencing problems with an application. Using the above technical environment for internally hosted applications, the Corporate Web Team can provide first line support for an application, get an idea of the problem and provide information to the supplier to resolve the problem.

6 Legal Framework

6.1 Suppliers' obligation

Conditions

- 6.1.1 Suppliers shall have full regard to the Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act and the Disability Discrimination Act as amended from time to time and any other relevant legislation.

6.2 Disability Discrimination Act

Conditions

- 6.2.1 Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) makes it unlawful for a service provider to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability. Service providers must also consider making reasonable adjustments to the way that they deliver their services where disabled people find these impossible or unreasonably difficult to access.
- 6.2.2 Any web development which will form part of LBRuT's internet or intranet presence must be designed in such a way as to enable the Council to meet fully its legal obligations and comply with all relevant Codes of Practice.

Guidelines

- 6.2.3 Full guidance can be obtained from the Equality and Human Rights Commission website.
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/Pages/default.aspx>

6.3 Data protection and the collection of information

Guidelines

- 6.3.1 The Council's Personal Information Policy statement held on our Terms of Use page details how we treat personal information collected from members of the public, both manually and on the public website. Users of the website are to be directed to this Policy each time personal information is collected via the website (for example, on an online application form). This is to be done by the use of a "pop-up" before the user sends the information to us. For guidance please contact the Web Team: (web.team@richmond.gov.uk).

6.4 Disclosing personal information on the web site

Conditions

- 6.4.1 No personal information about any individual shall appear via the website. If any question arises about a person's personal information on the website, legal advice will be sought from the Information Lawyer in the Borough's Legal Services Department.
- 6.4.2 If you are unsure about the way you are collecting and/or storing the data you should seek your own legal advice to ensure compliance with Richmond's requirements.

6.5 Use of photographs

Conditions

- 6.5.1 Any people who are used as subjects for photographs, and are identifiable from those photographs, must give written permission for that photo to be used on the website. This applies equally to adults and children (consent from the child's parent/guardian may be required, depending on the age of the child – see below)

Guidelines

- 6.5.2 The following is a recommendation from the Office of the e-Envoy document regarding using photographs of children 'Guidelines for UK Government Websites: A Framework for Local Government - see 'Legal Issues' in Section 5.

Local education bodies often take photographs of children for use in newsletters or on the Web. The use of photographs of children, as does the use of children as users to test a website, raises particular legal issues. This guidance applies to photographs taken of children and all young people. It is intended to raise awareness of the issue, and is no substitute for taking proper legal advice. Legal advice should also be sought if videos or film are to be made involving young people for broadcast or web use.

You should be especially sensitive in the case of children with special educational needs.

If you could readily identify an individual child by sight, or if a child is named, then you are strongly advised to:

- Have written consent to the publication of the photograph, signed by the parent or guardian
- Explicitly include publication on the Internet in the consent form. It is not sufficient simply to re-use a consent for printed publication

- Retain the signed consent in case it is required for reference

These considerations do not apply if, for example, a group of children were viewed from behind, or in the distance, and it would not be possible to identify individuals - but if you are in doubt, it is best to err on the side of caution.

Where documents have already been produced but written consent is not held on file, such consent should be sought immediately or legal advice taken. Where appropriate, you should also remove all relevant images from live websites until consent is obtained.

6.6 Cookies

Conditions

6.6.1 Cookies are used on www.richmond.gov.uk only for anonymous web analytics. Please see guidance in <http://www.richmond.gov.uk/terms.htm>.

Guidelines

6.6.2 If suppliers deem cookies necessary then the following Government guidelines should be adhered to:

- The content and purpose of any cookie that is delivered by your website should always be communicated to the user.
- Users should have the ability to refuse a cookie without it affecting the basic usability of your website.
- Your website should notify your users if technical features of your site will be degraded as a result of their declining to accept cookies from it.

7 Clarification

If you have any queries on the content of this document or for more information, please contact the web team: (web.team@richmond.gov.uk).