



WEST NORFOLK BECOMING MORE ACCESSIBLE WITH OFFICEFORMS



A SINGLE PLACE TO FIND COMPREHENSIVE, UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION

Toplevel has helped the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to provide local residents and visitors to the area with a single place to find comprehensive, up-to-date information on the accessibility of more than 600 businesses and venues.

The online West Norfolk Access Guide provides a powerful yet easy-to-use search engine that enables users to quickly find venues that meet their particular combination of access needs, eliminating wasted journeys and disappointing outings.

The database-driven site can easily be kept current, and showcases accessibility best practice such as support for screen readers, text-only browsers, and the Browsealoud software.

THE CHALLENGE

The council wanted to empower local residents and visitors to the area to be able to easily and quickly find out whether a particular business or venue meets their accessibility requirements.

Some information was available through the Tourist Information Centre, from individual businesses, or by searching the internet, but it was not collected in one place.

The council had previously produced a hard-copy access guide for one of the three main towns in the area, but the time taken to gather and publish the information meant it was out of date as soon as it was printed.

With more and more people having access to the internet, the council decided to investigate providing a guide online, since this could be more easily kept up to date. The council considered several options, including working with a national charity, but felt Toplevel's solution would be able to provide more comprehensive coverage of all businesses and venues within West Norfolk.

"Toplevel demonstrated a better understanding of the council's requirements than the other providers, and offered a competitively priced bid and a delivery schedule that met the council's needs," explains Andrew Whalley, head of the Business Systems Team at the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.



Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**

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ANDREW WHALLEY, BUSINESS SYSTEMS TEAM

TOPLEVEL'S SOLUTION

Toplevel developed the website using its Office-Forms solution, with the development work taking less than three months to complete.

At the heart of the guide is a search page that allows users to identify businesses that meet their particular combination of access needs. "We needed a site that provided a logical, step-by-step process for searching the data, to guide users to the response they were looking for," says Andrew Whalley.

"Toplevel developed a solution that makes it easy to combine search criteria to build up a complete picture of their access needs, and shows which criteria the user has already selected when displaying search results."

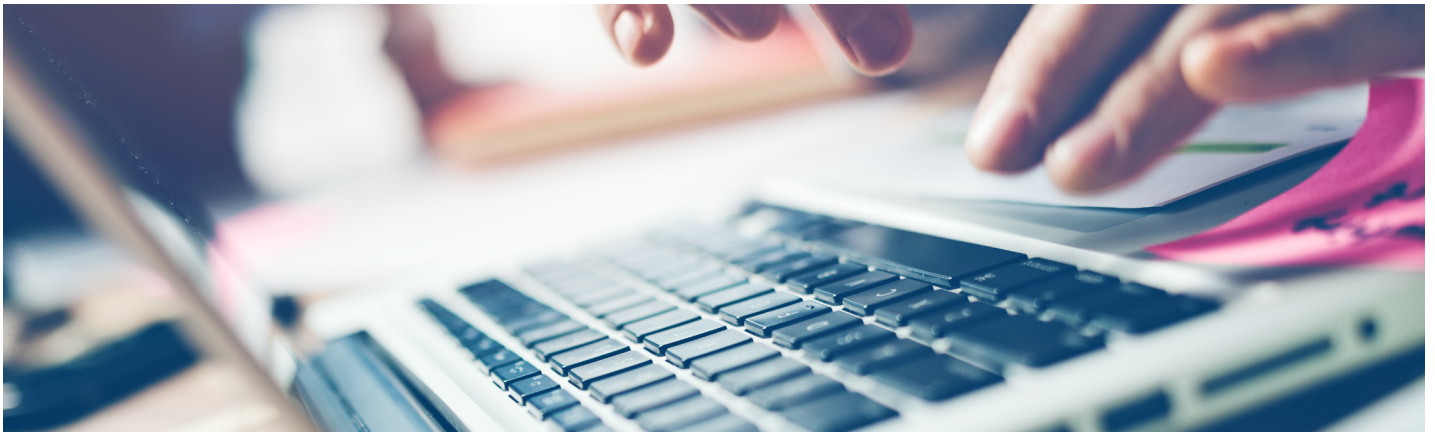
ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE

Users can also view detailed pages for each business listed, and the site includes a number of information pages which council staff can update themselves, using an easy-to-use content management system supplied by Toplevel.

Other key requirements were for the guide to run on a secure server, and for it to offer high levels of accessibility through features such as: resizing text on buttons when text on pages is resized; allowing all text to be displayed in red as well as black; and ensuring the site

works with screen readers, text only browsers, screen magnifiers and the Browsealoud software.

The website was initially populated with details from surveys carried out by qualified access auditors of over 600 businesses in the three main centres in West Norfolk: Downham Market, Hunstanton and King's Lynn. Businesses can request a listing or update their existing entries through an online self-service update request, with updates moderated by staff at the council before being released to the live website



SUCCESS

The website was launched in July 2009, and has received very positive feedback from local businesses and residents' groups. The council will now be promoting it in the local area and as part of its tourism initiatives, and will look to extend coverage to more rural areas of West Norfolk.

It is also discussing the potential of extending coverage to neighbouring

authorities, becoming a focal point for information on accessibility within Norfolk. Andrew Whalley concluded: "This project has been delivered on time and to budget. Toplevel have demonstrated good in-depth technical knowledge and excellent customer service, resulting in our queries being responded to quickly and effective solutions being found."

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ANDREW WHALLEY,
BUSINESS SYSTEMS TEAM

TOPLEVEL – Secure online case management

Call us now or use the enquiry form on our website to discuss how we can help you deliver your next project.

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