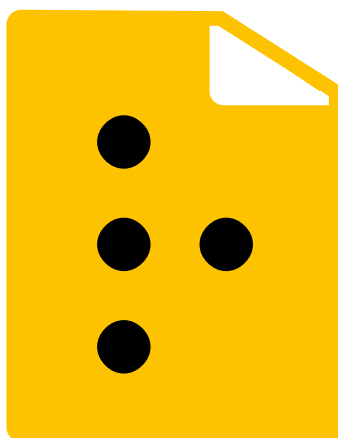


How to campaign accessibly

R N I B
Scotland

See differently



Let's make the next General Election the most accessible election campaign ever

A practical guide for ensuring your message can reach voters with sight loss

If you want blind and partially sighted constituents to fully engage with the political process, an accessible campaign is essential. From brochures and reading materials to social media content, we've brought together in this document all the key elements you'll need to consider and tips on putting accessibility into practice.

Blind and partially sighted people often feel excluded because people do not think about their needs, or how to include them in a campaign.

By following some simple steps, you can make sure you can reach voters with sight loss through accessible and inclusive campaigning.

Did you know, on average, there are more than 500 blind or partially sighted people in every UK Parliamentary constituency?

Play your part in making the next General Election the most accessible campaign ever

Small changes in your online campaigning will show your blind or partially sighted constituents you care about including them.

There are two simple things political parties and candidates can do if they aren't doing them already online to make digital campaigning more accessible:

- Always add **ALT text** to images
- and **#CapYourHashtags**

Most people have heard of ALT text, but many aren't sure what it is or how to use it. All social media platforms give you the chance to add alternative text to describe the picture you are posting. It only takes a few seconds, and it means a blind or partially sighted person can hear a summary of what is featured in the image and connect more with what you post.

Next time you do a **#Hashtag** make sure you capitalise each word – screen readers struggle to pick up hashtags and that small change means those using them are able to decipher hashtags more easily and understand your message.

Suggested Tweet



Your next MP



I'm supporting [@RNIB's](#) push to make the next [#GeneralElection](#) the most accessible ever. Join me and [#AddAltText](#) to your pictures & capitalise [#Hashtags](#)



ALT text reads: The Houses of Parliament, as seen from the south side of the River Thames.

Sharing information

Your social media

Add descriptive ALT text to images and graphics shared on social media.

Many blind or partially sighted people will read digital content using technology called a 'screen reader' which literally reads out the text on a screen.

ALT text (sometimes referred to as image descriptions) is a written description of an image, making it accessible to screen reader users.



X/Twitter: After adding an image to your tweet, tap 'add description' and write your ALT text. Tweets have an "ALT badge" on images when someone has added a description.



Facebook: Facebook can automatically generate alternative text for images, but why not override this with your own more accurate and interesting description?



Instagram: Once you have added your caption for the post, click on 'Advanced settings' and then select 'Accessibility'. You'll then have the option to write ALT text.

You don't need to include every single detail, only the main elements need to be conveyed. If there is text in the image, write it all out in the description.

Use camel case for hashtags to improve screen reader readability!

When you use a hashtag, always capitalise the first letter of each word. This is sometimes referred to as camel case. Capitalising the first word of each letter within a hashtag ensures the words are read out separately by screen readers. For example, write **#SeeDifferently** rather than **#seedifferently**.

Top tips for using emojis

Do...



- ✓ limit emojis to one per post
- ✓ check what your emoji means!!
- ✓ consider how your emoji will stand out on a background.

Don't...



- ✗ place emojis in the middle of sentences
- ✗ use an emoji to replace a word!
- ✗ use too many emojis or repeat one for impact.



LinkedIn: Watch our video on how to make social media content accessible
[rnib.in/MakingSocialMediaAccessible](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rnib/in/MakingSocialMediaAccessible)

How to never miss out on ALT text on X (Twitter)

- From the homepage, on the left hand menu go to 'More'.
- Then click 'Settings and privacy'.
- Another menu will appear adjacent to the left-hand menu. Click 'Accessibility, display, and languages' (it is the eighth option from the top) .
- Another menu will appear alongside, which will be towards the right-hand of the screen.
- Select 'Accessibility'.
- This menu will change to a new menu.
- Underneath the heading 'Media', select the tick box that reads 'Receive image description reminder'.

RNIB Guide to accessible social media

This is the best accessibility practice ([rnib.in/AccessibleMediaGuide](https://www.rnib.in/AccessibleMediaGuide)).

Your campaign materials

Offer campaign literature, in braille, audio or large print options.

Our Clear Print standard

Do...



- ✓ use a simple sans-serif font like Arial
- ✓ use a minimum text size of 12-points
- ✓ use left aligned body text
- ✓ use bold type sparingly
- ✓ use good colour contrast throughout.

Don't...



- ✗ use stylised or "fancy" fonts
- ✗ use hyphenation in paragraphs
- ✗ use text overlaid on images
- ✗ use pale colours on a pale background
- ✗ use dark colours on dark background.

Accessible online documents

Make online campaign documents available in accessible formats such as HTML, plain text, and accessible PDFs (APDFs).

Your website

Is your website screen reader ready?

Screen readers are used if someone does not have any useful vision to be able to view content from a screen. By using a screen reader, information from the device is announced in clear speech allowing a blind user to access devices on an equal footing with sighted counterparts. Screen reading software can make many main stream applications and services completely accessible.

Ensure your campaign website is compatible with screen readers

The checkpoints we test against are taken from the technical standard Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (WCAG) (www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21), published by the **World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)** (www.w3.org).

Top tip

For web or online campaign material you can check your on screen contrast here: bit.ly/3st67Aw

This can also be used as a rough guide for printed materials too.

In person

In conversation

Always introduce yourself; if you'd like to shake hands let your constituent know.

For example, you could say:

"Hello it's Richard, I am just extending my hand to you."

If there are several people present make sure you introduce each person and, if anyone needs to leave, tell the group, so the constituent is not left talking to an empty space.



The direction of your voice is important; always face the constituent when speaking. Avoid visual gestures like nodding. Use verbal assent instead.

Let them know what you're doing in quiet moments:

"I am just going to make a few notes, bear with me while I write."

Guiding

Your constituent may want to be guided to where your meeting will be held using your bent elbow or by putting their hand on your shoulder.

- Ask which side is preferred. They will have been guided many times before so will be used to explaining what they need from you.
- Remember not to reach out and touch someone or take an arm without permission.
- Walk at a normal relaxed pace, advising of any hazards, uneven surfaces and when you are approaching doors or steps.
- Help your visitor to sit down by guiding them to a chair and placing his or her hand on the back of it. That way the person will be able to find their way to the seat.
- If you're offering refreshments, be clear about where you are placing them, especially drinks.

Contact our Public Affairs team at:



PublicAffairs@rnib.org.uk



[@RNIB_Campaigns](https://twitter.com/RNIB_Campaigns)

[rnib.org.uk](https://www.rnib.org.uk)
