

Accessibility and Koha

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What am I going to talk about?

- Who am I and who are PTFS Europe?
- Some background context for Accessibility in Koha
- Global views on accessibility
- How are we tracking accessibility in Koha?
- What challenges are we facing?
- Case study - British Museum
- Future improvements
- Final round up



Who am I?

- Software Engineer - with PTFS Europe since November 2022
- Currently one of two Accessibility Advocates for this release cycle
 - Roles are all visible on the Koha wiki:
 - https://wiki.koha-community.org/wiki/Roles_for_24.05
 - Roles are currently open for this cycle:
 - https://wiki.koha-community.org/wiki/Roles_for_24.11



Who are PTFS Europe?

- Open-source library solutions support company based in the UK
- Offering installation and support for:
 - Koha LMS
 - Aspen Discovery
- 24 people with a development team of 5 devs - 2 or 3 working on Koha at a time
- Find us on LinkedIn or YouTube!



Background - Accessibility and Koha

- Koha has a long history of trying to keep up with accessibility standards; We've had our highs and lows:
 - The Highs
 - July 2020 our first ACC guideline was added to the coding guidelines
 - October 2020 we created the 'Accessibility advocate' community role
 - KohaCon 2023 had an accessibility workshop to define an Accessibility statement as well as tackle some outstanding issues
 - The Lows
 - We really struggle with identifying issues and keeping up with updates to the standards
 - Koha is very flexible, this unfortunately makes it very easy to “shoot oneself in the foot” accessibility wise if great care isn't taken when using content blocks and preferences.
 - Accessibility has been worked on piecemeal without a strong ongoing focus and little strong ongoing leadership to date.



Global perspective

- In the UK we are bound by [strict legislation](#) on public sector websites
- Currently we are required to comply with WCAG 2.1 AA requirements
 - As of October 2024 this will change to the new WCAG 2.2!
 - WCAG = Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
- EVERY UK tender has a mandatory requirement on accessibility
- We regularly get assessed against this standard
- Sweden - "Lagen om tillgänglighet till digital offentlig service" (The Act on Accessibility to Digital Public Services)
 - Public sector organizations are required to comply with the accessibility standards specified in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA level.



How are we tracking accessibility?

- We use bugzilla as our focal point for all accessibility related issues
- Bugs can be flagged as Accessibility issues when created



Bugzilla – Enter Bug: Koha Home New Browse Search Search [?] Reports F

Before reporting a bug, please read the [bug writing guidelines](#), please look at the list of [most frequently reported bugs](#), and [Show Advanced Fields](#) (* = Required Field)

* **Product:** Koha **Reporter:** matt.blenkinsop@ptfs-europe.com

* **Component:**

- About
- Accessibility ←
- Acquisitions
- Architecture, internals, and plumbing
- Authentication
- Browser compatibility
- bugs.koha-community.org
- Cataloging

Component Description: Select a component to read its description.

* **Version:** 22.05 **Severity:** enhancement



How are we tracking accessibility?

- When bugs are raised we link them to “Omnibus” style bugs to categorise the bugs into their relevant sections of WCAG

Status ▲	Resolution	Summary
NEW	---	Accessibility: OPAC search results header obscures content when zooming in
NEW	---	Accessibility: WCAG 1.4.1 - Content reflow
NEW	---	Accessibility: 1.4.4 Resize text
NEW	---	Accessibility: 2.4.6 Headings and Labels
NEW	---	Accessibility: 2.4.7 Focus Visibility
NEW	---	Accessibility: 4.1.3 Status Messages
NEW	---	Accessibility: 2.1.1 Keyboard Access
NEW	---	Accessibility: Screen Options



What challenges are we facing?

- Customisation
 - UserJS/UserCSS, Custom pages, notice templates, HTML customisations
- Accessibility standards are a moving target
 - Different requirements per country
- Identifying issues
 - Testing is key!
 - We need bugs to fix



Case study – The British Museum, London

- External audit carried out by [The Shaw Trust](#)
- The website is manually tested by an in-house team of experienced pan-disabled testers, many of which use assistive technologies. The team is made up of individuals with different disabilities to cover the widest range of accessibility barriers as possible.
- Testing on a wide range of assistive technologies including JAWS and NVDA screen readers, Dragon voice activation software and ZoomText magnification. They test the true accessibility of a wide range of web platforms against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
- Some automated tools do not test every WCAG criterion, and it can be difficult to determine the quality of accessibility solutions



Case study – The British Museum, London

- The British Museum (Library) website met 6 of the 18 (33%) applicable success criteria required for level A conformance and 6 of the 14 (43%) applicable success criteria required for level AA conformance.
- HTML Customisations can break accessibility!
- We had no Accessibility Statement in Koha
 - Rectified at Kohacon 2023
 - https://wiki.koha-community.org/wiki/Accessibility_Statement
- Catalogue records themselves can break accessibility!

British Museum (Library)

Accessibility Assessment Report

29th November 2022

Accessibility
Services



Future improvements

- Add a default custom page to Koha for an accessibility statement that can be edited based on customisations made for each customer - Bug 34556
- Integrate automated testing into our QA tools - Long term
 - Every patch could be checked for basic issues like colour contrast, html structure
- We need regular testing by a recognised / expert body
 - Automated testing coupled with testing by users
 - Ideally this would be done on the latest major release of Koha main branch
 - Every 6 months to check for regressions / new issues in each released version (24.05, 24.11 and so on)
 - How do we fund this..?



Future improvements

- Hackfest, Marseille April 2024
 - Proposal put forward to move Koha into a foundation
 - More detail will be coming out soon in the newsletter/ mailing lists
 - A community level vote will be held on this, all will be welcome to vote
 - A foundation will enable us to attract and manage funding at a community level which can then be used to fund regular accessibility testing
 - This testing will identify issues which we can then track and fix through bugzilla
- In the meantime, we will continue to tackle any bugs raised as best we can



Final points

- We need everyone's help!
 - Anyone can raise bugs and users such as yourselves are much closer to the end users than we are as developers
- Roles are open for 24.11 cycle, everyone is welcome!
- Keep an eye out for information relating to moving Koha to a foundation, the vote will be open to all
- Join in on Mattermost!: <https://chat.koha-community.org/>



Thanks for listening!

