Large Print:

Making images and diagrams accessible

Guidance from UKAAF

UK Association for Accessible Formats (UKAAF)

Because format quality matters

Why format quality matters

"When organisations send me information in formats that I can read myself it allows me to be independent, feel informed and appreciated - just like every other customer."
End-user

"Producing consistently high quality accessible formats helps us to maintain our reputation, to gain new customers and to retain existing ones."
Transcription agency

"We are committed to ensuring that our customers with print impairments receive the same information, of the same quality, as everyone else."
Service provider

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance from the UK Association for Accessible Formats (UKAAF) is primarily aimed at individuals and organisations that need to make images or diagrams accessible to large print users.

The guidance includes:

Advice on creating accessible images and diagrams, including examples of accessible graphics.

Disclaimer

This guidance may include references to external websites, services or products for which UKAAF accepts no responsibility. This information is given without any representation or endorsement of those websites, services or products.

Contents

1 Introduction

By obtaining and following these guidelines you are demonstrating your commitment to helping people with a print impairment to read your materials if they find reading standard print materials difficult or impossible.

UKAAF's guidance concentrates specifically on materials suitable for blind and partially sighted people - such as large print, audio, braille and electronic file formats. However, others with a print impairment, for example with dyslexia or motor-difficulties, may also find such materials necessary.

The provision of accessible information is a key requirement of the Equality Act which service providers must follow, but good customer service and business practice includes communicating with your customers and staff in ways which meet their reading needs. By providing accessible format materials, you not only demonstrate your commitment to equality and inclusion, but also increase your reach and customer base. It therefore makes good business sense.

This guidance will help you and your organisation to incorporate good practice into your business and provide good quality accessible format materials in a timely and appropriate way.

2 About UKAAF

The UK Association for Accessible Formats (UKAAF) is the industry association whose mission is to set standards for accessible formats that meet end-user needs through:

- development, delivery and promotion of codes, standards, and best practice for the production and provision of accessible formats

- consultation and collaboration with transcribers, service providers and users of accessible formats.

Members of UKAAF include organisations and individuals with an interest in the provision of quality accessible formats, such as service providers, transcribers, educators, researchers, print services, publishers, and end-users.

Through its leadership and representation, standards-setting, and by fostering a spirit of cooperation between members, UKAAF ensures that the needs and requirements of end-users are understood by service providers and transcribers to help improve the quality of accessible formats.

Please see the section on "Where to get further help" towards the end of this document for more information about the benefits of being a member of UKAAF.

3   Definition of print impairment

A print-impaired person is anyone for whom a visual, cognitive, or physical impairment hinders the ability to read print. This includes all visual impairments, dyslexia, and any physical impairments that prevent the handling of a physical copy of a print publication. Source: The Copyright and Rights in Performances (Disability) Regulations 2014

4   What to consider

4.1   Consider whether an image conveys relevant information, or could be omitted altogether

This depends on the information the image conveys and the context in which it is used.

Keep the image if it conveys information additional to that in the text, or data which needs to be interpreted. Some concepts work best as diagrams and it is important to retain them.

A purely decorative image may not be needed at all. Such images can add interest to a document, although they may take some time to interpret, decide if the image is really necessary.

4.2 Consider if an image needs to be modified or simplified

If you decide that the image is to be kept, consider if it can be made easier to read in terms of its purpose and what it conveys.

If the image is very detailed, you could remove unnecessary information or break it down into a series of simpler images.

4.3 Adding a text description of the image

It is important to provide an additional text description of the image.

If the image is straightforward, a brief caption is sufficient: for example, a photograph of a person may be represented by the person's name.

To write an effective description of an image:

- Give it a meaningful title.
- Briefly describe its main features and their relative positions, presenting the information in a logical sequence.
- If the image is complex, present a summary, followed by a more in depth description.
- Include information or data that the image is showing, but take care with images used in educational tests or assessments to avoid giving away answers!

Aim for the description to be as clear and succinct as possible.

4.4 Provide legible text labels

Many images include text. This text should follow large print guidelines: be in a legible font and an appropriate text size. If the image is contained within a text document, the text labels should be in the same font and size as the rest of the document. Text labels should be placed outside the image itself or in clear spaces within it rather than overprinting the image. Text labels should always be horizontal. Any lines pointing from the labels to the relevant part of the image must stand out clearly.

4.5 Use strong colour contrasts

Use light colours against dark colours or very pale greys against very dark greys to ensure the image is clear and easier to see.

4.6 Sometimes it can be helpful to change the image into a different format

For example, a pie chart could be turned into a table, presenting the same data in a more helpful way.

4.7 Consider adding shading to line drawings using either greyscale or colour

Some black and white line images can be difficult to interpret as there is too much white space. For a person using a magnifier it can be unclear what they are looking at. These images can be adapted by adding greyscale or colour shading to distinguish different areas defined by the lines. The five images at the end of this document provide examples of this. The map shown in images 1 and 2 shows how the addition of colour makes it easier to differentiate the land mass from the surrounding sea, and adds definition to the motorway network. Similarly, in images 3 to 5,

although the differing textures in the line drawing (image 3) help to define the sea, sky, sand, cliff and grass, it is helpful if this is emphasized by shading, whether by greyscale (image 4) or colour (image 5).

4.8   Consider the orientation and/or paper size

If images need enlarging, consider altering the page orientation of the document. For example, an image on a portrait layout that is wider than it is tall may be enlarged effectively if placed on a landscape layout instead, and similarly an image that is taller than it is wide can be enlarged by placing on a portrait layout rather than landscape. A larger page size such as A3 can also be used, although for some readers it can be physically awkward to handle.

5   Images

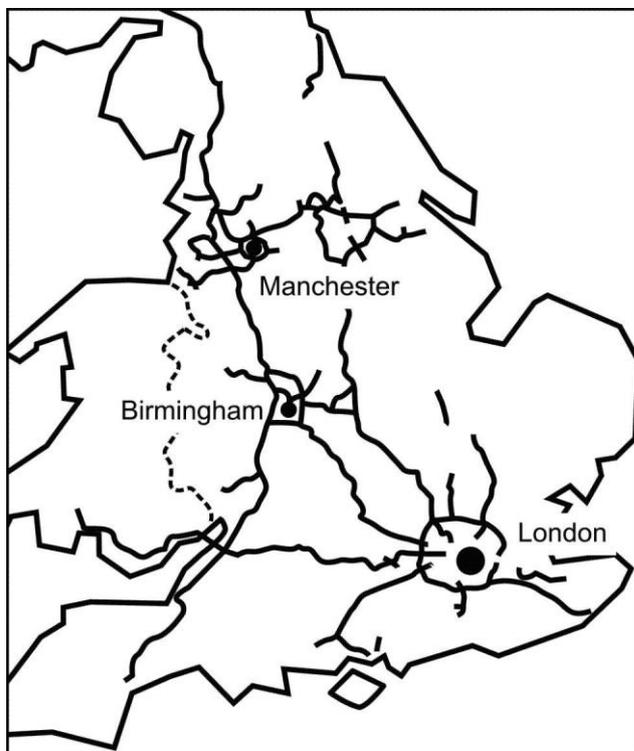**Image 1: Map of England and Wales with the motorway network as a line drawing**

Image 2: The same map with the addition of colour

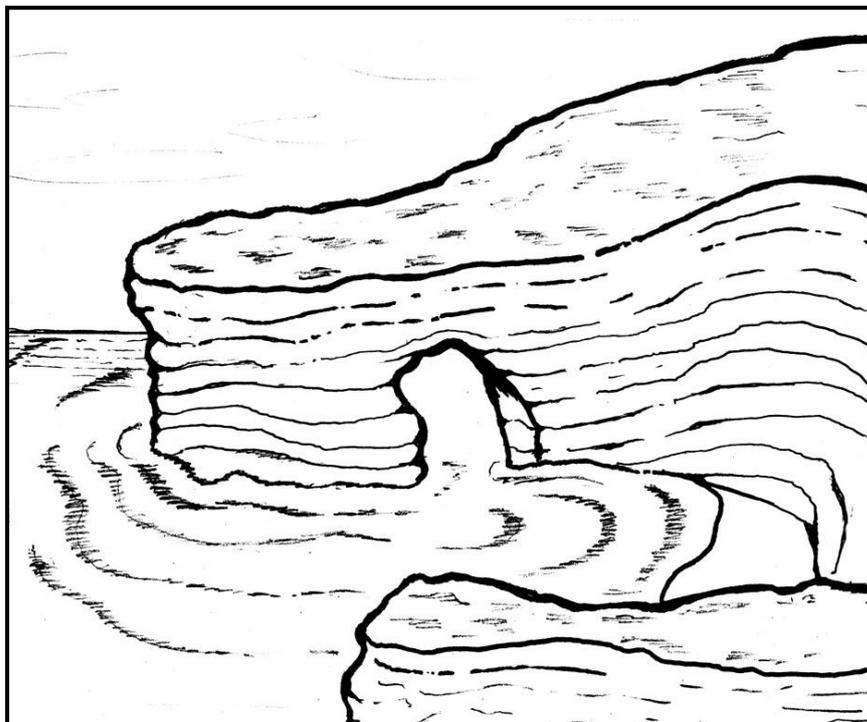**Image 3: Image of coastal features as a line drawing**

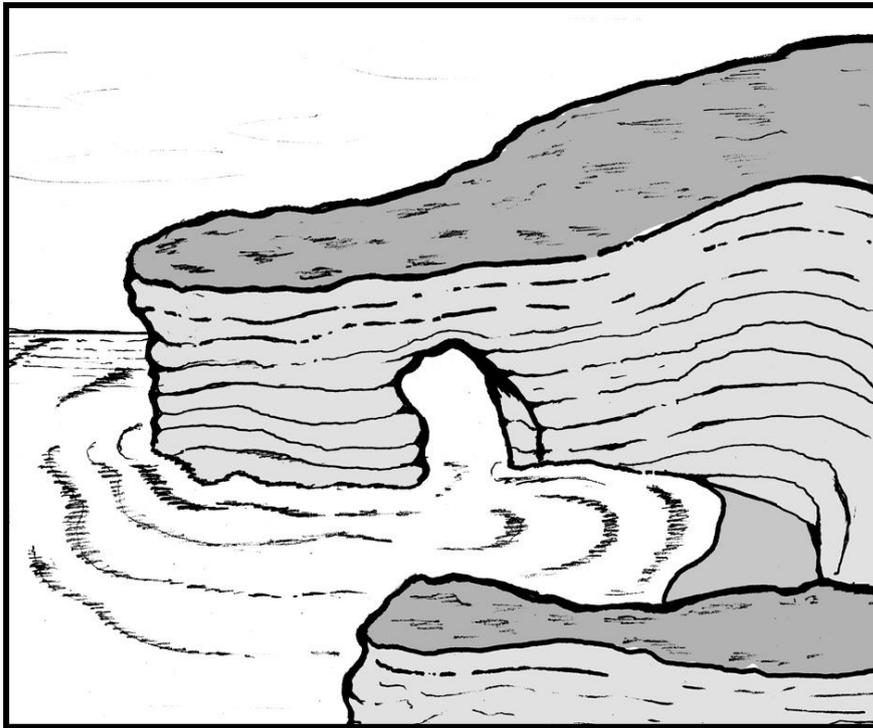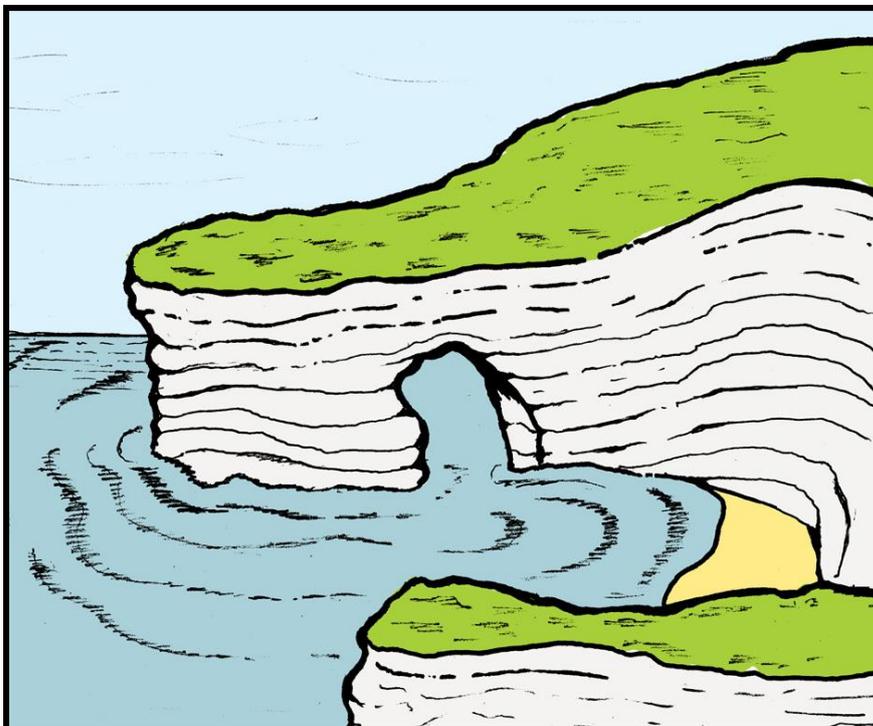**Image 4: The same image with greyscale shading**

Image 5: The same image with colour shading

6 Where to get further help

UKAAF assists businesses and organisations by advising how to meet the needs of customers and clients with print impairments; providing guidance on how to source and provide quality accessible formats like large print, audio, braille, electronic file formats and Easy Read; and helping you to understand your responsibilities as a service provider.

Through our website and magazine, members will also gain access to:

- findings from public consultations and end-user research

- research and innovation in accessible formats

- information on suppliers of transcription services

- guidance and advice on standards for accessible formats

- opportunities to review and help to develop standards and guidance.

In addition to supporting service providers and transcribers, UKAAF also represents people with print impairments. We believe that because format quality matters, end-users should have genuine input into the development of standards for accessible information. By collecting and sharing users' views with service providers and transcribers we can help them to deliver a quality service which meets users' needs.

There are many benefits of being a member of UKAAF, not least to demonstrate your commitment to quality accessible formats. For more information visit us at www.ukaaf.org.

7   Additional resources

The Government Equalities Office (GEO) has responsibility for equality strategy and legislation and provides up-to-date information on the Equality Act 2010 www.equalities.gov.uk

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) produces a range of downloadable codes of practice to accompany the Equality Act. Of particular interest to service providers is the Code of Practice on Services, Public Functions and Associations https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/services-public-functions-and-associations-statutory-code-practice

RNIB's website provides information about the Equality Act 2010 and implications for service providers and blind and partially sighted people www.rnib.org.uk/information-everyday-living-your-rights/equality-act-2010

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) provides online resources to help you improve information for impaired people https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-disability-issues

RNIB offers information and advice on making your website accessible to everyone www.rnib.org.uk/rnib-business/website-and-apps

The Royal Mail and RNIB provide more information on-line regarding the "Articles for the blind" postage scheme www.royalmail.com/portal/rm/jump2?catId=400130&mediaId=80600742 www.rnib.org.uk/information-everyday-living-benefits-and-concessions-concessions/free-postal-service-articles-blind

8 Your feedback is welcome

We would welcome your views on this guidance, any suggestions for additions, or case studies of how this guidance has helped you. You might like to share your experience in an article in our magazine 'Format Matters'.

You can phone, email or write to us - our details are at the back, or use the feedback form on our website www.ukaaf.org.

If you find UKAAF's guidance valuable, please encourage others to join by visiting our website.

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