

Website Policy 2022/23

For new and existing website owners



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New website requests

Please note: Setting up a new website requires the involvement and approval of Web and Digital Services.

A new website may be appropriate if the content you wish to put online fits the following criteria:

1. Isn't core or statutory to Surrey County Council (SCC)
2. Doesn't fit naturally on the SCC website or an existing website
3. Is tailored to Surrey residents and cannot be found elsewhere

It may also be appropriate if there is a legal or strategic requirement for your content to be separate from the SCC website.

If you haven't already done so, please read the ['New website requests'](#) webpage. This will explain the process for requesting a website, of which this policy is just one part. You'll also find the form needed to make a request.

What this policy tells you

- What's expected of you, the website owner
- What we, Web and Digital Services, will do to help your website succeed
- Your responsibilities for maintaining your website
- Your responsibilities for measuring the success of your website
- Who to contact if you need help, and how to make a project request

Site owner responsibilities

Setup

You're expected to cooperate with Web and Digital Services at the building stage, collaborating with us on your **website's look and feel**, and helping **integrate web tools** you'll use to measure success.

These could include:

- Google Webmaster Tools
- Google Analytics
- Siteimprove QA
- Siteimprove Analytics
- Siteimprove feedback survey

You're also responsible for **migrating content** to the new website, rationalising what stays and what goes in the process. If other Surrey websites form part of your users' journeys, you're responsible for ensuring there are **clear handover points** at every stage.

Once a draft website is built, you may be required to **test this with your users** – in collaboration with us, and using our set process. This will ensure that the website meets your users' needs.

Finally, you are required to consult with us on your proposed **website domain/URL**. Once agreed upon, we register and manage it – as is the standard for all Surrey domains/URLs, including variations you may propose in future. This allows you to retain control over its use, while our assistance ensures it stays in safe hands and is properly maintained and secured.

We'll cover the cost of two domain registrations -- for example, newsite.org and newsite.org.uk. Additional variations must be requested, and will need to be paid for by your team via a cost code, which we'll provide.

Maintenance

Your **day-to-day responsibilities** include:

- **Grammar, spelling and broken link checks**
Monitoring Siteimprove QA to check for errors and then fixing them.
- **Readability**
Writing in a suitable style for your audience, using plain English, and checking your site's readability score in Siteimprove QA.
- **Content**
Keeping it accurate and updated, and following our [web standards](#).
- **Accessibility**
Ensuring your website meets the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0](#) to level AA. This is a [legal requirement of all public sector sites](#) from 23 September 2018 (EU Directive).
- **Metadata**
Adding [page descriptions and keywords](#) to all pages, based on what your users search for, and updating them when the pages are changed.
- **Search Engine Optimisation**
Optimising your pages for Google by checking how they rank in search, looking at the competition, and writing content your users want to read.
- **Maintaining the original look and feel**
Keeping this as described in the original site specification unless a new project request is submitted by you (and approved by us).
- **Images**
Keeping to the dimensions and file sizes as described in the original site specification.

Performance measuring

You're required to have **key performance indicators (KPIs)** for your website – ways of measuring how well your website is meeting its desired outcomes.

These will have been confirmed when you first requested your website, or determined at the most recent annual audit of your website.

You're responsible for measuring your website's performance against these KPIs – and subsequently making improvements – by doing the following:

- **User testing periodically**
Ensuring your audience can find what they need quickly and easily. We will help you interpret this feedback, if required.
- **Reviewing analytics regularly**
Measuring how well your site is performing using the appropriate analytics package, defining certain website 'goals' for users, and using this information to inform any changes you make. We will help you interpret this information, if required.
- **Acting on improvements by listening to advice and feedback**
Improving the quality of your website by listening to our advice and reacting to it appropriately.
- **Accepting feedback from your users**
Adding a website feedback survey to your website – when possible – and addressing feedback in a timely manner.
- **Participating in annual website audits**
Providing us with comprehensive data that shows your website's performance for that year, whether it's meeting its KPIs, and if not, what you plan to do to improve it. We will help you interpret your website's performance into new goals, if required.

Keeping us informed

You're required to provide updates on customer feedback, analytics data, KPI measures, and site costs, when requested.

You're also responsible for informing us if:

- You need to make a change beyond basic web content – for example, a [new domain/URL](#) or a [new project](#)
- Your plans for the website change
- Site admins or editors leave
- Your contact details change
- You suspect the security of the site is compromised

Failure to follow this policy

Surrey sets and maintains high standards for the public website so that it is easy to use, responsive and accessible for residents.

We expect our partner sites to reflect the same principles by accepting the responsibilities set out in this website policy.

Failure to maintain your website to appropriate standards will result in remedial action.

Domain retention policy

Please note that when a domain is no longer needed, it will still be retained by us for a minimum of three years.

This is to reduce the risk the threat of a third party taking advantage of a website's residual reputation with residents.

Halfway through this retention period, redirects for this domain will be stopped.

This encourages external referring websites to change or remove links to the old domain, for residents to adjust to the website's closure, and to further reduce the risk from third parties.

- [Read more about shortcut URLs and domains](#)

Enquiries and project requests

Website enquiries

- digitalprojectsteam@surreycc.gov.uk

Project requests

For new project requests or to close your website, please complete a Digital Project Request form.

We aim to respond to all requests within one week:

- [Digital Project Request form](#)