

Charity Website Launch Checklist

A step-by-step guide to getting a charity website ready to go live - from first planning conversation through to the weeks after launch.

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This checklist is written for trustees, volunteers and small charity teams. Work through each section in order, tick things off as you go, and use it alongside whoever is building or managing your site.

**Items marked with an asterisk may not apply to every charity - complete these only if applicable to yours.*

1 Planning & Strategy

- ☐ Define the primary objective of the site (e.g. drive donations, recruit volunteers, build funder trust).
- ☐ Map out the site structure, distinguishing essential launch pages from post-launch additions.
- ☐ Assign final sign-off authority to a single person or small decision-making group.
- ☐ Set a realistic target launch date and communicate it across the organisation.
- ☐ Confirm who will be responsible for ongoing site maintenance post-launch.



Key Insight: Clear upfront strategy prevents costly scope creep and launch delays.

2 Content Preparation

- ☐ Write a clear overview of your organisation's mission and beneficiary impact.
- ☐ Set up and end-to-end test the donation pathway.
- ☐ Confirm your Gift Aid declaration process is in place for eligible donations.*
- ☐ Verify your Payment Processor Account (e.g. Stripe, PayPal, GoCardless) is fully approved for live transactions.*
- ☐ Display up-to-date contact details (email, phone, and optional postal address).
- ☐ Include your official registered charity name, jurisdiction, and charity number in the website footer (e.g. 'Registered Charity in England & Wales No. X').
- ☐ Source high-resolution photos of genuine activities rather than stock media.
- ☐ Confirm Photo Permissions & Safeguarding consent has been obtained for anyone featured, particularly children and vulnerable beneficiaries.*

- ☐ Confirm Copyright Clearance for all images, text and other media sourced from third parties.
- ☐ Draft service and programme descriptions using clear, non-internal language.
- ☐ Perform an independent proofread of all site copy.

3 Legal & Compliance

- ☐ Publish a clear Privacy Policy detailing data collection and usage.
- ☐ Include Website Terms of Use.
- ☐ Implement a Cookie Policy and consent banner if tracking tools or analytics are active.
- ☐ Ensure all forms comply with UK GDPR requirements for handling personal data.
- ☐ Confirm SSL encryption is configured across all data collection forms.
- ☐ Publish or link to your Safeguarding / Whistleblowing Policies.*
- ☐ Publish a clear Complaints Procedure for beneficiaries, donors and the public.



Data Protection Note: Ensure clear internal ownership over what personal data is collected, stored, and processed across your site forms.

4 Accessibility & Usability

- ☐ Verify that text meets minimum visual contrast standards.
- ☐ Test full site navigation via keyboard.
- ☐ Add descriptive alternative text (alt text) to all informative images.
- ☐ Ensure the layout adapts seamlessly to browser text zoom.
- ☐ Review site functionality across mobile devices and desktops.



Accessibility Standard: Inclusive design ensures all site visitors - regardless of disability or assistive device - can engage with your mission and services.

5 Technical Infrastructure

- ☐ Verify the active SSL certificate (HTTPS / padlock indicator).
- ☐ Audit page loading performance on mobile networks.
- ☐ Perform a link check across all pages to eliminate broken links.
- ☐ Set up web analytics tracking.
- ☐ Test form submission deliverability to ensure automated notification emails avoid spam filters.

- ☐ Configure a custom 404 error page.

6 Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

- ☐ Write unique meta titles and descriptions for every page.
- ☐ Submit your sitemap to Google Search Console.
- ☐ Set up or claim your Google Business Profile (if operating locally or physically).
- ☐ Standardise Name, Address, and Phone (NAP) details across all online references.

7 Pre-Launch Verification

- ☐ Complete end-to-end test submissions on all contact, donation, and sign-up forms.
- ☐ Verify display consistency across key browsers (Chrome, Safari, Edge, Firefox).
- ☐ Conduct user testing with external participants to identify potential usability gaps.
- ☐ Create a full backup of any existing site prior to migration.
- ☐ Prepare launch announcements for newsletter and social media channels.

8 Post-Launch Maintenance

- ☐ Monitor user interactions and address reported issues during the first 72 hours.
- ☐ Schedule bi-annual or annual content reviews.
- ☐ Store administrative credentials securely in a centralised password manager.
- ☐ Ensure the domain name (website address) and primary admin accounts are registered under the charity's official email address.
- ☐ Document an Emergency Contact / Handover Plan in case the current site administrator becomes unavailable.
- ☐ Assign specific roles for ongoing content and technical updates.



Long-Term Ownership: Assign clear responsibility for ongoing site updates and security maintenance before going live.

Need assistance?

Yelland Digital specialises in designing and building accessible, easy-to-maintain websites for charities and non-profit organisations. Contact us at yellanddigital.co.uk for a site review or launch support.