



FREE GUIDE · DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS

Church Website Audit Checklist

A 66-point checklist to audit your church website covering first impressions, SEO, mobile, accessibility and security.

We try hard to get everything here right, and every guide and template shows when it was last reviewed. But they are free, they are general and things change: the law, prices and the tools themselves. We cannot guarantee they are complete, current or right for your church, so check anything you rely on and take professional advice where a decision matters.

Church Website Audit Checklist

Who this is for: the volunteer who looks after the church website and wants to check it still serves visitors well.

This checklist is designed to help you quickly assess how well your church website is serving visitors and your community. Work through it with a phone in one hand and a laptop in the other – most items can be checked in under a minute. Don't worry if you can't tick everything right away. Focus on the areas that will make the biggest difference to someone visiting your website for the first time.

Checklist Content

1. First impressions (what someone sees in the first 10 seconds)

- ☐ It's immediately clear this is a church (name, location, denomination visible)
- ☐ Main Sunday service time visible without scrolling
- ☐ A welcoming photo or message is the first thing visitors see – not a notice board
- ☐ The site looks current – no outdated banners, expired events or "last updated 2023" timestamps
- ☐ There's a clear answer to "What would it be like if I visited?"

2. Essential information

- ☐ Service times for all regular gatherings (Sunday, midweek, prayer, etc.)
- ☐ Physical address with a one-click map link (Google Maps or Apple Maps)
- ☐ Parking information, public transport and accessibility details
- ☐ A named contact person or role (not just a generic inbox)
- ☐ Phone number visible and clickable on mobile
- ☐ Denomination or church tradition explained briefly for newcomers
- ☐ Safeguarding policy or statement accessible (with named safeguarding lead). This checks only that the page can be found; what it says comes from your denomination's safeguarding policy
- ☐ Charity registration number visible, if you are a registered charity (excepted charities, which includes many churches, have no number to show)

3. Visitor journey

- ☐ "Plan a visit" or "What to expect" page linked prominently from the homepage
- ☐ The visitor page answers practical questions: what to wear, where to sit, what happens with children, how long it lasts
- ☐ Prayer request or "Get in touch" form that works and sends to a monitored inbox

- ☐ Children's and youth work described with session times and age groups
- ☐ Community groups and activities listed (not just Sunday services)
- ☐ Give Online option present but not the first thing a visitor sees
- ☐ Clear next step for someone who has visited: connect card, welcome email or follow-up process described

4. Content quality

- ☐ Replace church jargon with everyday words (nave, vestry, narthex, etc.) – if a newcomer wouldn't know the term, explain or replace it
- ☐ Page titles use action verbs: "Plan a Visit" not "Information", "Get Involved" not "Activities"
- ☐ No broken links (run a free link checker like Dead Link Checker)
- ☐ No orphan pages (every page reachable from the navigation or another page)
- ☐ Blog or news section updated within the last month (or removed if dormant)
- ☐ Events page shows only future events (past events archived or removed)
- ☐ Sermons or talks page current if offered (or removed if abandoned)
- ☐ Photos show real congregation, real building, real life – not generic stock images
- ☐ All text is proofread – no typos, no placeholder "Lorem ipsum" content

5. Search and discovery (SEO basics)

- ☐ Google Business Profile claimed, verified and up to date (hours, photos, description)
- ☐ Church appears correctly on Google Maps with the right pin location
- ☐ Page titles include church name and location (e.g. "St Mark's Church, Chelmsford")
- ☐ A short meta description is set for the homepage (what Google shows in search results)
- ☐ Site appears on the first page when you Google "[church name] [town]"
- ☐ Listed on your denominational directory (e.g. A Church Near You, Find a Church, church finder tools) with correct details

6. Mobile experience

- ☐ Pages load without horizontal scroll on a 6-inch phone
- ☐ Buttons and links are at least 44 x 44 px (thumb-friendly)
- ☐ No auto-playing carousels, pop-ups or overlays hiding content
- ☐ Navigation menu works cleanly on mobile (hamburger menu or similar)
- ☐ Text is readable without pinching to zoom
- ☐ Check mobile usability in **Google Search Console** (Page Experience / Core Web Vitals), or simply open the site on a phone and try to use it. *(Google's standalone Mobile-Friendly Test was retired in December 2023 – if a guide still points you there, it's out of date.)*

- ☐ Pages load in under 3 seconds on a mobile connection (test with PageSpeed Insights)

7. Accessibility

- ☐ Text-to-background contrast greater than 4.5:1 (WCAG AA standard)
- ☐ Keyboard navigation works - Tab key cycles through all links and buttons
- ☐ All images have meaningful alt-text (e.g. "Families chatting over coffee after the service")
- ☐ Videos have captions or transcripts available
- ☐ Font size is at least 16px for body text
- ☐ Links are descriptive - "Read our safeguarding policy" not "Click here"
- ☐ Forms are labelled properly (screen readers can identify each field)

8. Security, privacy and compliance

- ☐ Site loads over HTTPS - padlock visible, no mixed-content warnings
- ☐ Privacy / cookies notice present and links to a valid privacy policy
- ☐ Privacy policy covers GDPR and PECR requirements
- ☐ Contact forms include a brief data use statement ("We'll use this to respond to your enquiry...")
- ☐ No personal data (phone numbers, emails of individuals) published without consent
- ☐ If the site collects donations online, payment processing is PCI-compliant (Stripe, PayPal, etc.)

9. Social media and online presence

- ☐ Social media links visible on the website (and the links work)
- ☐ Social profiles link back to the website
- ☐ Consistent name, logo and description across website and all social platforms
- ☐ At least one social channel updated within the last two weeks
- ☐ Livestream or online worship link easy to find if offered

10. Analytics and ongoing care

- ☐ Google Analytics 4 (or Plausible / similar) installed and receiving data
- ☐ Someone knows how to log in and check basic stats
- ☐ Primary call-to-action click-through rate tracked (e.g. Plan a Visit button)
- ☐ Monthly reminder set to review stats and update content (15-30 min)
- ☐ Website platform (WordPress, Squarespace, etc.) and plugins are up to date
- ☐ At least two people have admin access (bus factor - what happens if one person is unavailable?)

Your score

Give yourself 1 point per tick. There are 66 items in total.

Score	Rating
56–66	Excellent – your website is serving your church and community well
41–55	Good foundations – targeted improvements will make a real difference
26–40	Getting there – focus on sections 1–3 first (first impressions, essential info, visitor journey)
Below 26	Priority rebuild needed – but don't panic, start with the basics and build from there

Not sure where to start? Prioritise anything that helps a first-time visitor find you, understand you and take a next step. Everything else can follow.