

My Comprehensive Analysis and Proposed Improvements for **Paul Rhodes Bakery's Website**

Url: <https://paulrhodesbakery.co.uk/>

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1. Introduction

I chose to analyze the **Paul Rhodes Bakery** website (<https://paulrhodesbakery.co.uk/>) for a few reasons. At first glance, the site looks visually appealing and modern—with inviting images of bread, pastries, and other baked goods. It gives the impression that everything should work smoothly. However, I wanted to explore how a website that looks great on the surface might not always offer the best experience for all users. Once I started interacting with it and digging into the code, I noticed several issues that could impact accessibility and usability. In addition to user experience concerns, the website also raises questions about performance and sustainability—factors that affect load times and energy consumption.

I believe a modern website should be easy to use for people with various abilities, it should be welcoming to a diverse set of users, and it should minimize its impact on the planet. That is why, in this report, I'm going to focus on three main aspects of the site: **Accessibility**, **Inclusivity**, and **Sustainability**. Each section of this document has three parts:

1. **Baseline Analysis** – where I describe what the website currently does and any issues I discovered just by browsing and testing.
2. **Testing Observations** – where I explain specific results from tools like color contrast checkers, heading structure analyzers, and carbon footprint calculators.
3. **Proposed Improvements** – where I suggest changes that I think will fix the issues I found and make the site better for everyone.



2. Accessibility

2.1 Baseline Analysis (Accessibility)

Accessibility basically means how well a website can be used by people with different abilities. For those who rely on screen readers or have low vision, color blindness, or motor issues that prevent them from using a mouse. My assessment is based on how well everyone is able to read, navigate, and interact with the website's content in a comfortable way.

Based on **WCAG** (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) principles and basic best practices, I noticed the following **baseline** issues before running any specialized tools:

- **Heading Structure**
 - The homepage appears to have multiple `<h1>` tags, or it sometimes jumps from `<h1>` to `<h3>` with no `<h2>`. This can confuse assistive technologies and break logical page hierarchy. Proper headings will help all users, especially those using screen readers, figure out what each part of the page is about.
- **Alt Text for Images**
 - Many product images and banner images lacked `alt` attributes, meaning screen reader users would not know what the images depict. Majority of images used also lacked width and height specification. Every image should have a text description that explains what the image shows. If the `alt` attribute is empty or missing, screen reader users hear nothing, which can keep them from fully engaging with the content.
- **Color Contrast & Readability**
 - Overall body texts have low readability, especially texts placed over pale backgrounds, with light hue muted sage texts. If the texts and background colors do not have enough contrast, it becomes very hard or even impossible for users with low vision (or certain types of color blindness) to read the text.

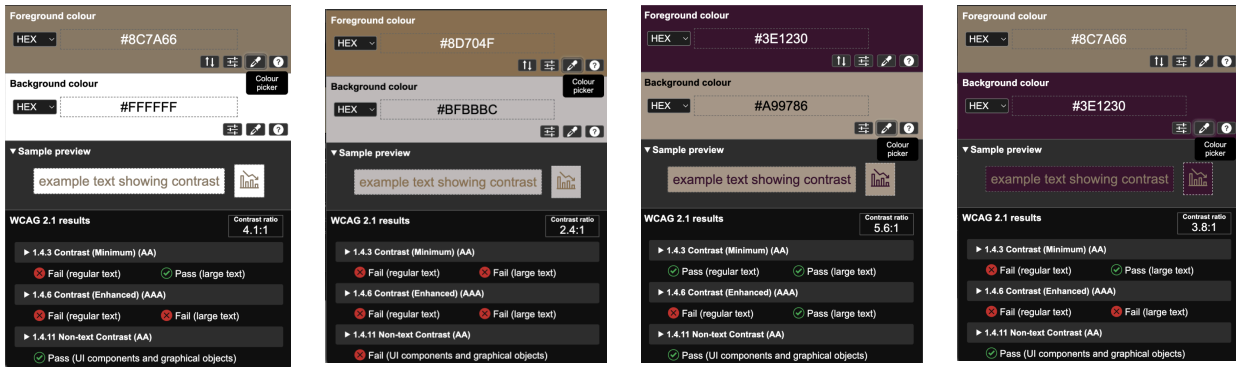
- **Keyboard Operability & ARIA**
 - Immediately I noticed the hero section had an image slider that auto-rotated, and couldn't be paused or navigated via keyboard. People who cannot use a mouse typically move through a website using the Tab key and the arrow keys. If certain interactive elements (like sliders or drop-down menus) are not focusable or don't show a focus outline, these users can get stuck or lost.
- **Fonts & Text Styles**
 - The font choice for the body text was mostly unreadable. An overly thin typeface was used (courier), making it difficult to see, especially on lighter backgrounds. Additionally, the inconsistent text sizing made content navigation confusing and interrupted the ability to skim easily. There was also excessive use of capital letters, which slowed down reading and reduced clarity. Using too many different fonts or extremely thin styles can make a page feel cluttered and negatively impact readability. Text in all caps, in particular, slows reading speed because each word becomes a uniform block, making it harder for the eye to recognize word shapes.

These five areas gave me a starting point for deeper testing. My initial impression was that Paul Rhodes Bakery's site had a good layout visually, but I needed to see if it worked well for people with various needs.

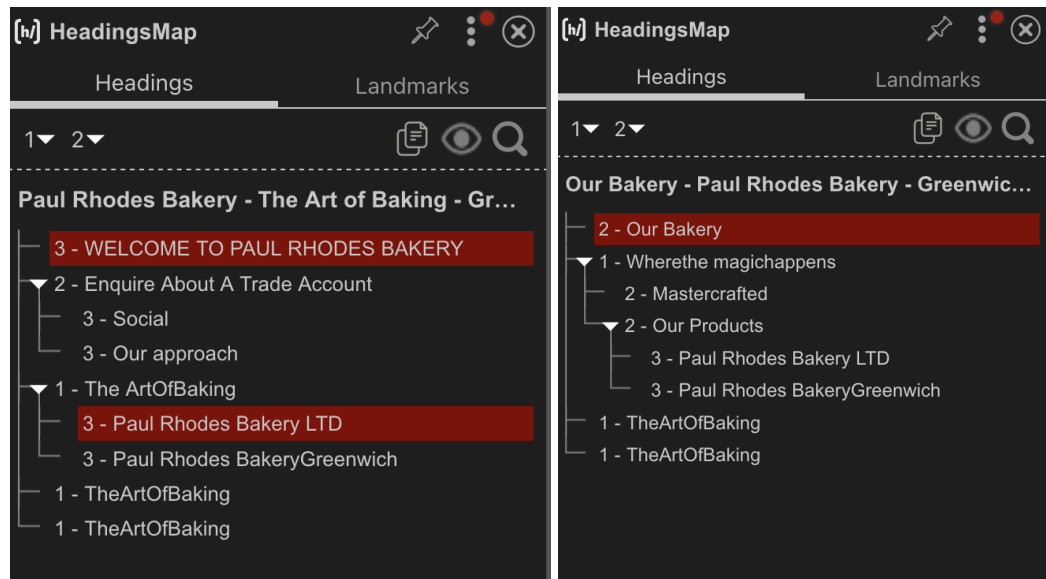
2.2 Testing Observations (Accessibility)

To get more detailed results, I used a combination of manual testing and online tools:

- **Color Contrast Analyser:** I tested the color combinations of text and background in multiple sections (like headings, paragraphs, and footer text). I found that many color pairs failed the recommended contrast ratio of 4.5:1 for normal text. The color blind testing also failed due to the existing color contrast being insufficient.



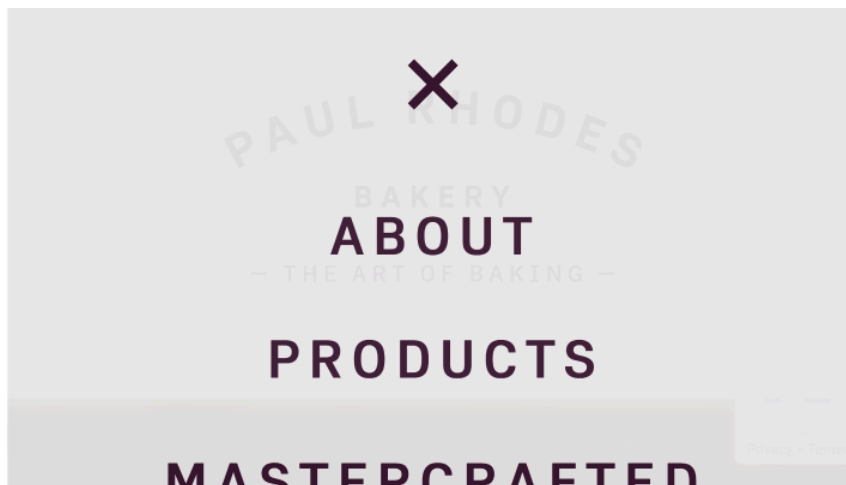
- **HeadingsMap by Jorge Rumoroso:** This browser add-on provides a visual map of the heading structure on a page. It flagged the site for having multiple `<h1>` tags on a single page, which is not best practice. There is also the case of `<h3>` tags coming first before `<h1>` then jumping back to `<h2>`.



- **Keyboard Navigation:** I tried tabbing through the site from top to bottom. While some links were easy to reach, the slider on the main page was tricky. The focus highlight didn't stand out, and it was easy to lose track of where I was. There was also no way to skip navigation, and had to tap through for each page.



- **All Caps Text:** I noticed entire paragraphs and headings in uppercase, which can slow reading. If someone has dyslexia or if they rely on a screen reader that interprets uppercase differently, this becomes a barrier.
- **Zoom & Navigation Glitches:** At higher zoom levels, the menu collapses into a hamburger icon but it enlarges the links but can be viewed in scrollable. Links, images, fonts are often cut off with no way to view it.



- **High Mental Effort & Inconsistent Clickability:** The layout demands extra effort to follow: some text blocks are overwhelming, and images on certain pages are clickable while others are not, creating confusion. Autoplay elements can also shift content too quickly, causing overstimulation.
- **Font Overload:** I saw references in the code to multiple fonts: Open Sans, Inter, Cardo, Courier, Zimmer-Medium, and even slick. This not only can be confusing

visually but also adds extra loading time. Some fonts are so thin that they're hard to read on certain displays or when the text is small.

- **Missing Alt Text:** Checking the HTML code, I found that many images used `alt=""` with no clear & short description inside.
- **Unclear Form Errors:** Some pages have forms, like the contact form, with (*) for required fields. But if I leave a field empty, it just shows a small red star or a generic notice. This doesn't clearly explain what the error is or how to fix it.

```
<main>
<section class="single_item slider">

  <div class="banner">
    
    
  </div>

  <div class="banner">
    
    
  </div>

  <div class="banner">
    
    
  </div>

  <div class="banner">
    
    
  </div>
</section>
<div id="modules" class="module-grid">
  <div class="left-col">
    <div class="text-mod module-content">
      <div class="module-wrapper">
        <h2>WELCOME TO PAUL RHODES BAKERY</h2>
        <p>My ambition when I started the bakery was simple: to provide London's busy chefs with the best handcrafted bread, made from the finest in</p>
        <a class="read-more" href="https://paulrhodesbakery.co.uk/about/">Read More</a>
        <div class="stamp"></div>
      </div>
    </div>
  </div>
  <div class="right-col">
```

From these observations, it's clear that Paul Rhodes Bakery's site has potential but needs adjustments to ensure it meets accessibility standards.

2.3 Proposed Improvements (Accessibility)

Based on my findings, here's what I suggest to fix or improve the site:

1. Simplify the Heading Structure:

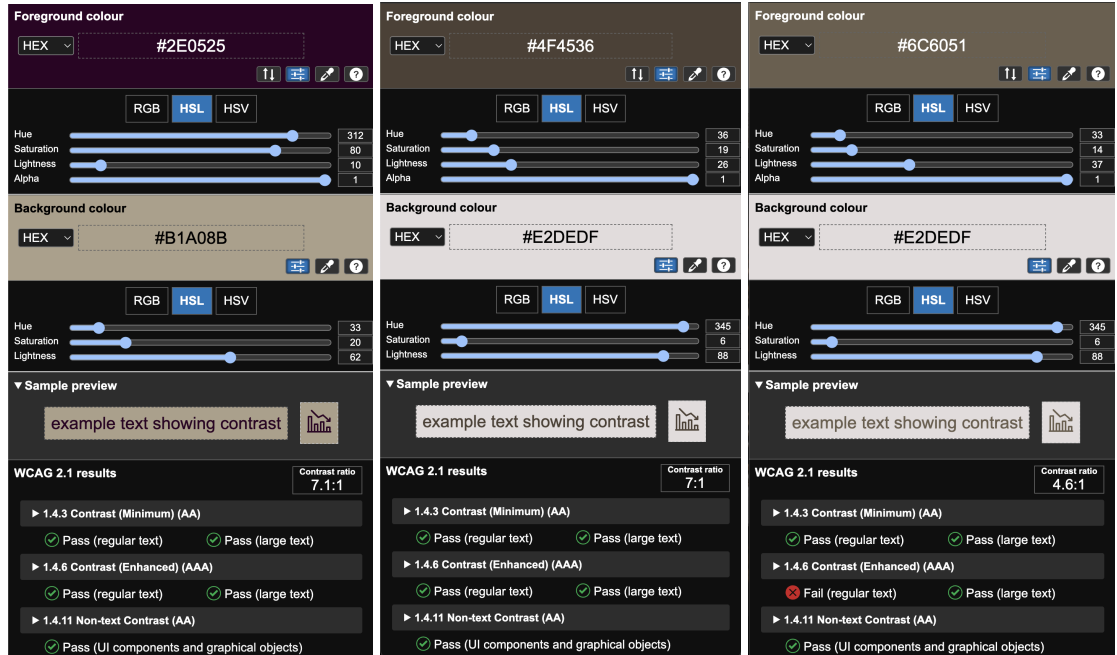
- For effective and accessible SEO, always use semantic HTML heading tags properly. Each page should have **exactly one** `<h1>` that clearly

describes the main topic—never place `<h1>` tags in footers or unrelated sections.

- Follow a **logical heading order** using `<h2>`, `<h3>`, and so on, without skipping levels. Don't jump from `<h1>` straight to `<h4>`.

2. Fix Color Contrast:

- Identify problem areas (for example, light text on a white background, or pastel text on a similarly light color).
 - i. First Color suggestions:
 1. current colors:
 - a. Foreground color: #8C7964,
 - b. Background color: #E2DEDF
 2. New colors:
 - a. Foreground color:
 - i. #6C6051 (AA) Approval
 - ii. #4F4536 (AAA) Approval
 - ii. Second Color suggestions:
 1. Current colors:
 - a. Foreground color: #8D785E
 - b. Background color: #3E1230
 2. New colors:
 - a. Foreground color: #B1A08B
 - b. Background color: #2E0525
- By Adjusting the lightness, saturation you can slightly adjust colors while still matching the brand. Passing the contrast ratio with is at least 7.1:1 for normal text.



3. Limit Fonts and Avoid All Caps:

- Pick one or two main fonts that suit the bakery’s brand identity. For instance, use “Open Sans” instead of courier font face for paragraphs and “Zimmer-Medium” for headings if it matches the brand style.
- If you need uppercase for headings, style it with `text-transform: uppercase;` in CSS, so the actual text in the HTML remains mixed case. I would still minimize use of caps though. That helps with screen readers and readability overall.
- Increase font weight if text is too thin. For example, use `font-weight: 400` or `500` instead of `300`.

4. Improve Keyboard Navigation:

- Provide a better visible focus outline for the sliders section & images that is bigger.
- Add a skip link at the top of the page, like `Skip to Main Content`, so users can jump past the navigation if they want.

- Make sure sliders or carousels can be paused and navigated with arrow keys or the Tab key.
 - i. **Disable autoplay by default**, or provide a clearly visible pause/play button.

5. Add Meaningful Alt Text:

- For each product image, write a short description like `alt="Loaf of sourdough bread on a cutting board"` to help screen reader users know what the image shows.
- If an image is purely decorative, place the image in `css`. And style it out that way.

6. Better Form Labels and Error Messages:

- Use `<label>` elements tied to form fields with `for` and `id` attributes. For example: `<label for="name">Name:</label><input type="text" id="name" ...>`
- When a user leaves a required field empty, show a clear text error message like "Please enter your name." This helps both sighted users and screen readers.

3. Inclusivity

3.1 Baseline Analysis (Inclusivity)

When reviewing the Paul Rhodes Bakery website, I assessed key elements that affect usability due to the lack of inclusivity. My baseline observations:

- I noticed the site had some marketing language that could be misunderstood. Terms like "mastercrafted" might not be clear to everyone. Also, I didn't see any mention of dietary needs, like gluten-free or vegan offerings, even though many bakeries nowadays highlight that to show inclusivity of different dietary lifestyles.

Overall, the site exudes a cozy brand identity but may not feel welcoming for users who need simpler language, explicit dietary info, or a more direct style. Inclusivity means making sure the website feels welcoming and easy to understand for people from different cultures,

backgrounds, languages, and life experiences. It can also mean considering things like age, reading level, or ability to handle motion on the screen.

3.2 Testing Observations (Inclusivity)

I read through each main page and took notes on language, tone, and structure:

1. Language and Tone

The site uses a lot of marketing phrases like “mastercrafted” and “we think it’s about time you did.” While that adds personality, it might confuse people who don’t speak English fluently or who just want clear, simple descriptions. Some of the language also assumes that the visitor has a certain lifestyle or a lot of free time, which might not be the case for everyone.

2. Inclusivity and Dietary Needs

I didn’t see any mention of dietary options like vegan, gluten-free, or allergen-friendly choices. These are things many bakeries highlight now, and not including them could make some people feel like the site (or the brand) isn’t for them.

3. Layout and Readability

On the “About” page, the text is center-aligned and written in big paragraphs with no headings or bullet points. That makes it harder to skim or stay focused, especially for people who have attention difficulties or are just trying to get quick info. Breaking up the text into sections could help a lot more.

4. Autoplay and Motion

There are also a couple of image carousels, which move on their own, and there’s no way to pause it. That can be annoying—or even make some users feel sick. Plus, people might need more time to read the text that’s on the images.

5. Technical Note

I also noticed the site doesn’t include `<html lang="en">`, which might seem small, but it actually helps screen readers and translation tools work better.

BAKERY

GENIUS IN THE BAKING



Founded in 2003 by Pierre Koffmann protégé and former Michelin-starred chef Paul Rhodes, Paul Rhodes Bakery is one of the leading independent bakeries in London, specialising in handcrafted breads and pastries, all made using the finest ingredients and traditional techniques.

Our business is constantly evolving and we are always looking at new ways of working. A 'back to basics' approach is now driving our business forward, ensuring an even greater emphasis on provenance and true artisanal production – as well as allowing us to help sustain independent UK farmers. We are regularly meeting with farmers, millers and suppliers of other ingredients – from olives to fresh fruit – to ensure our products are not only as natural and sustainably sourced as possible – but also the very best tasting we can find.

From our Greenwich bakery, we provide customers of all sizes within the London area – from Michelin-starred restaurants, neighbourhood cafes and specialist delis, through to leading hotel groups, major foodservice companies, and world-beating venues – with all their bakery needs, virtually every day of the year. And whatever the size and nature of their order, it all gets delivered freshly baked and early in the morning, by our own drivers.

We also run a neighbourhood bakery shop in Greenwich which keeps us in tune with the daily demands of our own consumers.

Dedicated to traditional baking techniques and committed to excellence across every aspect of our business, we take pride in meeting the needs of every customer, whatever the size of their business or appetite.

Welcome to The Art of Baking

3.3 Proposed Improvements (Inclusivity)

To make the site more inclusive:

1. Simplify the Language:

- Replace words like “mastercrafted” with something more widely understood like “handcrafted” or “expertly baked.”
- Avoid phrases that assume the reader’s time or habits. For example, instead of “we think it’s about time you did,” just say “We invite you to try our baked goods.”

2. Mention Dietary Options:

- If the bakery offers gluten-free bread, vegan pastries, or special allergen information, say so up front. This will help people with specific needs feel included.
 - If these options are not available, consider adding them or at least stating which common allergens are present.
- 3. Offer Autoplay Controls:**
- Let users pause or skip the slideshow if they want. Some people don't want the page to move on its own.
 - Provide arrow buttons labeled with text like "Next Slide" or "Previous Slide" so screen readers can read them.
- 4. Break Up Text with Headings and Lists:**
- Short paragraphs, subheadings, and bullet points help everyone scan content quickly.
 - Use bold or highlighted text for keywords so the main ideas are easy to spot.
- 5. Clear Error Feedback:**
- When a user leaves a required field empty, show a direct message such as "Please fill out this field."
 - Use an icon or bold text that's not purely color-based. This way, people with color-blindness or low vision can still notice the error.
- 6. Add `<html lang="en">`:**
- This simple step tells browsers and screen readers that the site is in English, helping them with pronunciation and translation tasks.

4. Sustainability

4.1 Baseline Analysis (Sustainability)

Sustainability in web design is about reducing the energy a site uses and the carbon footprint it leaves behind. The server hosting, the size of images, the number of scripts, and how the code is written can all affect how green or not green a site is.

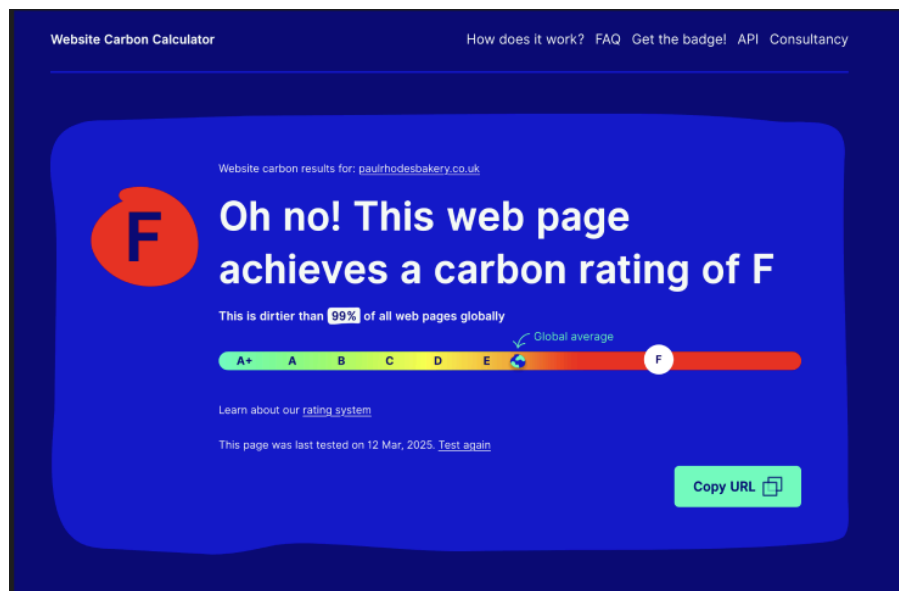
For Paul Rhodes Bakery, I paid attention to:

1. **Number of HTTP Requests:** Every extra CSS or JavaScript file means an additional request, which uses bandwidth and energy.
2. **Image Size and Format:** Large, high-resolution images can slow down the site and waste energy. Serving them in more efficient formats can save bandwidth.
3. **Unused CSS or JS:** If the site loads big frameworks or scripts but only uses a small part of them, it's not sustainable.

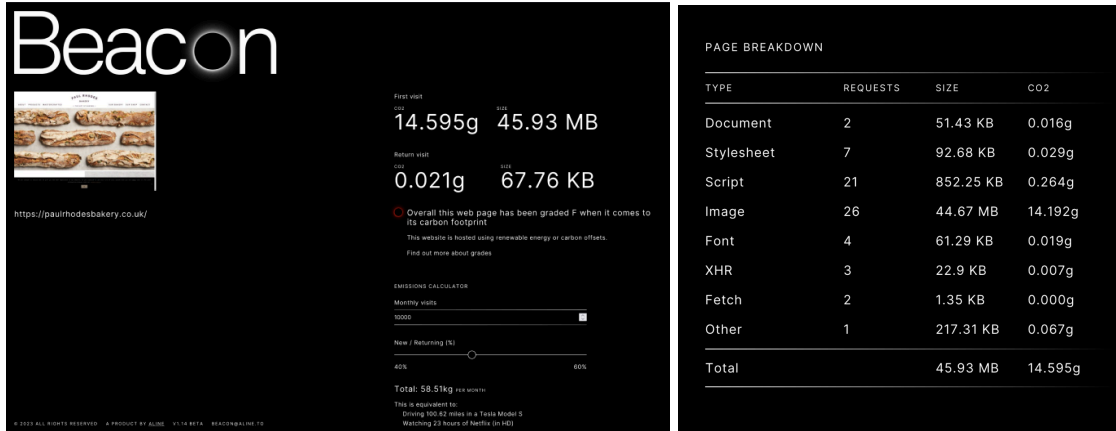
4.2 Testing Observations (Sustainability)

I ran a few tests to measure the site's environmental impact:

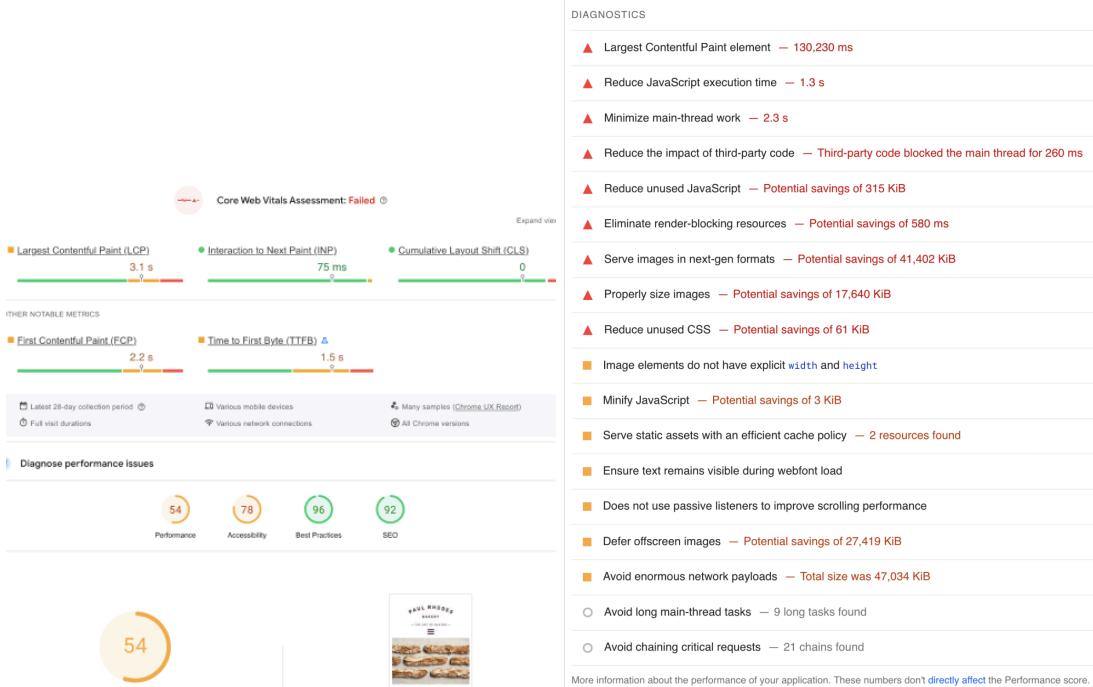
WebsiteCarbon.com: The site produced around 10.51 grams of CO2 per page view, which is quite high. It's ranked as dirtier than 99% of the websites tested by this tool.



Digital Beacon: Confirmed that the site's images were very large and there were too many scripts.



PageSpeed Insights: Showed that the Largest Contentful Paint (LCP) can take over 6 seconds on certain devices (and can go way higher if the user's connection is slow). It also reported significant amounts of unused JavaScript.



Multiple Stylesheets: I counted more than 7 CSS files. Some of them might be duplicates or only needed for certain pages.

Scripts in the Header: The code places many JavaScript files at the top of the page, which can block the loading of the main content.

No Lazy Loading: Product images load immediately, even the ones offscreen. This slows the site and uses more data, especially on mobile.

4.3 Proposed Improvements (Sustainability)

Here's my plan to reduce the site's carbon footprint:

1. Compress and Optimize Images:

- Use tools like TinyPNG or JPEGmini to reduce image file sizes.
- Serve photos in next-gen formats like WebP or AVIF, which are smaller but keep good quality.
- Use descriptive width and height attributes so browsers can load images more efficiently.

2. Lazy Loading:

- Add `loading="lazy"` to `` tags, so images below the fold don't load until the user scrolls to them. This can significantly speed up the first load.

3. Combine and Minify CSS/JS:

- Merge several small CSS files into one if possible.
- Remove or defer unused JavaScript. If the code is for something rarely used, consider loading it only when needed.
- Place scripts right before `</body>` to prevent render-blocking.

4. Regular Audits:

- Keep checking with PageSpeed Insights and the Website Carbon Calculator after making changes to see if the site's performance and carbon usage improve.
- If new features or content are added, keep them optimized so the site doesn't balloon in size again.

5. Conclusion

After a detailed analysis, I believe that **Paul Rhodes Bakery** has a strong brand story and great-looking products, but the website suffers from a few major weaknesses. People with visual or motor challenges might find it difficult to move around the site, read the text, or place orders. Others might struggle with language that isn't clear or inclusive, especially if they aren't fluent in English or have different cultural backgrounds. And from an environmental standpoint, the site currently consumes more energy than it needs to, which increases its carbon footprint.

By handling these areas—**Accessibility**, **Inclusivity**, and **Sustainability**—the bakery can reach more customers, keep them happier, and reduce its impact on the planet. My suggestions include fixing heading structures, ensuring color contrast, limiting the number of fonts, adding alt text, offering more control over carousels, cleaning up code, and compressing images. I recommend that the team possibly consolidate style sheets and reorganize scripts.

After these improvements, the site can be retested with the same tools (like color contrast analyzers, WebsiteCarbon.com, and PageSpeed Insights) to confirm that each fix is working. In time, these changes will help the bakery's website become a welcoming, efficient, and eco-friendly place for visitors to learn about and purchase delicious baked goods.

6. References

Here are the main references and tools I used:

1. Website Carbon Calculator

- <https://www.websitecarbon.com/>
- Used to measure the CO2 emissions per page view and to compare the site's performance globally.

2. Digital Beacon

- <https://digitalbeacon.co/>
- Confirmed image sizes, scripts, and carbon footprint for the site.

3. Google PageSpeed Insights

- <https://pagespeed.web.dev/>
- Gave me details on Largest Contentful Paint, total blocking time, and suggestions for removing unused JS and CSS.

4. HeadingsMap by Jorge Rumoroso

- A browser extension that shows the heading structure and flags issues like multiple `<h1>` tags or skipped heading levels.

5. Color Contrast Analyser

- A tool that checks whether the foreground and background colors meet WCAG minimum contrast guidelines (4.5:1 for normal text).

6. Keyboard Accessibility Techniques

- [WebAIM: Keyboard Accessibility](#)
- Helped me test tab navigation, focus outlines, and skip links.

7. The A11Y Project

- [How to Create an Accessible Heading Structure](#)
- Confirmed best practices for heading tags and how screen readers interpret them.

8. Inclusive Design References

- [Design For Web: Inclusive Design](#)

- Provided tips for writing inclusive content, addressing diverse audiences, and controlling autoplay elements.

9. **Sustainable Web Manifesto**

- <https://www.sustainablewebmanifesto.com/>
- Outlined principles like clean, efficient, open, honest, regenerative, and resilient websites.