



LAWS guidelines

Version

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Abstract

This document contains a set of design guidelines for local authority Web sites.

Prepared for the LAWS project
by the IBM Usability Competency Centre.

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Introduction

About this document

Origin




This document contains design guidelines for local authority Web sites. It was sponsored by the [LAWs project](#) and developed by the [IBM Usability Competency Centre](#).

Scope

The guidelines cover fields such as usability, accessibility, trust, e-government, legislation, and adoption. In most cases, the document gives guidelines at a summary level and refers you to authoritative sources for detailed advice. For example, while the guidelines do emphasize the important principles of coding accessible HTML, they do not give technical details for all aspects of tagging.

How this document is organised

Principles, guidelines, and sources

This guide is structured as a collection of guidelines organised within a set of principles. Guidelines are derived from range of referenced sources. Principles are marked by the symbol , guidelines are shown by the symbol , sources are indicated by the symbol  and glossary terms are identified by the fact they are underlined.

Where a principle describes a goal that a designer should aim for, the related guidelines offer specific advice on how to achieve that goal. Think of the principle as "why" and the guideline as "how". For example, to satisfy the principle *Build on the citizen's prior knowledge*, you would follow related guidelines such as *Highlight new content and important news* and *Provide clear information that tells citizens how to contact the local authority*.

Indexes and content

The front section of this document contains a set of indexes to help you find the guidelines you need. The main index *Guidelines by LAWS goals and principles* lists principles and their associated guidelines under the three LAWS goals, *Useful*, *Usable*, and *Used*. Three secondary indexes list guidelines by field of study, (for example *Accessibility*), by role and task, (for example *Designer* and *Design content*), and by validation method, (for example *Expert review*).

The body of the document contains details of all principles and guidelines. Like the main index, it is organised by guideline within principle within the three LAWS goals *Useful*, *Usable*, and *Used*. For each principle, it explains the meaning and underlying thinking. For

each guideline, it provides additional information such as examples, rationale, the impact of not following the guideline, priority, validation method, and sources of further information.

The back of the document contains a glossary of technical terms and details of the sources referenced in the guidelines.

How to use these guidelines

To achieve a design that is useful, usable, and used:

1. Follow the link in the table of contents to review the main index *Guidelines by LAWS goals and principles*
2. Follow the links in the index to review individual principles and guidelines

To find guidelines related to a specific field of theory or practice such as *Usability* or *Accessibility*:

1. Follow the link in the table of contents to review the index *Guidelines by category - Field*
2. Follow the links in the index to review individual guidelines

To find guidelines related to a specific role and task such as *Designer* and *Design content*:

1. Follow the link in the table of contents to review the index *Guidelines by category - Role and task*
2. Follow the links in the index to review individual guidelines

To find guidelines for which compliance can be checked by a specific validation method such as *Expert review*:

1. Follow the link in the table of contents to review the index *Guidelines by validation method*
2. Follow the links in the index to review individual guidelines

To find out the meaning of specialist terminology:

1. Hover over or click on terms highlighted in underlined italics

Disclaimer

This document is not intended to offer advice on legal or safety matters. If you need guidance on these matters, please contact an appropriate professional.

Guidelines by LAWS goal and principle

Useful

See **Make all services available at all times on page: 39**

- See **Make services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week** on page: 39
- See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
- See **Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones** on page: 40

See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need on page: 41**

- See **When planning which services should be hosted online first, consider those which are most in demand by citizens and those which will bring the greatest cost savings to your authority** on page: 41
- See **Present content that is applicable to citizens** on page: 42
- See **Support two-way communication between local authorities and citizens** on page: 42
- See **Provide clear information that tells citizens how to contact the local authority** on page: 43
- See **Provide clear directions on how to find local authority buildings** on page: 44
- See **Highlight new content and important local news** on page: 44
- See **Offer services that help to create and support local online communities** on page: 45
- See **Offer services that support local businesses** on page: 45

Usable

See **Allow citizens to customise on page: 46**

- See **Store each citizen's personal information** on page: 46
- See **Allow citizens to tailor services to their needs** on page: 47


See **Build on the citizen's prior knowledge on page: 47**

- See **Use a single domain name with a suffix of .gov.uk** on page: 48
- See **Use terms that are familiar to citizens** on page: 49

- See **Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority** on page: 49
- See **On forms, use** on page: 50
- See **Display e-mail addresses using the standard e-mail format and include the correct** on page: 52

 **See Create a feeling of progress and achievement on page: 53**

- See **Thank citizens for adopting your site** on page: 53
- See **Send citizens e-mail receipts for financial transactions** on page: 54
- See **Provide notification when a citizen has completed a transaction** on page: 54
- See **Help citizens recognise that their** on page: 55
- See **Confirm task completion or failure in terms of the citizen's goals rather than in changes to the system state** on page: 55
- See **Phrase error messages politely** on page: 56


 **See Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection on page: 56**

- See **Use** on page: 57
- See **Provide more than one** on page: 58
- See **Where advanced technologies such as** on page: 58
- See **Ensure that the default text size used is legible** on page: 59
- See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
- See **Avoid designs that rely on specific** on page: 60
- See **Design pages to be independent of specific** on page: 61
- See **Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen** on page: 61
- See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
- See **Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies** on page: 62
- See **On forms, group the** on page: 63
- See **On forms, add '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, use '** on page: 64
- See **Communicate time constraints clearly, and allow citizens to request additional time to complete their tasks** on page: 65
- See **Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens** on page: 66
- See **Support 'accesskeys' for navigating forms** on page: 66
- See **Support 'accesskeys' for important links** on page: 67
- See **Create a logical tabbing order** on page: 68
- See **Where** on page: 69
- See **Where** on page: 69


 **See Do not compromise usability for function on page: 70**

- See **Use visual** on page: 70


- See **Design each page so that the initial information gives** on page: 71
- See **Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text** on page: 71

 **See Keep the citizen out of trouble on page: 72**


- See **Validate all information entered by the citizen as soon as possible** on page: 72
- See **On forms, use elements that have built in validation** on page: 73
- See **Before citizens complete a process that has been split across multiple pages, provide them with a summary of all the data that has been collected** on page: 73
- See **Format transaction e-mails so that the citizen recognises who the author is** on page: 74

 **See Provide proactive assistance on page: 74**

- See **Design error pages and transactional failure notices so that they help citizens resolve their problems** on page: 75
- See **Provide links to the home page and other important pages on every page within your site** on page: 75
- See **Ensure help text is goal-oriented** on page: 76


 **See Make on page: 76**

- See **Clearly describe any steps in a process that cannot be reversed** on page: 77
- See **Preserve information that the citizen has entered** on page: 77

 **See Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site on page: 78**


- See **Do not place too much information on the page** on page: 78
- See **Use all available space to distribute information evenly on the page** on page: 79
- See **Use properties such as size, position and colour to show the relative importance of information on the page** on page: 80
- See **Use a style of font with visual characteristics that are appropriate to the type of information being displayed** on page: 80
- See **Choose a text foreground colour that is at least 30 percent lighter or darker than the background colour** on page: 81
- See **Use appealing colours** on page: 81
- See **Use common colour conventions** on page: 82
- See **Use a small set of colours to reduce the amount of visual information citizens need to process** on page: 82
- See **Use** on page: 83
- See **Where there is a need to attract the citizen's attention, use** on page: 83
- See **Use images to illustrate key concepts that citizens may find difficult to understand when expressed in words alone** on page: 84

- See **Use images of body parts and cultural symbols only when they are essential; do not use metaphors based on these symbols** on page: 85
- See **Use branding elements to support information rather than to dominate it** on page: 85

 **See Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen on page: 86**

- See **Avoid using slang and idioms unless you explain their meaning** on page: 86
- See **Use unambiguous page** on page: 87
- See **Write using the inverted pyramid style** on page: 87
- See **Do not use leading articles such as 'A,' 'An,' and 'The' in e-mail subjects and page** on page: 88
- See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88
- See **Write using first and second-person sentences rather than third person sentences** on page: 89
- See **Write using the active voice rather than the passive** on page: 90
- See **Use plain and simple English, and avoid using marketing rhetoric** on page: 90
- See **Write consistently** on page: 91
- See **Write short sentences** on page: 91
- See **Write short** on page: 92
- See **Write succinctly** on page: 93
- See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93
- See **Use highlighting and** on page: 94
- See **Use sub-** on page: 94
- See **Ensure information sourced through external links is relevant** on page: 95

Used

 **See Avoid displaying or collecting information that could be misused on page: 95**

- See **When providing services for children or using information about children, ensure that permission has been obtained from their parent or guardian** on page: 96
- See **Only use images of children in suitable dress** on page: 96
- See **Do not display personal contact information about children such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers** on page: 97
- See **When using photographs of children, avoid associating names to photographs** on page: 97


 **See Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use on page: 98**

- See **When Acts, Regulations, and guidance about them are updated, review your Web site to ensure it is still compliant** on page: 98
- See **Ensure your Web site provides regulated information in accordance with the appropriate Acts and Regulations** on page: 99
- See **Provide responses to e-mails within 20 days and in the citizen's preferred format** on page: 99
- See **Do not include anything that could be defamatory** on page: 100
- See **Do not infringe the rights of a copyright owner** on page: 101
- See **Follow the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF)** on page: 101
- See **Use the Local Government Category** on page: 102
- See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
- See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
- See **Implement metadata or other mechanisms needed to identify records that need to be preserved** on page: 104
- See **Display details of any charges for copies of government information** on page: 104
- See **Comply with specific relevant acts** on page: 105
- See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
- See **Do not publish personal details without consent** on page: 106
- See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107
- See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
- See **Where forms are used to collect a citizen's personal information say which body is collecting the information** on page: 109
- See **When using images of people, ensure the correct level of permission has been granted** on page: 109
- See **Inform citizens if their personal information could be disclosed to third parties** on page: 110
- See **When collecting personal information from children, ensure that information about parents and others is not requested** on page: 111
- See **Set the default for forms that permit usage of personal data to allow usage for essential purposes only** on page: 111
- See **When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority** on page: 112
- See **Allow citizens to complete any transaction without supplying marketing or promotion related information** on page: 113

 **See Create a site that citizens trust on page: 113**

- See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114
- See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
- See **Write correctly** on page: 115

- See **Use humour with caution** on page: 115
- See **Use a tone that is appropriate for your audience and the message you are trying to convey** on page: 116
- See **Ensure content is accurate and up to date** on page: 117
- See **Where there is doubt over the accuracy or source of any information, incorporate a content disclaimer** on page: 117
- See **Provide external links to reputable and independent sources** on page: 118
- See **Adhere to conventions on government publicity and advertising** on page: 118
- See **If selecting advertising and sponsorship partners, choose brands that are trusted by citizens** on page: 119

 **See Design the site to encourage on page: 120**

- See **Do not provide an excessive number of links to a single external source** on page: 120
- See **Allow citizens to explore your site before they make a commitment** on page: 121
- See **Use Web forms rather than** on page: 121
- See **On the home page state the purpose, scope, and benefits of your site** on page: 122
- See **Make citizens aware that your site is available** on page: 122

Guidelines by category - Field

This index enables you to find guidelines related to a specific field of theory or practice, such as usability, accessibility, or trust.

Guidelines for Business

Business related fields study factors that are important to ensure success in a real-world business context.

Guidelines for Government

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
 - See **Follow the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF)** on page: 101
- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Ensure your Web site provides regulated information in accordance with the appropriate Acts and Regulations** on page: 99
 - See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
 - See **Implement metadata or other mechanisms needed to identify records that need to be preserved** on page: 104
 - See **When Acts, Regulations, and guidance about them are updated, review your Web site to ensure it is still compliant** on page: 98
 - See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Adhere to conventions on government publicity and advertising** on page: 118
 - See **Do not display personal contact information about children such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers** on page: 97
 - See **Present content that is applicable to citizens** on page: 42
 - See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107
 - See **Provide clear information that tells citizens how to contact the local authority** on page: 43
 - See **Use the Local Government Category** on page: 102
 - See **When planning which services should be hosted online first, consider those which are most in demand by citizens and those which will bring the greatest cost savings to your authority** on page: 41

- See **When providing services for children or using information about children, ensure that permission has been obtained from their parent or guardian** on page: 96
- See **Where there is doubt over the accuracy or source of any information, incorporate a content disclaimer** on page: 117
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Highlight new content and important local news** on page: 44
 - See **Offer services that support local businesses** on page: 45
 - See **Provide clear directions on how to find local authority buildings** on page: 44
 - See **Support two-way communication between local authorities and citizens** on page: 42
 - See **Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones** on page: 40

Guidelines for Law

- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Allow citizens to complete any transaction without supplying marketing or promotion related information** on page: 113
 - See **Display details of any charges for copies of government information** on page: 104
 - See **Do not include anything that could be defamatory** on page: 100
 - See **Do not infringe the rights of a copyright owner** on page: 101
 - See **Do not publish personal details without consent** on page: 106
 - See **Ensure your Web site provides regulated information in accordance with the appropriate Acts and Regulations** on page: 99
 - See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
 - See **Implement metadata or other mechanisms needed to identify records that need to be preserved** on page: 104
 - See **Inform citizens if their personal information could be disclosed to third parties** on page: 110
 - See **Provide responses to e-mails within 20 days and in the citizen's preferred format** on page: 99
 - See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
 - See **When Acts, Regulations, and guidance about them are updated, review your Web site to ensure it is still compliant** on page: 98
 - See **When collecting personal information from children, ensure that information about parents and others is not requested** on page: 111
 - See **When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority** on page: 112
 - See **When using images of people, ensure the correct level of permission has been granted** on page: 109

- See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
- See **Where forms are used to collect a citizen's personal information say which body is collecting the information** on page: 109
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Do not display personal contact information about children such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers** on page: 97
 - See **Only use images of children in suitable dress** on page: 96
 - See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107
 - See **When using photographs of children, avoid associating names to photographs** on page: 97
 - See **Where there is doubt over the accuracy or source of any information, incorporate a content disclaimer** on page: 117
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Send citizens e-mail receipts for financial transactions** on page: 54
 -
 - See **Comply with specific relevant acts** on page: 105

Guidelines for Safety

- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Do not publish personal details without consent** on page: 106
 - See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Do not display personal contact information about children such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers** on page: 97
 - See **Only use images of children in suitable dress** on page: 96
 - See **When using photographs of children, avoid associating names to photographs** on page: 97
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114

Guidelines for Trust

- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Allow citizens to complete any transaction without supplying marketing or promotion related information** on page: 113
 - See **Display details of any charges for copies of government information** on page: 104
 - See **Do not publish personal details without consent** on page: 106
 - See **Provide responses to e-mails within 20 days and in the citizen's preferred format** on page: 99
 - See **Set the default for forms that permit usage of personal data to allow usage for essential purposes only** on page: 111

- See **When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority** on page: 112
- See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
 - See **Ensure content is accurate and up to date** on page: 117
 - See **If selecting advertising and sponsorship partners, choose brands that are trusted by citizens** on page: 119
 - See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107
 - See **Use plain and simple English, and avoid using marketing rhetoric** on page: 90
 - See **Where there is doubt over the accuracy or source of any information, incorporate a content disclaimer** on page: 117
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114
 - See **Do not provide an excessive number of links to a single external source** on page: 120
 - See **Ensure information sourced through external links is relevant** on page: 95
 - See **Format transaction e-mails so that the citizen recognises who the author is** on page: 74
 - See **Offer services that help to create and support local online communities** on page: 45
 - See **On the home page state the purpose, scope, and benefits of your site** on page: 122
 - See **Provide external links to reputable and independent sources** on page: 118
 - See **Provide notification when a citizen has completed a transaction** on page: 54
 - See **Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones** on page: 40

Guidelines for Design

Design fields are concerned with the needs and motivation of individual users.

Guidelines for Accessibility

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
 - See **Avoid designs that rely on specific** on page: 60
 - See **Create a logical tabbing order** on page: 68

- See **Design pages to be independent of specific** on page: 61
- See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
- See **Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies** on page: 62
- See **Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens** on page: 66
- See **Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text** on page: 71
- See **On forms, add '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, group the** on page: 63
- See **On forms, use '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, use** on page: 50
- See **Provide more than one** on page: 58
- See **Use** on page: 57
- See **Use Web forms rather than** on page: 121
- See **Where** on page: 69
- See **Where** on page: 69
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Communicate time constraints clearly, and allow citizens to request additional time to complete their tasks** on page: 65
 - See **Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen** on page: 61
 - See **Support 'accesskeys' for important links** on page: 67
 - See **Support 'accesskeys' for navigating forms** on page: 66
 - See **Use images to illustrate key concepts that citizens may find difficult to understand when expressed in words alone** on page: 84
 - See **Use sub-** on page: 94
 - See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88

Guidelines for Adoption

- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Display details of any charges for copies of government information** on page: 104
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
 - See **Avoid designs that rely on specific** on page: 60
 - See **Confirm task completion or failure in terms of the citizen's goals rather than in changes to the system state** on page: 55
 - See **Design pages to be independent of specific** on page: 61
 - See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
 - See **Ensure content is accurate and up to date** on page: 117
 - See **Make citizens aware that your site is available** on page: 122

- See **Where advanced technologies such as** on page: 58
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to explore your site before they make a commitment** on page: 121
 - See **Highlight new content and important local news** on page: 44
 - See **Make services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week** on page: 39
 - See **Offer services that help to create and support local online communities** on page: 45
 - See **Offer services that support local businesses** on page: 45
 - See **On the home page state the purpose, scope, and benefits of your site** on page: 122
 - See **Phrase error messages politely** on page: 56
 - See **Thank citizens for adopting your site** on page: 53
 - See **Use a single domain name with a suffix of .gov.uk** on page: 48

Guidelines for Culture

- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Use humour with caution** on page: 115
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Use images of body parts and cultural symbols only when they are essential; do not use metaphors based on these symbols** on page: 85

Guidelines for Technology

- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Avoid designs that rely on specific** on page: 60
 - See **Design pages to be independent of specific** on page: 61
 - See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
 - See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
 - See **Use** on page: 57
 - See **Where advanced technologies such as** on page: 58
 - See **Where** on page: 69
 - See **Where** on page: 69
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114
 - See **Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen** on page: 61
 - See **Make services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week** on page: 39

Guidelines for Typography

- 2. Strongly recommended

- See **Choose a text foreground colour that is at least 30 percent lighter or darker than the background colour** on page: 81
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Ensure that the default text size used is legible** on page: 59
 - See **Use a style of font with visual characteristics that are appropriate to the type of information being displayed** on page: 80
 - See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93

Guidelines for Usability

- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
 - See **Before citizens complete a process that has been split across multiple pages, provide them with a summary of all the data that has been collected** on page: 73
 - See **Clearly describe any steps in a process that cannot be reversed** on page: 77
 - See **Confirm task completion or failure in terms of the citizen's goals rather than in changes to the system state** on page: 55
 - See **Create a logical tabbing order** on page: 68
 - See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
 - See **Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens** on page: 66
 - See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
 - See **Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text** on page: 71
 - See **On forms, add '** on page: 64
 - See **On forms, group the** on page: 63
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 - See **On forms, use elements that have built in validation** on page: 73
 - See **On forms, use** on page: 50
 - See **Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority** on page: 49
 - See **Preserve information that the citizen has entered** on page: 77
 - See **Provide links to the home page and other important pages on every page within your site** on page: 75
 - See **Provide more than one** on page: 58
 - See **Use** on page: 57
 - See **Use properties such as size, position and colour to show the relative importance of information on the page** on page: 80
 - See **Use terms that are familiar to citizens** on page: 49
 - See **Use Web forms rather than** on page: 121
 - See **Validate all information entered by the citizen as soon as possible** on page: 72

- 3. Recommended
 - See **Allow citizens to tailor services to their needs** on page: 47
 - See **Communicate time constraints clearly, and allow citizens to request additional time to complete their tasks** on page: 65
 - See **Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen** on page: 61
 - See **Design each page so that the initial information gives** on page: 71
 - See **Design error pages and transactional failure notices so that they help citizens resolve their problems** on page: 75
 - See **Display e-mail addresses using the standard e-mail format and include the correct** on page: 52
 - See **Do not place too much information on the page** on page: 78
 - See **Help citizens recognise that their** on page: 55
 - See **On the home page state the purpose, scope, and benefits of your site** on page: 122
 - See **Phrase error messages politely** on page: 56
 - See **Provide notification when a citizen has completed a transaction** on page: 54
 - See **Send citizens e-mail receipts for financial transactions** on page: 54
 - See **Store each citizen's personal information** on page: 46
 - See **Support 'accesskeys' for important links** on page: 67
 - See **Support 'accesskeys' for navigating forms** on page: 66
 - See **Use a single domain name with a suffix of .gov.uk** on page: 48
 - See **Use images to illustrate key concepts that citizens may find difficult to understand when expressed in words alone** on page: 84
 - See **Use sub-** on page: 94
 - See **Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones** on page: 40
 - See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88
 - See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93
 - See **Where there is a need to attract the citizen's attention, use** on page: 83
 -
 - See **Use visual** on page: 70

Guidelines for Visual design

- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Choose a text foreground colour that is at least 30 percent lighter or darker than the background colour** on page: 81
 - See **Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text** on page: 71
 - See **Provide more than one** on page: 58
 - See **Use a small set of colours to reduce the amount of visual information citizens need to process** on page: 82

- See **Use branding elements to support information rather than to dominate it** on page: 85
- See **Use properties such as size, position and colour to show the relative importance of information on the page** on page: 80
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Do not place too much information on the page** on page: 78
 - See **Use all available space to distribute information evenly on the page** on page: 79
 - See **Use appealing colours** on page: 81
 - See **Use common colour conventions** on page: 82
 - See **Use highlighting and** on page: 94
 - See **Use images to illustrate key concepts that citizens may find difficult to understand when expressed in words alone** on page: 84
 - See **Use** on page: 83
 - See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93
 - See **Where there is a need to attract the citizen's attention, use** on page: 83

Guidelines for Writing

- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Avoid using slang and idioms unless you explain their meaning** on page: 86
 - See **Ensure help text is goal-oriented** on page: 76
 - See **Use humour with caution** on page: 115
 - See **Use plain and simple English, and avoid using marketing rhetoric** on page: 90
 - See **Use terms that are familiar to citizens** on page: 49
 - See **Use unambiguous page** on page: 87
 - See **Write consistently** on page: 91
 - See **Write correctly** on page: 115
 - See **Write short** on page: 92
 - See **Write succinctly** on page: 93
 - See **Write using the inverted pyramid style** on page: 87
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Design error pages and transactional failure notices so that they help citizens resolve their problems** on page: 75
 - See **Do not use leading articles such as 'A,' 'An,' and 'The' in e-mail subjects and page** on page: 88
 - See **Use a tone that is appropriate for your audience and the message you are trying to convey** on page: 116
 - See **Use highlighting and** on page: 94
 - See **Use sub-** on page: 94
 - See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93
 - See **Write using first and second-person sentences rather than third person sentences** on page: 89
 - See **Write using the active voice rather than the passive** on page: 90

LAWS guidelines

- - See **Write short sentences** on page: 91

Guidelines by category - Role and task

This index enables you to find guidelines related to a specific role and the tasks typically carried out by that role.

Guidelines for Content creator

A content creator is responsible for developing material such as service definitions, location descriptions, and policy statements. Content creators typically have skills in writing and communicating together with subject matter expertise in aspects of local government.

Guidelines for Create content

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
 - See **Follow the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF)** on page: 101
- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Display details of any charges for copies of government information** on page: 104
 - See **Do not include anything that could be defamatory** on page: 100
 - See **Do not infringe the rights of a copyright owner** on page: 101
 - See **Do not publish personal details without consent** on page: 106
 - See **Ensure your Web site provides regulated information in accordance with the appropriate Acts and Regulations** on page: 99
 - See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
 - See **When using images of people, ensure the correct level of permission has been granted** on page: 109
 - See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Adhere to conventions on government publicity and advertising** on page: 118
 - See **Avoid designs that rely on specific** on page: 60
 - See **Avoid using slang and idioms unless you explain their meaning** on page: 86
 - See **Design pages to be independent of specific** on page: 61
 - See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
 - See **Do not display personal contact information about children such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers** on page: 97
 - See **Ensure content is accurate and up to date** on page: 117

- See **Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies** on page: 62
- See **If selecting advertising and sponsorship partners, choose brands that are trusted by citizens** on page: 119
- See **Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text** on page: 71
- See **Only use images of children in suitable dress** on page: 96
- See **Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority** on page: 49
- See **Present content that is applicable to citizens** on page: 42
- See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107
- See **Provide clear information that tells citizens how to contact the local authority** on page: 43
- See **Provide more than one** on page: 58
- See **Use branding elements to support information rather than to dominate it** on page: 85
- See **Use** on page: 57
- See **Use humour with caution** on page: 115
- See **Use plain and simple English, and avoid using marketing rhetoric** on page: 90
- See **Use terms that are familiar to citizens** on page: 49
- See **Use the Local Government Category** on page: 102
- See **Use unambiguous page** on page: 87
- See **When providing services for children or using information about children, ensure that permission has been obtained from their parent or guardian** on page: 96
- See **When using photographs of children, avoid associating names to photographs** on page: 97
- See **Where advanced technologies such as** on page: 58
- See **Where** on page: 69
- See **Where** on page: 69
- See **Where there is doubt over the accuracy or source of any information, incorporate a content disclaimer** on page: 117
- See **Write consistently** on page: 91
- See **Write correctly** on page: 115
- See **Write short** on page: 92
- See **Write succinctly** on page: 93
- See **Write using the inverted pyramid style** on page: 87
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to explore your site before they make a commitment** on page: 121
 - See **Communicate time constraints clearly, and allow citizens to request additional time to complete their tasks** on page: 65
 - See **Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen** on page: 61

- See **Design each page so that the initial information gives** on page: 71
- See **Display e-mail addresses using the standard e-mail format and include the correct** on page: 52
- See **Do not place too much information on the page** on page: 78
- See **Do not use leading articles such as 'A,' 'An,' and 'The' in e-mail subjects and page** on page: 88
- See **Ensure information sourced through external links is relevant** on page: 95
- See **Highlight new content and important local news** on page: 44
- See **Offer services that help to create and support local online communities** on page: 45
- See **Offer services that support local businesses** on page: 45
- See **On the home page state the purpose, scope, and benefits of your site** on page: 122
- See **Phrase error messages politely** on page: 56
- See **Provide clear directions on how to find local authority buildings** on page: 44
- See **Provide external links to reputable and independent sources** on page: 118
- See **Use a tone that is appropriate for your audience and the message you are trying to convey** on page: 116
- See **Use highlighting and** on page: 94
- See **Use images of body parts and cultural symbols only when they are essential; do not use metaphors based on these symbols** on page: 85
- See **Use sub-** on page: 94
- See **Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones** on page: 40
- See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88
- See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93
- See **Write using first and second-person sentences rather than third person sentences** on page: 89
- See **Write using the active voice rather than the passive** on page: 90
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- See **Write short sentences** on page: 91

Guidelines for Create help text

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Ensure help text is goal-oriented** on page: 76
 - See **Use humour with caution** on page: 115

- See **Use plain and simple English, and avoid using marketing rhetoric** on page: 90
- See **Write consistently** on page: 91
- See **Write correctly** on page: 115
- See **Write short** on page: 92
- See **Write succinctly** on page: 93
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Use a tone that is appropriate for your audience and the message you are trying to convey** on page: 116
 - See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88
 - See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93
 - See **Write using first and second-person sentences rather than third person sentences** on page: 89
 - See **Write using the active voice rather than the passive** on page: 90

Guidelines for Designer

A designer is responsible for the user experience of a local authority site. Designers typically have skills related to interaction design, information design, or graphic design.

Guidelines for Design interaction

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Allow citizens to complete any transaction without supplying marketing or promotion related information** on page: 113
 - See **Do not publish personal details without consent** on page: 106
 - See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
 - See **Inform citizens if their personal information could be disclosed to third parties** on page: 110
 - See **Set the default for forms that permit usage of personal data to allow usage for essential purposes only** on page: 111
 - See **When collecting personal information from children, ensure that information about parents and others is not requested** on page: 111
 - See **When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority** on page: 112
 - See **Where forms are used to collect a citizen's personal information say which body is collecting the information** on page: 109
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
 - See **Avoid designs that rely on specific** on page: 60

- See **Before citizens complete a process that has been split across multiple pages, provide them with a summary of all the data that has been collected** on page: 73
- See **Clearly describe any steps in a process that cannot be reversed** on page: 77
- See **Confirm task completion or failure in terms of the citizen's goals rather than in changes to the system state** on page: 55
- See **Create a logical tabbing order** on page: 68
- See **Design pages to be independent of specific** on page: 61
- See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
- See **Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies** on page: 62
- See **Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens** on page: 66
- See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
- See **Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text** on page: 71
- See **On forms, add '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, use '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, use elements that have built in validation** on page: 73
- See **On forms, use** on page: 50
- See **Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority** on page: 49
- See **Use** on page: 57
- See **Use terms that are familiar to citizens** on page: 49
- See **Use unambiguous page** on page: 87
- See **Use Web forms rather than** on page: 121
- See **Validate all information entered by the citizen as soon as possible** on page: 72
- See **Where advanced technologies such as** on page: 58
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Allow citizens to explore your site before they make a commitment** on page: 121
 - See **Allow citizens to tailor services to their needs** on page: 47
 - See **Communicate time constraints clearly, and allow citizens to request additional time to complete their tasks** on page: 65
 - See **Design each page so that the initial information gives** on page: 71
 - See **Design error pages and transactional failure notices so that they help citizens resolve their problems** on page: 75
 - See **Display e-mail addresses using the standard e-mail format and include the correct** on page: 52
 - See **Do not place too much information on the page** on page: 78
 - See **Format transaction e-mails so that the citizen recognises who the author is** on page: 74
 - See **Help citizens recognise that their** on page: 55

- See **Provide notification when a citizen has completed a transaction** on page: 54
- See **Send citizens e-mail receipts for financial transactions** on page: 54
- See **Store each citizen's personal information** on page: 46
- See **Support 'accesskeys' for important links** on page: 67
- See **Support 'accesskeys' for navigating forms** on page: 66
- See **Support two-way communication between local authorities and citizens** on page: 42
- See **Thank citizens for adopting your site** on page: 53
- See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88

Guidelines for Design navigation

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
 - See **Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority** on page: 49
 - See **Present content that is applicable to citizens** on page: 42
 - See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107
 - See **Provide links to the home page and other important pages on every page within your site** on page: 75
 - See **Use terms that are familiar to citizens** on page: 49
 - See **Use the Local Government Category** on page: 102
 - See **Use unambiguous page** on page: 87
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Do not provide an excessive number of links to a single external source** on page: 120
 - See **Do not use leading articles such as 'A,' 'An,' and 'The' in e-mail subjects and page** on page: 88
 - See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88
 - - See **Use visual** on page: 70

Guidelines for Design presentation

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
- 1. Legal requirement

- See **When using images of people, ensure the correct level of permission has been granted** on page: 109
- See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Choose a text foreground colour that is at least 30 percent lighter or darker than the background colour** on page: 81
 - See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
 - See **Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens** on page: 66
 - See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
 - See **Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text** on page: 71
 - See **Only use images of children in suitable dress** on page: 96
 - See **Provide more than one** on page: 58
 - See **Use a small set of colours to reduce the amount of visual information citizens need to process** on page: 82
 - See **Use branding elements to support information rather than to dominate it** on page: 85
 - See **Use properties such as size, position and colour to show the relative importance of information on the page** on page: 80
 - See **When using photographs of children, avoid associating names to photographs** on page: 97
 - See **Where advanced technologies such as** on page: 58
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen** on page: 61
 - See **Design each page so that the initial information gives** on page: 71
 - See **Do not place too much information on the page** on page: 78
 - See **Ensure that the default text size used is legible** on page: 59
 - See **Format transaction e-mails so that the citizen recognises who the author is** on page: 74
 - See **Highlight new content and important local news** on page: 44
 - See **Phrase error messages politely** on page: 56
 - See **Use a style of font with visual characteristics that are appropriate to the type of information being displayed** on page: 80
 - See **Use all available space to distribute information evenly on the page** on page: 79
 - See **Use appealing colours** on page: 81
 - See **Use common colour conventions** on page: 82
 - See **Use images of body parts and cultural symbols only when they are essential; do not use metaphors based on these symbols** on page: 85
 - See **Use images to illustrate key concepts that citizens may find difficult to understand when expressed in words alone** on page: 84
 - See **Use** on page: 83

- See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88
- See **Where there is a need to attract the citizen's attention, use** on page: 83
-
- See **Use visual** on page: 70

Guidelines for Developer

A developer is responsible for implementing a design as software on both client and server. Developers typically have skills such as implementation design, programming languages, networks, and server configuration.

Guidelines for Develop software

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
 - See **Follow the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF)** on page: 101
- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority** on page: 112
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
 - See **Avoid designs that rely on specific** on page: 60
 - See **Confirm task completion or failure in terms of the citizen's goals rather than in changes to the system state** on page: 55
 - See **Create a logical tabbing order** on page: 68
 - See **Design pages to be independent of specific** on page: 61
 - See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
 - See **Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies** on page: 62
 - See **Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens** on page: 66
 - See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
 - See **On forms, add '** on page: 64
 - See **On forms, group the** on page: 63
 - See **On forms, use '** on page: 64
 - See **On forms, use elements that have built in validation** on page: 73
 - See **On forms, use** on page: 50
 - See **Present content that is applicable to citizens** on page: 42
 - See **Preserve information that the citizen has entered** on page: 77
 - See **Use** on page: 57
 - See **Use Web forms rather than** on page: 121

- See **Validate all information entered by the citizen as soon as possible** on page: 72
- See **Where advanced technologies such as** on page: 58
- See **Where** on page: 69
- See **Where** on page: 69
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to tailor services to their needs** on page: 47
 - See **Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen** on page: 61
 - See **Design error pages and transactional failure notices so that they help citizens resolve their problems** on page: 75
 - See **Ensure that the default text size used is legible** on page: 59
 - See **Phrase error messages politely** on page: 56
 - See **Provide notification when a citizen has completed a transaction** on page: 54
 - See **Send citizens e-mail receipts for financial transactions** on page: 54
 - See **Store each citizen's personal information** on page: 46
 - See **Support 'accesskeys' for important links** on page: 67
 - See **Support 'accesskeys' for navigating forms** on page: 66
 - See **Thank citizens for adopting your site** on page: 53

Guidelines for Implement servers and networks

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF)** on page: 101
- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
 - See **Present content that is applicable to citizens** on page: 42
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Make services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week** on page: 39

Guidelines for Manager

A manager is responsible for ensuring that relevant legislation and government policy is implemented in the design of an authority site.

Guidelines for Manage implementation

Manage implementation

- 0. Mandatory UK government requirement
 - See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
 - See **Follow the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF)** on page: 101
- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **Allow citizens to complete any transaction without supplying marketing or promotion related information** on page: 113
 - See **Display details of any charges for copies of government information** on page: 104
 - See **Do not include anything that could be defamatory** on page: 100
 - See **Do not infringe the rights of a copyright owner** on page: 101
 - See **Do not publish personal details without consent** on page: 106
 - See **Ensure your Web site provides regulated information in accordance with the appropriate Acts and Regulations** on page: 99
 - See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
 - See **Implement metadata or other mechanisms needed to identify records that need to be preserved** on page: 104
 - See **Inform citizens if their personal information could be disclosed to third parties** on page: 110
 - See **Provide responses to e-mails within 20 days and in the citizen's preferred format** on page: 99
 - See **Set the default for forms that permit usage of personal data to allow usage for essential purposes only** on page: 111
 - See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
 - See **When Acts, Regulations, and guidance about them are updated, review your Web site to ensure it is still compliant** on page: 98
 - See **When collecting personal information from children, ensure that information about parents and others is not requested** on page: 111
 - See **When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority** on page: 112
 - See **When using images of people, ensure the correct level of permission has been granted** on page: 109
 - See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
 - See **Where forms are used to collect a citizen's personal information say which body is collecting the information** on page: 109
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Adhere to conventions on government publicity and advertising** on page: 118
 - See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
 - See **Ensure content is accurate and up to date** on page: 117
 - See **If selecting advertising and sponsorship partners, choose brands that are trusted by citizens** on page: 119

- See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107
- See **Provide clear information that tells citizens how to contact the local authority** on page: 43
- See **Use the Local Government Category** on page: 102
- See **When planning which services should be hosted online first, consider those which are most in demand by citizens and those which will bring the greatest cost savings to your authority** on page: 41
- See **When providing services for children or using information about children, ensure that permission has been obtained from their parent or guardian** on page: 96
- See **Where there is doubt over the accuracy or source of any information, incorporate a content disclaimer** on page: 117
- 3. Recommended
 - See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114
 - See **Allow citizens to explore your site before they make a commitment** on page: 121
 - See **Highlight new content and important local news** on page: 44
 - See **Make services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week** on page: 39
 - See **Provide external links to reputable and independent sources** on page: 118
 - See **Support two-way communication between local authorities and citizens** on page: 42
 - See **Use a single domain name with a suffix of .gov.uk** on page: 48
 - See **Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones** on page: 40
 -
 - See **Comply with specific relevant acts** on page: 105

Guidelines for Marketer

A marketer is responsible for promoting the authority site and encouraging increased uptake by citizens.

Guidelines for Promote site

Market site

- 1. Legal requirement
 - See **When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority** on page: 112
- 2. Strongly recommended
 - See **Make citizens aware that your site is available** on page: 122
 - See **Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority** on page: 49
 - See **When planning which services should be hosted online first, consider those which are most in demand by citizens and those which will bring the greatest cost savings to your authority** on page: 41

- 3. Recommended
 - See **Display e-mail addresses using the standard e-mail format and include the correct** on page: 52
 - See **Format transaction e-mails so that the citizen recognises who the author is** on page: 74
 - See **Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones** on page: 40

Guidelines by validation method

Guidelines for validation method - Code inspection

A code inspection is a review of the source code for the site to check for compliance with coding standards. A code inspection typically looks at both client-side code, such as HTML, and server side code such as PERL.

- See **Add content rating metadata to the home page** on page: 114
- See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
- See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
- See **Design pages to be independent of specific** on page: 61
- See **Display e-mail addresses using the standard e-mail format and include the correct** on page: 52
- See **Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies** on page: 62
- See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
- See **Follow the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF)** on page: 101
- See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
- See **On forms, add '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, group the** on page: 63
- See **Preserve information that the citizen has entered** on page: 77
- See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
- See **Use** on page: 57
- See **Use the Local Government Category** on page: 102
- See **Validate all information entered by the citizen as soon as possible** on page: 72
- See **Where** on page: 69
- See **Where** on page: 69

Guidelines for validation method - Expert review

An expert review is a inspection of some aspect of the design by a panel of specialists in a field such as accessibility, usability, or legislation.

- See **Adhere to conventions on government publicity and advertising** on page: 118
- See **Advise citizens when** on page: 114
- See **Allow citizens to complete any transaction without supplying marketing or promotion related information** on page: 113
- See **Allow citizens to explore your site before they make a commitment** on page: 121
- See **Allow citizens to tailor services to their needs** on page: 47
- See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40
- See **Avoid designs that rely on specific** on page: 60

- See **Avoid using slang and idioms unless you explain their meaning** on page: 86
- See **Before citizens complete a process that has been split across multiple pages, provide them with a summary of all the data that has been collected** on page: 73
- See **Choose a text foreground colour that is at least 30 percent lighter or darker than the background colour** on page: 81
- See **Clearly describe any steps in a process that cannot be reversed** on page: 77
- See **Communicate time constraints clearly, and allow citizens to request additional time to complete their tasks** on page: 65
- See **Confirm task completion or failure in terms of the citizen's goals rather than in changes to the system state** on page: 55
- See **Create a logical tabbing order** on page: 68
- See **Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen** on page: 61
- See **Design each page so that the initial information gives** on page: 71
- See **Design error pages and transactional failure notices so that they help citizens resolve their problems** on page: 75
- See **Design pages to work with any font size or screen** on page: 59
- See **Display details of any charges for copies of government information** on page: 104
- See **Display e-mail addresses using the standard e-mail format and include the correct** on page: 52
- See **Do not display personal contact information about children such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers** on page: 97
- See **Do not include anything that could be defamatory** on page: 100
- See **Do not infringe the rights of a copyright owner** on page: 101
- See **Do not place too much information on the page** on page: 78
- See **Do not provide an excessive number of links to a single external source** on page: 120
- See **Do not publish personal details without consent** on page: 106
- See **Do not use leading articles such as 'A,' 'An,' and 'The' in e-mail subjects and page** on page: 88
- See **Ensure content is accurate and up to date** on page: 117
- See **Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies** on page: 62
- See **Ensure help text is goal-oriented** on page: 76
- See **Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens** on page: 66
- See **Ensure that the default text size used is legible** on page: 59
- See **Ensure your Web site provides regulated information in accordance with the appropriate Acts and Regulations** on page: 99
- See **Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the** on page: 103
- See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102

- See **Format transaction e-mails so that the citizen recognises who the author is** on page: 74
- See **Help citizens recognise that their** on page: 55
- See **Highlight new content and important local news** on page: 44
- See **Implement metadata or other mechanisms needed to identify records that need to be preserved** on page: 104
- See **Inform citizens if their personal information could be disclosed to third parties** on page: 110
- See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
- See **Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text** on page: 71
- See **On forms, add '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, group the** on page: 63
- See **On forms, use '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, use elements that have built in validation** on page: 73
- See **On forms, use** on page: 50
- See **On the home page state the purpose, scope, and benefits of your site** on page: 122
- See **Only use images of children in suitable dress** on page: 96
- See **Phrase error messages politely** on page: 56
- See **Preserve information that the citizen has entered** on page: 77
- See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107
- See **Provide clear directions on how to find local authority buildings** on page: 44
- See **Provide clear information that tells citizens how to contact the local authority** on page: 43
- See **Provide external links to reputable and independent sources** on page: 118
- See **Provide links to the home page and other important pages on every page within your site** on page: 75
- See **Provide more than one** on page: 58
- See **Provide notification when a citizen has completed a transaction** on page: 54
- See **Send citizens e-mail receipts for financial transactions** on page: 54
- See **Set the default for forms that permit usage of personal data to allow usage for essential purposes only** on page: 111
- See **Store each citizen's personal information** on page: 46
- See **Support 'accesskeys' for important links** on page: 67
- See **Support 'accesskeys' for navigating forms** on page: 66
- See **Support two-way communication between local authorities and citizens** on page: 42
- See **Thank citizens for adopting your site** on page: 53
- See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
- See **Use a single domain name with a suffix of .gov.uk** on page: 48
- See **Use a small set of colours to reduce the amount of visual information citizens need to process** on page: 82

- See **Use a style of font with visual characteristics that are appropriate to the type of information being displayed** on page: 80
- See **Use a tone that is appropriate for your audience and the message you are trying to convey** on page: 116
- See **Use all available space to distribute information evenly on the page** on page: 79
- See **Use appealing colours** on page: 81
- See **Use branding elements to support information rather than to dominate it** on page: 85
- See **Use common colour conventions** on page: 82
- See **Use highlighting and** on page: 94
- See **Use** on page: 57
- See **Use humour with caution** on page: 115
- See **Use images of body parts and cultural symbols only when they are essential; do not use metaphors based on these symbols** on page: 85
- See **Use images to illustrate key concepts that citizens may find difficult to understand when expressed in words alone** on page: 84
- See **Use plain and simple English, and avoid using marketing rhetoric** on page: 90
- See **Use properties such as size, position and colour to show the relative importance of information on the page** on page: 80
- See **Use** on page: 83
- See **Use sub-** on page: 94
- See **Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones** on page: 40
- See **Use the Local Government Category** on page: 102
- See **Use unambiguous page** on page: 87
- See **Use visual** on page: 70
- See **Use Web forms rather than** on page: 121
- See **Validate all information entered by the citizen as soon as possible** on page: 72
- See **When Acts, Regulations, and guidance about them are updated, review your Web site to ensure it is still compliant** on page: 98
- See **When collecting personal information from children, ensure that information about parents and others is not requested** on page: 111
- See **When providing services for children or using information about children, ensure that permission has been obtained from their parent or guardian** on page: 96
- See **When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority** on page: 112
- See **When using photographs of children, avoid associating names to photographs** on page: 97
- See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
- See **Where advanced technologies such as** on page: 58
- See **Where forms are used to collect a citizen's personal information say which body is collecting the information** on page: 109

- See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88
- See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93
- See **Where** on page: 69
- See **Where there is a need to attract the citizen's attention, use** on page: 83
- See **Where there is doubt over the accuracy or source of any information, incorporate a content disclaimer** on page: 117
- See **Write consistently** on page: 91
- See **Write correctly** on page: 115
- See **Write short** on page: 92
- See **Write short sentences** on page: 91
- See **Write succinctly** on page: 93
- See **Write using first and second-person sentences rather than third person sentences** on page: 89
- See **Write using the active voice rather than the passive** on page: 90
- See **Write using the inverted pyramid style** on page: 87

Guidelines for validation method - Research (interview etc)

Research involves gathering opinions from citizens. Methods include interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

- See **Ensure that the default text size used is legible** on page: 59
- See **If selecting advertising and sponsorship partners, choose brands that are trusted by citizens** on page: 119
- See **Make citizens aware that your site is available** on page: 122
- See **Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority** on page: 49
- See **Present content that is applicable to citizens** on page: 42
- See **Use appealing colours** on page: 81
- See **Use terms that are familiar to citizens** on page: 49
- See **When planning which services should be hosted online first, consider those which are most in demand by citizens and those which will bring the greatest cost savings to your authority** on page: 41

Guidelines for validation method - User test

A user test is a scientific study that observes and measures citizens using the site to carry out typical tasks.

- See **Allow citizens to complete any transaction without supplying marketing or promotion related information** on page: 113
- See **Allow citizens to explore your site before they make a commitment** on page: 121
- See **Allow citizens to tailor services to their needs** on page: 47
- See **Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose** on page: 40

- See **Avoid using slang and idioms unless you explain their meaning** on page: 86
- See **Before citizens complete a process that has been split across multiple pages, provide them with a summary of all the data that has been collected** on page: 73
- See **Clearly describe any steps in a process that cannot be reversed** on page: 77
- See **Communicate time constraints clearly, and allow citizens to request additional time to complete their tasks** on page: 65
- See **Confirm task completion or failure in terms of the citizen's goals rather than in changes to the system state** on page: 55
- See **Create a logical tabbing order** on page: 68
- See **Design each page so that the initial information gives** on page: 71
- See **Design error pages and transactional failure notices so that they help citizens resolve their problems** on page: 75
- See **Do not place too much information on the page** on page: 78
- See **Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies** on page: 62
- See **Ensure help text is goal-oriented** on page: 76
- See **Ensure information sourced through external links is relevant** on page: 95
- See **Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens** on page: 66
- See **Ensure that the default text size used is legible** on page: 59
- See **For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English** on page: 102
- See **Format transaction e-mails so that the citizen recognises who the author is** on page: 74
- See **Help citizens recognise that their** on page: 55
- See **Highlight new content and important local news** on page: 44
- See **If selecting advertising and sponsorship partners, choose brands that are trusted by citizens** on page: 119
- See **Inform citizens if their personal information could be disclosed to third parties** on page: 110
- See **Minimise page download size** on page: 62
- See **On forms, add '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, group the** on page: 63
- See **On forms, use '** on page: 64
- See **On forms, use** on page: 50
- See **On the home page state the purpose, scope, and benefits of your site** on page: 122
- See **Only use images of children in suitable dress** on page: 96
- See **Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority** on page: 49
- See **Phrase error messages politely** on page: 56
- See **Present content that is applicable to citizens** on page: 42
- See **Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy** on page: 107

- See **Provide clear directions on how to find local authority buildings** on page: 44
- See **Provide clear information that tells citizens how to contact the local authority** on page: 43
- See **Provide links to the home page and other important pages on every page within your site** on page: 75
- See **Provide more than one** on page: 58
- See **Provide notification when a citizen has completed a transaction** on page: 54
- See **Send citizens e-mail receipts for financial transactions** on page: 54
- See **Store each citizen's personal information** on page: 46
- See **Support 'accesskeys' for navigating forms** on page: 66
- See **Support two-way communication between local authorities and citizens** on page: 42
- See **Thank citizens for adopting your site** on page: 53
- See **Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens** on page: 108
- See **Use a style of font with visual characteristics that are appropriate to the type of information being displayed** on page: 80
- See **Use a tone that is appropriate for your audience and the message you are trying to convey** on page: 116
- See **Use appealing colours** on page: 81
- See **Use branding elements to support information rather than to dominate it** on page: 85
- See **Use common colour conventions** on page: 82
- See **Use highlighting and** on page: 94
- See **Use humour with caution** on page: 115
- See **Use plain and simple English, and avoid using marketing rhetoric** on page: 90
- See **Use properties such as size, position and colour to show the relative importance of information on the page** on page: 80
- See **Use sub-** on page: 94
- See **Use terms that are familiar to citizens** on page: 49
- See **Use unambiguous page** on page: 87
- See **Use visual** on page: 70
- See **Validate all information entered by the citizen as soon as possible** on page: 72
- See **When providing services for children or using information about children, ensure that permission has been obtained from their parent or guardian** on page: 96
- See **Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used** on page: 106
- See **Where forms are used to collect a citizen's personal information say which body is collecting the information** on page: 109
- See **Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked** on page: 88
- See **Where information can be summarised, use bulleted** on page: 93
- See **Where there is a need to attract the citizen's attention, use** on page: 83

LAWS guidelines

- See **Write consistently** on page: 91
- See **Write short** on page: 92
- See **Write short sentences** on page: 91
- See **Write succinctly** on page: 93
- See **Write using the inverted pyramid style** on page: 87

Details of guidelines

Useful

PRINCIPLE

Make all services available at all times

Users expect to be able to use Internet based services at any time they choose.

Citizens should be able to use all services in any sequence and at any time. They may wish to interrupt one task to perform another.

Give the citizen control over the system. Enable the citizen to apply self-defined procedures to accomplish tasks. Do not impose your own notion of the "correct" way of doing things, and limit the choices that should be available to the citizen.

Ensure that the system permits the citizen to establish and maintain a constant working context or a frame of reference. Make obvious the current state of the system and the Action for the citizen to perform. If the citizen leaves the system for a moment or longer, the state of the system should remain current or stable at the time of their return. This contextual framework contributes to their feeling of stability.

Avoid the use of modes. Modes restrict the user's ability to interact with the system. For example, allow the citizen to log on through more than one Browser window at the same time so that they can refer to old information at the same time as supplying new information.


GUIDELINE

Make services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Rationale

Users expect Web sites to be available all the time. If your site is down, or a service is unavailable, citizens' trust and perception of the usefulness of your site will be damaged.

Priority

3. Recommended 

Validation method

- Process inspection

Related principle

- See **Make all services available at all times** on page: 39

Sources

- See **Top 10 Guidelines for UK local government websites** on page: 153
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Allow citizens to use services in the sequence they choose

For example, do not prevent them from using two different services at the same time.

Rationale

Citizens may wish to read information at the same time as completing a transaction in a different area. Whilst carrying out transactions, some citizens may see other information that they want to investigate. Allow citizens to explore other possibilities without abandoning work they have already done.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Make all services available at all times** on page: 39

Sources

- See **IBM Common User Access Guidelines** on page: 143
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Use team or generic e-mail addresses rather than personal ones

For example, use `planning_department@camden.gov.uk` instead of `Richard_Smith@camden.gov.uk`.

Rationale

Citizens should not have to adjust contact details they have saved as a result of personnel changes within the local authority. Using team or generic e-mail addresses provides a far more sustainable way to publish and handle e-mails.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Make all services available at all times** on page: 39

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141

PRINCIPLE

Provide services and information that citizens want and need

Government Web sites need to be user focused. Provide the information and services that citizens want, and continually evolve them to meet user demand. Web sites that do not meet user needs cannot be effective.

Local authorities will often need to provide electronic information, and in some cases transactions, for over 700 different services. Give priority to services that are most beneficial to the local community. This will help ensure that the site is useful to its target audience.

GUIDELINE

When planning which services should be hosted online first, consider those which are most in demand by citizens and those which will bring the greatest cost savings to your authority

Rationale

Government policy is to make all government services electronically available by 2005. As Web usage increases, citizens' expectations will increase in relation to the online information and services provided by government.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Research (interview etc)
- Process inspection

Related principle

- See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need** on page: 41

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

GUIDELINE

Present content that is applicable to citizens

Rationale

Many government documents are not aimed at the general public, or are of any interest to them. Make a distinction between information that is aimed at different audiences. Ensure the main navigation and search functions used by citizens leads them first to information that is useful to them.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Research (interview etc)
- User test

Related principle

- See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need** on page: 41

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

GUIDELINE

Support two-way communication between local authorities and citizens

For example, provide contact information on the home page to reassure citizens that they can speak to someone either on the phone or face-to-face.

Rationale

Citizens will expect to be able to contact government officials, express their views, make enquiries, or ask for help. If your site does not provide an adequate level of support, some citizens will be unable to complete tasks effectively. Encourage citizens to adopt your site by supporting feedback and queries, and by reassuring them that help is available should they encounter any difficulties.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test
- Process inspection

Related principle

- See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need** on page: 41

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
- See **Top 10 Guidelines for UK local government websites** on page: 153

☑ GUIDELINE

Provide clear information that tells citizens how to contact the local authority

Rationale

Web users expect to be able to contact real human beings if they need to. Providing contact details will help build trust amongst citizens and give them easier access to the local authority. Display clear contact information on the home page. Include a full postal address, a telephone number, and a contact e-mail address.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need** on page: 41

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Provide clear directions on how to find local authority buildings

Rationale

Some citizens may need to visit council officers, and they will expect the Web site to provide clear directions on how to find the local authority buildings. Provide textual directions on rail, road, bus and underground travel. If you provide a map, present it either as a graphic (GIF or JPG) or a downloadable [PDF](#) file.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need** on page: 41

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Highlight new content and important local news

Rationale

Highlighting new content helps citizens find new information and helps them to appreciate the active nature of the site. Review highlighting regularly so that it is not devalued by over use.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need** on page: 41

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Offer services that help to create and support local online communities**

For example, adopt the LAWS Community Engagement Modules that provide facilities to help local communities set up their own web site and publish local events.

Rationale

Providing services that are useful to local communities will encourage more citizens to use and value the local authority site.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Interface inspection

Related principle

- See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need** on page: 41

Sources

- See **Local Authority Websites (LAWs) national project** on page: 146
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Offer services that support local businesses**

For example, adopt the Community Engagement Modules to enable businesses to advertise available jobs.

Rationale

Providing services that are useful to local communities will encourage more citizens to use and value the local authority site.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Interface inspection

Related principle

- See **Provide services and information that citizens want and need** on page: 41

Sources

- See **Local Authority Websites (LAWs) national project** on page: 146

Usable

PRINCIPLE

Allow citizens to customise

The interface should be tailorable to an individual citizen's needs and desires. No two citizens are exactly alike. Citizens have varying backgrounds, interests, motivations, levels of experience, and physical abilities. Customisation can help make an interface feel comfortable and familiar.

Personalising a computer interface can also lead to higher productivity and user satisfaction. For example, allow citizens to change their own home page to give priority to elements that they use most frequently.

GUIDELINE

Store each citizen's personal information

Rationale

Citizens will not continue to use a site that makes them supply the same information more than twice. Allow citizens to choose how much of their personal information is stored.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Allow citizens to customise** on page: 46

Sources

- See **Design principles** on page: 134
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Allow citizens to tailor services to their needs

For example, if citizens log on, allow them to remove rarely used functions from their view of the site.

Rationale

If citizens are presented with few choices, they will be able to find areas they need more quickly.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Allow citizens to customise** on page: 46

Sources

- See **Design principles** on page: 134
-

📖 *PRINCIPLE*

Build on the citizen's prior knowledge

Allow citizens to build on prior knowledge, especially knowledge they have gained from experience in the real world. A small amount of knowledge, used consistently throughout an interface, can empower the user to accomplish a large number of tasks.

Concepts and techniques can be learned once and then applied in a variety of situations. Citizens should not have to learn new things to perform familiar tasks. The use of concepts and techniques that users already understand from their real world experiences allows them to get started quickly and make progress immediately.

Be consistent with the way that similar concepts are presented. A consistent user interface ensures that users can carry out their tasks easily and effectively, and rapidly learn the user interface.

☑ GUIDELINE

Use a single domain name with a suffix of .gov.uk

Rationale

Citizens will expect a government site to have a name that fits into the Internet naming structure. If other domain names are used, citizens will question the validity of the site.

Web users will often try to guess the name of a Web site. Names that fit the overall naming structure are easier to guess.

It is not helpful to citizens if authorities generate a number of sites, all with different names, each one relating to a different initiative or department. Citizens will have less trust in an authority Web site that uses different domain names. The more names an authority invents for its Web sites, the less confident citizens will be that they are genuinely obtaining information from a local government organisation.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Build on the citizen's prior knowledge** on page: 47

Sources

- See **Top 10 Guidelines for UK local government websites** on page: 153
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Use terms that are familiar to citizens****Rationale**

Citizens may not understand the jargon of local government. Do not attempt to teach citizens new terms; use terms they already understand.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Research (interview etc)
- User test

Related principle

- See **Build on the citizen's prior knowledge** on page: 47

Sources

- See **Design principles** on page: 134
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Organise information in a way that citizens understand rather than using the structure of the local authority****Rationale**

Citizens will not be familiar with the internal structure of the local authority. If information is organised to follow the internal structure of the local authority, citizens will not be able to find what they need. A citizen seeking to find out how to dispose of asbestos is unlikely to look for disposal facilities under departmental **Error! Reference source not found.s**. Organise information under **Error! Reference source not found.s** that citizens understand. For example, use **Error! Reference source not found.s** such as 'rubbish' or 'waste.'

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Research (interview etc)
- User test

Related principle

- See **Build on the citizen's prior knowledge** on page: 47

Sources

- See **Design principles** on page: 134

☑ GUIDELINE

On forms, use Fields of the appropriate type for each Action, Routing or Setting

For example, on forms use 'Textarea' for long text values and 'Input' for short text values.

Rationale

Citizens will recognise the Fields on the form and be able to interact with them with the minimum of instruction. For example, when Textarea are used, citizens will understand that they are able to enter more than one or two words. Use links for access to information, and buttons for Action. Before citizens Select a choice, they will know whether they are merely moving to another place or sending information.

Figures

Fields for selecting information						
<u>Field type</u>	<u>Number of Selectable Choices</u>	<u>Types of Choices</u>	<u>Shown As</u>	<u>Relative Space Used</u>	<u>Selection Type Supported</u>	<u>Example</u>
Push button	1 for each push button, 6 or fewer choices per form	<u>Action</u> - when the user is sending data to the site.	Alphanumeric, Graphic	Low	Single	<input type="reset" value="Clear the entire Form"> <input type="submit">
Link	Any number	<u>Routing</u> - when the user is moving to another part of the site.	Alphanumeric, Graphic	Low	Single	 [content]
Radio button	1 for each radio button, 6 or fewer per <u>field</u>	Fixed <u>setting</u> choices - a set of choices that are the same each time the page is	Alphanumeric	Medium	Single	<input type="radio" name="field-name" value="Plum"> Plum <input

		viewed.				type="radio" name="field- name" value="Grape" CHECKED> Grape
List box	Any number	Variable <u>settings</u> choices - a set of choices that may change each time the page is viewed.	Alphanumeric, Graphic	Medium -High	Single or Multiple with ctrl+click	<select name="field- name" size="3"> <option> Peach <option> Pear <option with SELECTED> Apple <option> Banana </selct>
Drop- down list	Any number	Fixed or variable <u>settings</u> choices - see above. May also be used for an <u>action</u> or <u>routing</u> when used with a Submit (for action) or Go (for <u>routing</u>) button.	Alphanumeric, Graphic	Low	Single	<select name="field- name" size="1"> <option> Peach <option> Pear <option SELECTED> Apple <option> Banana </selct>
Check box	1 for each check box, 6 or fewer per <u>field</u>	Fixed <u>settings</u> choices - see above.	Alphanumeric	Medium	Multiple	<input type="checkbox" name="field- name" value="Grape" CHECKED>
<u>Fields for entering text</u>						
<u>Field type</u>	<u>Number of Characters Permitted</u>	<u>Relative Space Used</u>	<u>Example</u>			
Entry <u>field</u> (single line)	60 or fewer	Low	<input type="text" name="field-name" size="20" maxlength="30">			

Entry field (multiple-line)	Any	Medium high	<textarea name="field-name" cols="50" rows="3" wrap="virtual"></textarea>
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Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Build on the citizen's prior knowledge** on page: 47

Sources

- See **IBM Common User Access Guidelines** on page: 143

☑ GUIDELINE

Display e-mail addresses using the standard e-mail format and include the correct HTML Tag

For example, use Enquiries@camden.gov.uk

Rationale

New Web users who many not realise that the name represents an e-mail address.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Build on the citizen's prior knowledge** on page: 47

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

PRINCIPLE

Create a feeling of progress and achievement

Allow citizens to make uninterrupted progress and enjoy a sense of accomplishment. Reflect the results of Action immediately; any delay will intrude on the citizen's tasks and erode confidence in the system. Immediate feedback allows citizens to assess whether the results were what they expected and to take alternative Action immediately.

Avoid situations where citizens may be working with information that is not up-to-date. Update or refresh information as soon as possible so that citizens are not making any incorrect decisions or assumptions. If the results of a refresh cannot be displayed immediately, inform the citizen.

GUIDELINE

Thank citizens for adopting your site

For example, add positive messages at the end of a transaction, and in any transaction-related e-mail.

Rationale

Users who adopt new ideas typically seek reassurance and recognition to confirm that they have made an appropriate decision. Citizens will seek reassurance that they have made the right decision to adopt your site.

Priority

3. Recommended 

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a feeling of progress and achievement** on page: 53

Sources

- See **Diffusion of Innovations** on page: 136

GUIDELINE

Send citizens e-mail receipts for financial transactions

Rationale

Citizens may need to refer to receipts at a later date. Provide citizens with information that they can store.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a feeling of progress and achievement** on page: 53

Sources

- See **Usability of Confirmation Email and Transactional Messages** on page: 157
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Provide notification when a citizen has completed a transaction

For example, when citizens have completed an online business transaction, send them a confirmation e-mail.

Rationale

Confirmation e-mails strengthen customer service and give users confidence that the loop has been closed in business transactions.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a feeling of progress and achievement** on page: 53

Sources

- See **Usability of Confirmation Email and Transactional Messages** on page: 157
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Help citizens recognise that their Actions have taken them nearer to their goal**

For example, at each step in a process show how intermediate results relate to the citizen's final goal.

Rationale

Citizens are more likely to use your site when their Action produce results and benefits that are visible and immediate.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a feeling of progress and achievement** on page: 53

Sources

- See **Diffusion of Innovations** on page: 136
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Confirm task completion or failure in terms of the citizen's goals rather than in changes to the system state**

For example, if a citizen applies for a library ticket online, display a completion message that reads, "Ticket request received by the library department." Do not display a message that reads, "Transmission record sent."

Rationale

Users typically seek confirmation that they have successfully achieved their goals. This is especially important when those goals have legal and financial aspects. If confirmation messages use unfamiliar terms, citizens may not understand what they have achieved.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a feeling of progress and achievement** on page: 53

Sources

- See **Design principles** on page: 134
-

 **GUIDELINE**


Phrase error messages politely

For example, if a citizen fails to complete all the mandatory Fields in a form, do not display an message that blames them for the error.

Rationale

Citizens may be offended by error messages that are unnecessarily accusatory.

Priority

3. Recommended 

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a feeling of progress and achievement** on page: 53

Sources

- See **E-commerce User Experience 207 Guidelines for E-commerce Sites** on page: 137
-

 **PRINCIPLE**

Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection

Allow citizens to choose the method of interaction that is most appropriate to their situation. Interfaces that are flexible in this way are able to accommodate a wide range of user skills, physical abilities, interactions, and usage environments.

Each interaction device is optimized for certain uses or users and may be more convenient in one situation than another. For example, a microphone used with voice-recognition software can be helpful for fast entry of text or in a hands-free environment. Pen Input is helpful for people who sketch, and mouse Input works well for precisely indicating a selection. Alternative output formats, such as computer-generated voice output for foreign language instruction, are useful for some purposes. No single method is best for every situation.

Citizens may not be able to make full use of colour, either because they are colour blind or because their Browser cannot support colour in the way that was intended. Citizens may wish to print information from the screen with a black and white printer. Always use additional Cues to make colour coding redundant.

Citizens are most likely to adopt innovations that they find compatible with their existing tools. For local authority sites, examples include the device by which they access the Internet (Personal Computers, Interactive TV, console, public access terminal), the speed and cost of their Internet connection, and the software level of their Browser and associated plug-ins. Citizens may be discouraged by what they see as poor performance or by the need to change their computer to enable certain features.

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Use HTML and other types of code in the way that they were intended

For example, do not use **Error! Reference source not found.**s markup <H1> as a way to make text bold.

Rationale

Citizens may adjust the way that their Browser shows certain information. Incorrect use of HTML will cause problems for those that adopt this method. For example, if **Error! Reference source not found.**s are encoded by making text bold instead of using an <h1> or <h2> Tag, Screen readers will not recognise the text as a **Error! Reference source not found.**. This could confuse users who choose to use **Error! Reference source not found.**s to navigate through a page.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** on page: 158
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Provide more than one Cue to the coding of information

For example, use font style and colour to mark significant words.

Rationale

Some citizens may not be able to see coding that relies on a single indicator. For example, citizens who cannot see a colour difference will be unable to see coding that relies on colour alone. Citizens who print a page on a monochrome printer will also be unable to see coding that relies solely on colour.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** on page: 158
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Where advanced technologies such as QuickTime VR, video, or Streamed audio are used, offer citizens alternatives

For example, use text alternatives or captioning.

Rationale

Slow networks may make some advanced technologies unusable. Many citizens may want access to the information that is being provided, but not it in a form that uses heavy graphics or animations. Citizens with vision or hearing impairments may not be able to use this content.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Quality Framework for UK government website design** on page: 149
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Ensure that the default text size used is legible

Rationale

Older users may experience problems reading very small text.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- Research (interview etc)
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Universal Principles of Design** on page: 155
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Design pages to work with any font size or screen Resolution

Rationale

In order to read content, citizens with vision impairment may wish to enlarge fonts and other graphics on the screen. Some citizens may use screens that have an unusual Resolution or shape. For example, citizens may use a high or low screen Resolution, or a portrait format. Ensure your site adapts to the citizen's screen space.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **IBM Web Accessibility Checklist** on page: 143
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Avoid designs that rely on specific Browser plug-ins

For example, to enable citizens to find out about public transport, do not rely on a timetable viewer plug-in.

Rationale

Many citizens will be reluctant or unable to download and install specific Browser plug-ins. Features that rely on a plug-in are likely to be under-used.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Diffusion of Innovations** on page: 136
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Design pages to be independent of specific Browsers and different Browser versions**

For example, avoid using HTML and JavaScript features that are only supported by specific versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator.

Rationale

Many users remain committed to a preferred Browser and many do not regularly upgrade their Browser software. Few will switch to a different Browser or upgrade their software in order to use a single site, unless compelling benefits are provided.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Designing Web Usability** on page: 135
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Create pages that do not depend on a specific window size or screen Resolution****Rationale**

Some citizens will access the Internet using older equipment with low-Resolution screens. Others will use channels such as interactive television or Internet-equipped games consoles.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Diffusion of Innovations** on page: 136
-

GUIDELINE

Minimise page download size

For example, avoid intensive and unnecessary use of branding graphics and animations.

Rationale

Large page downloads can lead to a perception of poor performance, especially for users with limited bandwidth connections.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Diffusion of Innovations** on page: 136
-

GUIDELINE

Ensure content is compatible with assistive technologies

For example, ensure that images are appropriately tagged to enable a Screen reader to describe their contents.

Rationale

Designing to support Assistive technologies ensures that people, with disabilities can successfully use local authority sites. Additionally, this guideline supports compliance with

the Disabilities Discrimination Act. Important and frequent tasks can be completed successfully using tools such as Screen readers, magnifiers, or voice recognition software.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Disability Rights** on page: 136
- See **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** on page: 158

☑ GUIDELINE

On forms, group the Fields that are parts of a concept and Label them using 'Fieldset' and 'Legend' Tags

For example, group all the parts of an address in a Fieldset with a Legend of 'Address.'

Rationale

Citizens will understand the relationships of Fields and be able to fill in forms more easily. Citizens who use Assistive technologies will understand the structure of the form more easily.

Figures

```
<fieldset> <legend>Name</legend>
<p> . <input type="text" name="firstName"/></p>
<p> . <input type="text" name="lastName"/></p>
</fieldset>
```

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** on page: 158
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

On forms, add 'Label' Tags to all Fields

Rationale

'Label Tags' make a specific association between the Label and the Field. Citizens who use Screen readers and other Assistive technologies will have a clearer understanding of the meaning of each Field.

Impact

If 'Label Tags' are not used, citizens will have to imply the meaning of a Field from the layout of the page.

Figures

```
<label for="firstName">First Name</label>  
<input type="text" name="firstName" id="firstName" accesskey="f" tabindex="1"/>
```

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **IBM Web Accessibility Checklist** on page: 143
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

On forms, use 'Textareas' only where essential

Rationale

Whilst in a 'Textarea', some citizens may press the Enter key to submit the form. Pressing the Enter key within a 'Textarea' will take citizens to a new line; it will not submit the form.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **IBM Common User Access Guidelines** on page: 143
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Communicate time constraints clearly, and allow citizens to request additional time to complete their tasks

Rationale

Citizens who use Screen readers may be unaware that there are time limitations in place. Additionally, such users may take longer to complete tasks.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** on page: 158

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Ensure potential distractions can be adjusted or removed by citizens

Rationale

Users find it hard to read text when distracted by animations that include blinking and flashing text and graphics, and flickering such as flashing banner ads or scrolling ticker tape. Some citizens may also react adversely to these distractions. For example, flashing elements can induce seizures in people with conditions such as epilepsy.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** on page: 158
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Support 'accesskeys' for navigating forms

For example, assign 'accesskey' N to an editable name Field.

Rationale

Citizens who have difficulty using the mouse can quickly move to the Fields they need using access keys. There are currently no recognised standards for assigning 'accesskeys' to form Fields. Be aware that the prefix for 'accesskeys' varies in different Browser and across differing computing platforms.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141

☑ GUIDELINE**Support 'accesskeys' for important links**

For example, assign 'Accesskey' 1 to the link which takes citizens to the home page.

Rationale

Accesskeys provide keyboard shortcuts for users who have difficulty using the mouse. Follow the recommended UK Government access key standards. Be aware that the prefix for access keys varies in different Browsers and across differing computing platforms.

Figures

Recommended UK Government access keys.

S	
	Skip to main content;
1	Home page;
2	What's new;
3	Site map;
4	Search;
5	Frequently Asked Questions;
6	Help;
7	Complaints procedure;
8	Terms and Conditions;
9	Feedback form;
0	Access key details.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK government websites: Framework for senior managers** on page: 140

GUIDELINE

Create a logical tabbing order

For example, use the '[Tabindex](#)' to specify a tabbing sequence that matches the order in which citizens read.

Rationale

Citizens who are unable to use a mouse will use the Tab key to navigate between different links, elements and controls on your site. A random, unorganised tabbing order will confuse citizens and lengthen the amount of time it takes them to complete a task. A typical reading order is from left to right and then from top to bottom.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** on page: 158

GUIDELINE

Where **Flash** is used, ensure it is created using the latest version of **Macromedia Flash MX2004**

Rationale

Previous versions of **Flash** are not accessible to individuals who use assistive technology.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Accessibility and Macromedia Flash MX 2004: Design Guidelines** on page: 130
 - See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Where **PDF** files are used, ensure they are created as version 1.4 using the latest version of **Adobe Acrobat**

Rationale

Previous **PDF** versions are not accessible to individuals who use assistive technology.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to support the citizen's preferred method of connection** on page: 56

Sources

- See **Acrobat Accessibility** on page: 130

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

PRINCIPLE

Do not compromise usability for function

Keep the interface simple and straightforward. Users benefit from function that is easily accessible and usable. Basic functions should be immediately apparent, while advanced functions may be less obvious to new users. A poorly organised interface that is cluttered with many advanced functions distracts users from accomplishing their everyday tasks. A well-organised interface that supports the user's tasks fades into the background and allows users to work efficiently.

GUIDELINE

Use visual Cues to highlight the citizen's position in the site

For example, provide Breadcrumbs to show where the current page resides within the site structure.

Rationale

Users need to know their current location so that they can learn and understand the structure of the site. Consistently highlighting the citizen's current location promotes Adoption because it gives them the confidence to explore the site.

Priority

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Do not compromise usability for function** on page: 70

Sources

- See **Designing Web Usability** on page: 135
-

GUIDELINE

Design each page so that the initial information gives Cues to the full contents

For example, provide a List of page contents at the top of the page.

Rationale

Citizens may not realise that a page has more information than they can see at first glance. Specifically, readers may not appreciate that important information is available "below the fold" and that scrolling is required.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Do not compromise usability for function** on page: 70

Sources

- See **The Art & Science of Web Design** on page: 151
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Minimise the use of distracting elements such as animations and scrolling text

Rationale

When moving objects are used, users find it hard to concentrate on reading text. Use alternative means to communicate information conveyed in moving objects.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Do not compromise usability for function** on page: 70

Sources

- See **Designing Web Usability** on page: 135

PRINCIPLE

Keep the citizen out of trouble

Citizens should be protected from making errors. The interface should provide visual Cues, reminders, Lists of choices, and other aids, either automatically or on request. Do not allow citizens to start Action that have no chance of success.

Humans are much better at recognition than recall. Citizens should never have to rely on their own memory for something the system already knows, such as previous Settings, file names, and other interface details. If the information is in the system in any form, the system should provide it.

GUIDELINE

Validate all information entered by the citizen as soon as possible

Rationale

Citizens may have to assemble information from a variety of sources. For example, when filling out forms, they may have to refer to paper documents, or ask relatives specific questions. If information is not validated until later, the citizen may have lost track of the source.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended 

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Keep the citizen out of trouble** on page: 72

Sources

- See **Windows User Experience: Official Guidelines for User Interface Developers and Designers** on page: 160
-

GUIDELINE

On forms, use elements that have built in validation

For example, use drop down Lists to Select values rather than text entry Fields.

Rationale

When entering information, users can make small errors. For example, they may mistype a digit when entering their year of birth. Input errors could lead to problems later in a process. If data cannot be validated by the interface, consider asking citizens to validate the information. For example, ask citizens to enter critical data twice so that the two versions can be checked with each other.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Keep the citizen out of trouble** on page: 72

Sources

- See **IBM Common User Access Guidelines** on page: 143
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Before citizens complete a process that has been split across multiple pages, provide them with a summary of all the data that has been collected

For example, on the final page of a Wizard, summarise all the choices that the citizen has selected.

Rationale

Citizens may not recall important information entered early in a long process. Citizens will be reassured if all information is summarised before they make a final decision to commit.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Keep the citizen out of trouble** on page: 72

Sources

- See **Web Design Guidelines** on page: 158
-

GUIDELINE

Format transaction e-mails so that the citizen recognises who the author is

For example, in the ‘from line,’ use a short, unambiguous e-mail address that shows the name of your authority.

Rationale

Users are less likely to mistake a transactional e-mail for Spam if they recognise the name of the sender. In case the subject line is truncated in the citizen’s inbox, use keywords at the start of the subject line.

Priority

3. Recommended 

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Keep the citizen out of trouble** on page: 72

Sources

- See **Usability of Confirmation Email and Transactional Messages** on page: 157
-

PRINCIPLE

Provide proactive assistance

Help the citizen perform a variety of tasks. The knowledge of the system and the ability to handle a task vary from one user to another. Enable the system to recognise the ability of an individual user, and offer assistance as appropriate.

Provide assistance in the form of on-page hints or associated help pages. Ensure the assistance information is simple, concise, and task-oriented so that the citizen is able to complete their task with relative ease and efficiency.

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Design error pages and transactional failure notices so that they help citizens resolve their problems

For example, state the nature of the error in plain, simple language, and provide a clear set of options for resolving the problem.

Rationale

When citizens cannot quickly reach their goal, they may abandon the attempt and then revert to previous methods of achieving their goal. Provide a quick Resolution to problems so that citizens are encouraged to continue using the site and have less need to call on help lines.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Provide proactive assistance** on page: 74

Sources

- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157
 - See **Usability of Confirmation Email and Transactional Messages** on page: 157
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Provide links to the home page and other important pages on every page within your site

Rationale

If citizens find a page on your site via a search engine, they will be able to find the right starting point for their interaction.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Provide proactive assistance** on page: 74

Sources

- See **Web Design Guidelines** on page: 158
-

✔ GUIDELINE

Ensure help text is goal-oriented

For example, write help text that addresses the citizen's tasks and goals, and provide step-by-step instructions.

Rationale

When users read help text they need to find concepts that match the way they think about their needs. Help citizens to find a starting point in the help by ensuring that they can recognise descriptions of their goals.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Provide proactive assistance** on page: 74

Sources

- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157
-

🔗 PRINCIPLE

Make Actions predictable and reversible

A citizen's Action should cause the results that they expect. In order to meet those expectations, the designer must understand the citizen's tasks, goals, and mental model. Use terms and images that match the citizen's task experience, and that help them understand the objects, and their roles and relationships in accomplishing tasks. Users feel more comfortable with interfaces in which their Actions do not cause irreversible consequences. Citizens should feel confident in exploring, knowing they can try an Action, view the result, and undo the Action on if the result is unacceptable.

Avoid bundling Actions together because the citizen may not anticipate the side effect. For example, if a citizen chooses to cancel a request to send a message, only cancel the send request. Do not bundle another Action, such as deletion of the message, with the cancel request. Make Actions independent and provide ways to allow citizens to combine them when they wish.

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Clearly describe any steps in a process that cannot be reversed

For example, describe Actions that transfer money with terms such as 'make payment' rather than more neutral terms such as 'submit.'

Rationale

When steps are difficult to reverse, users need to be certain of the commitments they are making.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Make** on page: 76

Sources

- See **IBM Common User Access Guidelines** on page: 143

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Preserve information that the citizen has entered

For example, if a citizen presses the Back button before submitting a form, always restore their original data when they press the Forward button.

Rationale

Users become frustrated if they are required to re-enter data.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Make** on page: 76

Sources

- See **E-commerce User Experience 207 Guidelines for E-commerce Sites** on page: 137

PRINCIPLE

Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site

Clutter distracts users from the task in hand.

Relative position and contrast in colour and size can be used to differentiate items. Understand the importance of the citizen's tasks and the concepts they use. Establish the hierarchy of these tasks or concepts visually. An important element can be given extra visual prominence.

Do not eliminate extra space in a page just to reduce page size. Use white space to provide visual 'breathing room' and to convey structure and meaning.

GUIDELINE

Do not place too much information on the page

Rationale

'White space' between page elements allows the human eye to identify separate items on the page. Use empty space to ensure that the eye is able to focus on the important page elements.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Designing Visual Interfaces** on page: 135
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Use all available space to distribute information evenly on the page****Rationale**

Users look for a visual structure in the information they are processing. A clear structure allows this to be done efficiently. A page layout that contains evenly distributed elements will appear visually harmonious to a user and will also promote a clear structure.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Designing Visual Interfaces** on page: 135
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Use properties such as size, position and colour to show the relative importance of information on the page

Rationale

When users process visual information on a Web page, they scan read and their eyes are drawn to the most visually prominent information. Presenting a clear visual structure that supports this process will ensure that the most important pieces of information are viewed first.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Designing Visual Interfaces** on page: 135
- See **Information Visualization: perception for design** on page: 145

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Use a style of font with visual characteristics that are appropriate to the type of information being displayed

Rationale

Fonts are designed for specific purposes, and their characteristics are manipulated to reflect this. For example, highly decorative, ornate fonts work well at a large physical size and would therefore not be appropriate for displaying large amounts of data.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Stop Stealing Sheep and Find Out How Type Works** on page: 151
-

GUIDELINE

Choose a text foreground colour that is at least 30 percent lighter or darker than the background colour

Rationale

The legibility of text is determined by the contrast between the background and foreground colours. Using a contrast of at least 30 percent should provide legible text for most citizens.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Type and Typography** on page: 154
-

GUIDELINE

Use appealing colours

Rationale

Users find aesthetically pleasing designs easier to use than less pleasing designs. Good design, with colours working in harmony, encourages users to return. Provide visual harmony by using complimentary colours in the Colour wheel. For example, blue and orange work well together as they are complimentary colours.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- Research (interview etc)
- User test

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Universal Principles of Design** on page: 155
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Use common colour conventions

For example, when citizens have successfully completed a transaction, do not use red text in confirmation messages.

Rationale

Citizens may make an assumption based on colour before they read the text. Green is commonly associated with success. Orange and red are associated with warnings.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Information Visualization: perception for design** on page: 145
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Use a small set of colours to reduce the amount of visual information citizens need to process

Rationale

At a glance, the human eye can only process about 5 colours. Use a limited number of colours to ensure citizens are not distracted and can focus on important information.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Universal Principles of Design** on page: 155
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Use Strong colour sparingly****Rationale**

Citizens may be fatigued by viewing intense colours. Use only one or two saturated colours.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Universal Principles of Design** on page: 155
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Where there is a need to attract the citizen's attention, use Strong colours**

Rationale

High colour

Saturation levels are visually stimulating and attract the user's attention. Use highly saturated colours sparingly to ensure the citizen's eye is drawn to them. Use pale colours with low

Saturation levels in areas that are not intended to be the main focal points of the page.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Universal Principles of Design** on page: 155

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Use images to illustrate key concepts that citizens may find difficult to understand when expressed in words alone

For example, use both text and a picture to display a process flow chart.

Rationale

Some users absorb information better through pictures, whereas others absorb it better through text. Using both pictures and text together helps communicate information to a broader audience.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Designing Visual Interfaces** on page: 135
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Use images of body parts and cultural symbols only when they are essential; do not use metaphors based on these symbols****Rationale**

The meaning of an image may be interpreted differently by certain cultures. For example, in certain cultures, a handprint on a wall has associations with identity, whilst in other cultures it has associations with death.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Designing Visual Interfaces** on page: 135
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Use branding elements to support information rather than to dominate it****Rationale**

When users process visual information on a Web page, they scan read and their eyes are drawn to the most visually prominent information. Visually prominent branding will distract citizens from the information they are looking for.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

- User test

Related principle

- See **Use visual design to communicate the meaning and importance of elements of the site** on page: 78

Sources

- See **Information Visualization: perception for design** on page: 145
-

 **PRINCIPLE**

Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen

Reading from computer screens is tiring on the eye. Additionally, a key goal of Web users is to find a piece of information as quickly as possible. Users therefore scan read online content looking for the key words and sentences, rather than reading everything word for word.

Make content short, concise, relevant and to the point. Use methods that make it easy for citizens to read content quickly and absorb information effectively.

 **GUIDELINE**

Avoid using slang and idioms unless you explain their meaning

Rationale

Users from different cultures may have difficulty understanding slang and idioms.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended 

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157

☑ *GUIDELINE***Use unambiguous page Titles**

For example, ensure that citizens can understand page Titles when they see them out of context.

Rationale

Page Titles appear in search listings, bookmarks and other reference to the page. Ambiguous **Error! Reference source not found.s** will be overlooked by some citizens and the contents that lies beneath them will not be read. Citizens should be able to tell what the rest of the page will offer them from quickly glancing at the headline.

Avoid using puns or metaphors in page Titles and **Error! Reference source not found.s**.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Microcontent: How to Write Headlines, Page Titles, and Subject Lines** on page: 147

☑ *GUIDELINE***Write using the inverted pyramid style**

For example, start with each page with a summary of the content and then follow with background and detailed information.

Rationale

Users who scan can find the key points quickly, and choose to continue reading if they need to.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Concise, SCANNABLE, and Objective: How to Write for the Web** on page: 132

☑ GUIDELINE

Do not use leading articles such as 'A,' 'An,' and 'The' in e-mail subjects and page Titles

Rationale

Users find shorter content easy to scan read. When search listings are arranged in alphabetical order, citizens will find it harder to scan read for the page Titles that are clustered by the article at the front of the text.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Designing Web Usability** on page: 135

☑ GUIDELINE

Where hyperlinks are used, ensure that meaningful words are linked

For example, in "Click here to view our services" the link should be placed on "view our services" not on "click here."

Rationale

Meaningful links help users to scan read content. If citizens are presented with a page that contains multiple links labelled "Click here," they will not be able to scan the page to find out where they should click.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Write using first and second-person sentences rather than third person sentences

For example, use "We provide you with up to date information" rather than "Manchester City Council provides citizens with up to date information."

Rationale

Third person sentences sound unfriendly and place a distance between the authority and its citizens.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Write using the active voice rather than the passive

For example, use "We offer the following services," rather than, "The following services are offered."

Rationale

Active sentences are more direct and easier to understand than passive sentences. Active sentences are also more personal and help to engage the user.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Use plain and simple English, and avoid using marketing rhetoric

Rationale

Users prefer to read facts rather than promotional language which takes longer to read. Use simple, straight forward language to ensure that content is understood by an audience with diverse levels of literacy.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Concise, SCANNABLE, and Objective: How to Write for the Web** on page: 132
- See **The plain English guide to designing clear websites** on page: 152

☑ GUIDELINE**Write consistently**

For example, use consistent punctuation, spelling, capitalisation and grammar.

Rationale

An inconsistent writing style and lack of attention to detail can confuse the user, demonstrate poor craftsmanship, and undermine the professionalism of the site. With multiple authors contributing to content, it is important that a consistent writing style is used by all.

Refer to a single authoritative style guide for standards on Web writing, or develop an internal style guide to maintain consistency.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Chicago Manual of Style** on page: 131

☑ GUIDELINE**Write short sentences****Rationale**

Effective Web writing involves communicating information to the user as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Use short sentences with a simple structure.

Priority

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **The plain English guide to designing clear websites** on page: 152
- See **The Web Content Style Guide** on page: 152

☑ GUIDELINE

Write short Paragraphs with one idea in each

Rationale

Web users do not read online text word for word; they scan read the first few words in each Paragraph. Use one idea per Paragraph to ensure important information is not overlooked by citizens.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Concise, SCANNABLE, and Objective: How to Write for the Web** on page: 132
- See **The Web Content Style Guide** on page: 152

☑ GUIDELINE

Write succinctly

For example, write half the number of words that you would do for conventional writing.

Rationale

Verbose writing often impairs the usability of a site by hiding valuable content within unnecessary text.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Be Succinct! (Writing for the Web)** on page: 131
-

GUIDELINE

Where information can be summarised, use bulleted Lists

For example, use bullets when describing the benefits of a service.

Rationale

Bulleted Lists help to break up the flow of text and therefore make content easier to scan.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **How Users Read on the Web** on page: 142

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Use highlighting and Emphasis to make keywords stand out

For example, use or Tags to highlight short phrases.

Rationale

The user's attention is drawn to keywords that are highlighted and emphasised.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Be Succinct! (Writing for the Web)** on page: 131
 - See **Concise, SCANNABLE, and Objective: How to Write for the Web** on page: 132
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Use sub-Error! Reference source not found.s to break up the flow of text

Rationale

Useful sub-Error! Reference source not found.s help users to scan read and find the information they are looking for.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Be Succinct! (Writing for the Web)** on page: 131
-

GUIDELINE

Ensure information sourced through external links is relevant

Rationale

Citizens will use your site to find information that enables them to carry out a task. Use links to provide additional information that helps citizens perform their tasks. Providing links to irrelevant external sources will not add value and will slow citizens down.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- User test

Related principle

- See **Write in a way that makes it easy for citizens to read on a computer screen** on page: 86

Sources

- See **Designing Web Usability** on page: 135
-

Used

PRINCIPLE

Avoid displaying or collecting information that could be misused

The use of personal information is controlled by the Data Protection Act. All information must be handled in ways that comply with this act Failure to comply can result in legal consequences.

Many citizens are concerned that information might be revealed by government. There is also increasing concern that information is becoming more accessible on the Internet.

Special care must be taken with any information that relates to children. Do not publish information that allows strangers, or sometimes even relatives, to make contact with minors without prior reference to their parents or guardians.

☑ **GUIDELINE**

When providing services for children or using information about children, ensure that permission has been obtained from their parent or guardian

Rationale

Children need to be protected from any attempts at unauthorised contact.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Avoid displaying or collecting information that could be misused** on page: 95

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
 - See **Good practice models and guidance for the internet industry** on page: 138
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Only use images of children in suitable dress

Rationale

If children are shown without some clothing, it could lead to inappropriate use or cause offence.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Avoid displaying or collecting information that could be misused** on page: 95

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
 - See **Setting Up Your Own Web Site** on page: 150
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Do not display personal contact information about children such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers****Rationale**

Displaying too much personal information can increase the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Avoid displaying or collecting information that could be misused** on page: 95

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ GUIDELINE**When using photographs of children, avoid associating names to photographs****Rationale**

Using a photograph that is not associated with a child's name reduces the risk of that child receiving inappropriate, unsolicited attention. If a child is named, do not use a photograph.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Avoid displaying or collecting information that could be misused** on page: 95

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

PRINCIPLE

Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use

Non compliance with rules and regulations can lead to legal consequences. Codes of practice provide a consistent framework for users of other, similar sites. For example, they allow users who move from one area to another to adopt local services more quickly.

GUIDELINE

When Acts, Regulations, and guidance about them are updated, review your Web site to ensure it is still compliant

Impact

Possible prosecution under the Acts and Regulations.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141

☑ GUIDELINE**Ensure your Web site provides regulated information in accordance with the appropriate Acts and Regulations****Rationale**

The provision of some classes of information is governed by Acts and Regulations. These include the Data Protection Act 1998, the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003, and the Environmental Information Regulations 1992.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ GUIDELINE**Provide responses to e-mails within 20 days and in the citizen's preferred format****Rationale**

When responses are delayed users perceive the site or organisation as being unresponsive or even evasive. The Freedom of Information Act requires authorities to respond to a citizen's enquiry within 20 days, and in their preferred format. Automatic responses that acknowledge an enquiry are not sufficient.

Citizens who are carrying out financial transactions will expect a response within 2 days at the most.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Process inspection

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Freedom of Information Act 2000** on page: 138
 - See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Do not include anything that could be defamatory

Scrutinise anything that might injure a person's reputation before publication.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Do not infringe the rights of a copyright owner

For example, ensure you have the right to publish work on which a copyright exists.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141

GUIDELINE

Follow the e-Government Metadata Framework (e-GMF)

Rationale

Citizens want simple access to information and services organised around their needs and not the needs of government organisations. Citizens should not need to know which government body does what; they need to know that their request for information or services is being dealt with and handled effectively.

e-GMF provides details on providing consistent metadata for government documents. This helps search engines identify correct matches with search criteria, improves the ease with which government information can be joined up, and improves the ease of archiving and removal of documents.

Priority

0. Mandatory UK government requirement **0**

Validation method

- Code inspection

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
- See **UK Gov Talk Schemas and Standards** on page: 155

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Use the Local Government Category List (LGCL)

Rationale

The LGCL provides a common vocabulary and process for sharing information. Adopting the LGCL will reduce information retrieval and re-purposing costs.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **LAWs Project – Information Standards & Architecture** on page: 145
- See **Local Authority Websites (LAWs) national project** on page: 146

☑ **GUIDELINE**

For authorities in Wales, provide alternative representations in both Welsh and English

Rationale

The Welsh Language Act 1993 places a duty on the public sector to put Welsh and English on an equal basis when providing services to the public in Wales. Local authorities should apply the principles of their Welsh language schemes to their Web sites.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
- See **Welsh language board Website** on page: 160

☑ GUIDELINE**Follow all Priority 1 recommendations of the W3C Web Access Initiative (WAI)****Rationale**

UK government policy is that conformance with these guidelines is to level A. To conform at level A a Web site must follow the Priority 1 checkpoints as shown on the Checklist of Checkpoints for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0

<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/full-checklist>. HTML The level of conformance is likely to be raised to level AA by pending European legislation.

Priority

0. Mandatory UK government requirement **0**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144
 - See **Top 10 Guidelines for UK local government websites** on page: 153
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Implement metadata or other mechanisms needed to identify records that need to be preserved

Rationale

Preserving certain records is required by the Public Records Act. Local authority Web sites may contain materials that could influence the Actions of a member of the public. If so, a preservation policy should be developed and followed.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Display details of any charges for copies of government information

Rationale

The Freedom of Information Act requires that a local authority site should display a List of publications that are available under their publication scheme. It is not sufficient to state that "costs may be incurred." If a charge is to be levied for copies of publications in a scheme, the charge should be clearly displayed.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Freedom of Information Act 2000** on page: 138
- See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144

GUIDELINE

Comply with specific relevant acts

These include the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Data Protection Act 1998, and the Freedom of Information Act

Rationale

Citizens expect that their rights are upheld when local authorities offer services and obtain, hold, use and disclose their personal information. Ensure that your Web site does so. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 is intended to promote a culture of openness and accountability amongst public authorities by providing people with rights of access to the information held by them. Local authority Web sites should support this aim.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

Validation method

-

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
- See **Disability Rights** on page: 136

- See **Freedom of Information Act 2000** on page: 138
-

GUIDELINE

Where a citizen's personal information is collected, incorporate a statement to inform the citizen how their data will be used

Rationale

You must incorporate such statements to comply with the Data Protection Act. In each case the statement should be as specific as possible.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Top 10 Guidelines for UK local government websites** on page: 153
-

GUIDELINE

Do not publish personal details without consent

Rationale

To comply with the Data Protection Act, consent must be sought from individuals if there is an intention to publish information about them. If an individual objects to publication of their personal information, the wishes of that individual must be respected.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
 - See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Provide a clear and easy-to-find privacy policy

For example, use P3P standards so privacy checking software can find and verify the statement.

Rationale

A privacy policy can increase the citizen's confidence that their personal information will remain private. Although a privacy policy may not be read by citizens, its presence will increase their trust in your Web site.

A privacy statement should describe not only what the local authority does with personal data but also what it does not do. It should also tell individuals something about their rights and how to exercise them. For example, individuals have a right to be told whether data that describes them is being processed and to have a copy of that data.

The privacy statement must include the physical address of the local authority unless this is clearly available elsewhere on the site.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **E-commerce User Experience 207 Guidelines for E-commerce Sites** on page: 137
 - See **Platform for Privacy Preferences (P3P) Project** on page: 148
-

GUIDELINE

Use a secure transmission system to protect personal data collected from citizens

Rationale

The Data Protection Act requires transmission using a secure, encryption-based transmission system.

Web users are often concerned that other people may be able to access their personal information. For example, some users may not feel confident enough to Input their credit card details online. Use secure connections to ensure that citizen's can see that their information is protected.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
 - See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144
-

GUIDELINE

Where forms are used to collect a citizen's personal information say which body is collecting the information

Rationale

The Data Protection Act places a duty on the local authority to protect personal information. To pursue their rights, a citizen must know who the identity of the organisation that collects this information.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
- See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144

GUIDELINE

When using images of people, ensure the correct level of permission has been granted

Rationale

The Data Protection Act requires that Data subjects understand how any personal information is used. Identifiable images should be protected, especially when they are related to other personal information. Images may be in the form of photographs, recorded video or video streams from webcams. When asking for permission, you must make it clear why you want to use their image and, if you know, who might want to look at it.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Verification of permission

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
 - See **Top 10 Guidelines for UK local government websites** on page: 153
-

GUIDELINE

Inform citizens if their personal information could be disclosed to third parties


Rationale

Unless obvious from context, the local authority must give this information to citizens before they collect any personal data from them. For example, tell citizens of third parties used during the collection of secure payment transactions.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement 

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
 - See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144
-

GUIDELINE

When collecting personal information from children, ensure that information about parents and others is not requested

Rationale

The Data Protection Act indicates that information should normally only be collected from the subject of that data and not from a third party.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
- See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Set the default for forms that permit usage of personal data to allow usage for essential purposes only

For example, do not include citizens on mailing Lists unless they specifically request it.

Rationale

The Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 require that an "Opt-in" policy is adopted. "Opt-in" mechanisms help build and maintain user trust.

Impact

Your site will not comply with the EC directive.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
 - See **Freedom of Information Act 2000** on page: 138
 - See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144
 - See **Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003** on page: 149
-

GUIDELINE

When sending marketing information by e-mail, clearly state the name of the local authority

Rationale

This is required so that any e-mail promotion will comply with the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003.

Users often check the author of incoming e-mail in order to distinguish useful communications from "spam". A clearly identified and credible source ensures that mail from authorities is not inadvertently discarded.

Impact

Your site will not comply with the EC directive.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
 - See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144
 - See **Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003** on page: 149
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Allow citizens to complete any transaction without supplying marketing or promotion related information

Clearly mark any Fields that are being used for this purpose.

Rationale

The Data Protection Act requires that Data subjects know how any information will be used.

Impact

Your site will not comply with current UK legislation.

Priority

1. Legal requirement **1**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Comply with all legislation and Government guidelines that affect Web site design and use** on page: 98

Sources

- See **Data Protection Act 1998** on page: 134
 - See **Information Commissioner** on page: 144
-

📖 **PRINCIPLE**

Create a site that citizens trust

It is important that users have confidence in a Web site, particularly if they are using it to conduct business. High quality content and accurate up to date material increases the credibility of a site and the organisation, and it encourages users to revisit.

Good craftsmanship in Web design demonstrates an attention to detail, and makes the site look polished and professional. It is therefore fundamental in increasing the user's confidence and trust in the professionalism of the Web site and organisation. An untidy, poorly written Web site filled with errors and inconsistencies will lead citizens to doubt the quality and reliability of services provided. Discretionary users will resort to alternative means of finding the information they require. Citizens may lose faith in the authority and refrain from using its services altogether.

Use a tone that is appropriate to your authority and the image it wants to project.

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Add content rating metadata to the home page

Rationale

Internet rating allows citizens to filter out sites with certain types of content. The Internet Content Rating Association provides a service allowing you to obtain a rating Label (metadata) that can be added to the home page which effectively provides a rating for the whole site.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Code inspection

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
 - See **Internet Content Rating Association** on page: 145
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Advise citizens when Cookies will be used and ensure the site does not rely on them

Rationale

Cookies are small files that are written to a user's machine. Many users worry that Cookies are being used to find information that they do not wish to reveal. Within a privacy policy, help citizens understand your need for Cookies by explaining their benefits and how you intend to use any information you gather.

Never use third party Cookies as these are often associated with sites that try to gather marketing information.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Code inspection
- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **Top 10 Guidelines for UK local government websites** on page: 153
-

✔ *GUIDELINE*

Write correctly

For example, always use correct punctuation, spelling, capitalisation and grammar.

Rationale

Well written high quality text will gain the trust and respect of users and will therefore encourage usage. Pay attention to detail in order to show good craftsmanship. Refer to a single authoritative style guide for conventions on correct Web writing and use of the English language.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **Chicago Manual of Style** on page: 131
 - See **Usability for the Web** on page: 156
-

✔ *GUIDELINE*

Use humour with caution

Avoid using sarcasm and irony.

Rationale

Users who scan read may not realise that you are being humorous. Users may also fail to understand humour or misinterpret sarcasm and irony. They may find such language patronising.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157
-

☑ *GUIDELINE*

Use a tone that is appropriate for your audience and the message you are trying to convey

For example, avoid overly formal writing.

Rationale

Users find it easier and faster to read content that is less formal. Use formal language only where it is needed such as in information that has legal significance. Make customer service e-mails polite, helpful, businesslike and friendly.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157

☑ *GUIDELINE***Ensure content is accurate and up to date****Rationale**

A user's trust can be undermined if they visit a Web site that regularly displays out of date information. Users may doubt that the content is ever updated and may find cause to visit an alternative Web site. Ensure that out of date content is removed.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **E-commerce User Experience 207 Guidelines for E-commerce Sites** on page: 137
- See **Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work** on page: 157

☑ *GUIDELINE***Where there is doubt over the accuracy or source of any information, incorporate a content disclaimer****Rationale**

Citizens may not understand that some information is supplied from sources that are not under your direct control.

Do not automatically add disclaimers about content. Assess whether you need to incorporate a content disclaimer on a case by case basis.

If you decide to incorporate a disclaimer, use wording similar to the following: "The following information [information name] is provided for convenience as part of the service we offer at this website. However [Local authority name] cannot accept any liability for its accuracy or content. Visitors who rely on this information, do so at their own risk."

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Provide external links to reputable and independent sources

Rationale

Showing citizens that you have the confidence to link to reputable external sources can increase trust.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **E-commerce User Experience 207 Guidelines for E-commerce Sites** on page: 137
-

☑ GUIDELINE

Adhere to conventions on government publicity and advertising

Rationale

A local authority Web site is a form of publicity and is therefore required to adhere to conventions on government publicity and advertising. Ensure that your site is objective and explanatory, relevant to the authority's responsibilities, and not party political.

Produce and distribute your site in an economical and relevant way so that costs can be justified as a proper expenditure of public funds.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **Government and Information Communication Service Handbook** on page: 139
- See **Guidance on the work of the Government Information Service** on page: 140
- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141

☑ GUIDELINE**If selecting advertising and sponsorship partners, choose brands that are trusted by citizens****Rationale**

Users are less likely to trust and have confidence in a site that is associated with brands that they react negatively towards.

Avoid endorsing the advertisement of partners' products and services. If advertising is displayed, ensure that it does not detract from the local authority Web service being provided.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Research (interview etc)
- User test

Related principle

- See **Create a site that citizens trust** on page: 113

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-

PRINCIPLE

Design the site to encourage Adoption

Lead citizens to expect the site to be the primary source for information and services. If the site does not provide timely and accurate information, trust will be broken, and usage will eventually diminish.

Before making a decision to adopt the Web for their interactions with an organisation, users need information. Potential adopters will typically follow a process of progressively acquiring information to reduce uncertainty and increase commitment. This process has six stages:

1. awareness of the site,
2. interest in potential benefits,
3. comparison to other ways of dealing with the organisation (such as post, telephone, or visits to premises),
4. tentative trial before commitment,
5. decision to adopt or reject, and
6. seeking post- Adoption reassurance.

Provide information to encourage Adoption and continued use by reducing uncertainty.

GUIDELINE

Do not provide an excessive number of links to a single external source

Rationale

Whilst providing links to external sources helps to build trust amongst users, pointing to one particular Web site in excess may be seen as an infringement of copyright.

Priority

3. Recommended 

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to encourage** on page: 120

Sources

- See Content Critical: Gaining Competitive Advantage Through High-Quality Web Content on page: 133
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Allow citizens to explore your site before they make a commitment

For example, avoid premature requests for registration, disclosure of personal information, or agreement to terms and conditions.

Rationale

Users typically "trial" new ideas before fully committing themselves. In the case of local authority Web sites, citizens may wish to try out aspects that return information before adopting features that require a higher degree of commitment such as disclosure of personal information. For example, citizens might look for information about public transport before gaining the confidence to pay their council taxes.

Priority

3. Recommended **3**

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to encourage** on page: 120

Sources

- See **Diffusion of Innovations** on page: 136
-

☑ **GUIDELINE**

Use Web forms rather than PDF forms to capture citizen information

Rationale

Older PDF forms cannot be filled in electronically, even when downloaded. If PDF forms are used, citizens will have to return them to you by post. Where possible, your Web site should enable task completion through electronic means.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Expert review

Related principle

- See **Design the site to encourage** on page: 120

Sources

- See **Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams** on page: 141
-


GUIDELINE

On the home page state the purpose, scope, and benefits of your site

Rationale

Once potential adopters have become aware of your site, they will look for information to assess how useful it is. Provide information that is easy to find, simple to understand and persuasive.

Priority

3. Recommended 

Validation method

- Expert review
- User test

Related principle

- See **Design the site to encourage** on page: 120

Sources

- See **Diffusion of Innovations** on page: 136
-

GUIDELINE

Make citizens aware that your site is available

For example, encourage other well-used local community, media, and government sites to reference your site, and consistently include the address of your site in print media distributed to citizens. Register your site with an appropriate set of search engines.

Rationale

Citizens need to be aware of your site before they can make an informed decision to use your services online.

Priority

2. Strongly recommended **2**

Validation method

- Research (interview etc)

Related principle

- See **Design the site to encourage** on page: 120

Sources

- See **Diffusion of Innovations** on page: 136

Glossary

Accesskey	HTML attribute	An HTML attribute that associates a character on the keyboard with an HTML element. Users can access the element by typing the key with a modifier. For example, with Internet Explorer on Windows the access keys are operated using Alt with the character.
Action	Choice	A choice that immediately begins to perform an action. For example, a pushbutton on a Web page labelled 'Make payment'.
Adoption		The process of accepting a facility. In the context of a Web site, users adopt a Web site if they see some value in using it.
Alt	HTML attribute	An HTML attribute that provides text that can be used as an alternative to a picture or sound. Assistive technology frequently operates by presenting the alt text to the user.
Anchor	HTML tag	An HTML tag, written as <a>, that marks a hypertext link in a Web page.
Assistive technologies		A hardware or software product that enables people with disabilities to accomplish their tasks. Examples include Braille displays, screen readers, and ergonomic keyboards.
Breadcrumbs		A set of links that show the position of the current page within the hierarchy of the site.
Browser		The software that runs on a user's computer to enable them to view a Web page. Popular browsers are Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator or Communicator, Opera and Eudora. Users with disabilities may use special browsers such as IBM Home Page Reader.
Character		A single letter, number or symbol on a computer screen.
Colour wheel		A diagrammatic representation of the relationships between primary, secondary and tertiary colours.

Cookie		A small file that a Web site can use to retrieve information about a user's previous visits to that site. These are often used to hold personal information to customise the user's experience.
Cue		A change in the display of information that shows the significance of the information in this context.
Data controller		Within the Data Protection Act, the person who controls access to data for a body such as a local authority.
Data subject		The term used within the Data Protection Act to refer to an individual about whom the data controller retains information. For local authorities this normally equates to a citizen.
e-GIF		Government Interoperability Framework. Government framework for adopting internet and world wide Web standards for all government systems.
Emphasis	HTML tag	An HTML tag, written as , that marks a portion of text that needs light emphasis. Most browsers will show this text as italic. See Strong.
Field	HTML tag	An HTML element that accepts input from the user. For example an input, select and textarea element.
Fieldset	HTML tag	An HTML element that groups several fields into a logical collection. For example, a fieldset might group fields called 'street', 'town' and 'postcode' into a collection called 'home address'.
Flash		A technology that provides interactive and animated areas within a Web page.
Frame of reference		A set of standards or principles governing behaviour, or thought. In the context of a Web site, a sustained theme or design that the user can recognise to understand the position of any page relative to the rest of the site.

Heading	HTML tag	A group of HTML tags of the general form <hn> (where n is a number) that provide nested headings for a page. The number of the tag shows the level of importance of the heading. For example, <H1> shows a primary heading and an <H2> would indicate a sub-heading of the previous <H1>.
HTML		Hypertext Markup Language. Defines the structure and layout of a Web document by using a variety of tags and attributes.
HTML attribute		A coding within an web page that adds detail to an HTML tag. Attributes are written as attribute=value. For example, the alt attribute for a hypertext link might be written as alt="latest news".
HTML tag		An element of HTML that marks the significance of parts of a web page. Each tag is written within < and > symbols. For example, the strong tag is written as <.strong>.
Hypertext link		An HTML element that connects one web page to another. The most common form of hypertext link uses the <a> or 'anchor' tag.
IDTV		Interactive Digital Television. Digital television that accepts interactions from a user.
Input	HTML Tag	An HTML tag that allows a user to input information in a Web page. Input can be in the form of a button, check box, text field, or radio button.
Label	HTML Tag	An HTML tag that defines a the label to be used for a field. Assistive technology often presents this information to a user when they are providing input.
Legend	HTML Tag	An HTML element that provides the name for a fieldset.
List	HTML Tag	A group of HTML tags that provide lists within a Web page. The two most common lists are ordered and unordered lists. Unordered list are show with bullets and use the tag; ordered lists are shown with numbers and use the tag.

Meta	HTML Tag	An HTML tag that provides additional information about a Web page that is not normally shown directly to the user. Typical meta tags will contain search terms or content ratings.
Modifier		One of the keys on the keyboard that alters the meaning of another key. On a PC keyboard the three modifiers are Alt, Ctrl and Shift.
Page fold		An analogy with a folded newspaper. This term describes the lower limit of the information that can be seen on a page without using a scrolling mechanism. The fold is rarely predictable because of variations in screen size, font size and technology.
Paragraph	HTML tag	An HTML tag, written as <p>, that marks the extent of a paragraph.
PDF		Portable Document Format. Portable Document Format files created by a program such as Adobe Acrobat. This file format preserves the fonts, images, graphics, and layout of any source document, regardless of the application used to create it.
Plug-in		A browser extension developed by a software vendor to enable a browser to display a specialised form of content.
QuickTime VR		A technology that provides moving pictures within a Web page.
Resolution		The number of points of information on the screen of a computer. Many computer monitors have a resolution of 1024 by 768 points. Recently obtained computers are likely to have higher resolution screens such as 1600 by 1200 or 1400 by 1050.
Routing	Choice	A choice, often called a hypertext link, that displays a different page of a Web site or a page of another Web site.

Saturation		A description of the visual strength of a colour. The term 'saturated' is used to describe a vivid intense colour. The term 'less saturated' is used to describe a pale colour.
Screen reader		A type of assistive technology that reads the text on the screen to the user. Screen readers are most commonly used by users with visual impairments.
Select	HTML tag	An HTML tag that allows the user to select from a list of choices.
Semiotics		The study of signs and symbols, and their use, especially in language.
Server side		Features of the site that are executed on the server rather than relying on features of a user's computer.
Setting	Choice	A choice that allows a user to change a property of an object or an option for an action. For example, a setting might allow a user to enter their age on a personal information form.
Spam		Unsolicited e-mail that is sent indiscriminately to multiple mailing lists, individuals, or newsgroups.
Streamed audio		A technology that provides audio on a Web page without storing the information on a file in the user's computer.
Strong	HTML tag	An HTML tag that marks a portion of text that need strong emphasis. Most browsers will show this text as bold. See Emphasis [HTML tag].
Tabindex	HTML attribute	An HTML attribute that controls the order in which the elements of a Web page are visited when the user presses the tab key.
Tag		An element of the coding that specifies how the HTML or XML document, or a portion of the document, should be formatted.
Textarea	HTML tag	An HTML element that provides for a large amount of text to be input by the user.

Third party cookies		Cookies used by one domain that have an address from another domain. Third party cookies are frequently used by advertising sites to track user's access to the site's clients. Many users feel that this is an invasion of their privacy.
Title	HTML tag	An HTML tag that marks the text to shown in the window title of the browser. Most browsers will also use this text in any bookmarks or history lists.
W3C		World Wide Web Consortium. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) develops interoperable technologies (specifications, guidelines, software, and tools) to lead the Web to its full potential. W3C is a forum for information, commerce, communication, and collective understanding.
WAI		Web Accessibility Initiative. An initiative organised by W3C that pursues accessibility of the Web through five primary areas of work: technology, guidelines, tools, education and outreach, and research and development.
Wizard		A style of presenting a task to a user whereby it is broken into small, well explained steps.
XML		Extensible Markup Language. Extensible Markup Language (XML) is a simple, very flexible text format. Originally designed to meet the challenges of large-scale electronic publishing, XML is also playing an increasingly important role in the exchange of a wide variety of data on the Web and elsewhere.

Sources

SOURCE

Accessibility and Macromedia Flash MX 2004: Design Guidelines

Description

Guidelines on designing accessible Macromedia Flash content.

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Standards

Sponsor

Macromedia, Inc.

Technology vendor

URL

<http://www.macromedia.com/macromedia/accessibility/features/flash/>

SOURCE

Acrobat Accessibility

Description

Information and resources to help you learn more about how the Adobe® Acrobat® 6.0 product family helps makes documents and forms more accessible to everyone.

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Adobe Systems Incorporated.

Technology vendor

URL

http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/access_info.html

 **SOURCE**

Be Succinct! (Writing for the Web)

Description

Guidelines on writing for the Web.

Domain

Writing

Class

Guidelines

Author

Neilsen, J.

Sponsor

Nielsen Norman Group

Consultant

URL

<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9703b.html>

Related sources

The Web Content Style Guide

McGovern, G., Norton, R., and O'Dowd, C.

 **SOURCE**

Chicago Manual of Style

Description

An authoritative reference guide for authors, editors, proofreaders, indexers, copywriters, designers, and publishers in every field.

LAWS guidelines

Domain

Writing

Class

Standards

Version

15

Sponsor

University of Chicago Press

URL

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/about.html>

ISBN

226104036

Related sources

The Times Style and Usage Guide
Austin, T.

Crystal Mark

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/crystalmark.html>

 **SOURCE**

Concise, SCANNABLE, and Objective: How to Write for the Web

Description

How to make increase a Web site's usability by making it concise, scannable, and objective.

Domain

Writing

Class

Guidelines

Author

Morkes, J., and Nielsen, J.

URL

<http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/writing.html>

 **SOURCE**

Content Critical: Gaining Competitive Advantage Through High-Quality Web Content

Description

A guide to creating high quality Web content

Domain

Writing

Class

Textbook

Author

McGovern, G., and Norton, R.

ISBN

027365604

 **SOURCE**

Crystal Mark

Description

A guide to obtaining the Crystal Mark seal of approval for clear written communication.

Domain

Writing

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Plain English Campaign

Standards organisation

URL

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/crystalmark.html>

 **SOURCE**

Data Protection Act 1998

Description

Guideline documents for the Data Protection Act

Domain

Government

Class

Legislation

Sponsor

Information Commissioner's Office

Government body

URL

<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=438>

 **SOURCE**

Design principles

Description

A set of basic design principles for interface design.

Domain

Usability

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

IBM Corporation

Technology vendor

URL

http://eou5.austin.ibm.com/easy/eou_int.nsf/Publish/6

 **SOURCE**

Designing Visual Interfaces

Description

An overview of techniques that can be employed in order to enhance the visual aspects of user interfaces across various platforms.

Domain

Visual design

Class

Textbook

Author

Mullet, K., and Sano, D.

ISBN

0133033899

 **SOURCE**

Designing Web Usability

Description

A comprehensive book covering everything from content and page design to designing for ease of navigation and users with disabilities.

Domain

Usability

Class

Textbook

Author

Neilsen, J.

Sponsor

Nielsen Norman Group

Consultant

ISBN

156205810

 **SOURCE**

Diffusion of Innovations

Description

An influential account of how and why people choose to adopt new ideas and how to effectively communicate innovations to potential users.

Domain

Class

Version

4

Author

Rogers, E.M.

ISBN

0029266718

 **SOURCE**

Disability Rights Commission

Description

The Web site of the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) which is an independent body, established by Act of Parliament to eliminate discrimination against disabled people and promote equality of opportunity.

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Textbook

Sponsor

Disability Rights Commission

Non-profit organisation

URL

<http://www.drc-gb.org/>

 **SOURCE**

E-commerce User Experience 207 Guidelines for E-commerce Sites

Description

A Nielsen Norman report containing extensive guidelines for how to design e-commerce sites in order to make them more usable.

Domain

Business

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Nielsen Norman Group

Consultant

URL

<http://www.nngroup.com/reports/ecommerce/>

ISBN

970607202

Related sources

Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work
Brinck, T., Gergle, D., and Wood, S.D.

Content Critical: Gaining Competitive Advantage Through High-Quality Web Content
McGovern, G., and Norton, R.

 **SOURCE**

Environmental Information Regulations 1992

Description

Guideline documents for the Environmental Information Regulations 1992.

LAWS guidelines

Domain

Government

Class

Legislation

Sponsor

Information Commissioner's Office

Government body

URL

<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=789>

 **SOURCE**

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Description

Guideline documents for the Freedom of Information Act.

Domain

Government

Class

Legislation

Sponsor

Information Commissioner's Office

Government body

URL

<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=77>

 **SOURCE**

Good practice models and guidance for the internet industry

Description

This document sets out a series of models of good practice for the provision of different kinds of internet services by a range of companies and organisations who are active in the online world. It is intended primarily as a guide to commercial or other organisations, or individuals, who are already providing online services or are considering doing so in the future. As a public document, it will also be of interest to internet users.

Domain

Government

Class

Textbook

Author

Home Office task force on child protection on the internet

Sponsor

Home Office

Government body

URLhttp://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/ho_model.pdf

 SOURCE**Government and Information Communication Service Handbook****Description**

From organising a press conference to running a multi-million pounds advertising campaign the GICS Handbook is a comprehensive source of advice to PR practitioners everywhere.

Domain

Government

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Government Information and Communication Service

Government body

URL

 **SOURCE**

Guidance on the work of the Government Information Service

Description

This note provides guidance on the work of the Government Information Service and other officials directly involved in similar tasks, including the presentation of Government policy and information through relations with the media, publicity and advertising. It is specifically intended for the use of Government Information Officers and others involved in Government information services.

Domain

Government

Class

Textbook

Sponsor

Cabinet Office

Government body

URL

<http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/central/1999/workgis/>

 **SOURCE**

Guidelines for UK government websites: Framework for senior managers

Description

A set of guidelines for UK government sites.

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Office of the E-Envoy

Government body

URL

<http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/00/09/16/04000916.pdf>

Related sources

Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams

 **SOURCE**

Guidelines for UK Government Websites: Illustrated Handbook for Web Management Teams

Description

A comprehensive guide to managing a Government Web site

Domain

Government

Class

Textbook

Sponsor

Office of the e-Envoy Cabinet Office

Government body

URL

<http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/Resources/WebHandbookIndex1/fs/en>

ISBN

0114301794

Related sources

Data Protection Act 1998, Environmental Information Regulations 1992, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003

 **SOURCE**

How to write in plain English

Description

A guide to writing in plain English.

Domain

Writing

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Plain English Campaign

Standards organisation

URL

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/plainenglishguide.html>

 **SOURCE**

How Users Read on the Web

Description

Tips on writing for the Web.

Domain

Writing

Class

Guidelines

Author

Nielsen, J.

URL

<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9710a.html>

 **SOURCE**

IBM Common User Access Guidelines

Description

A guide to designing desktop software.

Domain

Usability

Class

Standards

Sponsor

IBM Corporation

Technology vendor

ISBN

1565291700

SOURCE

IBM Web Accessibility Checklist

Description

A Web accessibility checklist for developers.

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Standards

Sponsor

IBM Corporation

Technology vendor

URL

<http://www-306.ibm.com/able/guidelines/web/accessweb.html>

Related sources

Beyond ALT Text: Making the Web Easy to Use for Users With Disabilities

Coyne, K.P., and Nielsen, J.

LAWS guidelines

Designing for Accessibility

Bergman, E., and Johnson, E.

<http://www.sun.com/access/developers/software.guides.html>

IBM Java Accessibility Checklist

<http://www-306.ibm.com/able/guidelines/java/accessjava.html>

IBM software accessibility checklist

<http://www-3.ibm.com/able/guidelines/software/accesssoftware.html>

User Agent Accessibility Guidelines

World Wide Web Consortium

<http://www.w3.org/TR/UAAG10/>

SOURCE

Information Commissioner

Description

The Web site of the Information Commissioner who's Mission is:

"We shall develop respect for the private lives of individuals and encourage the openness and accountability of public authorities,

- by promoting good information handling practice and enforcing data protection and freedom of information legislation;
- by seeking to influence national and international thinking on privacy on information access issues."

The Information Commissioner is responsible for administration of the Data Protection Act.

Domain

Government

Class

Textbook

Sponsor

Information Commissioner

Government body

ISBN

<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/>

 **SOURCE**

Information Visualization: perception for design

Description

An in-depth look at how humans process visual information.

Domain

Visual design

Class

Textbook

Author

Ware, C.

ISBN

1558605118

 **SOURCE**

Internet Content Rating Association

Description

The Internet Content Rating Association is an international, independent organization that empowers the public, especially parents, to make informed decisions about electronic media by means of the open and objective labelling of content.

Domain

Class

URL

<http://www.icra.org/about/>

 **SOURCE**

LAWs Project – Information Standards & Architecture

LAWS guidelines

Description

The LAWs (Local Authority Websites) project is working with the ESD Toolkit to develop a National Local Authority Category List, which may be seen as a more detailed breakdown of certain areas of the Government Category List, available through GovTalk.

The National Local Authority Category List will be a refined version of the APLAWS Category List produced by the APLAWS Project. Each category will group several services (process areas) which are defined by the ESD Toolkit's PID List.

This page provides access to the lists being considered. The page will be updated to reflect the outcome of workshops being run by the LAWs Project – Information Standards & Architecture Workstream.

Domain

Government

Class

Standards

Sponsor

Electronic Services Delivery (ESD) Toolkit

Government body

URL

<http://www.esd-toolkit.org/laws>

SOURCE

Local Authority Websites (LAWs) national project

Description

LAWs will help Local Authorities deliver higher quality and a wider range of services online at lower cost. Its deliverables will help ensure that all councils meet the target of 100% electronically delivered or supported services by 2005.

Domain

Government

Class

Textbook

Sponsor

Local Authority Websites National Project

Government body

URL

<http://www.laws-project.org.uk/archives/000851.shtml>

 **SOURCE**

Microcontent: How to Write Headlines, Page Titles, and Subject Lines

Description

Guidelines on writing introductory material describing the scope of Web pages.

Domain

Writing

Class

Guidelines

Author

Neilsen, J.

Sponsor

Nielsen Norman Group

Consultant

URL

<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/980906.html>

Related sources

Designing Web Usability

Neilsen, J.

The Web Content Style Guide

McGovern, G., Norton, R., and O'Dowd, C.

Usability for the Web

Brinck, T., Gergle, D., and Wood, S.D.

 **SOURCE**

Platform for Internet Content Selection (PICS)

Description

The PICS specification enables labels (metadata) to be associated with Internet content. It was originally designed to help parents and teachers control what children access on the Internet, but it also facilitates other uses for labels, including code signing and privacy. The PICS platform is one on which other rating services and filtering software have been built.

Domain

Classification

Class

Standards

Sponsor

World Wide Web Consortium

Standards organisation

URL

<http://www.w3.org/PICS/>

SOURCE

Platform for Privacy Preferences (P3P) Project

Description

The Platform for Privacy Preferences Project (P3P), developed by the World Wide Web Consortium, is emerging as an industry standard providing a simple, automated way for users to gain more control over the use of personal information on Web sites they visit.

Domain

Legal

Class

Standards

Sponsor

World Wide Web Consortium

Standards organisation

URL

<http://www.w3.org/P3P/>

SOURCE

Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003

Description

Guideline documents for the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003

Domain

Government

Class

Legislation

Sponsor

Information Commissioner's Office

Government body

URL

<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=96>

SOURCE

Quality Framework for UK government website design

Description

This Framework pulls together advice from a wide range of web publishers, usability experts, web designers, government web managers and academics to clarify what relevant usability and design criteria should be used when planning a government website or judging how good it is. This advice also draws on the current standards for human centred design.

Domain

Government

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Office of the e-Envoy

LAWS guidelines

Government body

URL

<http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/Resources/WebGuidelines/fs/en>

 **SOURCE**

Section 508 of the 1998 Rehabilitation Act

Description

A law governing accessibility standards in the USA. Whilst this law is not directly relevant to the UK the requirements presented are considered to be good practice worldwide.

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Legislation

Sponsor

US Government

Government body

URL

<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=3>

 **SOURCE**

Setting Up Your Own Web Site

Description

Guidelines from the National Grid for Learning on the safe use of web sites.

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

DfES - National Grid for Learning

Government body

URL

<http://safety.ngfl.gov.uk/schools/document.php3?D=d27>

 **SOURCE**

Stop Stealing Sheep and Find Out How Type Works

Description

A guide to typography

Domain

Visual design

Class

Textbook

Version

2

Author

Spiekermann, E., and Ginger, E.M.

ISBN

0201703394

 **SOURCE**

The Art & Science of Web Design

Description

An overview of core web concepts

Domain

Visual design

Class

LAWS guidelines

Textbook

Author

Veen, J.

ISBN

078972370

 **SOURCE**

The plain English guide to designing clear websites

Description

A guide to designing clear Web sites

Domain

Writing

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Plain English Campaign

Standards organisation

URL

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/webdesign.html>

Related sources

Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work
Tom Brinck, Darren Gergle & Scott D. Wood

Crystal Mark

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/crystalmark.html>

 **SOURCE**

The Web Content Style Guide

Description

A guide for online writers, editors and managers

Domain

Branding

Class

Textbook

Author

McGovern, G., Norton, R., and O'Dowd, C.

Sponsor

Gerry McGovern

Consultant

URL

http://www.gerrymcgovern.com/web_content_style_guide.htm

ISBN

0273656058

📖 SOURCE

Top 10 Guidelines for UK local government websites

Description

Provides best practice guidance for local government web managers on how to design and maintain accessible websites. In particular, it outlines 10 key best practice guidelines for UK local government websites. These ten guidelines not only set the website in a broader context of policy, but provide practical guidance on the kinds of tasks that need to be planned and considered in website development and management.

Domain

Government

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

Office of the e-Envoy

Government body

LAWS guidelines

URL

<http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/00/59/61/04005961.pdf>

Related sources

Quality Framework for UK government website design

 **SOURCE**

Trust UK

Description

TrustUK is a non-profit organisation run by industry, with the full endorsement of the Government. The members are trade associations and organizations committed to ensuring the UK delivers the highest commercial standards of e-commerce.

TrustUK are working to provide a 'hallmark' to show that Web sites follow appropriate standards.

Domain

Business

Class

Guidelines

Sponsor

TrustUK

Non-profit organisation

URL

www.trustuk.org.uk

 **SOURCE**

Type and Typography

Description

A guide to type and typography

Domain

Visual design

Class

Textbook

Author

Baines, P., and Haslam, A.

ISBN

1856692442

 **SOURCE**

UK Gov Talk Schemas and Standards

Description

The technical standards that will act as the foundation of e-Government strategy.

These standards will allow information to flow seamlessly across the public sector and will provide citizens and business with better access to government services.

Domain

Government

Class

Standards

Sponsor

UK Gov Talk

Government body

URL

<http://www.govtalk.gov.uk/interoperability/schemasstandards.asp>

 **SOURCE**

Universal Principles of Design

Description

100 Ways to Enhance Usability, Influence Perception, Increase Appeal, Make Better Design Decisions, and Teach Through Design

LAWS guidelines

Domain

Usability

Class

Textbook

Author

Butler, J., Lidwell, W., and Holden, K.

Sponsor

Rockport Publishers

Consultant

ISBN

1592530079

 **SOURCE**

Usability for the Web

Description

A book examining the entire spectrum of usability design issues, including architecture, navigation, graphical presentation, and page structure.

Domain

Usability

Class

Textbook

Author

Brinck, T., Gergle, D., and Wood, S.D.

Sponsor

Morgan Kaufmann

Consultant

ISBN

155860658

 **SOURCE**

Usability For The Web: designing web sites that work

Description

A book that provides guidelines on writing style and how to write in order to communicate effectively.

Domain

Writing

Class

Textbook

Author

Brinck, T., Gergle, D., and Wood, S.D.

ISBN

1558606580

 **SOURCE**

Usability of Confirmation Email and Transactional Messages

Description

73 Design Guidelines for Automated Messages from Websites to Customers

Domain

Usability

Class

Guidelines

Author

Nielson, J., and Farrell, S.

Sponsor

Nielsen Norman Group

Consultant

URL

<http://www.nngroup.com/reports/confirmation/>

 **SOURCE**

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Description

A guide on how to make Web content accessible

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Guidelines

Version

1.0

Sponsor

W3C

Standards organisation

URL

<http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/>

Related sources

IBM Web Accessibility Checklist

<http://www-306.ibm.com/able/guidelines/web/accessweb.html>

Section 508 of the 1998 Rehabilitation Act

<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=3>

 **SOURCE**

Web Design Guidelines

Description

A guide for creating easy-to-use Web sites

Domain

Business

Class
Guidelines

Sponsor
IBM

Technology vendor

URL
http://eou5.austin.ibm.com/easy/eou_int.nsf/Publish/572

 **SOURCE**

Web Style Guide

Description
Basic design principles for creating Web sites

Domain
Accessibility

Class
Textbook

Version
2

Author
Lynch, P.J., and Horton, S.

Sponsor
Lynch and Horton

Academic

URL
<http://www.webstyleguide.com/index.html?/contents.html>

ISBN
0300088981

 **SOURCE**

Welsh language board Website

Description

Useful background information about the Welsh language and about the Welsh Language Board and its work.

Domain

Legal

Class

Legislation

Sponsor

Welsh Language Board

Government body

URL

<http://www.bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk/>

 **SOURCE**

Windows User Experience: Official Guidelines for User Interface Developers and Designers

Description

A guide to interface design, and visual and functional consistency within and across Windows-based applications.

Domain

Accessibility

Class

Standards

Sponsor

Microsoft

Technology vendor

URL

<http://msdn.microsoft.com/library/en-us/dnwue/html/welcome.asp>

ISBN
0735605661
