



Cabinet Office

Simon Kaplan

Product content lead, GOV.UK

Government Digital Service

simon.kaplan@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk

1. How GOV.UK happened.
2. Content quality: a strategy for improvement.
3. What's the future?

How GOV.UK happened



Simon Kaplan

GDS

Government Digital Service

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Design Principles

Listed below are our design principles and examples of how we've used them so far. These build on, and add to, our original 7 digital principles.

- 1 **Start with needs***
- 2 **Do less**
- 3 **Design with data**
- 4 **Do the hard work to make it simple**
- 5 **Iterate. Then iterate again.**
- 6 **Build for inclusion**
- 7 **Understand context**
- 8 **Build digital services, not websites**
- 9 **Be consistent, not uniform**
- 10 **Make things open: it makes things better**

<https://www.gov.uk/design-principles>

Start with needs*

*user needs not government needs



- Home 
- Business & industry ▾
- Environmental topics ▾
- Waste ▾
- Types of waste ▾
- Light bulbs ▶

How to dispose of lightbulbs

Energy saving light bulbs and fluorescent light tubes contain small amounts of mercury.

As mercury is a hazardous substance these types of lightbulbs should be disposed of sensibly and in accordance with the [Hazardous Waste Regulations](#).

Most local councils will only collect or accept waste from their residents. They will not offer a waste collection or disposal service for business waste. Most businesses will have to use a private waste management company to collect their waste, or deposit their waste at a commercial waste management site.

Details of private waste management companies can be found on our on-line [Waste Recycling Directory](#).

If the domestic property owner hires a private company / individual (not local council) to remove their waste they must ensure that all [duty of care](#) requirements are met.

Old electrical items are covered by the WEEE regulations. The WEEE regulations state that in some commercial waste disposal situations the provider of new electrical equipment is responsible for the WEEE's disposal.

Rate this page

Was this information useful?

- Very useful
- Quite useful
- Unsure
- Not very useful

Page



Did not answer question!
How do you dispose of light bulbs?

But it doesn't say where and how to dispose of low energy bulbs!

Gives no detail about what to do - do you ring the council or what?!!!

Does not tell me how to dispose of lightbulb

Needs illustrations for each kind of bulb, and updating re how to dispose of each.

The question was 'How to dispose of lightbulb'. I challenge anyone to find the answer in this text.

This page is useless! It doesn't actually tell me (the average citizen) HOW to go about disposing of energy saving lightbulbs!! If I can't put them in the normal domestic rubbish or in the recycling bin, where do they go?

It is entitled "How to dispose of lightbulbs", but does not really tell me how to do so...

I would even go so far as to say WORTHLESS. You need to have one or two sentences that tell me exactly what to do with it. I do not want to go three additional websites of regulations. I will now throw it in the trash.

I'm an ordinary householder, I want to know what I ought to do with old lightbulbs. This does nothing for me.

3 categories of content on GOV.UK:

- mainstream
- departments and policies
- specialist

A single government domain:

- with content from 26 departments and 130 government agencies (35 to go)
- 1662 publishers across government
- 124,927 content items so far
- 2 million visits a day

Content quality: a strategy for improvement



What are the issues?

- push content not pull
- jargon not plain English
- put everything up that government produces

Words to avoid

agenda
advancing
collaborate
combating
commit/pledge
countering
deliver
deploy
dialogue
disincentivise
(and incentivise)

empower
facilitate
focusing
foster
initiate
key
land
leverage
liaise
overarching
progress
robust

slimming down
streamline
tackling
transforming
utilise

Metaphors

- drive or drive out
- going forward
- in order to
- one-stop shop
- ring fencing

Solutions:

Imbue digital teams with a vision.

They are making a difference because their proactive work can change the user experience.

‘We challenge and enable government to create and manage the highest quality content’

Develop a strategy that:

- creates a content community to support digital teams.
- gives feedback and is transparent about content quality.

Support digital teams through training...



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GDS

and standards...

Guidance for government digital publishing and services

Content and publishing

BETA This part of GOV.UK is being rebuilt – [find out what this means](#)

A to Z

[Content design: planning, writing and managing content](#)

[How to publish on GOV.UK](#)

[Style guide](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government-digital-guidance/content-publishing>

Provide digital teams with back-up:

- research and evidence
- advice
- data
- best practice examples



Ask for advice and guidance on Departments and Policy content

Should anybody else be copied in on this request? (comma-separated list of emails)

Title of request

What is the nature of this request?*

- Initial guidance from GOV.UK on content you are working on
- A formal response that you would like to pass onto other teams in your department or organisation
- Other - please give information

Details of your request

Please explain what you would like help with*

If you have relevant supporting documents, or files for us to host, please send them as attachments in reply to the acknowledgement email you will receive shortly.

Content clinics and an online community

- Clinics are an opportunity for face-to-face meetings between digital team members from across government facilitated by GDS
- monthly events
- started in London but are now being held regionally



Government content community

Advice please - content location challenges

Posted by Lucy Kennedy on Oct 23



My team has a commitment to publish a package of information about some of our policies and activities. This needs to be done very soon. I have a draft text, which brings together and summarises information – it isn't long enough to be a 'publication' in its own right, it's about three pages of A4. As things stand the idea is that I will make this a supporting page on the relevant policy.

I am a barely-trained web content creator – I will be getting the proper three-day training soonish, but it hasn't happened yet. I don't have all the information and resources that training would presumably offer me. I am relatively technically confident for someone untrained, but I am aware there's a lot I don't know about style and content design policy. (I also realise that this content hasn't been planned on the basis of a defined user need - although there may be one.)

I know that it's not really suitable to put this info package on the policy page, and I have a strong feeling it should probably be 'mainstream' content. But I don't have any information on how to make that happen, and am under very significant time pressure – it *has* to be published within the next fortnight maximum. What can I do? Is it verboten to put it up as a supporting page and then move it later? Any

[Home](#) > [Visas and immigration](#)

Apply for a UK visa

You can apply online for a UK visa to visit, work, study or join a family member or partner (eg spouse) already in the UK.

You must [apply in person](#) if you're from North Korea.

You can use this service to apply for a certificate of entitlement to [right of abode in the UK](#).

Visas and immigration

[Check if you need a UK visa](#)

[Find a visa application centre](#)

[Visa processing times](#)

[Visa fees](#)

[More](#)

User needs and metrics

Apply for a UK visa

Unique pageviews

15.8k per day

Searches started from this page

21.9 per day

Problem reports

14.8 per week

Users left this page by searching for:

- login (95)
- spouse visa (94)
- log in (77)
- tier 4 (71)
- contact (48)
- settlement (48)
- application form (43)
- supporting documents (41)
- visa (29)
- indefinite leave to remain (26)

Measured over the last 6 weeks

Why is this page on GOV.UK?

The user need for this page:

As a non-EEA national

I need to apply for a UK visa

So that I can come to the UK to visit, study or work

The need is met when the user:

This need is in proposition because:

Feedback and post publishing quality checks

Cabinet Office spot check: 14 to 21 May 2013

Publishing activity

We spot checked 8 of the 39 documents you published in the week of 7 to 14 May 2013, 2 for each category that was available.

If a content item has more than 5 errors in the first 10 sentences, we regard it as not in style and the item will need a rewrite. The errors in these articles aren't included in the table of results.

Also, we won't review content items if they are:

- in the wrong content format, eg a detailed guide that should be a supporting policy detail
- in the wrong section of GOV.UK, ie should be for citizens or businesses on 'mainstream' GOV.UK
- duplicating content elsewhere on GOV.UK or on other government sites

Spot checks focus on those content elements that are most important in guaranteeing good quality.

THE
FUTURE
IS NOW



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GDS

We plan to:

- concentrate on most viewed content
- embed digital team members at GDS and vice-versa
- roll out a programme of managing editor workshops
- look at controls of what goes on the site and develop our archiving policy

Conclusions:

- give digital teams as much backup as possible - including feedback about what good means
- create mini-GDSs in departments and agencies
- put resources into long term organisational change in the digital culture

Lessons learnt:

- if you give people a challenge, the remit, tools and the creative space they'll move mountains
- if you can win over your antagonists, you're half-way there



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News story

Vehicle tax changes

Organisation: [Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency](#)
Page history: Published 24 February 2014
Topic: [Transport](#)

Updates and advice on abolition of the vehicle tax disc and paying it by Direct Debit.



From 1 October 2014, the paper tax disc will no longer be issued and required to be displayed on a vehicle windscreen. DVLA holds a digital record of taxed and untaxed vehicles.

If you have any remaining months left on your current paper tax disc from 1 October 2014, you can either remove the tax disc from your vehicle or display the disc until it expires.

499, 271 unique page views

4.8 mins on page

98% entrances

Good quality content means users:

- are more sure they've found the right information
- return to the site because they trust it and find it easy to use

Pageviews distribution

Department	0	1 - 10	11 - 25	26 - 50	51 - 100	101 - 250	251 - 500	501 - 1000	1001 - 5000	5000+
AGO	● 40%	● 35%	● 8%	● 5%	● 4%	● 3%	● 5%		● 1%	
BIS	● 7%	● 39%	● 15%	● 10%	● 8%	● 9%	● 5%	● 3%	● 4%	● 0%
CO	● 3%	● 25%	● 19%	● 13%	● 13%	● 11%	● 8%	● 4%	● 3%	● 1%
DCLG	● 7%	● 30%	● 17%	● 11%	● 9%	● 11%	● 6%	● 4%	● 4%	● 0%
DCMS	● 11%	● 46%	● 13%	● 8%	● 6%	● 8%	● 2%	● 2%	● 2%	● 0%
DECC	● 4%	● 46%	● 15%	● 9%	● 7%	● 8%	● 5%	● 3%	● 3%	● 0%
DEFRA	● 5%	● 32%	● 17%	● 13%	● 11%	● 11%	● 5%	● 4%	● 2%	● 0%
DfE	● 0%	● 22%	● 15%	● 12%	● 12%	● 13%	● 8%	● 7%	● 8%	● 3%
DfID	● 18%	● 52%	● 13%	● 6%	● 4%	● 3%	● 2%	● 1%	● 1%	● 0%
DfT	● 2%	● 32%	● 15%	● 13%	● 13%	● 12%	● 6%	● 4%	● 3%	● 1%
DoH	● 1%	● 32%	● 19%	● 12%	● 10%	● 11%	● 5%	● 4%	● 5%	● 1%
DWP	● 8%	● 39%	● 16%	● 10%	● 9%	● 7%	● 4%	● 3%	● 3%	● 1%
FCO	● 4%	● 40%	● 20%	● 12%	● 9%	● 9%	● 3%	● 2%	● 1%	● 0%
HMT	● 19%	● 36%	● 9%	● 6%	● 6%	● 8%	● 6%	● 5%	● 4%	● 1%
HO	● 3%	● 46%	● 16%	● 11%	● 8%	● 7%	● 4%	● 3%	● 3%	● 1%
MoD	● 4%	● 27%	● 15%	● 14%	● 12%	● 13%	● 6%	● 4%	● 5%	● 1%
MoJ	● 3%	● 31%	● 16%	● 13%	● 10%	● 12%	● 6%	● 5%	● 4%	● 1%
NIO	● 22%	● 42%	● 10%	● 7%	● 10%	● 5%	● 1%	● 2%	● 1%	
No10	● 1%	● 10%	● 12%	● 11%	● 8%	● 15%	● 13%	● 6%	● 19%	● 3%
OAGS	● 33%	● 38%	● 13%	● 9%	● 6%	● 1%		● 1%		
ODPM		● 21%	● 12%	● 10%	● 17%	● 21%	● 8%	● 6%	● 4%	● 2%
OLHC	● 19%	● 48%	● 11%	● 4%	● 7%	● 4%	● 4%	● 4%		
OLHL			● 13%	● 13%	● 47%	● 13%	● 13%			
SO	● 20%	● 51%	● 6%	● 8%	● 3%	● 2%	● 3%	● 2%	● 3%	● 1%
UKEF	● 19%	● 29%	● 20%	● 10%	● 7%	● 6%	● 4%	● 4%	● 1%	● 1%
WO	● 5%	● 63%	● 9%	● 9%	● 5%	● 6%	● 1%	● 1%	● 0%	

Tier 4 premium customer service

The Tier 4 premium customer service is designed to:

- offer your organisation support in sponsoring all overseas students
- develop a relationship with you and a long-term understanding of your requirements

The [Tier 4 premium customer service for sponsors](#) contains more information on this service.

More like this

All detailed guidance about

- [Endorsing, sponsoring and supporting visa applicants](#)

[Is there anything wrong with this page?](#)

Is there anything wrong with this page?

Services and information

Departments and policy

Explore GOV.UK anonymous feedback

CONTENT REQUEST

- [Content change](#)
- [New feature/need](#)
- [Unpublish content](#)

USER ACCESS

- [Create or change user](#)
- [Remove user](#)

CAMPAIGNS

- [Campaign](#)

OTHER ISSUES

- [Analytics](#)
- [General](#)
- [Report a technical fault](#)

ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK

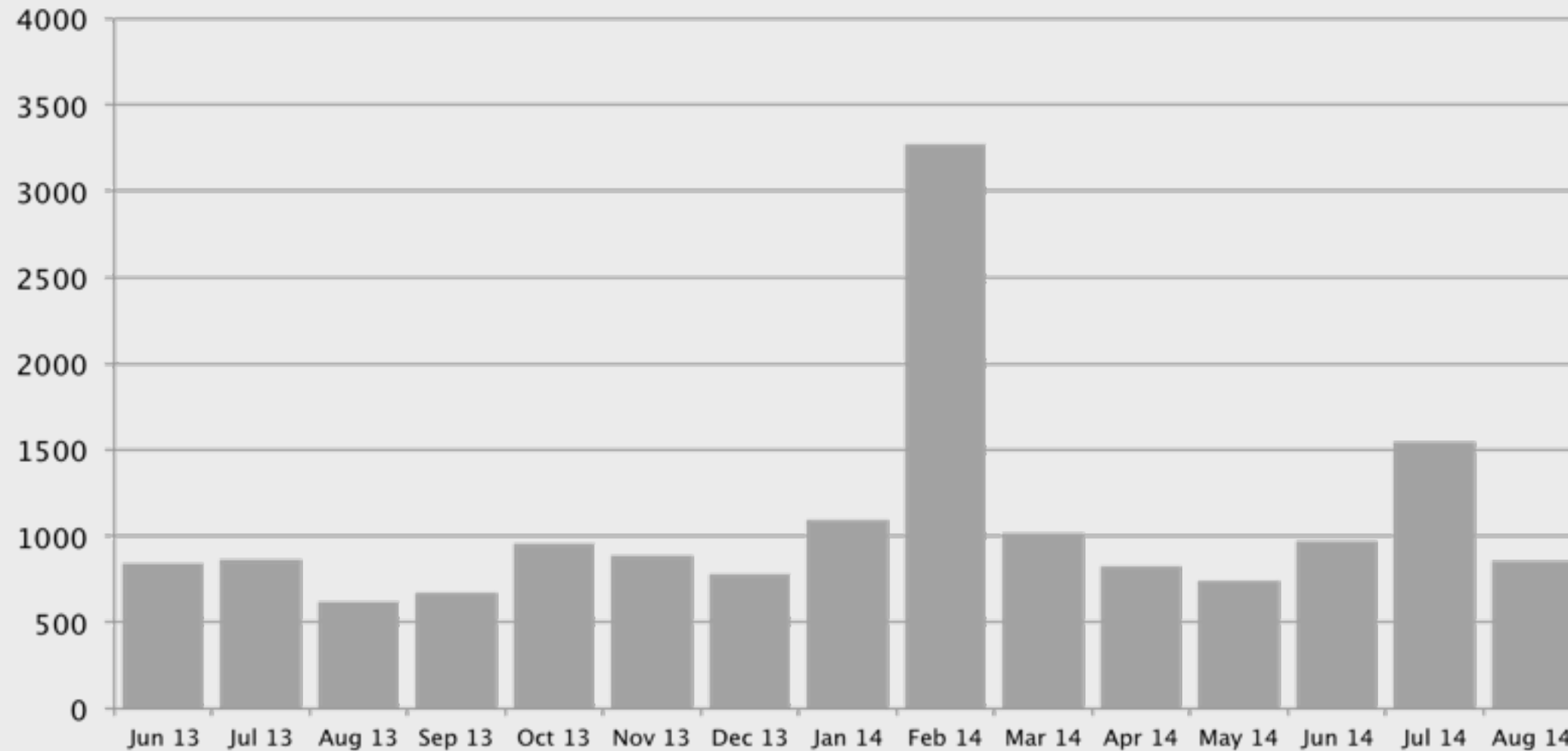
[Feedback explorer](#)

By URL*

Explore

Too much being published?

Content items published



	Jun 13	Jul 13	Aug 13	Sep 13	Oct 13	Nov 13	Dec 13	Jan 14	Feb 14	Mar 14	Apr 14	May 14	Jun 14	Jul 14	Aug 14
■ Content items published	844	861	618	672	957	889	781	1,095	3,270	1,020	829	743	968	1,547	857