**Really Useful Day**

**Model User Journey**

**Report a pothole**

**LGSL / IL = 557/0**

Really Useful Days are **free, practical training days for local authorities**, aimed at helping councils improve their digital services.

They involve a mixture of workshops, inspiring talks (often from other councils who talk about their experiences) and the chance for councils to network with each other

They are run regularly across the UK (see a list of future events at [www.localdirect.gov.uk/events/calendar/](http://www.localdirect.gov.uk/events/calendar/)) on different themes, including “Social Media for councils” and “Improving user journeys”.

At the “Improving user journeys” event, local authorities work together in groups, looking at different user journeys. They critique 3 examples of the journey and come up with their own ‘model’ version.

**This is a collection of all the praise, criticism and model journeys**

**groups have come up with for the user journey: “Report a pothole”.**

**Council pages looked at =**

Aberdeenshire, Islington, Leicester, Oxfordshire, Richmond

**Report a pothole**

This model journey was worked on in **London on 2 March 2012**

**To consider**

Website needs to let people report a pothole in a location they can’t geo-locate (eg with a smart phone) or where they don’t know the postcode. Maybe give people the option to locate on a map.

There are a number of audiences for potholes: residents, motorists (perhaps passing through, so don’t know the area and postcode), claimants.

One idea is to have a map to display “potholes the council is already dealing with”. However, there are some insurance-related issues from providing this information. It could be argued that the authority was aware of the problem and should a subsequent insurance claim be made, there would be little (if any) defence.

**A mock-up of a good customer journey:**

**LA website**

**Report a pothole form**

Data to collect:

* Size / depth of hole
* Location:
  + By map
  + By road
  + By free text (eg corner of x road and x road)

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**Other options =**

* User can send a photo
* User can email and be emailed back
* User can register

GOV UK

Back office

Where?

Updates

Email to user

**Non LA**

(Motorways, slip roads, ‘red’ routes)

**Report a pothole**

This model journey was worked on in **Newbury on 1 October 2013**

(Groups looked at Oxfordshire County, Leicester and Richmond upon Thames websites)

**The Bad – the pitfalls local authority sites should try to avoid**

**Oxfordshire**

* Page is called ‘report a street or road problem’ – no mention of potholes
* Very cluttered – pictures of previously reported potholes, numbers of potholes fixed recently and ‘updates on reports’ (what’s this?)
* Report box disappears into banner – needs to be differentiated better
* Map where you report pothole is very cluttered, with all other problems marked on it – confusing, needs to be simpler
* No link to the Highways Agency
* Page to give details of your pothole is cluttered and confused – needs a simpler form

**Leicester**

* Links to report pothole is buried down the bottom of the page and not obvious
* Uncertainty – reports will be investigated – no guarantee that anything will be done about them
* Irrelevance – gumpf about funding to repair potholes. What the council wants to tell you, not what you need/want to know.
* No web form to report a pothole – user is told to call (in bold), write or (lastly) email
* Unstructured page

**Richmond**

* Do it online option is there but on top right hand side of page, and completely missed by user
* Bumpf first about what Richmond do about potholes
* User is given choices of what to report and not all relate to pothole (fly-tipping, damaged pavement)
* The web form is okay for visitor but too vague for the back office
* Optional to provide contact details, which means back office can’t contact to confirm details

**A mock up of a good customer journey:**

* Minimum number of steps
* Options for describing the size of the pothole
* Guided location (street, landmark, Streetview)
* Possible to report on a smartphone
* Optional map
* Direct link to Highways Agency
* Contact details (optional)
* Follow up
* Tracking (self service) – human language

**Report a pothole**

This model journey was worked on in **Edinburgh on 11 October 2013**

(Groups looked at Aberdeen, Leicester and Richmond upon Thames websites)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Problems** | **Solutions** |
| Poorly-named contextual links  Task-specific buttons outside the F-shape | * Calls to action at top left / centre – clearly labelled actions |
| Action points not visible on main page for service area | * Put them there! * Direct links to top tasks |
| Loads of steps (16!) – can tell it’s adapted from telephone / in person script | * Written / built specifically as an online transaction |

**A mock up of a good customer journey:**

* First result on Google ‘report a pothole’ page
* Straight to an online form
* Fill in details of form (location etc). Option to submit photo
* Review form before submitting
* Confirmation of report with details of what happens next. Option to print

All terminology should be clear

**Report a pothole**

This model journey was worked on in **Manchester on 20 November 2013**

(Groups looked at Oxfordshire County, Richmond upon Thames and Leicester websites)

**The Good – what local authority sites should be trying to include**

**Oxfordshire county council**

* Updated figures on numbers of potholes reported, fixed, etc
* Clean, bright page
* Big search box

**Richmond**

* Clear categories
* East to complete form
* Good use of colour + buttons

**The Bad – the pitfalls local authority sites should try to avoid**

**Oxfordshire county council**

* Not clear what address details to use (your address? Address of pothole?)
* Overcomplicated map
* Lengthy process (5 steps)
* Need to register before it will be actioned – only discover this at the end!

**Richmond**

* Text heavy
* Vague sizing (“describe the size of the pothole”)
* 4 steps – could be less
* Jargon

**Leicester City**

* No online form. Can only use:-
  + - Phone
    - Email
    - Post (what about if it’s Xmas!?)
* Hidden page (under ‘footpaths’ section + hidden link (halfway down page)
* Why photo?
* Lots of text