

CASE STUDY

ENERGY



Brand Refresh



Client

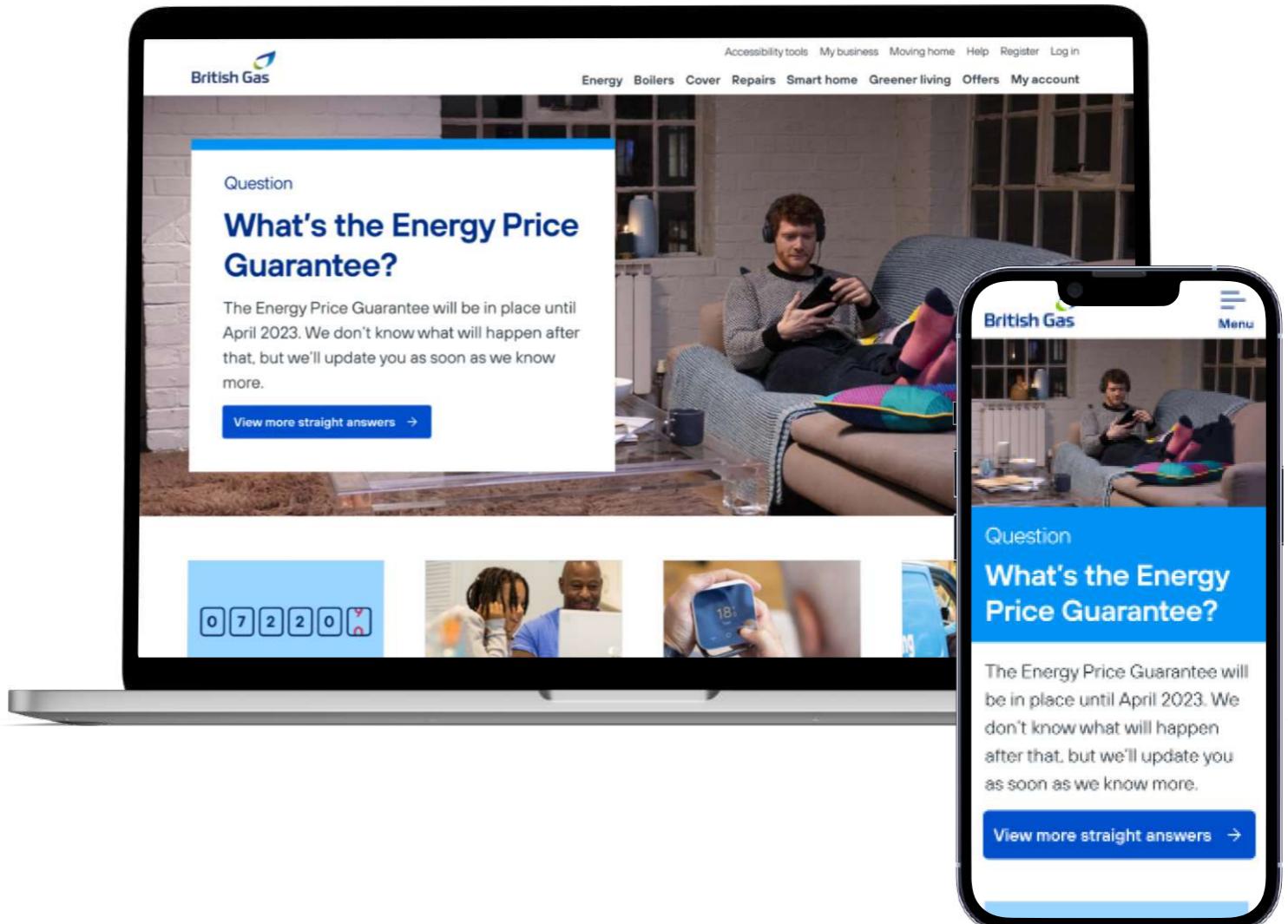


Duration

6 months for UX and UI design

Platform

Web platform and Native Mobile App



Project Overview

Refresh brand's shared design language to be flexible for multi brand adaption and be future proof.

Digital assets need to be brought in line with brand's ambitions. Evolving to be bolder, more modern, while building on brand's strengths and connected fully with brand guidelines.

Problem Statement

British Gas visual identity had not been updated in 5 years making it massively dated with outdated colour styles, fonts, supporting graphics and overall look and feel. There were still parts of British Gas website that were using 2 generations old styling as the last Visual identity update wasn't adopted fully. Some of the design decisions were made without any consistent approach or rationality.

Goal

- To back the design decisions and standards with evidence based design thinking via testing and rational spirit.
- Align all the squads within the organisation to commit to the new brand refresh and come up with a migration plan.
- Come up with solutions which enable minimal breaking changes while applying the new styling.

Responsibilities

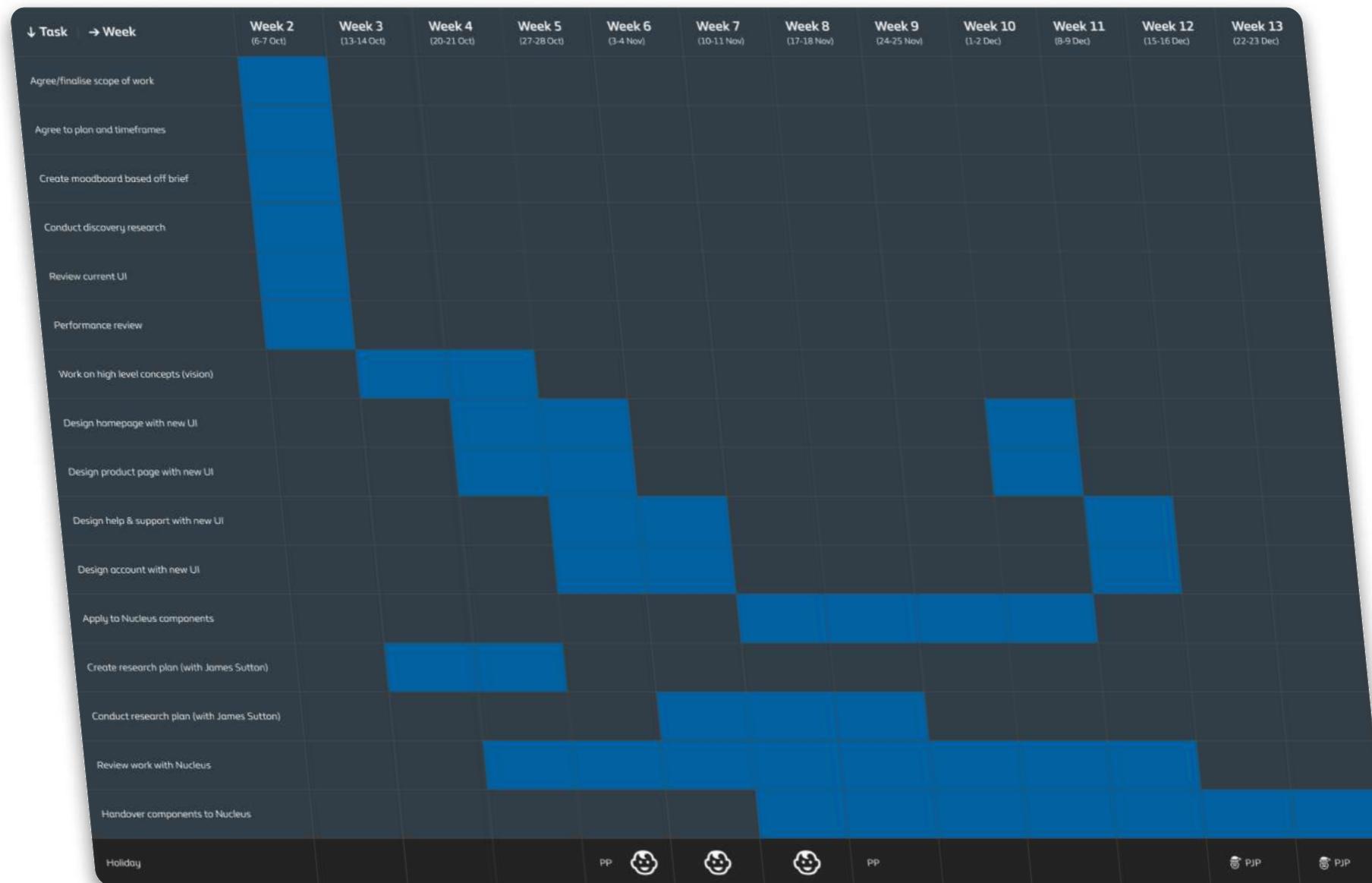
- Project planning & timelines
- Analytical research
- Stakeholders Presentations
- Prototype
- UI Design
- Design feasibility check
- Usability testing

Team

- 4 Designers
- 1 Product Owner
- 1 Data Analyst
- 1 Developer
- 1 UX Researcher
- Brand team stakeholders

Setting Timeline & rough milestones

To start with, I scanned the project brief and listed all the project tasks down. I then setup a project timeline with some estimates considering the factors like available resources and potential deliverables.



Approach



Define vision

Start with defining a clear vision for the digital expression of our Visual Identity.



Big picture

Based on our vision, redesign our web pages for the 4 focus areas. Mobile-first approach.



User Testing

Test different directions for the focus areas with users and against the ambitions we set out in our vision.



Delivery

Once a direction is agreed, all components can be redesigned accordingly. Test individual components for accessibility, and when needed with users.

Our ways of working:

- Test early & often
- Regular stakeholder checkpoints
- Workshops over meetings

Defining the initial Scope & Focus areas

Scope for MVP deliverables of the project and focus areas was discussed and agreed among the key stakeholders

We will change

Styling of components, this can include:

- Colours
- Layout
- Shadows

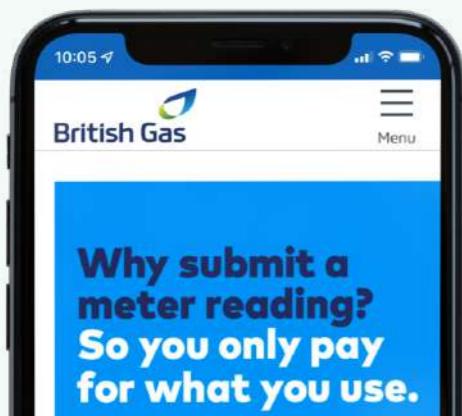
We won't

This is not a case of never, but in order to deliver we will tackle this later:

- Introduce **new components**
- Make **functional changes** to

Use the following areas as proof of concept for our designs, taking a mobile-first approach.

Homepage



Product page (ASHP)



Help & support



Account



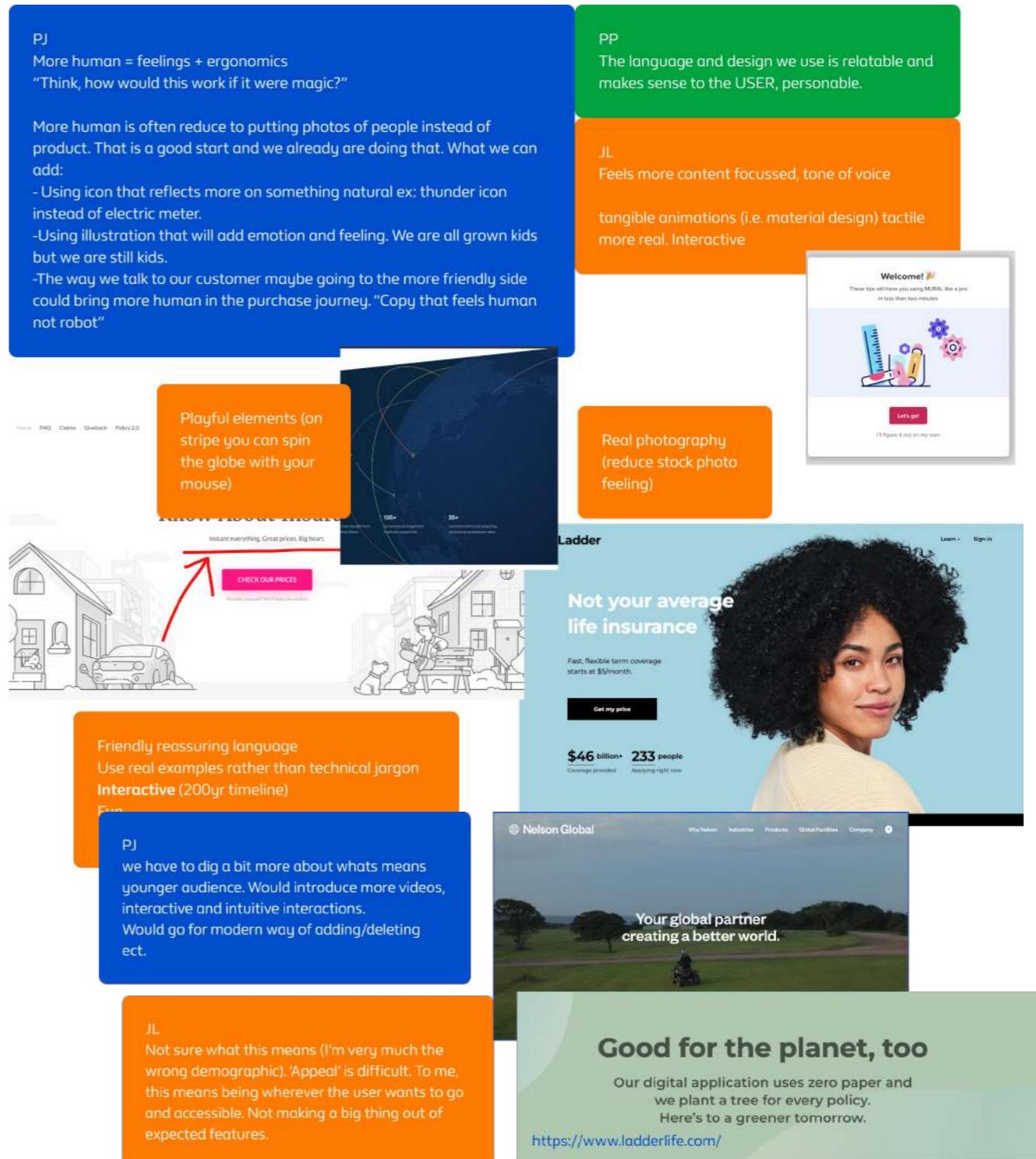
Setting the Mood

Mood boards serve as a source of inspiration, especially early in the project.

On the back of the brief, we started with the inspiration phase and set a mood board to fuel the ideation process.

We used this phase to share opinions after digesting the project brief and align everyone's takeaways from the brief.

We tried to pin inspirational material down which initiated some debates on how to translate the brief into tangible ideas.



PJ
More human = feelings + ergonomics
"Think, how would this work if it were magic?"

More human is often reduce to putting photos of people instead of product. That is a good start and we already are doing that. What we can add:
 - Using icon that reflects more on something natural ex: thunder icon instead of electric meter.
 - Using illustration that will add emotion and feeling. We are all grown kids but we are still kids.
 - The way we talk to our customer maybe going to the more friendly side could bring more human in the purchase journey. "Copy that feels human not robot"

PP
The language and design we use is relatable and makes sense to the USER, personable.

JL
Feels more content focussed, tone of voice
tangible animations (i.e. material design) tactile more real. Interactive

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- Playful elements (on stripe you can spin the globe with your mouse)
- Real photography (reduce stock photo feeling)
- Friendly reassuring language
Use real examples rather than technical jargon
Interactive (200yr timeline)
Etc.
- PJ
we have to dig a bit more about what means younger audience. Would introduce more videos, interactive and intuitive interactions.
Would go for modern way of adding/deleting ect.
- JL
Not sure what this means (I'm very much the wrong demographic). 'Appeal' is difficult. To me, this means being wherever the user wants to go and accessible. Not making a big thing out of expected features.

Nelson Global

Your global partner creating a better world.

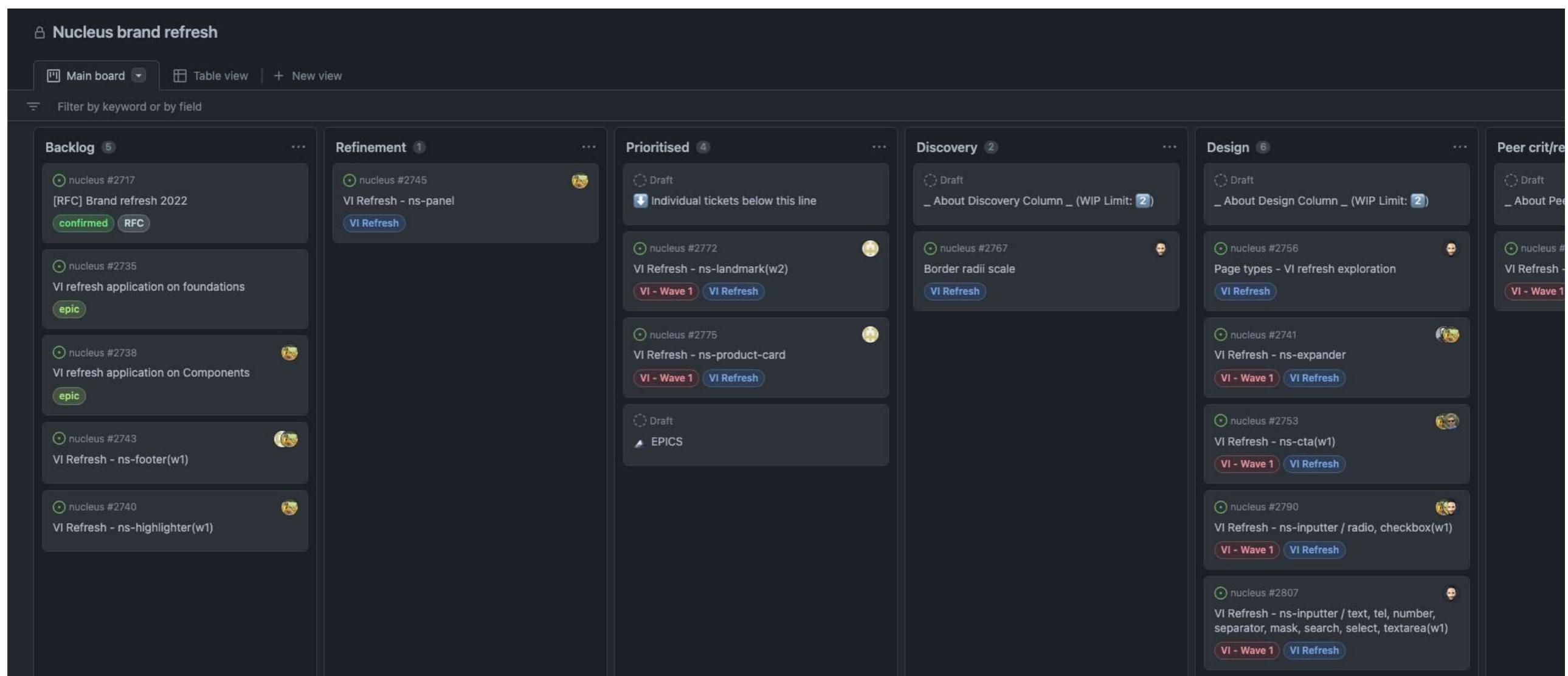
Good for the planet, too

Our digital application uses zero paper and we plant a tree for every policy. Here's to a greener tomorrow.

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Project Setup

To kick start the project, I created a Kanban board on github which is vital for task management, tracking progress, instilling transparency and generating project reports. This kanban board was a reflection of the process, included different phases of a task lifecycle and a backlog of epics and stories picked up by project contributors and taken through the due process.



Nucleus brand refresh

- Main board
- Table view
- + New view

Filter by keyword or by field

Backlog (5)	Refinement (1)	Prioritised (4)	Discovery (2)	Design (6)	Peer crit/review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nucleus #2717 [RFC] Brand refresh 2022 confirmed RFC nucleus #2735 VI refresh application on foundations epic nucleus #2738 VI refresh application on Components epic nucleus #2743 VI Refresh - ns-footer(w1) epic nucleus #2740 VI Refresh - ns-highlighter(w1) epic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nucleus #2745 VI Refresh - ns-panel VI Refresh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Individual tickets below this line nucleus #2772 VI Refresh - ns-landmark(w2) VI - Wave 1 VI Refresh nucleus #2775 VI Refresh - ns-product-card VI - Wave 1 VI Refresh Draft EPICS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft About Discovery Column (WIP Limit: 2) nucleus #2767 Border radii scale VI Refresh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft About Design Column (WIP Limit: 2) nucleus #2756 Page types - VI refresh exploration VI Refresh nucleus #2741 VI Refresh - ns-expander VI - Wave 1 VI Refresh nucleus #2753 VI Refresh - ns-cta(w1) VI - Wave 1 VI Refresh nucleus #2790 VI Refresh - ns-inputter / radio, checkbox(w1) VI - Wave 1 VI Refresh nucleus #2807 VI Refresh - ns-inputter / text, tel, number, separator, mask, search, select, textarea(w1) VI - Wave 1 VI Refresh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft About Peer review nucleus #2750 VI Refresh - ns-panel epic

Discovery Research

Demographics

I worked with the data analyst to better understand the core audience of the brand's product and services. I got my hands on the required demographics which were key to identifying the shortcomings in the current design and to serve a better user experience.

Behavioral science

We partnered with Cowry consultancy, an agency focused on the behavioral sciences on brand's communication. We used Cowry's research to shape up the project while keeping the key discoveries of this research in mind.



3. Each behavioural principle is matched with British Gas' tone of voice, where each page explains the evidence, key takeaways and a practical example.

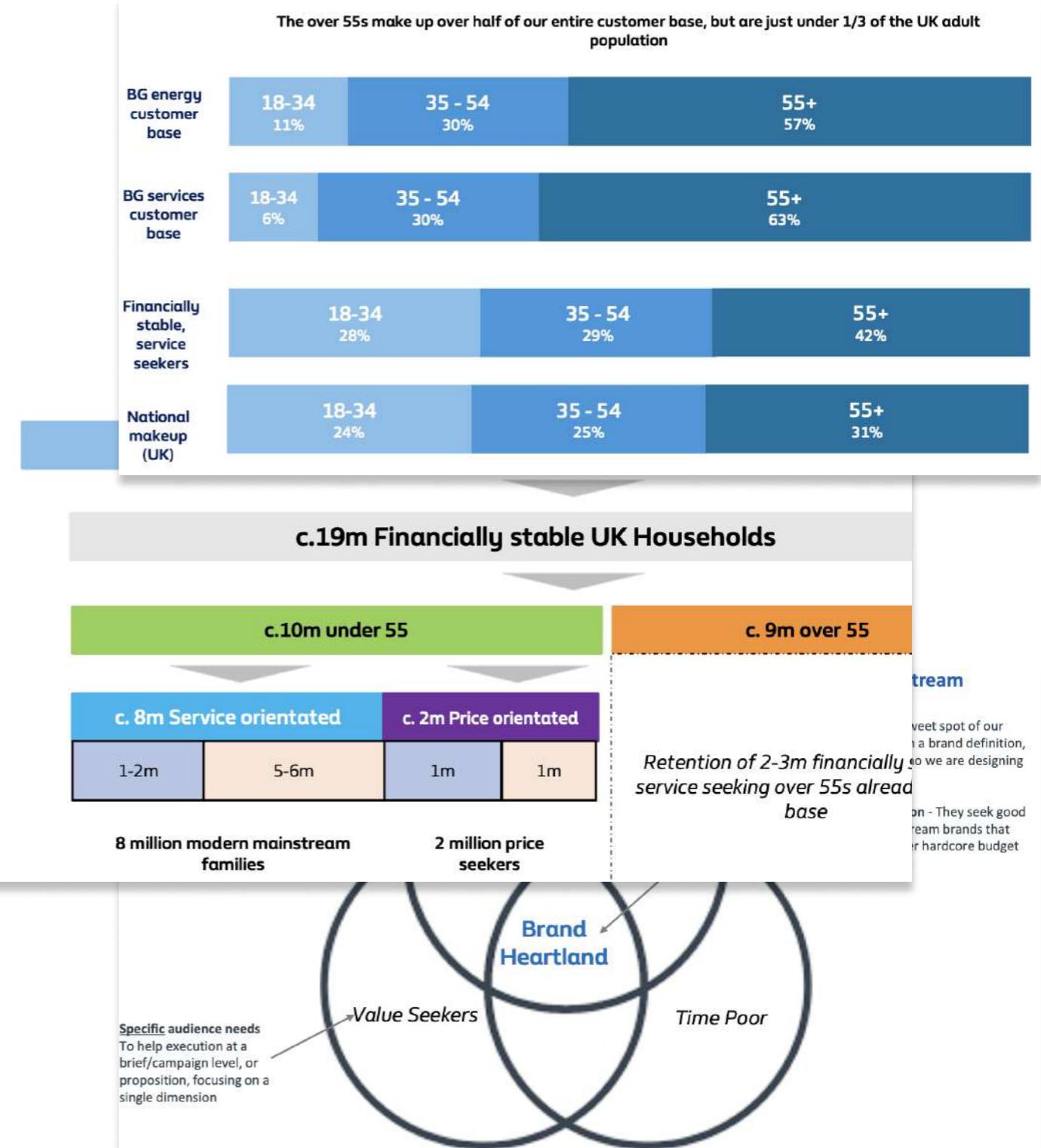
Behavioural principle: What is this page about and what does the customer need based on this?

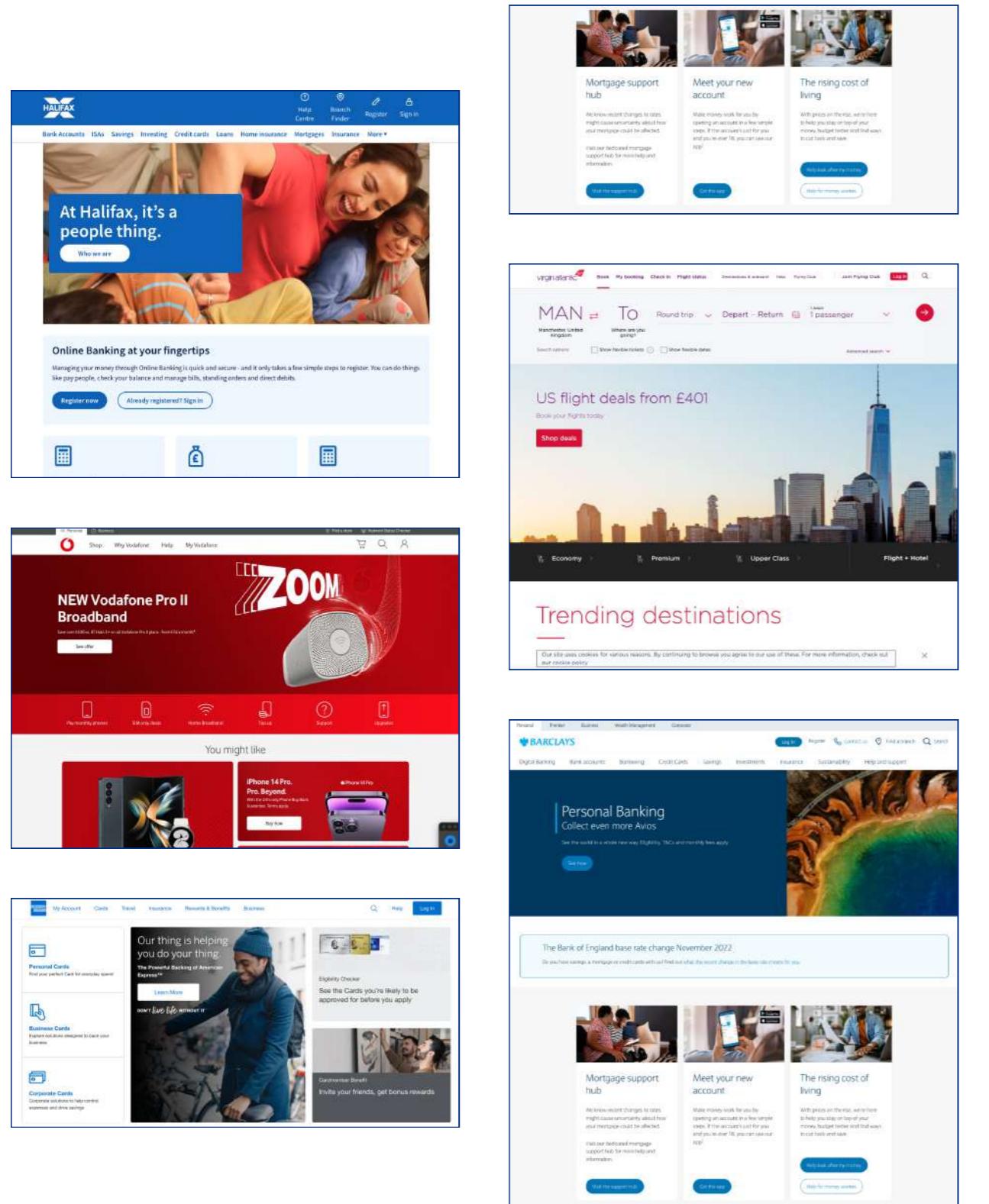
Visual hierarchy: **Visual hierarchy** is the way we read documents. The placement of text and images on a page influences the way we process information. By arranging content in a clear and logical structure, you can guide the eye and make it easier for the brain to process the information.

Tone of Voice: Does this behavioural principle relate to being: Confident, Authoritative, Helpful or Confident?

Key take-away: Use sufficient whitespace to chunk up different elements and paragraphs on a letter or email.

Exploration and Key Takeaway: Both the behavioural science and practical explanation is shown here, for which the references can be found on page 41 of this guide.





Lateral and competitor analysis

Lateral and competitor analysis was completed to understand how others cope with a strong brand colour and personality.

What we learned

The Good

- Starting with confidence (First impressions)
- Create a strong vertical rythym “unfold the story”
- Create movement and energy with layouts, contents and components
- Be more human

The Bad

- Fully blocks pages (wireframe feeling)
- Coldness
- Repetitive pattern

Principles

A principle is a proposition or value that is a guide for behaviour or evaluation.

Following the discovery research, we agreed on the following set of principles to drive the design thinking and applied these throughout the visual identity refresh exercise.

01 First Impressions

Present Brand Personality above the fold and let the brand shine at users first glance

02 Brilliantly Simple

Communicate the message in the simplest way possible

03 Content Matters

Content should be meaningful and adhere to the tone of voice principles

04 Supporting Media

Use media that complements the context and not just decoration

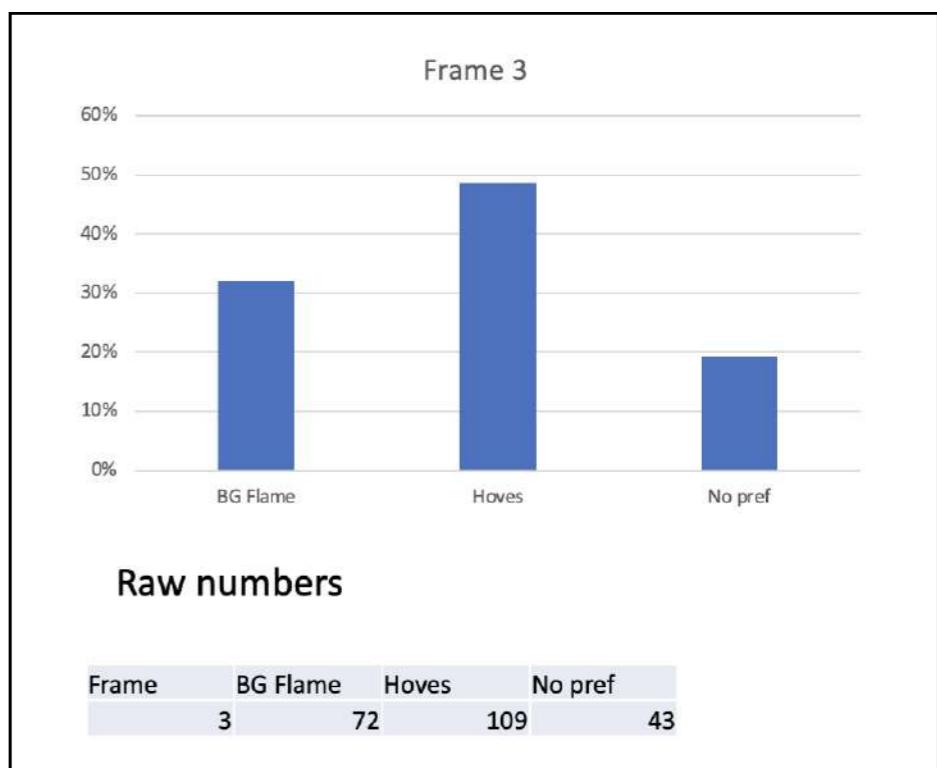
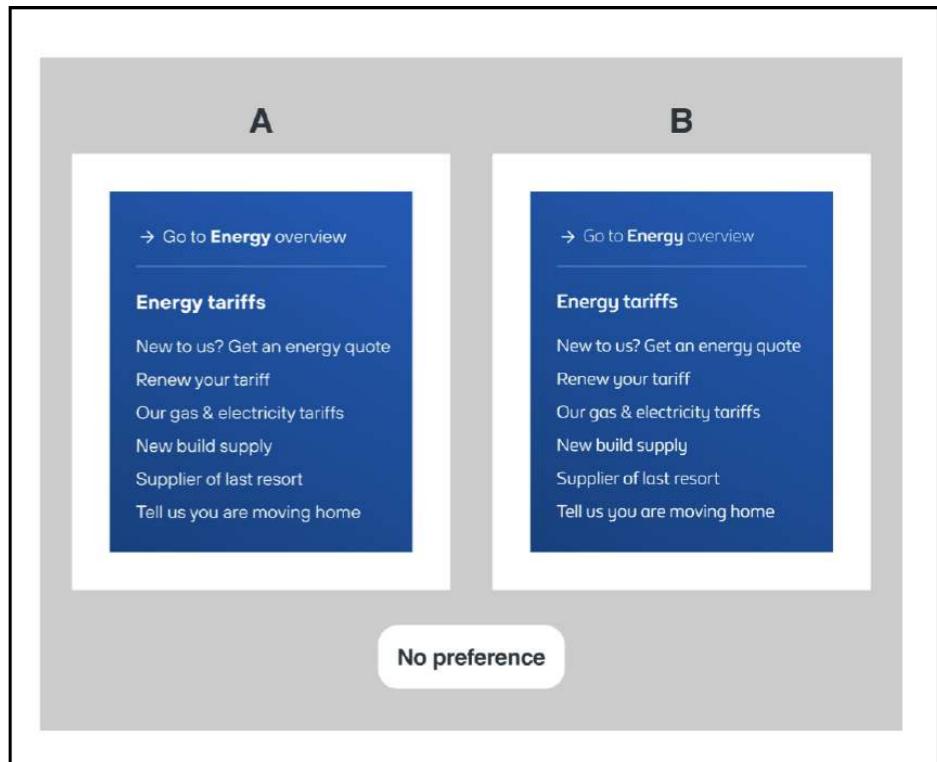
Discovery and testing

We decided to test some core changes with users first. These changes were foundational changes that would effect almost all parts of the refreshed design system and we wanted to be sure that it would work with the end users before committing to the changes.

Below are some of the fundamental changes we user tested before we would apply them on the whole scale.

- Typeface readability (TT Hoves vs BG flame)
- New colour palette compliance and application
- A brand recognition test with the single flame logo on mobile

The test findings gave us some answers on what to apply and what to improve on further before applying. A few more iterations were done and tested before we got confident on what changes to carry forward.

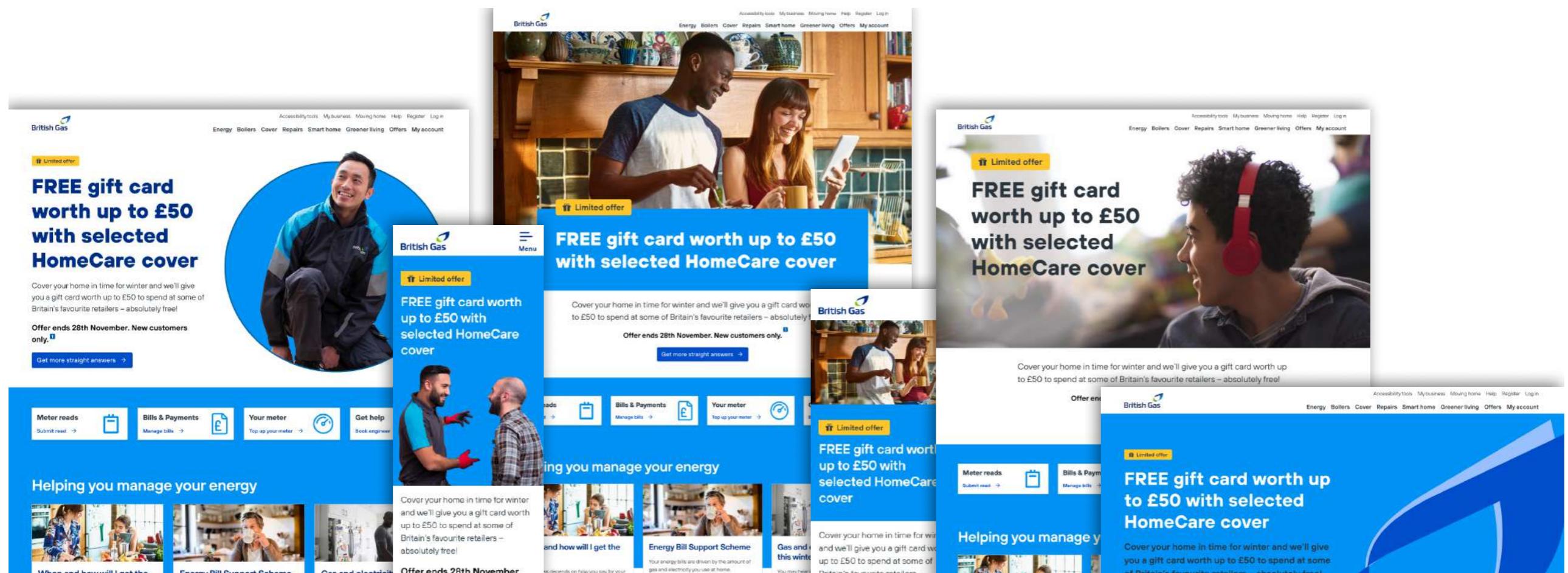


Explorations

We got our initial answers through stakeholder feedback and discovery testing, now it was time to jump on exploring the ideas and paint them down on canvas.

I setup shared explorations space within a new Figma team/project where designers began collaborating and started contributing with their opinions keeping the defined principles in mind.

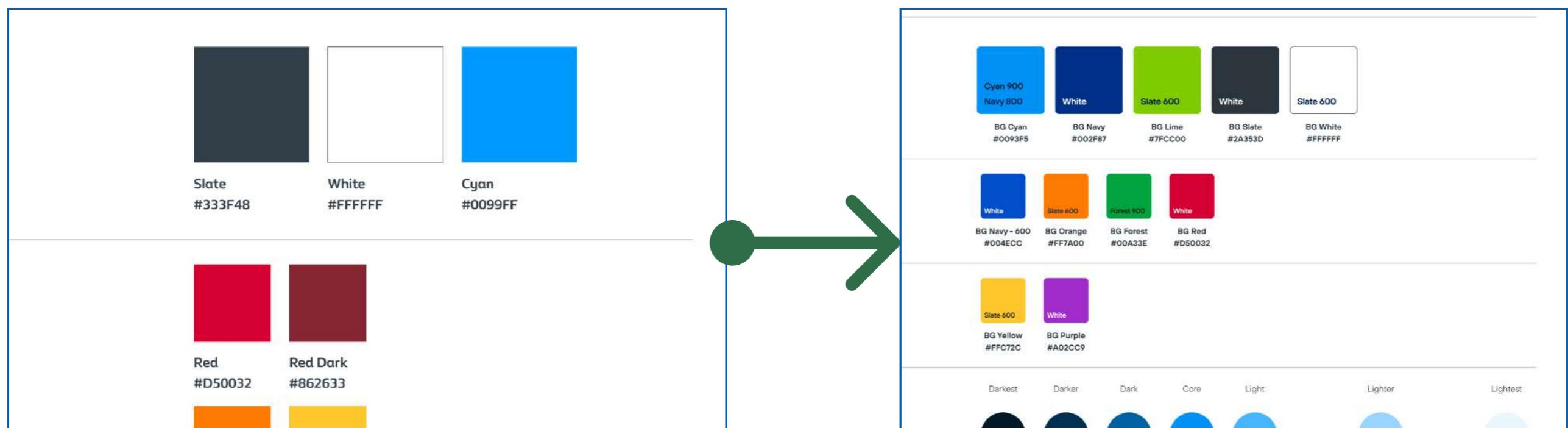
We quickly turned around some of the focus areas of British Gas website with treatment of Brand refresh principles on top.



Design System Refresh

In parallel I ran another task which was to register the new refreshed design decisions in form of design tokens. These decisions include colours spectrum, typography scale, spacing, border radii etc.

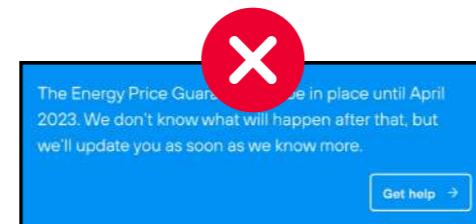
I branched out from the Foundations library of the design system and applied all these design tokens in. This gave designers a green signal on using the components with refreshed core styling.



Points of failure

We encountered some of the failing points in terms of design accessibility and feasibility as we tested some explorations.

- Primary colour is not fully compliant with dark and light text colours.
- Sharp corners could be perceived as not very inviting.
- Stock feeling on the imagery, need a bespoke photoshoot of engineers and customers.



- Users fed back on some explorations that sections of the page are highlighted and have too much stuff and it feels overwhelming.
- The content is very text heavy, need more relevant visuals.

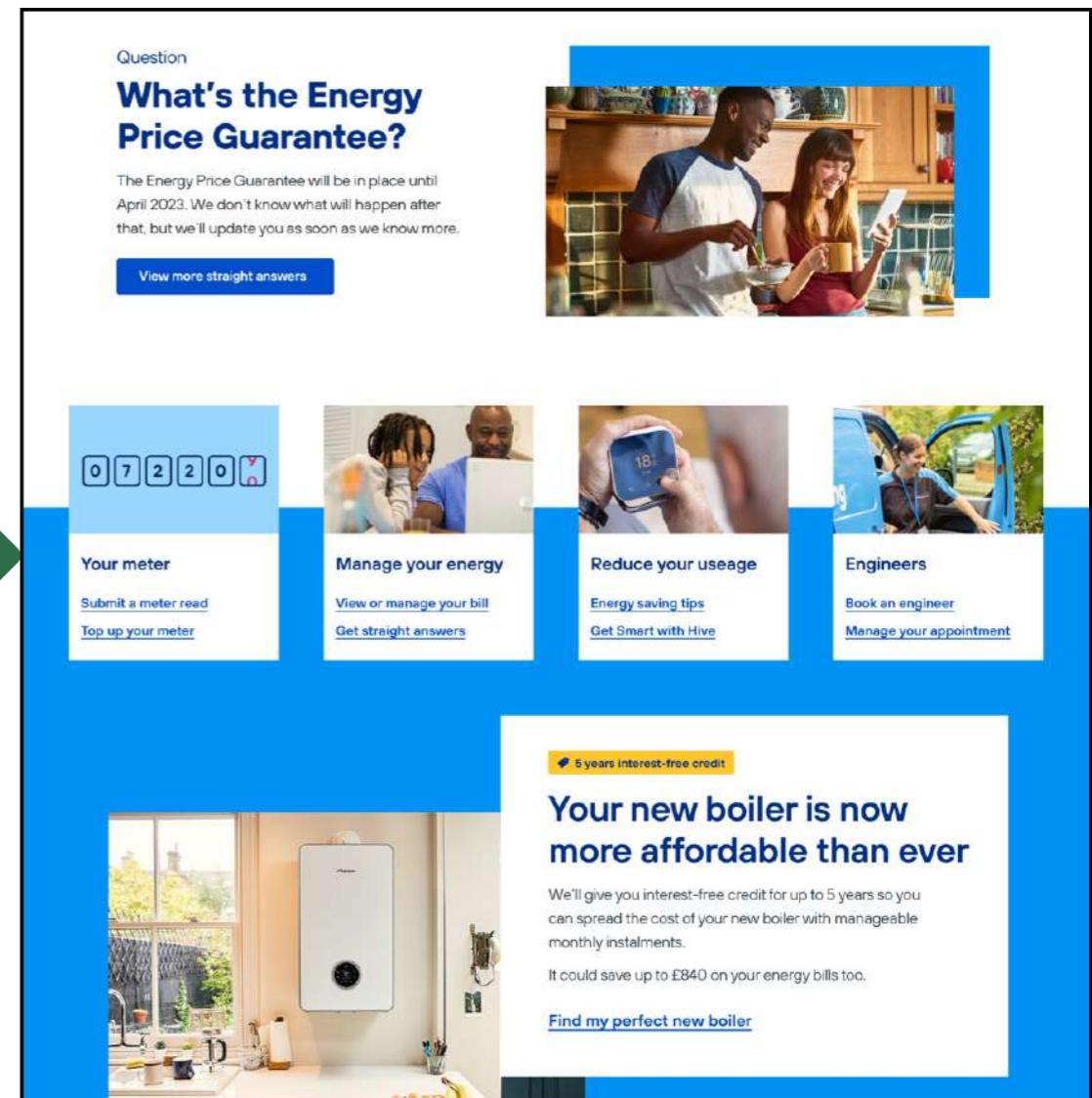
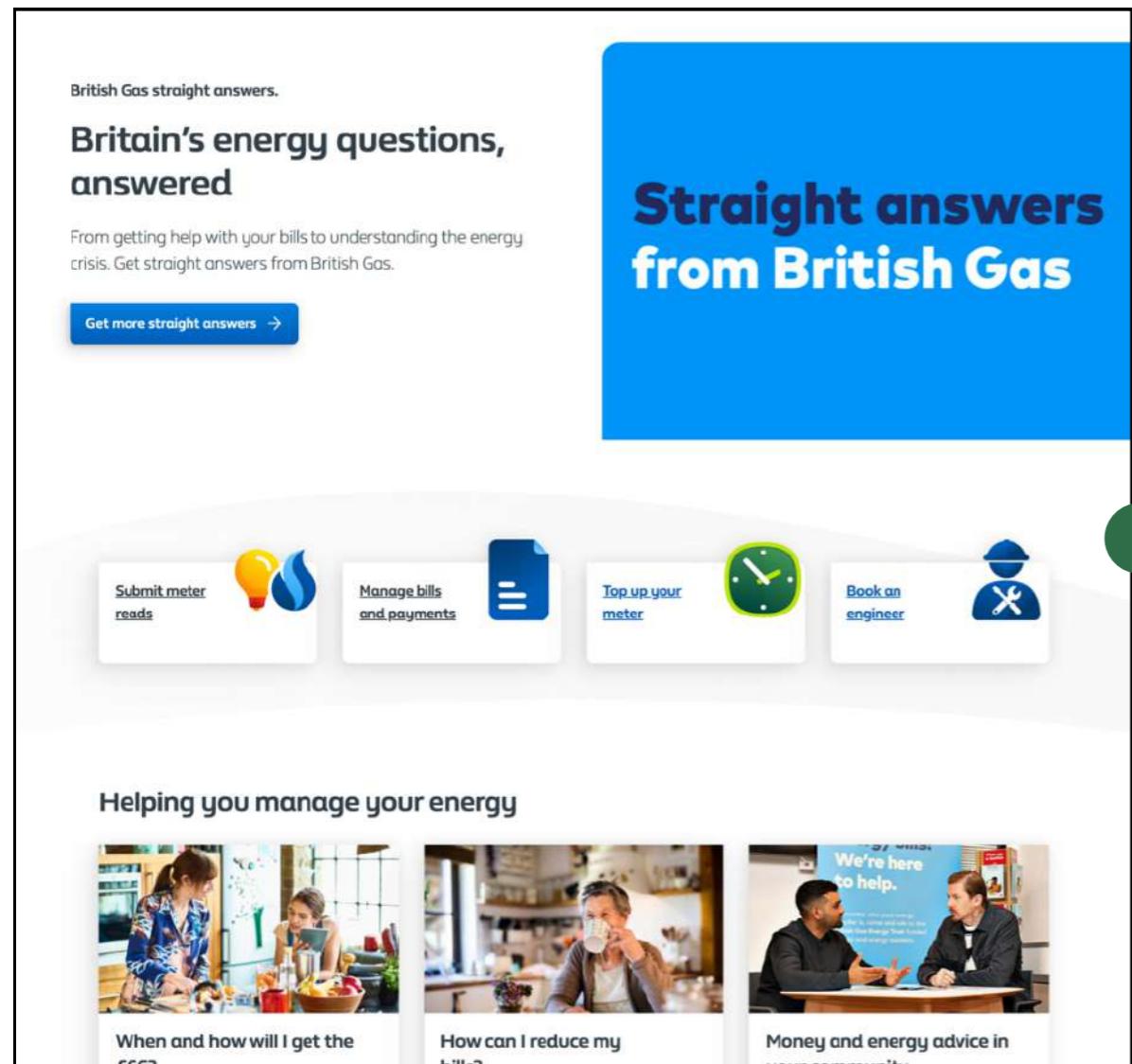


- Seriously – it – A heat pump generates about 3.5kWh of heat for every 1kWh of electricity used. That's 350% efficiency
- Built to last – Air source heat

We went back to the drawing board to iterate on the designs and solve the issues we encountered. We managed to address the shortcomings that were highlighted through some more cycles of iteration, peer feedback and testing.

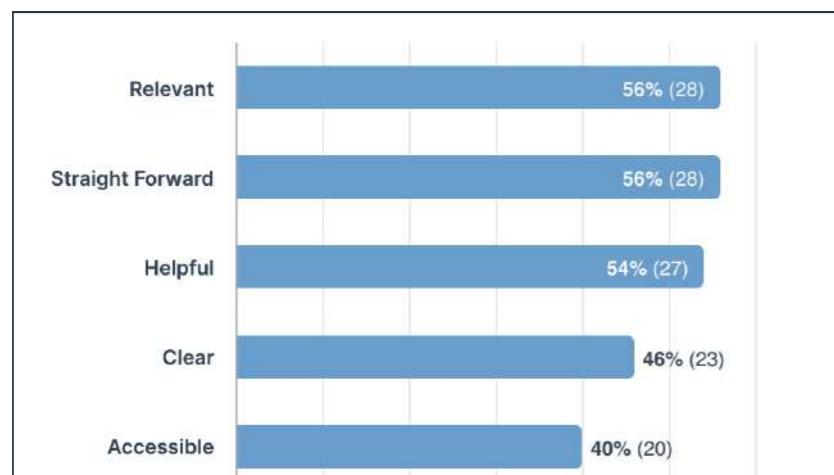
First Draft

The team managed to transform the existing design into the new refreshed design with new design vision by putting researched design explorations together from different areas.



Validating design

Newly curated designs needed some validation. I worked with the UX researcher and ran some usability tests on the designs to get some data which helped in refining the designs. We used **Userzoom** to run several tests including desirability test and some usability tests collecting user reactions.



"A longer page, but with plenty of information, easy to read and find the details I may want."



"A lot of useful tips and information on how to help manage and reduce energy use which is very relevant with the current uncertainty and high energy bills"



"It seemed to show everything that I could want - headings to send me to all the places that I would need to find the answers to any queries I might have"



What's happening with the Energy Price Guarantee?

The Government has announced a change to the **Energy Price Guarantee**. So from April 2023 to April 2024, the average bill will be around £3000 per year depending on your energy usage. They've also announced that they'll continue to help households with their energy bills from April 2023. The current **Energy Price Guarantee** will be in place until 31st March 2023 and you'll still receive the Government monthly discounts this winter.





How will I get the £66 payment?

The process

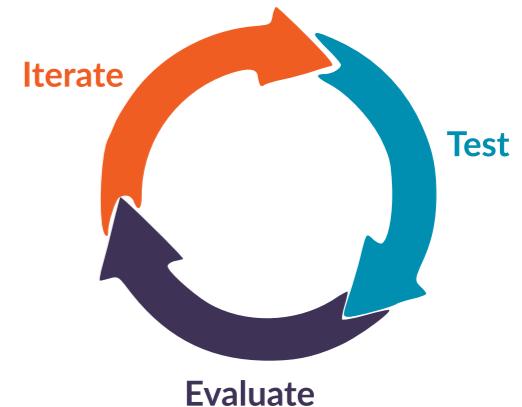
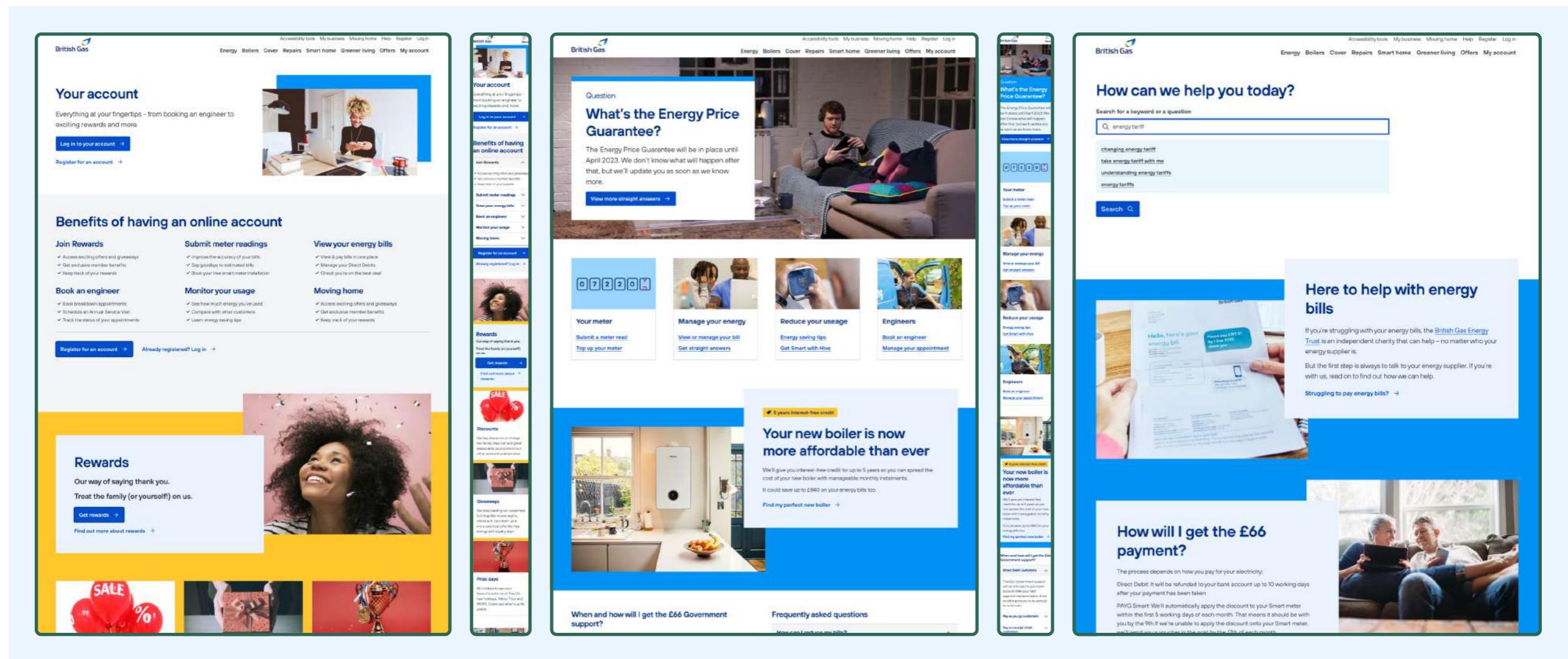
The process depends on how you pay for your electricity:

- Direct Debit**: It will be refunded to your bank account up to 10 working days after your payment has been taken.
- PAYG Smart**: We'll automatically apply the discount to your Smart meter within the first 5 working days of each month. That means it should be with you by the 9th. If we're unable to apply the discount onto your Smart meter, we'll send you a voucher in the post by the 17th of each month.

Iteration cycle and Result

The team analysed the test data and user feedback to identify areas for improvement. We did a few more iterations and cycled through the test and evaluation.

This gave us a refined and polished draft to work with and set it as a precedent from which we applied the learnings to the other areas. Below are the results we accumulated on the back of research & discovery, exploration and testing.

Next steps

- Roll out VI changes into Design System
- Update documentation
- Apply the new VI across all areas of the website
- Move to more Qualitative testing
- Further explore other areas/components with the new VI

