

Front end development standards



Gwyn Jones - Lead Front End Developer

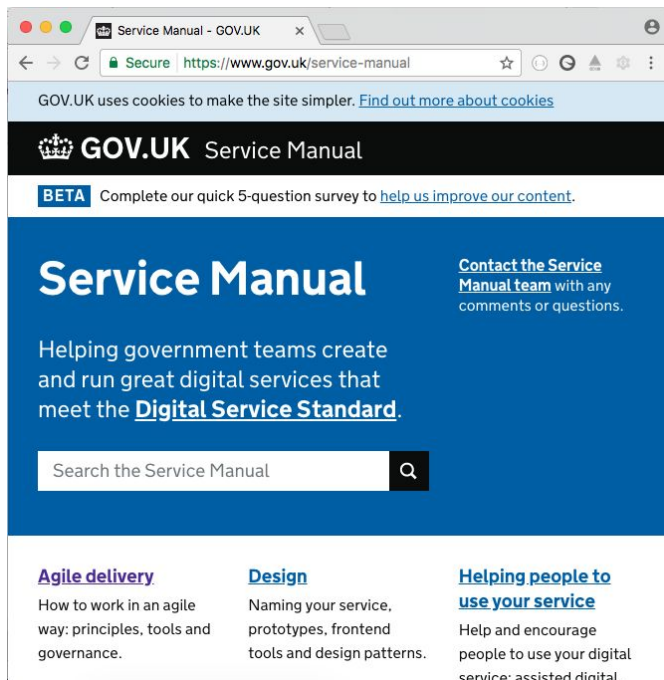
1. The Service Manual

GDS lead ‘Digital’ in Government

“The Government Digital Service (GDS) is part of the Cabinet Office. Our job is digital transformation of government. **We’re a centre of excellence in digital, technology and data, collaborating with departments to help them with their own transformation.** We work with them to build platforms, **standards**, and **digital services**. We always start with user needs. We are agile. We work to a set of Design Principles that guide us in everything we do. We believe in working openly, because making things open makes them better.”

<https://gds.blog.gov.uk/about/>

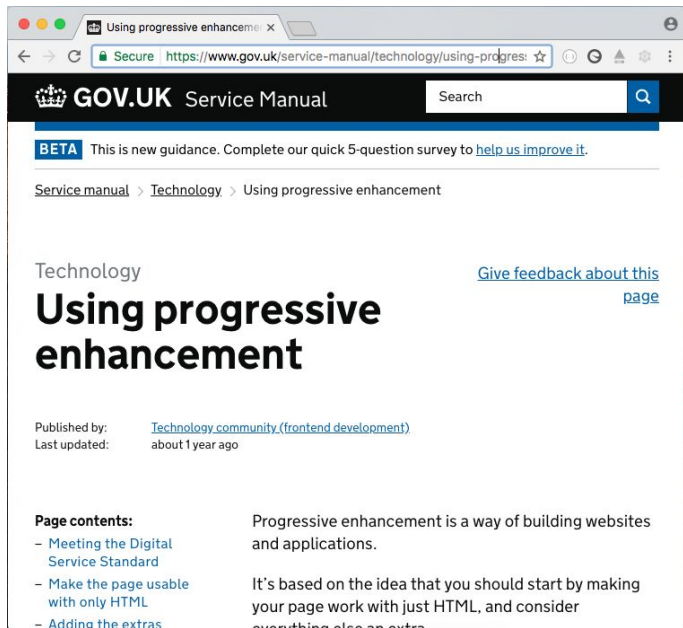
Service Manual



- Covers everything from User Research and Agile delivery to “Technology”
 - Software development processes, testing, hosting, protecting user information (and much more), including **Building Your Service: The Frontend**
 - Progressive enhancement
 - Accessibility
- The Service Manual team are keen to keep the manual relevant, can be contacted and will help
- **All developers should ensure they are familiar with relevant sections of the Service Manual**

<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual>

Use progressive enhancement



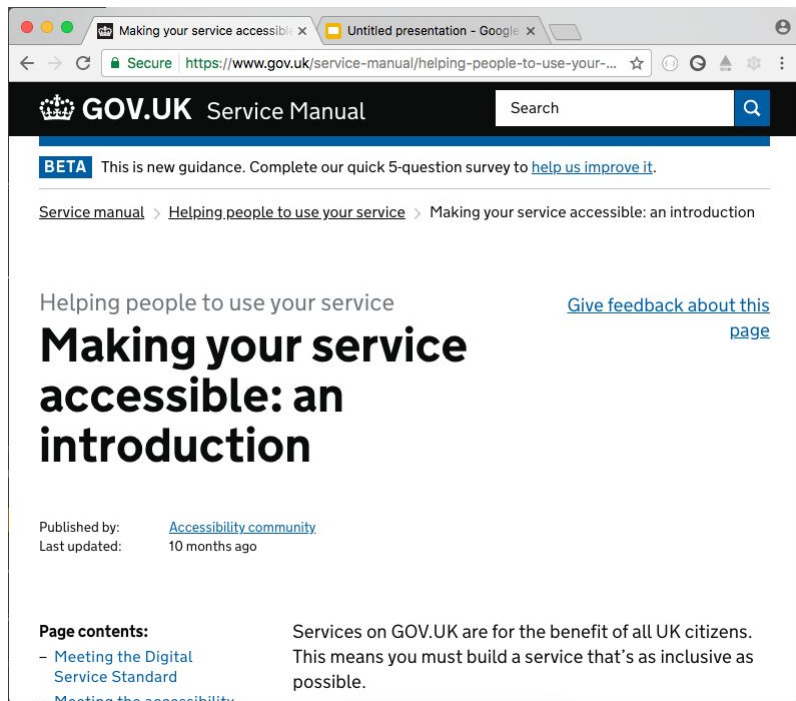
The service manual is clear that government websites should use progressive enhancement.

If you're not familiar with progressive enhancement, it's way of building websites and applications which reflects the resilience of the component technologies

The approach and its benefits is nicely described by Jeremy Keith here <https://vimeo.com/166790296>

**2. We have a legal duty
to ensure our services
meet accessibility
requirements**

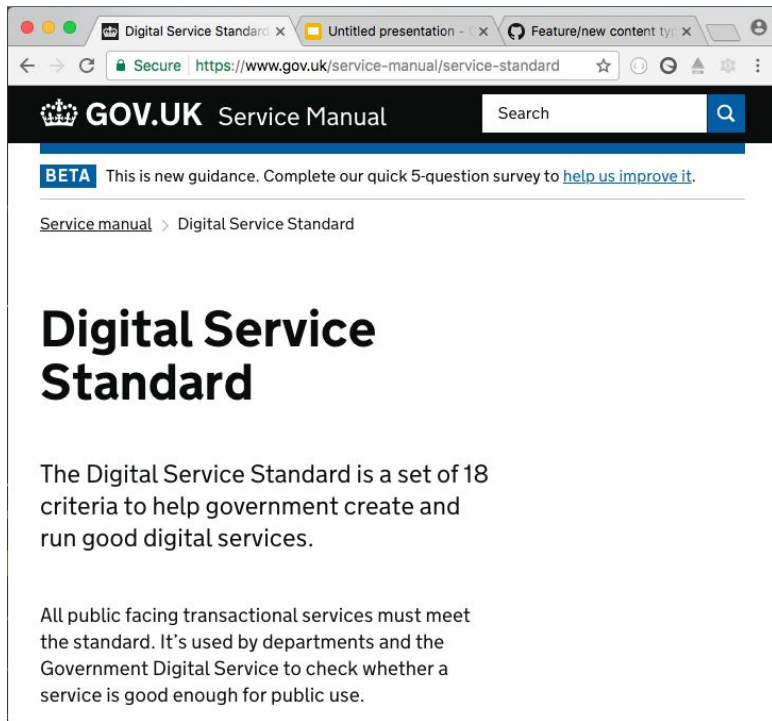
Service Manual - Accessibility



All developers should ensure they are familiar with Service Manual guidance on accessibility

3. Digital by Default Service Standard

Digital Service Standard



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the following elements:

- Browser tabs:** "Digital Service Standard", "Untitled presentation", and "Feature/new content type".
- Address bar:** "Secure https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/service-standard".
- Header:** "GOV.UK Service Manual" with a search bar containing the text "Search".
- Beta banner:** "BETA This is new guidance. Complete our quick 5-question survey to [help us improve it.](#)"
- Breadcrumbs:** "Service manual > Digital Service Standard".
- Section Header:** "Digital Service Standard".
- Text:**

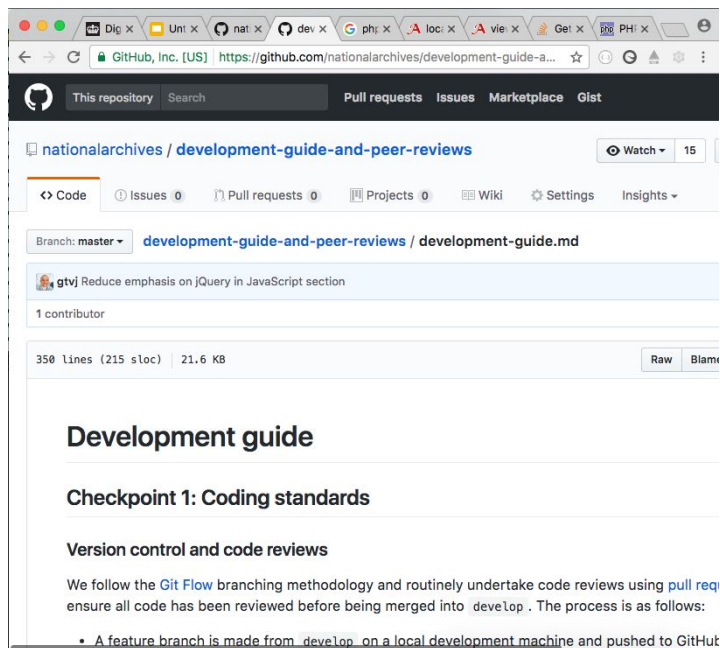
The Digital Service Standard is a set of 18 criteria to help government create and run good digital services.

All public facing transactional services must meet the standard. It's used by departments and the Government Digital Service to check whether a service is good enough for public use.

- 18 criteria to help government create and run good digital services
- Formal assessment: ½ day at GDS with GDS panel (Discovery has passed a Service Standard Assessment)

3. Front end development standards

The National Archives Development Guide



- A ‘living’ guide - open for contributions via Pull Request.
- Builds upon and compliments the guidance provided by GDS
- Framed around Progressive Enhancement with accessibility reflected at every stage

The Development Guide checkpoints

1. Checkpoint 1: Coding Standards

- Version control and code reviews (GitHub and Pull Requests); Architectural considerations (ROCA); WordPress coding style for PHP; Testing

2. Checkpoint 2: We meet needs using HTML

- General HTML principles; HTML5 syntax style; outlines and semantics; order; forms; tables; SVGs; images; ARIA;

3. Checkpoint 3: Enhance with CSS

- General principles; user focus; SASS; formatting; print CSS

4. Checkpoint 4: Enhance with JavaScript

- General principles; DOM abstraction strategies; form validation

5. Checkpoint 5: Pre-release checks

- WCAG 2.0 compliant at AA; testing across browsers, devices and contexts;

**Remember: It's
important we get front
end development right.
Ask if you need help or
advice. People will be
happy to help.**