

## Employer Services Directorate Intranet Web Site Review

### Statement of Purpose

The DWP Intranet is currently being redesigned within the Stellent Content Management System, to improve the look and management of DWP Intranet sites. John Baton at EDS has conducted a review.

According to the Communications Department, 'The DWP home page will change first then other Directorates will slowly follow.'

This review has been conducted to critically analyse the current status of the ESD Intranet site and thus begin the process of constructive dialogue that may make a contribution to critical feedback for any future plans to the ESD site.

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### Introduction

The primary objective of the ESD Intranet web site is '*enabling effective communications across the Directorate, support to colleagues in the field and key stakeholders across Jobcentre Plus, and to inform anyone who has an interest in our work.*' (Mark Grimshaw, ESD Home Page).

For any form of Electronic Publishing to function and *remain* an effective tool of communication, navigational design integrity and up-to-date, relevant information that reflects the activities of the online community should be considered paramount. After a review of the ESD Intranet web site, I believe that the following problems undermine it's primary objective.

1. Inconsistent design and layout.
2. Degradation of the html and Design structure
3. Unnecessary duplication of navigation links to the same data.
4. Out-of-date data, missing data and broken links to data.
5. A lack of up-to-date information about the activities of the various Directorates and its Teams.

## Summary

The review focuses on two main areas. Design and Content.

A Design Make-over can solve many of the current problems; that is restoring a degree of design integrity to the navigational structure and thus ease of access to information that already exists on the web site. However, the issue of collecting and implementing up-to-date content may require additional resources of time from personnel who perhaps, already have busy schedules.

## Design and Layout

The primary problem with the current ESD site is lack of consistency in layout and navigation structure. I have reviewed several pages in Dreamweaver that reveal a degree of html degradation. That is, nested framesets that either contain no data at all or appear to have lost their formatting. In short, the site lacks a strong Brand Identity that is established on the Home Page and maintained consistently throughout the site.

Substituting them with smaller, rollover navigation buttons or implementing text hyperlinks as the common paradigm of navigation could improve the Home Page navigation graphics. Whatever solution is chosen, it is important to decide what navigation links remain consistent throughout the ESD site. That is, links to other parts of the site that appear on every page. Equally as important is that they remain in the same location on every page. As a visitor goes deeper into the structure of the site and visits different Divisions and Teams, a separate navigation interface must be incorporated into the layout to accommodate new links to content that are relevant to that particular section of the site. (See Towards A Solution below).

## Examples

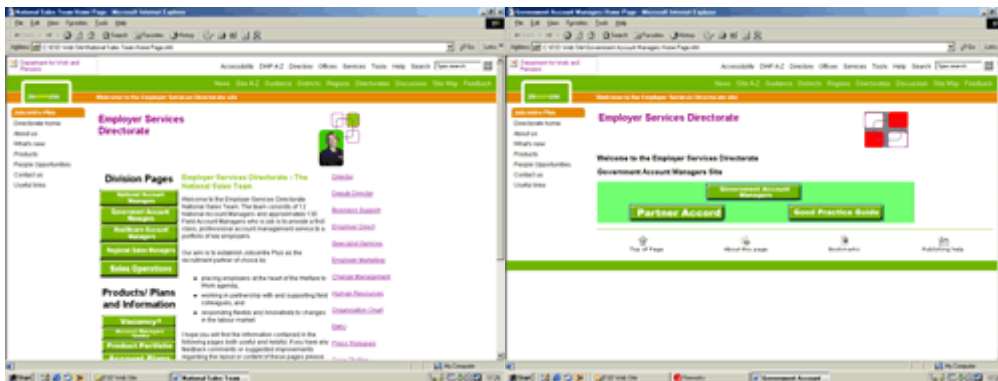
### 1. Navigation

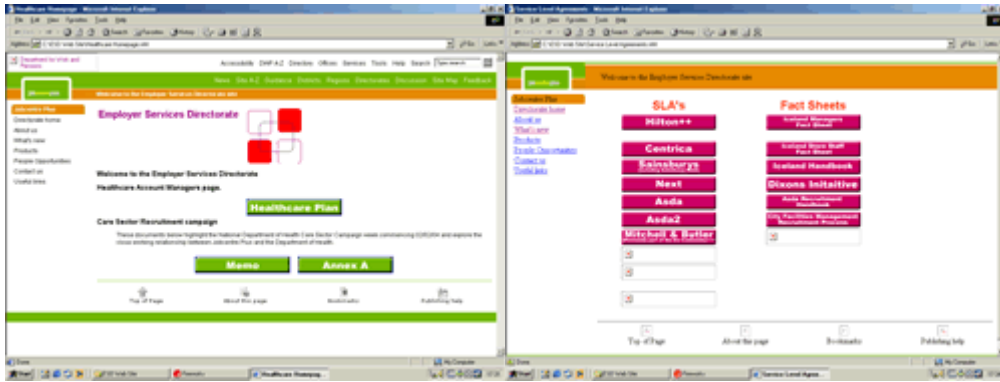
At the moment on the Home Page, hyperlinks are used on the left of the page to access relevant information, yellow and pink graphics are used on the top and to the right of the page to access information in the second tier of the site. These graphics are replaced at lower levels in the site by green and in places burgundy navigation buttons that are relevant to linked data in that particular Division. (See Fig. 1 & 1a. below).

Fig 1.



Fig 1a.

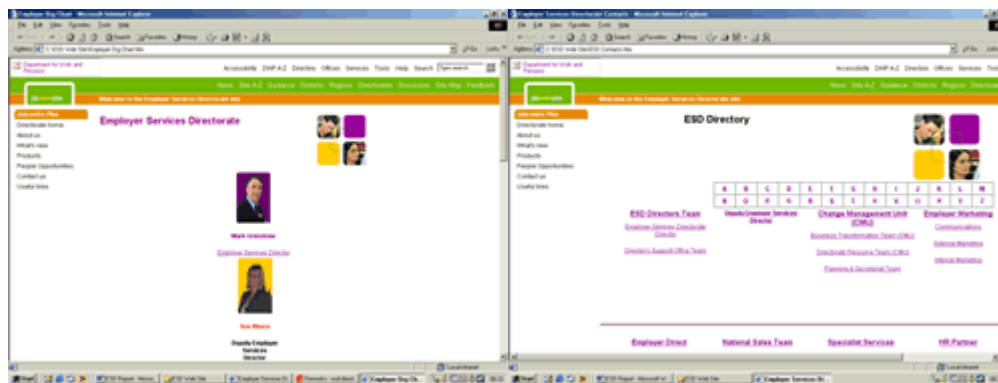




This inconsistency not only undermines the ESD Brand, it also leads to confusion as visitors attempt to navigate and access the information on the site. Viewing data on a site should appear as lateral, or a move on a horizontal plane rather than a vertical one. The location of the navigation structure represented by the green graphical interface is inconsistent throughout the lower levels of the site contributing to the feeling of descent – a vertical move. There is an implicit sense of increasing chaos.

Deleting the current graphics and redesigning the site navigational structure in a more logical and consistent manner as described earlier can go some way to solving the problem.

Fig. 2.

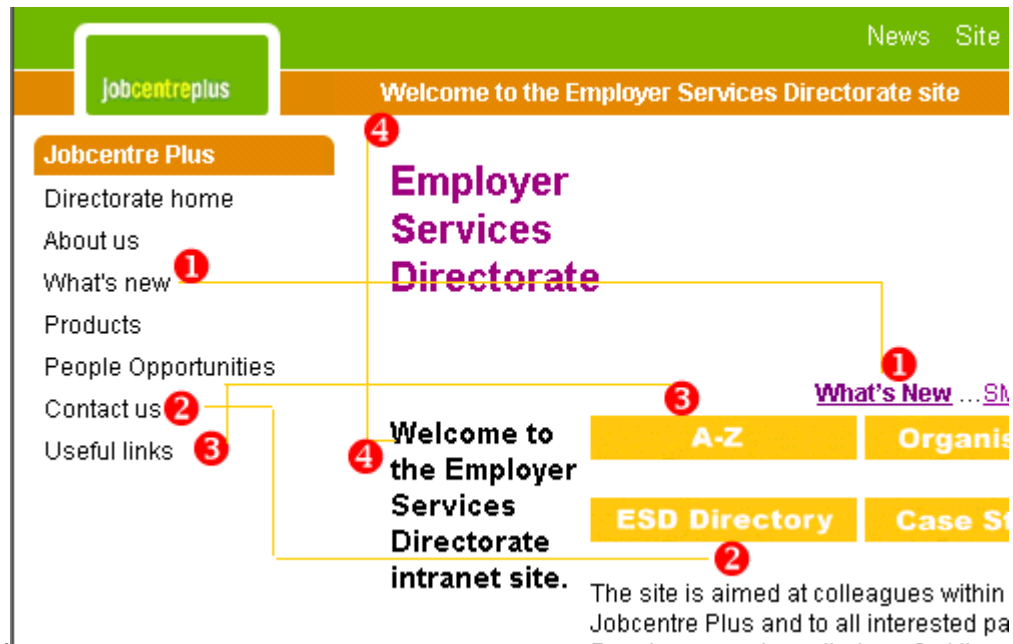


The pages containing the hierarchal Organisational Structure of ESD and the ESD Directory shown above in Fig. 2 are examples of valuable information on the ESD site. However, both pages need reformatting to repair structural degradation and trapped white space. Sometimes the graphic at the top of the page floats around in the middle of the page and sometimes it is offset to the right. This occurs regularly throughout the site. The floating position of the Right People, Right Job graphic is another example of layout inconsistency.

## 2. Duplication

On the Home Page, navigation links to the same data are duplicated three times and the Welcome message is also repeated for no apparent reason or design logic. (See Fig. 3 below).

Fig 3.

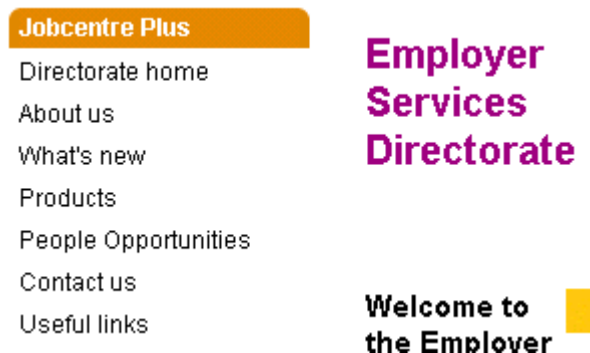


1. What's New duplicated link. Once as a hyperlink at top of page and again in the Sidebar navigation links. **Recommendation:** delete hyperlink.
2. Contact Us link on Sidebar is a duplicate link of the ESD Directory yellow navigation button. **Recommendation:** Delete ESD Directory link.
3. Useful Links page in Side-bar Navigation. Repeated link with A-Z yellow navigation button. **Recommendation:** Delete A-Z navigation button.
4. Welcome message duplicated. **Recommendation:** Delete text message in page and leave message in title bar. This is repeated throughout the site.

### 3. Navigation Clarity

The left hand side navigation bar is titled 'Jobcentre Plus' and as the ESD site is explored, it is not clear whether that sidebar refers to navigation links within the Jobcentre Plus site or the ESD site and may be the reason for the introduction of the duplicated links. (See Fig. 4 below)

Fig. 4.

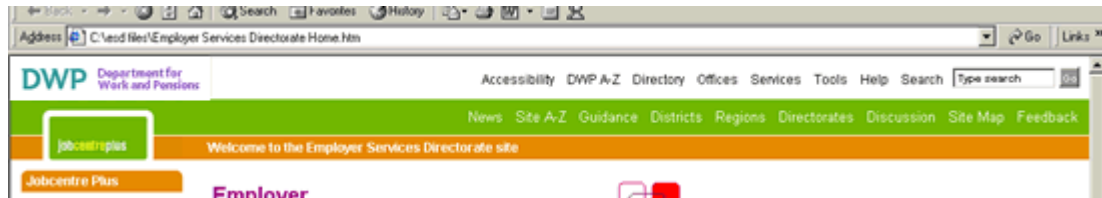


This can easily be clarified by replacing the Jobcentre Plus text at the top of the navigation panel with Employer Services immediately identifying the hyperlinks below as links to Employer Services Directorate data.

#### 4. DWP Parent Site

The Job Centre Plus web site is nested beneath primary links to the parent DWP site. This format is repeated in the Appeals Service site <http://intranlink/appeals/index.htm> but not in the Child Support Agency site <http://intranlink/csa/index.htm> which recently won an award (see Index 3) or Pension Service sites. <http://intranlink/pensions/index.htm>. (See Fig. 5. below).

Fig 5.

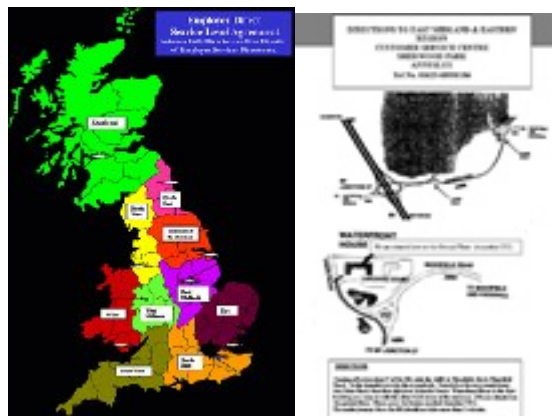


If strong Branding is desirable for the JCP site, a question for further discussion is whether access to all the primary DWP navigation is necessary throughout the JCP site when the parent site could be accessed with one click with the addition of DWP Home hyperlink or hyperlinked logo which appears in a consistent location throughout the JCP site.

See example; DWP Intranlink logo below the navigation bar on the Child Support Agency site. <http://intranlink/csa/index.htm>.

#### 5. Charts & Maps

A consistent style needs to be developed for charts and maps to establish a degree of design integrity to the ESD site.



Software packages like Freehand, Fireworks or Illustrator should be considered to render directional info-graphics instead of scanned diagrams as in this example to the right which provides directions to the East Midlands Customer Service Centre at Annesley.

#### 6. Broken Links

See below for detailed list.

##### 1. Home Page

Link from the Home Page to [Press Releases](#) (Yellow navigation button), goes to a page that then links further on to the actual Press Releases. [Click To View](#).

**Recommendation:** Create link directly to the Press Releases and eliminate unnecessary page.

## 2. National Sales Teams

- A. Path:/Service Level Agreements/Fact sheets. No link to four categories.
  - a. Iceland Managers Fact Sheet
  - b. Iceland Store Staff Fact Sheet
  - c. Iceland Handbook
  - d. City Facilities Management Recruitment Process. [Click To View](#)
- B. National Sales Team Home/Sales Operations. [Click To View](#). Link not connected.
- C. National Sales Team Home/Account Managers Toolkit. All links on the page are broken.
  - a. Dashboard
  - b. Employer Engagement Flow
  - c. Pipeline Guidance
  - d. Pipeline
  - e. Account Plan Template
  - f. Field Account Managers Prospects
  - g. Weekly Call Plan. [Click To View](#)
- D. National Sales Team Home/NAM Caseloads.
  - a. Janis Jones. 27 links to employers, part of caseload. 15 with no link attached.
  - b. Paul Foley. 1 link out of 11 are live to his caseloads. [Click To View](#)

## 3. Employer Business Support

Link to Directory repeated throughout the body of text instead of once in side bar.

## 4. NHEU Page

NHEU link to Job Bank. Missing link. [Click To View](#).

## 5. Specialist Services

- A. Employer Diversity Managers.
  - 1. Missing link to Good Practice Navigation Button. [Click To View](#)
- B. Sector Page.
  - 1. IT Navigation Button = no link attached.
  - 2. Utilities Navigation Button = no link attached. [Click To View](#)
- C. Page not found when Retail link clicked. [Click To View](#)

## 6. Employer Marketing

- A. Home/Introduction/Contact Details.
  - a. Text on Graphic illegible.
  - b. Text further down the page is yellow and difficult to read. [Click To View](#)
- B. ESD Intranet Work Request Form. Link broken. [Click To View](#) Intranet Error. Page not found.
- C. Good News Stories. Link broken. [Click To View](#) Intranet Error. Page not found.
- D. Case Studies. Link broken. [Click To View](#) Intranet Error. Page not found.

## 7. Change Management [Click To View](#)

Home page needs to be updated with reference to changes in structure and personnel. Directorate Resource Team and Directorate Support Team. No mention of IS/IT Team.

## 8. Human Resources

- A. Multiple missing links in the Induction Pack.
- B. Missing Link. Intranet Error. Page not found. [Click To View](#)
- C. Page not found. *To give you the vital information and to help you understand the context of our business please click here.* [Click To View](#)
- D. Page not found. [Click To View](#) Page not found. *To give you the vital information and to help you understand the context of our business please click here.*
- E. Page not found. Click here to view the [Click To View](#)
- F. Page not found. [Click To View](#)
- G. Training and Development/ Staff Induction. DWP Induction Page not found. [Click To View](#)

Part of the html degradation relates to broken links that again undermines faith in the ESD Brand. Dreamweaver will automatically identify broken links within a site folder and part of the work of cleaning up the site will be to either restore the broken link to the relevant data or remove them if the data no longer exists or is out-of-date.

Standards of electronic publishing in the commercial sector on the World Wide Web should apply equally to an Intranet site.

## Content

Effective communication is not just about the publication of raw data. The private sector equivalent of publishing an online catalogue – this is who we are, this is what we do – under utilises the medium as an effective communication tool. The monitoring of current data and the generation and publication of up-to-date, informative **new content** should be considered a priority if the ESD site is to achieve it's primary objective.

There must be a reason to re-visit the site.

If left to it's own devices without any centralised direction or objectives where even the information that exists on the site is not current, difficult to access or is unreliable, the site descends into a spiral of diminishing returns generating apathy and possibly even derision. It effectively becomes a waste of a potentially valuable resource.

This then raises the problem of collecting, collating and publishing new content.

The Directorate contains a vast pool of knowledge and experience that could be used to provide content. In other words not just, – this is who we are, this is what we do – but also, this is what we are doing.

One possible solution is the formation of an ESD Online Editorial Board. If composed of key members of staff from the various divisions who have the mindset and responsibility for collecting news and information, that data could then be used to update the ESD site on a monthly basis. It would, I believe, begin the process of asserting the site as a forum that is both informative and inclusive. That is, reflects current news, achievements, project related issues and even the social activities of the ESD Divisions and Teams. E.g. Golf, 5-a-Side Football.

If implemented, a design format which easily facilitates the addition of new data on a regular basis is imperative.

Template pages for each sector that could be used for new content is one solution to further structural degradation.

At the very least, personnel at AO level should be given the responsibility of passing on changes in organisational structure or personnel to the individual responsible for publishing material on the ESD site, as and when they occur.

## Further Notes

The welcome message from ESD Director Mark Grimshaw on the Home Page is valid for a limited time frame, and then it becomes somewhat dated and maybe better placed as part of the Director's Page.

Case Studies. The Case Studies read more like Press Releases. They do not give any in-depth information about the problems encountered while achieving goals.

Out-of-date information. The Change Management Unit page does not reflect the changes in structure of personnel. No mention of IS/IT or the activities of the recently merged Planning & Efficiency Team. Kathleen Bulmer is still listed as Team leader of the Business Transformation Team. The Directorate Resource Team and the Director Support Unit should either be moved to the Deputy Director's page or a new page created for them.

A review of the ESD Directory is necessary to ensure the data is current.

## Towards A Solution

The Home Page establishes the navigational structure that is used to guide visitors through a site. In the case of the ESD site, this consists of over 400 pages of information. At this stage, rather than propose a complete redesign of the ESD site, I have mocked up an example which if followed throughout the site would restore a degree of design and navigational integrity to the site structure.



On the Home page, I have established a standard, three-column structure. The left hand navigation bar contains links that remain constant throughout the site. The yellow, pink and green navigation buttons have been deleted and replaced with text hyperlinks. The title of the side bar has been changed from Jobcentre Plus to Employer Services.

The Welcome message by Mark Grimshaw in the middle column has been replaced by a general introduction at the top of the page. Underneath, a one-paragraph introduction to each Division or the first paragraph of a News Item can be followed through to the Division Home page.

The third column contains text hyperlinks to data that are relevant to a particular Division or team and will change as new relevant links are introduced further down in the site structure.

A more efficient use of space for this function might be a Jump Menu of Division or Team related links. See details below.



Hyperlink navigation structure that remains constant throughout the ESD site.

Jump Menu option.

Hyperlink navigation structure that changes within each division/team.

Once an acceptable layout and navigation structure has been established, it can be adapted and applied throughout the site. The choice of hyperlinks instead of a graphical interface should make adding new pages in the future unproblematic as the new category can be typed in and kept within the established design paradigm by the application of established Cascading Style Sheets. (CSS).

## Conclusion

The launch of the DWP redesign, Homepage and top-level pages is expected in July 2004. See this link to view new design (screen examples) for the DWP Intranet site and it's Directorates. [View New Design.](#)

Many of the problems mentioned above appear to have been identified during the course of the DWP Intranet redesign. See WCMS template production. [Template Production](#) and the proposed phasing in of the Stellant web content management system. (WCMS). See below, Index 1.

The question is, will EDS be redesigning the ESD site and reformatting and repairing all of the current content or will that be the responsibility of the Directorate. If the ESD site is to be included in the redesign process the question of timeline is important and whether a temporary makeover is necessary before the finished redesign is implemented.

## Index 1

### 3. What is a web content management system (WCMS)

3.1 A WCMS is a dedicated software tool that that will manage and control the publication of all Intranet content from creation to deletion. It uses functionality such as mandatory fields for metadata, automated workflows, version control and archiving etc. A WCMS is able to deliver content across a variety of platforms and in varying formats.

3.2 A WCMS creates Hyper Text Mark-Up Language (HTML) from a document held in a native format content such as MS Word. The automatically formatted HTML produces desired web-pages using the managed native content. A WCMS empowers content contributors (some of who may not possess design expertise) with the ability to create, manage and publish their own content, it will, as a consequence streamline the publication process.

3.3 A WCMS enables the controlled management of content. By content we mean anything that is likely to be published across an Intranet site. A WCMS makes use of a wide variety of content management functions that includes;

- Creating content explicitly for the web
- Capturing content from legacy documents, production databases and other internal/external sources
- Defining workflows to manage roles and responsibilities for content editing and approval
- Storing and managing the content in a secure and controlled repository
- Creating and managing metadata to catalogue and index the content
- Formatting the content with templates that render them effectively in the PC browser or alternatives (e.g. printers or mobile devices)

3.4 Content management is an umbrella term that encompasses traditional integrated document management with web content management. Content includes documents that do not change and that must be managed in their final form to satisfy legal or regulatory requirements. WCM software was designed to manage content that will be published to a website or to other devices in digital form.

3.5 **Metadata** [link to metadata page of Intranet Services site] is data that is hidden (you can see it though, via a right click) from view, controlling the management of the document/content.

3.6 Authoring - A WCMS gives non-technical users the tools to create and edit web content using web based application without a separate authoring package. This makes it easier to distribute the responsibility of contributing web content out to the business units who own or create that content.

3.6.1 Authors must assign metadata attributes to documents and document component during the authoring process. A WCMS brings many efficiencies for authors, including:

- Ease of use for non-technical users
- The ability to support at least the choice of concurrent users (i.e. authors)
- The ability to separate content from style through the use of form-based templates
- The ability to preview the rendered format of content
- The ability to access content stored in file system
- Has ability to support the choice of content types, including:
  - Hypertext Mark-Up Language (HTML)
  - Microsoft Office documents
  - structured content (e.g. database data)
  - compound documents containing text and graphics
  - PDF documents
  - multimedia (e.g. audio, video or flash files)

## Index 2

### Intranet design

The DWP Intranet Design Team are based in Room 165S, Longbenton, Newcastle upon Tyne. The Team was set up in April 2003 and their main responsibilities are:

- The planning and project management for the Intranet Redesign
- Introduction of usability and accessibility web design standards
- Departmental new media graphic design (development and consultancy)
- Provision of HTML templates for content management implementation
- The set-up and running of the DWP Design Focus Group
- Production of the DWP high-level Intranet Style Guide

The Team are currently working on the DWP Intranet Redesign. The objective of this work is to provide the Department with 'one corporate website'. This aim, which has been endorsed at Executive Team level, will realise four key benefits (CUBA).


Following Redesign, DWP Intranet will be:

- **Consistent** – in screen layout and appearance
- **Usable** – with intuitive navigation so information is found quickly and easily
- **Branded** – sites will have the correct DWP and/or business branding applied
- **Accessible** – content will be accessible to all users regardless of technology used

## Index 3.

The [Child Support Agency's website](#) has been awarded with the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) See it Right Accreditation.

This is the third DWP site to achieve the accreditation which is held by only one other Central Government website.

The two other DWP sites that have this accreditation are [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk) and [www.thepensionservice.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk). 

There are only 48 sites in the world that have met this standard to date.

The award is made to websites which meet recognised standards for their usability and accessibility for the visually impaired.

Earlier this year a Disability Rights Commission report on accessibility issues for websites stressed the importance of taking this subject seriously.