**Really Useful Day**

**Model User Journey**

**Apply to adopt a child through your council**

**LGSL / IL = 160/0**

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: “Apply to adopt a child through your council”.**

**Council pages looked at =**

Camden, Norfolk, North Somerset

**Apply to adopt a child through your council**

This model journey was worked on in **Llandrindod Wells on 30 July 2013**

(Groups looked at Norfolk, Camden, North Somerset websites)

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

* Ability to have a face to face or phone conversation
* Short pages and FAQs
* Ability to filter by the eligibility criteria that is clear-cut (some isn’t clear cut) so you can immediately see if you’re not eligible
* Links to third-party advice and information
* Questions that are direct and simple (not 2 questions in one)
* Clear signposting
* Keep the page action-orientated
* Use “assessment”, not “approval”, as otherwise it implies you will get approval
* Content should be in HMTL, not PDF (if it’s important)
* Potentially share other agencies’ details to help user if not enough children needing adoption at that council

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

* Actions = very far down the page
* Hyperlink in paragraph hard to spot – better as a button?
* A “sales pitch” about the benefits of adoption – not needed if people are at the applying stage
* Land on the “info” page, not on the “apply” page
* Land on a page where you can “express an interest”, not apply
* Search engine optimisation – should be using “I want to adopt”
* Information pack sent to people
* Too many services on one page
* Broken links
* Jargon and clichés
* Word cloud nav – stick to bullet points

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

**Your council**

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**Apply to adopt a child**

Friendly, short, welcoming introduction

**Click to express interest**

**/ request a call back**

**Links to further information**

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**Process of adopting**

**General comments**

* Include eligibility criteria
  + Absolute criteria (eg if you have conviction for child abuse: no)
  + Discretionary criteria: get in touch with us (eg with some criminal convictions, you are still allowed to adopt)
* You may be interested in….
* What to expect pre-approval and post-approval:
  + Timescales (in steps)
  + What we offer, so people can compare to other LAs/ agencies, eg:
    - Type and amount of support
    - Services provided
    - Events