**Really Useful Day**

**Model User Journey**

**Apply for housing benefit**

**LGSL / IL = 69/0**

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 for housing benefit”.**

**Council pages looked at =**

City of York, Flintshire, Fylde, Wrexham, Wyre Forest

**Apply for housing benefit**

This model journey was worked on in **Leeds on 28 September 2012**

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

* Clear language
* Proactive headings rather than product description e.g. “Check if you are eligible to claim” rather than “Benefits calculator"
* Provides a clear guide of the journey
* Minimises steps
* Promotes online above all other contacts

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

* Duplication of information and links
* Self navigation rather than guided
* Written for benefit officers, not the public
* Promotes the service
* Promotes telephone contact
* Too much information not directly relevant to the journey.
* Too much header ‘noise’

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

Big landing page, obvious title

Council site

Work out + claim benefit

Addressed checker (in LA)

* Basic guidance
* Complex steps
* Info you may need to help

Renew or extension

Yes

OK

GO

Change

Anonymous calculation

Save and return

Eligible

No

Personalised proof

What next?

Claim form

Auto appointment

**Apply for housing benefit**

This model journey was worked on in **Crewe on 26 October 2012**

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

**Wyre Forest**

* You can find out if you qualify first, before completing the application form – it’s a useful idea to have the calculator first.

**Flintshire**

* You know you’re on the right page

**Fylde**

* Obvious and simple
* Other information below
* Space well used

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

**Wyre Forest**

* You don’t go straight to the app.
* You have to enter information twice – once for the calculator and then again for the application form, because there is no integration between the two. This page is designed more for the benefit of customer services, rather than for the use of customers.
* Should have a “what information you need to have” checklist

**Flintshire**

* 1st page is wasted and too much text
* Should land on 1st page of form – and the ideal would be an integrated calculator and form

**Fylde**

* No online form – you have to print it out. What about people with no printer?

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

Redesigned application form – integrated to calculator. Asks for financial information first. Then, if you qualify, carries on to collect personal information.

NB. Similar to Flyde, the 1st page of form

**Start Application**

**Related Links**

* Edge cases
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Introductory text and form explanation
* Information / proof needed checklist

**Start Application**

**Housing Benefit**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX Council

Your council header