Expert inspection

Oxfordshire Gateway
Prototype

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A report for
Oxfordshire Gateway Project

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Management Summary

The product and its users

The Oxfordshire Gateway is a web portal enabling Citizens to find local services provided by the Partners in the Oxfordshire E-government Partnership.

It is primarily intended for people who live or work in Oxfordshire, but may also have an appeal for people who are considering doing business in Oxfordshire, moving to the area, or visiting.

The expert inspection

We reviewed an early prototype version of the Gateway from the point of view of general principles of good design in search interfaces, and by considering the possible experience of a variety of people who might visit the site (“the users”).

Recommendations

The functionality of this site has great promise, but this prototype user interface represents the underlying technology more than the tasks or processes of the people who might use it.

There are many specific recommendations attached to this report, but as you work on the next version, here are some general ideas to consider.

- Think about the kinds of questions citizens are likely to have, and how they would be answered by a person working directly with the public.
- Make the “conversation” of the user interface clear and direct.
- Use language that is easily understood by users. Be careful of two different types of specialised terminology that can easily creep in.
- Remember that users may not distinguish between site content provided as a list of authored links and links retrieved by a search.
- Build on users’ frame of reference (and do the usability testing with real users to understand them). Whether they think of the site as a directory, a helpful guide or a bulletin board, use that as the basis of the design.
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There are two Appendices:

Appendix A  Site Vision Questionnaire
Appendix B  User Personas

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1 Introduction

The Oxfordshire Gateway is a web portal enabling Citizens to find local services provided by the seven Partners in the Oxfordshire E-government Partnership.

It is primarily intended for people who live or work in Oxfordshire, but may also have an appeal for people who are considering doing business in Oxfordshire, moving to the area, or visiting.

About the site

The primary value of the site is to provide citizens with a single source for finding information about government services and policies and about various social service and medical businesses and facilities in their area. This functionality is of high value, as finding the information directly might mean visiting several of the sites. Ordinary citizens often do not understand what agencies offer what kinds of assistance, or where to begin their search.

The success of this site depends on two interlocking factors:

- The completeness and robustness of the underlying database and search technologies
- The usability of the interface through which this technology is presented to the people who use the site.

What we did

This review focused on the user interface: how well the capabilities of the site are communicated, and whether they are presented in a way that will produce an excellent user experience. This review did not consider the underlying database or search technologies.

We reviewed an early prototype version of the Gateway from the point of view of general principles of good design in search interfaces, and by considering the possible experience of a variety of people who might visit the site ("the users").

Goals for this site

We completed a 'Site Vision Questionnaire' for the site on the basis of a high-level outline document and our opinions about likely visitors to the site. This is included at Appendix A, for review and discussion.
Usability measures

So far as we know, usability measures have not yet been set for this site. We suggest the following overall proportions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>must find the required service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>speed is important but not the highest priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>a resource people want to come back to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error-tolerant</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>it's OK if people make a couple of mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to learn</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>must be obvious how to use it at a glance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The users

We drew up an initial set of personas to capture a selection of types of visitor to the site, and reasons why they might visit. This is included at Appendix B, for review and discussion.

There was no user participation in this evaluation, as the prototype is at a very early state.

Recommendation 1 We strongly recommend that the next version is tested by participants from Oxfordshire.

This report

The 'observations' section starts with a discussion of appearance: the first impression and accessibility.

We then move into discussion of the first elements of the "conversation", the dialogue created between user and site as users read, spot menus and links, and formulate their next actions.

As search is the dominant element of the conversation, we have grouped together our discussion of the four types of search, the influence of setting your location and presentation of search results.

We have included some specific comments on the supporting pages such as 'contact us'.

Overall, it is important to remember "relationship": is this site meeting its purpose? Does it deliver an appropriate experience for the users?
2 Observations

Initial appearance

Although pleasantly clean in design, the initial appearance is not inviting.

Recommendation 2 Reconsider the colour scheme and layout, particularly for the home page.

Accessibility issues

We checked the initial screen using BrowserCam (www.browsercam.com) and it appeared to render consistently in many browsers. We tried to check it using a screen reading emulator (http://www.ucc.ie/cgi-bin/uncgi/blind) but for some reason the emulator was not able to open the demonstration pages.
Recommendation 3  Ensure that the new colour scheme and layout continues to render well across many browsers.

Recommendation 4  Test the site in a screen reader, preferably used by someone who is familiar with the range of visual impairments.

Recommendation 5  Consider using 'Browsealoud' or one of the other writing-to-speech tools to help people with reading difficulties. (www.texthelp.com)

Opening text

The opening text has a blocky appearance and is written in a formal style that seems unappealing to a first-time visitor, and may be hard to understand if visitors do not read well.

Welcome

The OxWeb Gateway provides all citizens with access to the services provided within Oxfordshire County. The providers of the services include:- Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, The Partnership, Thames Valley Police.

Enter Location  Although not mandatory this site encourages you to enter your postcode or the name of the area you live in. This way we can personalise your experience within the Oxfordshire Gateway and present you with information relative to you. Once this information is entered you will not need to see this screen again.

Comments:

− If I'm not a citizen, am I not allowed to use it?
− The rather wordy term 'Oxfordshire Gateway to Services in Oxfordshire' is used in the title but the preamble uses the snappier term 'OxWeb gateway'.
− Enter location: the text refers to 'this site'. This is a peculiar way of doing it as it implies we're a machine rather than a friendly service.
− 'Although not mandatory' is a technical description that would be meaningless for most users.
− If I haven't set a location, do I get everything?
− If I don't see the screen again, how can I change the location I've entered?

Recommendation 6  Rewrite the opening text (and preferably move it to the 'About Us')
| Recommendation 7 | Use the term OxWeb where possible, removing its full name 'Oxfordshire Gateway to Services in Oxfordshire to 'About us' |

**Menu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Search</th>
<th>Show My Local</th>
<th>Community Info</th>
<th>A-Z</th>
<th>Contact Us</th>
<th>About the Partnership</th>
<th>About the Gateway</th>
<th>Site Map</th>
<th>Access Keys</th>
<th>Help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The left-hand menu is easy to spot and definitely looks like a menu. We liked the way the spot moved up and down to show us which option we were on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search:</th>
<th>What am I searching for? This site is a search site, so it is odd to have to go to a second level in order to find the main purpose.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show My Local</td>
<td>We found this phrasing strange and unclear. Please see detailed discussion of Search, below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-Z:</td>
<td>Please see detailed discussion of Search, below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Map</td>
<td>This page simply repeats the left-hand menu and adds no further value. Further, we know from general research that people rarely use site maps, even when they contain useful information. We recommend that you delete it entirely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the partnership / about the gateway</td>
<td>These should be combined into one option: 'About Us', as this would be clearer and if you are interested in one you're likely to be interested in another. This is where the constituent members of the partnership should be listed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Access keys | If "access keys" is about using keyboard shortcuts to get to navigate around the site then this information should be placed on the home page of the site. 
As a proportion of your visitors are likely to be older people who are not very web-savvy, we suggest that you include a specific button to click to change font size. It should be on the home page and close to the access keys. |
| Help | A simple site like this should not need help |
| Contact us | Essential to all sites. Further comments below. |
Search

There are four different searches on this site:

- A set of pre-defined searches for types of companies or agencies, bounded by a location. This is the “Search for my local… schools, dentists, councillors… function

- A search of the community information database, that seems to find community organisations and businesses. There are advanced and basic (keyword only) versions.

- A search of the Partner sites for information about Government services

- An A-Z list of keywords, listed in an alphabetical list

We could not easily tell the difference between these four ways of finding information. In fact, it took us some time to even discover that they all existed.

Show My Local, Community Info and A-Z all seem to find similar entries. We could not tell if they search the same or different data, but we assume that they search different databases. We don’t expect users to make this distinction, but it affects the design approach.

The primary mission of the home page of a portal site like this one should be to help visitors decide how to best find what they are looking for. Whether these four searches represent different query techniques or different databases, this is the important choice that takes the user one step closer to the information they want.

Instead, the bulk of the visible space on the home page is taken up with demanding to know the location of… something: your home, your work? None of this is explained in a way that makes us want to either divulge this information at this point in the relationship or be able to enter it appropriately.

**Recommendation 8** Focus the labels for the four searches on what you will find, rather than on how you will find it. Better yet, merge these searches into fewer different functions. If there is a value in distinguishing between private and governmental listings or other categorisations, do this in the results list.
Picking a pre-defined query

Two of the searches (Show my Local and A-Z) ask the user to pick from a pre-defined list of search terms.

In usability testing with suburban computer users and health information sites, we found that these pre-defined lists were a very effective way for them to search. Users often have trouble formulating a query, and they know that they do. They say things like “I know there’s a better word, but I just can’t think of it” or “Oh, typed it wrong again”. Offering them a list solves the first problem, because recognition works much better than forcing them to recall; and also solves the second problem, because it reduces the amount of typing.

However, this site uses terms in the different searches that are confusingly similar. What is the difference between (for example) “Adult Education Center” in Show My Local and “Adult and Community Learning” in A-Z?

List recognition also solves a problem of synonyms in one of two ways:

- The complete set of synonyms may be included in the list. For example, including Jobs, Career Planning, Vacancies, and so on. This would be a good solution for A-Z, where there is enough room to accommodate a long list.

- Users may have no problem recognising the term the site has selected, even if it was not the first one they thought of (Jobs and Vacancies may be equally recognisable, for example). In this case, even presenting just one of the options makes users more effective in using the site by keeping them from having to guess which is right. This solution is good for a shorter scrolling list.

In prior usability testing, on sites where there was a list of terms to select, users almost always tried using it first, even if they had shown a preference for using search immediately. One commented that seeing the list helped her understand what kinds of information is available on the site, suggesting that the simple presence of the list helps users understand the type of information that the site can find for them.

Recommendation 9 Continue to offer search choices that allow users to pick pre-defined queries from a list
Entering the query

The other two searches – Search and Community Info – rely on the user entering some query.

Labels in the search form.

The labels in the search form are an important part of the conversation, and should be focused on providing gentle assistance in understanding and completing an effective search.

This prototype labels the search entry field as “keywords”. This term is ambiguous within the search community. It seems to be used in this site in the sense of “words within the searchable text” but it can also mean “search for matching meta terms” And it is probably meaningless to users.

Single search field or additional qualifiers.

In many ways, Google and its rivals have changed the landscape of general searches, making more users comfortable simply entering a word or short phrase and seeing what they get.

For example, we recently analysed the search logs for a large website and found:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Search</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>single-word searches</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>searches with two words</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>searches with three words</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four or more words</td>
<td>less than 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This suggests that a single search entry box, coupled with a good relevancy sorting feature in the search engine, will suffice for most searches, as is the case in most of this site. However, one of the searches – the Community Search – offers a multi-field advanced search. This seems inconsistent.

Recommendation 10 If you consider that ‘advanced search’ is an important option, ensure that it is available at the same level as other search options rather than as a sub-option within one of the specific searches.
As the form is currently laid out, it is not clear how the Category and Place fields constrain the search, or even what they mean. Is "Place" used instead of the Set Your Location function? Does it override it? Although an experienced searcher might not be confused, it is a mistake to assume that this is easy for all users.

One solution is to add short prompts that connect the search fields into a coherent “quasi-sentence” and make the relationships clear.

Another technique is to put a neutral label ("Any place") in a drop-down default that indicates that it is all right not to make a choice.

Recommendation 11 Test labels carefully to be sure that they contribute to the users’ understanding of the search task.

Recommendation 12 Use the prompts in a search form to guide the use through the task of filling in the form easily and effectively.

Setting your location

The ‘set location’ function is currently on the home page. It seems completely misplaced, even assuming that the problems we see with having it reset during a session are a prototype issue.

If the location has been set, fine…use it as a constraint on the search. But, if it hasn’t it should be asked as a second question, rather than interrupting the first one.
That is, let the user enter or select what they are looking for and then ask for the location. This task flow might then match user expectations better, starting from the user’s goal, and filling in any information the program needs afterwards.

Show My Local >> Select [Nursery Schools] >> Where? >> Results

This allows the site to build a smoother conversational flow, in the prompts. Rather than starting by “demanding” a location, the Select a Location screen can now be a follow-up question – just as you might expect in a human-to-human conversation.

In this flow, there are no “errors” – but simply a process of moving closer to the information.

There is another advantage, which is that the Set Location screens can now be modular, called as needed from any place in the interface.

Another possible interaction is to allow the search to be run, but offer an option of showing only results near a location (and a button to set it, which re-runs the search).

At any rate, this function should not be the most visible thing on the home page – in that position it both takes away from the conversation the site is trying to establish, but also breaks relationship rules by demanding information from the user before understanding and trust have been established. This last point may be especially important on an E-government site.

Recommendation 13 Move 'set location' from the home page to become the second step in the search.
Presenting options in "set location"

It is especially important to be sure that the relationship between multiple fields on one page is completely clear: are they parts of one query that will be combined, or are they separate queries?

The home page breaks this rule by putting the Go button for Search in the same level of presentation as the set location fields – which are poorly presented as alternates for a single function. The word OR (in the common English sense) works well here:

Recommendation 14 Make it clear that there is more than one way to set location; and that the user does not have to fill in all of the fields on this form.
It was not at all obvious how to change location once it had been set. Eventually we spotted 'RESET' in black bar by scrolling horizontally.

Recommendation 15  Change the term "RESET" to 'Change location'

Recommendation 16  Make sure that the 'change location' function is easily visible on all screens

Using the map

The text for setting location through the map is not yet available, and the button to 'set location' is below the fold.

Recommendation 17  Move the map on the 'set location by map' page to the top left corner of the available screen area
The map itself seemed to work rather oddly, but we felt that this might be a problem of the limited functionality available at this stage.

Recommendation 18 Test the 'set location by map' feature with a wider range of maps available.

Changes to the home page after setting location

When you succeed in setting location, you end up with two very similar but subtly different pages: search and the located home page. We found that it was easy to become confused about which of these pages you are on. The 'located' home page no longer looks like the home page and we wondered what had happened to it.

There is no simple recommendation to solve this problem. Changes might include:

- Moving the Set Location function to a second screen, so the fields are not part of the home page
- Creating a more isolated location for the set location fields, replacing them with the selected location and a button to change locations.

According to the diagram, you can select a location to find services and companies for that area. The selected location is then displayed as OX1 1DJ Bridge Street Oxford. There is also an option to change the location.

Depending on the amount of space on the home page, this might even have the simplest option included, with a button for the complete set of options.
This design approach isolates this information and related controls while still keeping it readily available.

Recommendation 19 Redesign the home page so it does not change so dramatically once a location is set.

Recommendation 20 Reconsider the style and positioning of the 'set location' function.

Search results

This demonstration had a limited set of pre-populated information in the search results. You will see from the screenshot above that the results do not fit correctly in an 800x600 window, still a very popular choice of window especially for older people who prefer larger text.
Recommendation 21  Ensure that the search results fit neatly within an 800x600 window - preferably flexibly so that they take advantage of larger screens as well.

*Style of results display*

Generally, we find that we get better results in testing with rather see an annotated list-style, with the link on the title, such as:

**Household Refuse Collection**
A weekly collection service of household waste is provided to each household within the District... (West Oxfordshire District Council)

However, this may be design preference rather than a true usability problem. Usability problems that we see include:

- Differentiating between Services, Partner Sites and Community Info. If the results are going to be segregated like this, there needs to be a better explanation of what each is. Also, the "More.." button needs to be much more obvious. (Can just be seen as 'M' on the right of the screenshot on the previous page).

- Each of the searches appears to use a different format for the results list. This makes it seem inconsistent to the point of being chaotic.

- The titles of the results pages should reflect the type of items that have been found, not the search that was used. Of course, with better names for the searches, this would be much less of a problem.

- It is not clear to us when the search results leave the site, and when they lead to another page within the same site. We wanted to click once to get to the destination site, but sometimes we seemed to get another page within this site.

Recommendation 22  Display similar results information in a consistent way. Do not vary the results format according to the type of search.

Recommendation 23  Test the results format to be sure that it is easily readable: that it can be scanned easily and that users understand the content.

*Relevancy*

It is impossible to tell from this prototype how well the search engine handles relevancy ranking within the search results.

In prior testing, we found that participants simply assumed that the website would be smart enough to put the most important items at the top of the list. Participants do not want to see the relevancy ranking as such.
Recommendation 24  Work with the search technology to ensure that the most relevant results are at the top of the list.

**Putting Search onto the home page**

As a minimum, your home page really has to explain what the menu items are about. Search, show my local, and community info are the core purpose of the site but they are presented on the same level as Help.

However, we would much rather see the search options placed immediately on the home page.

*The following rough concepts are intended only to show some variations in how the home page might be presented. They are not design recommendations, but food for thought.*

**Concept 1: a gateway to four directories**

![OxWeb Banner](image-url)
**Concept 2:** another layout for getting into four directories

**Concept 3:** puts the user straight into search
Comments on individual pages

Show my local

To use "Show my local" effectively, the user has to understand that the location needs to be the one that relates to the information you want e.g. if you live in Bicester and work in Oxford then you need to enter Oxford for some things and Bicester for others. "Find near to" might convey this better - or might not.

Recommendation 25  Get participants from Oxfordshire to test the terms used for the different types of search.

The "Show my local" screen currently repeats the phrase 'Place Name' so that you have a choice of drop down or typing, which suggests that you can only type in phrases that also occur in the drop down.

It's not clear that why you have a dropdown as well as a type-in box. Is the list of place names likely to be very long?

Recommendation 26  Rewrite the prompts so they are clear, and that the user can either select a place in the drop-down or type a place name. Possibly: "Select place" for the dropdown, and "or enter a place name" for the input box.
The results on 'show my local' are below the fold so that map isn't meaningful. Conversely, the 'select service' needs to go below the results, and really means 'select a different service'.

**Recommendation 27** Rearrange the order of the 'show my local' results map so that it has: first, results; second: map; third: change category. Or, make the map smaller and placed in a secondary position on the stage.

Why is there a 'more results' button? Why not have all the results present on the results page, or use the standard paging mechanisms in the full search results lists?

When you find the 'GO' button (hidden below the fold, and requiring horizontal scrolling), the site pops up a new window without browser controls. This is a BAD idea as it removes the user's control over the 'Back' button, and there seems to be no justification for spawning a new window at this point.

**Recommendation 28** Do not pop up separate windows without browser controls.

**Recommendation 29** Keep all sub-pages within the overall structure of the site. Do not open new windows until you take the user to a Partner site. Consider keeping the same window even when you go to a Partner site.

The 'printer friendly' version of the result page seems to be an area of the prototype that has not yet been worked on. We noticed these problems:

- it has a menu and checkboxes, implying some sort of interaction (on a printer friendly version? surely not)
the greatest prominence on the page is given to the 'Gateway' title, an even more complicated one than the ones we have met previously. This information should be confined to a small note at the foot of the page.

the user will mostly be looking at the contact details etc in the main part of the page, but these are in ordinary type. The titles of the fields are much less interesting but have greater prominence through the use of bold.

we assume that the information published on your site will be that available to the public, so there is no need to repeat the term 'public' in front of several titles.

URL/internet address is a technical term. Better to say "web site".

what other languages are offered?

Recommendation 30  Retest the 'printer friendly' page when it has had some design attention.

Contact us

The 'Contact Us' page is very bare at the moment. People expect to find a much richer selection of contact information in this link, including:

- physical addresses and telephone numbers,
• staff directory
• webmaster
• how to complain
• how submit a correction
• how to submit a suggestion

Recommendation 31  Populate the 'contact us' page with, as a minimum, links to the contact us pages of the Partners and preferably a consolidated set of contacts.

It is a good idea to provide a form for contacts, and this one is simple and has no required fields - both definite advantages.

We tried using the form provided and got a confirmation screen (good) but with misleading text:

Contact Us
Feedback successfully received.

Your comments have been assigned a reference number of: 12345

• This form is likely to be used extensively by people who could not easily find what they wanted, and we suggest that you prepare for quite lengthy requests to appear in it - not merely 'feedback' (which implies comments on the Gateway site itself).

• "successfully received" implies that someone has done something, but in fact it merely means that the information on the form has been captured at the server.

• "assigned a reference number" is in the passive voice and therefore distancing. We suggest that you use the text 'please use this reference if you contact us again about this topic'

Recommendation 32  Ensure the wording of the 'contact us' confirmation screen reflects its likely usage, i.e. as a place for people to put general queries and requests.
Community info: submit new database entry

We have mentioned ‘community info’ in general in our comments on search, above. However, we notice that this has a button that allows interested organisations to send in a new entry. (top right hand corner).

This has no place in a search page, but should be in the left menu as a separate entry.

Recommendation 33  Move the ‘submit new entry’ option to the main menu, ensuring that it appears as a lower priority than the search options.
The form itself is rather daunting in appearance, due to the very strong reversed-polarity section dividers. It is horrible in 800x600 but we can probably assume that people who are sending in entries are more web-savvy, and therefore the screenshot above is taken at 1024x768.

The entries themselves seem reasonably straightforward, apart from the mysterious prompt "Capability statement" that appears near the end. Does this mean "What do you do"?

It is also not clear why your name, email address and title are requested at the top of the page. Will these appear in the listing?

Finally, there does not appear to be any link to 'privacy policy' on this form (or anywhere on the site).

Recommendation 34 Ensure that any form that asks for personal data has a clear link to 'privacy policy', and that the policy itself is easy to understand.
3 Conclusions and general ideas to consider

The functionality of this site has great promise, but the user interface represents the underlying technology more than the tasks or processes of the people who might use it.

For convenience, we have included a list of detailed recommendations as the next section in this report.

However, these should be regarded as suggestions. Our overall recommendation is to consider these general ideas:

- Think about the kinds of questions citizens are likely to have, and how they would be answered by a person working directly with the public. What sort of terminology do they use to elicit enough information to provide an answer, and in what order do they ask questions.

- Make the “conversation” of the user interface clear and direct. Use simple, sentence in an active voice to guide the visitor through the process of finding the information they need.

- Use language that is easily understood by users. Be careful of two different types of specialised terminology that can easily creep into the site: technical language reflecting the underlying technology and governmental language.

- Remember that users may not distinguish between site content provided as a list of authored links and links retrieved by a search. This can be an advantage, as it allows you to simplify the results listing.

- Build on users’ frame of reference (and do the usability testing with real users to understand them). Whether they think of the site as a directory, a helpful guide or a bulletin board, use that as the basis of the design.
4 List of detailed recommendations

1. We strongly recommend that the next version is tested by participants from Oxfordshire.

2. Reconsider the colour scheme and layout, particularly for the home page.

3. Ensure that the new colour scheme and layout continues to render well across many browsers.

4. Test the site in a screen reader, preferably used by someone who is familiar with the range of visual impairments.

5. Consider using 'Browsealoud' or one of the other writing-to-speech tools to help people with reading difficulties. (www.texthelp.com)

6. Rewrite the opening text (and preferably move it to the 'About Us')

7. Use the term OxWeb where possible, removing its full name 'Oxfordshire Gateway to Services in Oxfordshire' to 'About us'

8. Focus the labels for the four searches on what you will find, rather than on how you will find it. Better yet, merge these searches into fewer different functions. If there is a value in distinguishing between private and governmental listings or other categorisations, do this in the results list.

9. Continue to offer search choices that allow users to pick pre-defined queries from a list.

10. If you consider that 'advanced search' is an important option, ensure that it is available at the same level as other search options rather than as a sub-option within one of the specific searches.

11. Test labels carefully to be sure that they contribute to the users' understanding of the search task.

12. Use the prompts in a search form to guide the user through the task of filling in the form easily and effectively.

13. Move 'set location' from the home page to become the second step in the search.

14. Make it clear that there is more than one way to set location; and that the user does not have to fill in all of the fields on this form.

15. Change the term "RESET" to 'Change location'
16. Make sure that the 'change location' function is easily visible on all screens

17. Move the map on the 'set location by map' page to the top left corner of the available screen area

18. Test the 'set location by map' feature with a wider range of maps available.

19. Redesign the home page so it does not change so dramatically once a location is set.

20. Reconsider the style and positioning of the 'set location' function.

21. Ensure that the search results fit neatly within an 800x600 window - preferably flexibly so that they take advantage of larger screens as well.

22. Display similar results information in a consistent way. Do not vary the results format according to the type of search.

23. Test the results format to be sure that it is easily readable: that it can be scanned easily and that users understand the content.

24. Work with the search technology to ensure that the most relevant results are at the top of the list.

25. Get participants from Oxfordshire to test the terms used for the different types of search.

26. Rewrite the prompts so they are clear, and that the user can either select a place in the drop-down or type a place name. Possibly: "Select place" for the dropdown, and "or enter a place name" for the input box.

27. Rearrange the order of the 'show my local' results map so that it has: first, results; second: map; third: change category. Or, make the map smaller and placed in a secondary position on the stage.

28. Do not pop up separate windows without browser controls.

29. Keep all sub-pages within the overall structure of the site. Do not open new windows until you take the user to a Partner site. Consider keeping the same window even when you go to a Partner site.

30. Retest the 'printer friendly' page when it has had some design attention.

31. Populate the 'contact us' page with, as a minimum, links to the contact us pages of the Partners and preferably a consolidated set of contacts.
32. Ensure the wording of the 'contact us' confirmation screen reflects its likely usage, i.e. as a place for people to put general queries and requests.

33. Move the 'submit new entry' option to the main menu, ensuring that it appears as a lower priority than the search options.

34. Ensure that any form that asks for personal data has a clear link to 'privacy policy', and that the policy itself is easy to understand.