

# Content Guidelines

## **Page Title**

You should pick a short but descriptive title for your page; this title will display as the main heading on the page, and will also appear in search results and in the browser's title bar.

The title should give enough information to describe the page out of context. For instance page titles like 'Contact Us' or 'How to Apply' mean nothing to visitors when they see them in search results listings. For these two examples the page titles might be better as 'How to contact [name of department]' and 'How to apply for a [bus pass/parking permit/etc]'.

## **Page Name**

This is the part of the page's web address that is unique to that page; e.g. for a page at [www.example.com/pages/example\\_page](http://www.example.com/pages/example_page), 'example\_page' is the Page Name.

When you create a new page, this will be generated from the Page Title as you type. If you create a page and give it the title 'Environment and Planning' the Page Name which is generated will be 'environment\_and\_planning'. Quite often you can leave this unchanged, but it may be better to change this to something shorter and more memorable. A Page Name should be simple and short enough for a visitor to access that Page by typing the web address directly into their browser's address bar. In the example above, 'environment' would be easier to remember than 'environment\_and\_planning'.

Ideally the Page Name should be obvious enough that a visitor could correctly guess it; for instance a visitor wanting the Housing Department's page would guess that the address is '[website]/housing'.

## **Page content**

Try not to use italic and bold formatting except where it's necessary to emphasise something – overuse of formatting can make a Page difficult to read or understand, can put users off reading a Page, and lessens the impact of such formatting where its actually needed. Try to apply consistent formatting across pages; look at how other pages on the site have been laid out.

Use Headings to if you need to subdivide content on a page. Use the same level of heading for headings of the same importance and if you use a hierarchy of headings make sure that it is properly constructed (e.g. don't use a 'Heading 2 followed by a 'Heading 4'). Try and keep use of headings consistent across pages; look at how other pages on the site have been laid out. Avoid using heading styles to add emphasis to body text – use bold and italic formatting for this instead.

Don't put a heading at the beginning of your Page content; the Page Title is always displayed as the main heading of the Page, directly above the content.

For images, always complete the 'Alternative text' field, using a brief description of the image. This is useful to visitors who can't see the image, such as visually impaired users who are using a screen reader instead of a web browser.

## **Length of pages**

You should maintain a Page for each topic. If a page becomes too long, consider splitting it up into two or more Pages, based on topics; however, such Pages should be able to be read on their own. For example, if you have a long Page on fishing permits, and split it into four separate Pages, would the third Page make sense to a visitor without then having to read the first, second and fourth Pages as well?

## **Spelling**

Spelling mistakes are easy to make, but can make content look very unprofessional. The Page text editor has a spell checker built in – please use it!

## Categories

Correctly categorising your Page is vital in helping website visitors find the information they need, to enable the correct related content, such as contact information, to be displayed on the Page, and to build an accurate A-Z of services.

A Contact will appear on a Page if it has one or more categories in common with that page; if more than one Contact shares categories with a Page, they will all appear on the Page.

Your Page can have as many categories as you like; you should choose all that apply as a number of different category lists, each with different applications, are in use.

You can choose categories for Pages directly from these two category lists:

- **IPSV** (Integrated Public Sector Vocabulary): select categories from this list to describe the nature of the content of the page. The selections you make from this list help users find information, and are used for cross-referencing with other category lists
- **'Services' - LGSL** (Local Government Service List): categories in this list include all the types of service which local authorities provide. The selections you make from this list govern which Contacts are displayed on a page, and help to build up the A-Z of services

When you choose 'Auto-populate', categories are chosen from the two lists above, and from a number of other category lists, based on the content of the page and the category selections you have already made; many pages are already categorised using selections from these lists. These secondary lists include:

- **LGNL** (Local Government Navigation List): this list contains a recommended e-government structure for website content. Selections from this list may be used in the future to create a website navigation system
- **LGCS** (Local Government Classification Scheme): this list contains selections for categorising types of information held and published by the council; this list is designed to help local authorities meet data protection, information management and freedom of information requirements
- **LGBCL** (Local Government Business Category List): describes categories of businesses which are related to the content of the Page
- **LGDL** (Local Government Department List): categories in this list include generic descriptions of the type of department that is responsible for issues covered by the Page content (the actual name of the department within the Council may be different to this)

These lists contain categories with similar names. You will find that when you select 'Auto-populate' many categories with near-identical names appear; you should keep all those that are relevant to the content of your Page, and delete any which are not. Hover the mouse over a category title to see a fuller description of the areas that category covers.

## Contacts

You can edit contact information for your department or team, in the Admin area. If you select categories, this contact will appear on all pages which have at least one of the same categories. You should ensure that the correct categories are selected for each contact, so that it appears on the right pages.