

Start building digital by default services

DISCOVERY

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The service manual is here to help service managers and digital delivery teams across government make services so good that people prefer to use them. It's made up of two things;

- the [Digital by Default Service Standard](#), a list of criteria that services and teams must meet before they go live
- the [Government Service Design Manual](#), a pool of guidance and advice about how to design and build digital services from teams across government

[Watch our video about the Digital by Default Service Standard](#)

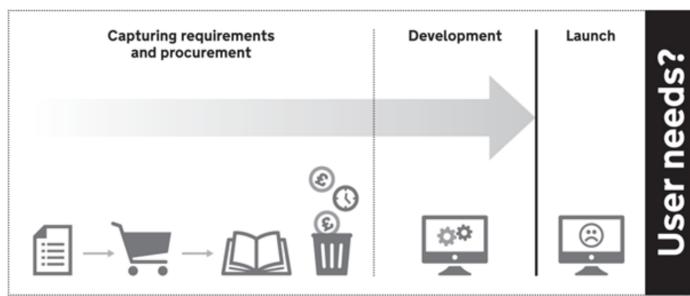
Putting users first

Building good services means meeting the needs of users. [82% of the UK population is online](#). They have high expectations for what makes a good digital service, whether it's from a bank, a travel agent, a retailer or a broadcaster, and when services don't meet those standards they let the people responsible know.

Government needs to learn from teams who are building successful, world class services. It needs to place users at the heart of service design, incorporating their feedback at every step of the way.

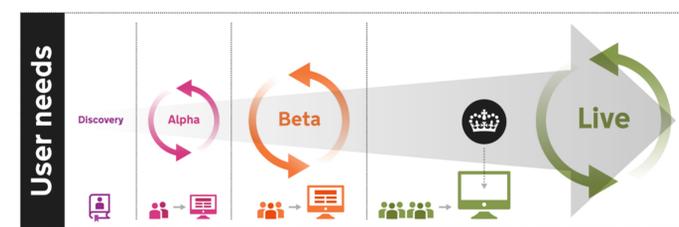
A new way of doing things

Typically, government services are built after long, costly procurement processes.



In this way of working, users are seldom – if ever – consulted about the service they'll be using. The first time the public might see a service is when it goes live, by which time it's too late to make any changes when it turns out to be unfit for purpose.

This way of working tends to encourage the creation of overly prescriptive policy, which then forms the basis of the requirements document. Instead, teams need to constantly iterate against user feedback.



This means [building and testing in small chunks](#), working quickly to deliver improvements to a service. Teams will work out how to best meet the [needs of users](#), [releasing code regularly](#) and [working in an agile way](#). This new approach allows closer working between policy and delivery teams and as a result, the development of more responsive policy, two aims of the [Civil Service Reform plan](#).

Essential reading

The [GDS Design Principles](#) present a clear vision of how delivery teams can think about designing digital by default services. These should be a touchstone for every member of a delivery team.

The [Government Digital Strategy](#) sets out the context we are working in. The departmental responses to the strategy contain a detailed breakdown of which services in particular will be tackled first.

And the [Digital by Default Service Standard](#) lists the criteria against which all new and redesigned services will be judged from April 2014. Find out [which services must meet the standard](#).

Another good way of finding out what's going on in the government around digital is through the [SPRINT initiative](#), organised by the [Cabinet Office](#).

At SPRINT13, Minister for the Cabinet Office Francis Maude discussed the [current landscape of digital within government](#). Watch that video below.

[Watch Francis Maude at SPRINT13](#)

SPRINT 13 also saw a talk by Stephen Kelly, Chief Operating Officer UK Government, in which he paints a picture of [what service redesign could mean for users](#).

[Watch Stephen Kelly at SPRINT13](#)

Start building digital by default services

When you're confident about the basics of service design and the requirement of [the standard](#), you can start exploring the advice and guidance in the manual.

You can explore the manual by [phase of delivery](#), [specific roles](#), or [by topic](#).

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