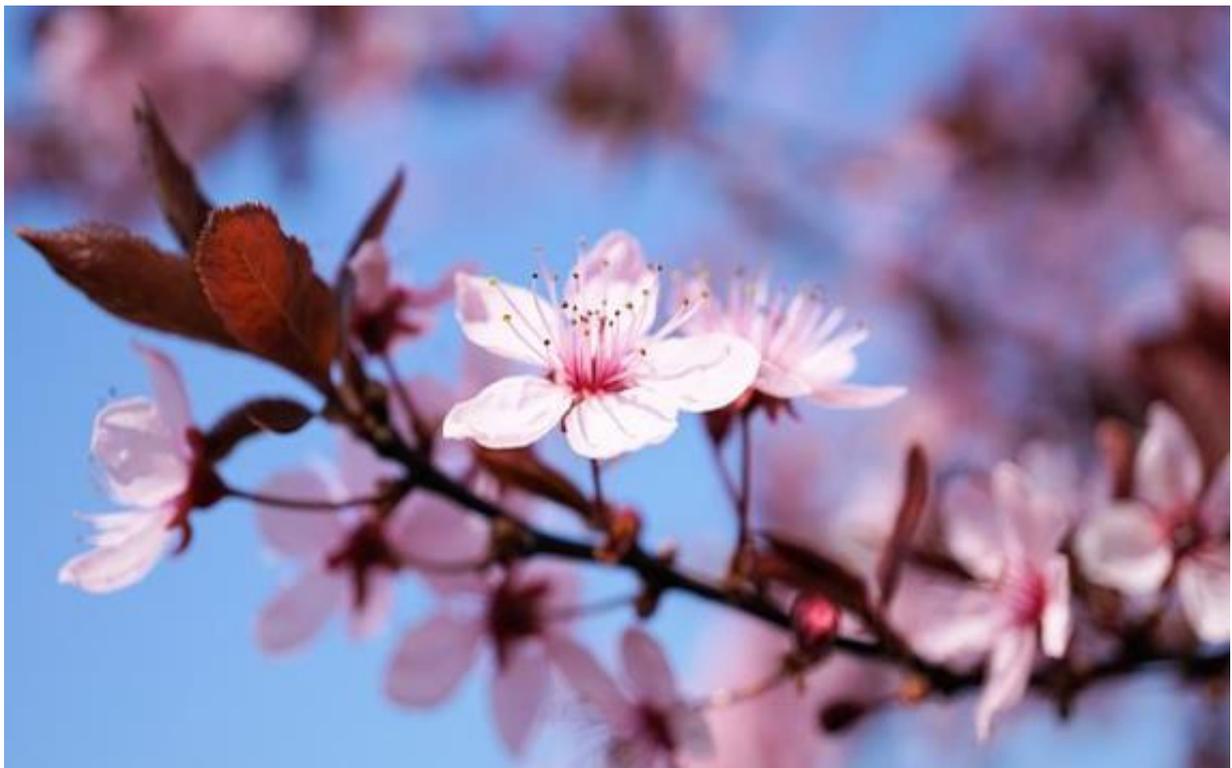


## Welcome to the latest addition of the Smarter Digital Services newsletter

**We hope you have been able to make the most of some of the sun we have had recently – it certainly feels like summer is on its way!**

In this newsletter, we will let you know what we have been up to lately and what we have got coming up too.



This newsletter will cover:

[Best Practice Research into IVR systems](#)

[Website content analysis for Dartford Borough Council](#)

[An Overview of the SDS Accessibility Workshop](#)

Usability testing TWBC Garden Waste online forms and payments

SDS Workshop – Data Capture and Analysis

Upcoming workshops **and the** next KCSG meeting

The SDS Work Programme

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## Best Practice Research into IVR systems

SDS completed a best practice project on IVR systems for a local emergency service.

As many local councils review their IVR systems, the emergency service is looking to maximise the potential of triaging callers to the right call taker on first attempt to reduce double handling, call handling time and caller frustration.



The emergency services cover an array of issues from urgent incidents to lost keys and cats stuck in trees! However, accurate triaging of these calls is essential to reduce call waiting times and the overall efficiency of the contact centre.

SDS focused on IVR scripting and routing best practices, the do's and don'ts of IVR scripting, common customer pain points and examples, as well as digitally looking to the future at more advanced IVR systems, used in the private sector, especially in the banking, telecommunications and retail industries. These industries are using voice biometrics, visual IVRs and artificial intelligence to analyse voice commands in order to create the best possible customer experience.

Customers now expect to interact with local services as they do with Amazon, online shopping platforms and eBay. Therefore, it is also important to signpost alternative channels to customers with the IVR script in order to satisfy customer expectations, create a multiple-channel experience and reduce demand.

However, not all customers are receptive to these messages. Expanding the digital channels available makes the emergency service more accessible as well

as giving customers more choice on which channel to communicate with them on, which is convenient for them.



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## Website Content Analysis - Usability testing Dartford Borough Council's website

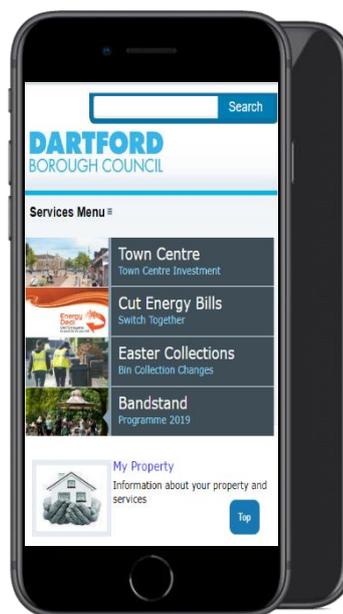
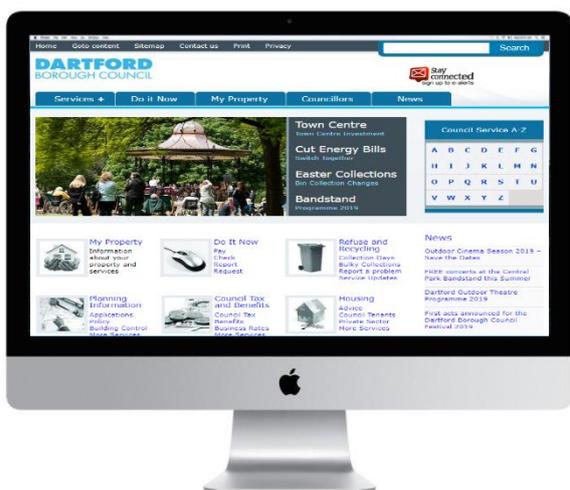
**Dartford Borough Council have already been awarded a 4-star rating from Socitm for their website, but the council wanted to gain the perspectives of their users too.**

**DARTFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

SDS carried out usability testing using varied scenarios to test each user's ease of navigation, user-friendliness, the language and tone as well as the look and feel of the website. SDS engaged with 5 service areas, Enforcement and Regulatory Services, Waste, Housing, Planning and Environmental Health to test their website content.

Overall, the users found it easy to locate the information, with some scenarios being more difficult than others. The website content on all the web pages was very informative and detailed but this meant there was lots of text to navigate through. SDS identified that if the content was not evident and intuitive to find, the user would resort to phoning or visiting the council.

SDS conducted the user testing on both a mobile device and desktop. We observed a clear difference in navigating through the website. On mobile devices, users would often visit more webpages and skim through content quicker than they would on a desktop. In addition, the search bar was more prominent on a mobile and therefore, more users utilised this function, which was particularly useful to find specific content. In fact, one user used their voice to search the website instead of typing in search terms.



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## SDS Accessibility workshop

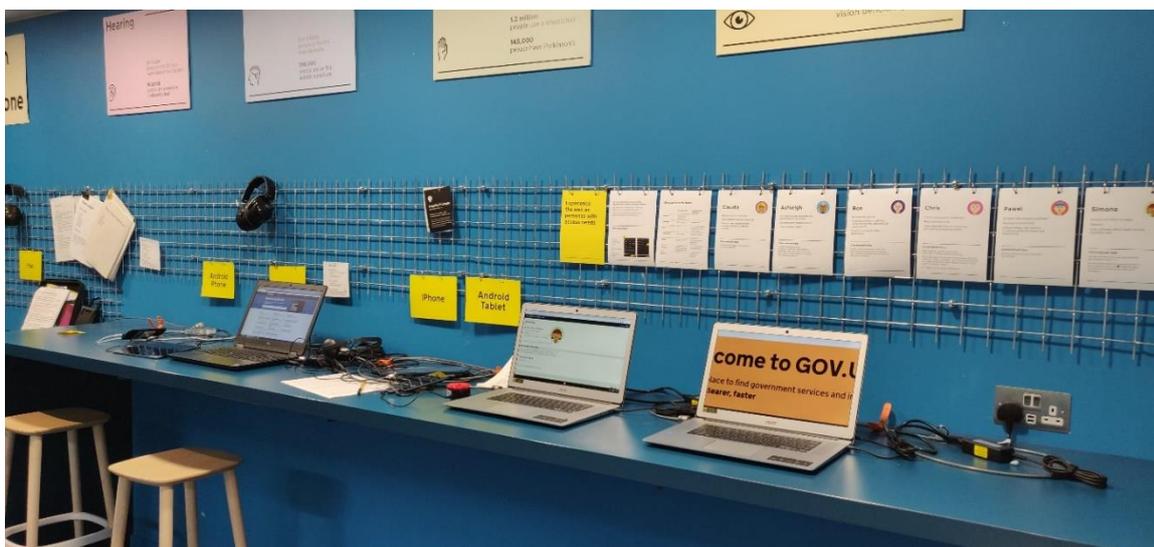
In April we held an energetic accessibility workshop with partners, guiding them through some of the issues they need to address to comply with the new accessibility regulations which will come into force in September 2019.

We used practical examples, for example, we looked at websites through tracing paper, through straws and using x400 magnifiers to demonstrate low vision problems and how the layout of some pages can hinder a user when trying to access our services and transact with us.

We covered issues relating to vision, hearing, motor skills and cognitive disabilities demonstrating what quick fixes could be applied to our websites

now and encouraged participants to create an action plan for more complex issues in order to fulfil their obligations before September 2019.

Several of our partners have now visited the [Accessibility Empathy lab at GDS](#) to see how their own websites appear under different accessibility conditions. [You can book a visit to the lab here.](#)



Kent Connects will be continuing to educate partner local authorities in Kent by hosting the first Kent Digital Accessibility Conference on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June which will feature a range of accessibility topics and practical workshops. [Register your interest here.](#)

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## Usability testing Garden Waste form and payments at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Prior to the launch of the Garden Waste opt-in service for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, SDS were asked to assist with a round of usability testing of the end to end sign-up process to alert the digital team to any issues relating to usability of their forms and payment capture.

Seven users completed the process both on a laptop and on a mobile phone signing up for the service by direct debit or by card payment. Users were able

to demonstrate where form fields were not clear and would result in the transaction not being completed. They were also able to indicate where they were unsure of what was expected of them and where wording could be improved.

If any partners require assistance with usability testing for their websites, forms or letters, please get in touch.



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## **SDS workshop – Data Capture & Analysis**

We held our last in the 2018/2019 series of our SDS workshops on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May at Ashford Borough Council. The theme for the workshop was Data capture and analysis.

There has been more and more emphasis on using data recently, particularly around using data to drive decision-making as well as measuring performance.

For many years now, we have been concentrating on the transformation of the services we offer our citizens. During this period of making and imbedding change, how well have we been able to monitor our successes and where could we have done better?

The workshop focused on how difficult it can be to identify and plan for the expected benefits to be achieved through making a change. We also looked at how we can measure success during the change process, through to completion, and beyond.

In the workshop we worked through exercises and used templates that can be used across all service changes both for current and future projects.

A big thank you to Ashford for hosting the workshop! We really appreciate it. Please get in touch if you were unable to attend the workshop and would like to know more.



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## Our workshops for 2019/2020

We are now planning for the workshops we would like to deliver over the next year. Are there any particular topics that you would like us to dedicate a workshop to at all? These could either be workshops we have already delivered or anything that you think would benefit everyone. Let Dom know at [dominic.taylor-langley@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:dominic.taylor-langley@tunbridgewells.gov.uk).

Also, we are looking for venues where we will be able to deliver our workshops, are you able to help us at all? If you are able to do so, please contact Dom.

## **Kent Customer Service Group – 4<sup>th</sup> June**

We have our next KCSG meeting on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June at the usual venue:

HR Training Room,  
Maidstone House,  
King Street,  
Maidstone,  
ME15 6JQ

This meeting will be at the usual time of 10am – 12pm.

We will be sending out an agenda for the meeting very soon. Keep an eye out for more information on the guest speakers on the day.

As always, the KCSG meeting will continue to be a great opportunity for us all to get together and discuss and learn about each other's projects as well as the sharing of ideas collaboratively.

If you have any suggestions for a potential guest speaker or if you would like to talk to the group at greater length about a specific bit of work you have done or are doing, please let us know.

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## **Projects and Research**

**Our full project programme is available to download here:**

<http://www.smarterdigital.info/pdf/SDS-Work-Programme-2019.pdf>

**SDS Smarter Digital Services Work Programme 2018/2019**

Project Title	Project Description	Partner(s)	SDS Lead	Nov 18	Dec 18	Jan 19	Feb 19	Mar 19	Apr 19	May 19	Jun 19
1 Monitoring centre process capture and message	Define and map out the current Lifetime Application process and the Out of Hours Calls and Procedures processes. Review these and make recommendations for ways to improve efficiency, enhance customer experience and incorporate the use of the Alaviva digital platform.	Ashford	Dominic Taylor-Langley								
2 Housing Register User Research	Carrying out user research to gain a clear understanding of the end-to-end experience for users that have approached Luton about joining the Housing Register.	LGA - Luton	Dominic Taylor-Langley								
3 Implementing garden waste recommendations	Implementing the recommendations from the previous SDS project reviewing garden waste processes.	Sevenoaks	Dominic Taylor-Langley								
4 Website audit and waste service review - User Experience	Through the facilitation of user research and user testing, explore how users feel about the whole waste service experience, the user's experience of the three different websites and the user's experience of using the shared online waste forms.	EC Shared Services	Jane Haselden								
5 Information Architecture Studies	Running Treejack tests to analyse user behaviour on the prototype Seaxie website.	Seaxie	Jane Haselden								
6 User testing new website	To carry out phase two user testing of the developing alpha website and make recommendations for improvements based on user feedback and current best practice.	Seaxie	Jane Haselden								
7 Customer Interaction, Demand & Communication Analysis	User test the letters that have been identified as causing avoidable contact.	Tandridge	Dominic Taylor-Langley								
8 UK Improvements	To define and user test the current rules and being NR structure and create and make recommendations for improvements that will help to encourage online self service and reduce avoidable contact.	Redburns and Highfa	Jane Haselden								
9 Planning process capture and message	Define and map out the current end-to-end Planning Application process with a more detailed look at the Planning Control and Development Management processes, focusing the identify where improvements can be made to the service.	Ashford	Dominic Taylor-Langley								
10 Planning process capture and message	Define and map out the current end-to-end Planning Application process with a more detailed look at the Planning Control and Development Management processes, focusing the identify where improvements can be made to the service.	Ashford	Dominic Taylor-Langley								

As always if you have any upcoming projects you would like help with, we would be delighted to discuss them with you. Please get in touch.

If you need to contact us, details are below:

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> [Newsletter Past Issues](#)