



The National Archives



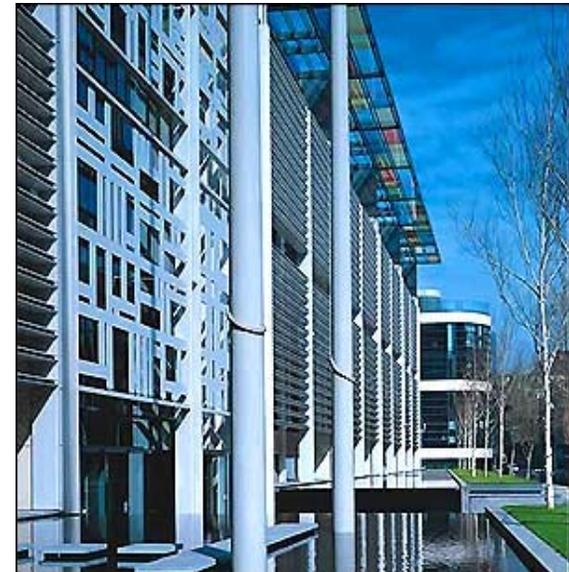
**Continuity and Capture:
Broken links and the UK
Central Government Web
presence**

**Amanda Spencer and Tom
Storrar, The National Archives,
July 2009**



Originally we had a simple plan

- UK Government Web Archive launched 2003
- Contracted out
 - Internet Archive 2003-2005
 - European Archive 2005 onwards
- Based around 7 core functions – sample of c50 major government websites monthly or six-monthly
- Also ad hoc collections relating to current events





Website Rationalisation

- Part of Transformational Government strategy
- Aims to better manage the government web estate through convergence of much of information on 3 super sites:
- Stricter control over creation of new .gov.uk sites
- The National Archives to archive all affected sites
- As many as 2000 sites
- Programme completed by 2011

Directgov





...But the world is changing fast

- Massive growth of government web estate
- Web is used by Government for all sorts of purposes – transactions and interaction with citizens
- Even to answer PQs!

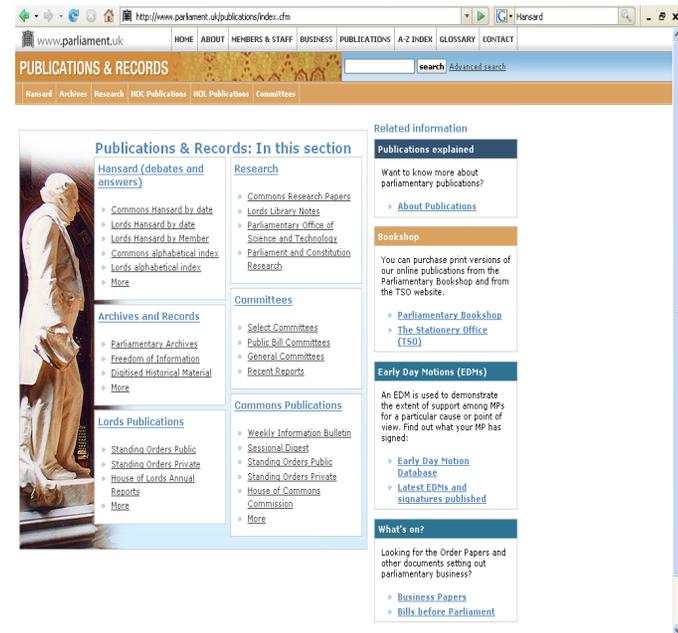
and this creates problems....

- Government's use of the web varies



Government's use of the web

- Ephemeral vs. Official record
- Prevalence of e-only publications
- Good and bad website management
- Problems with Hansard and the Jack Straw letter





Why it matters

- Integrity of Web links crucial to the business of government.
Without it:
- Public – impaired access – crucial given that the majority of all interaction between government and the public now happens online.
- Westminster village – impaired access
- The Press – impaired access
- Academics – impaired analysis
- Parliament – impaired scrutiny
- Impacts on reputation of government – public and abroad



Government is taking action

- April 2007 - Raised as a serious issue by Jack Straw, as Leader of the House of Commons
- May 2007 – Hilary Armstrong commits government to a package of measures that will provide a long-lasting solution to the problem
- Working Group established in May 2007 to investigate the problem and come up with a solution



The working group – research and recommendations

- 60% of URLs quoted in Hansard between 1997-2006 are broken
- Prevalence of e-only publication; issues with legal deposit in the electronic world
- Varied practice - PDF vs HTML
- Devolved system of web publication

- Project of comprehensive archiving and link management to be taken forward by The National Archives



The Web Continuity project

Part of a package of projects that are addressing the issue of sustainable information across government





Comprehensively archiving government's websites

- In partnership with the European Archive
- Whole of UK central government
- Incorporating Transformational Government Website Rationalisation Programme
- 3 x yearly; around 1200 sites
- Website managers can request additional crawls

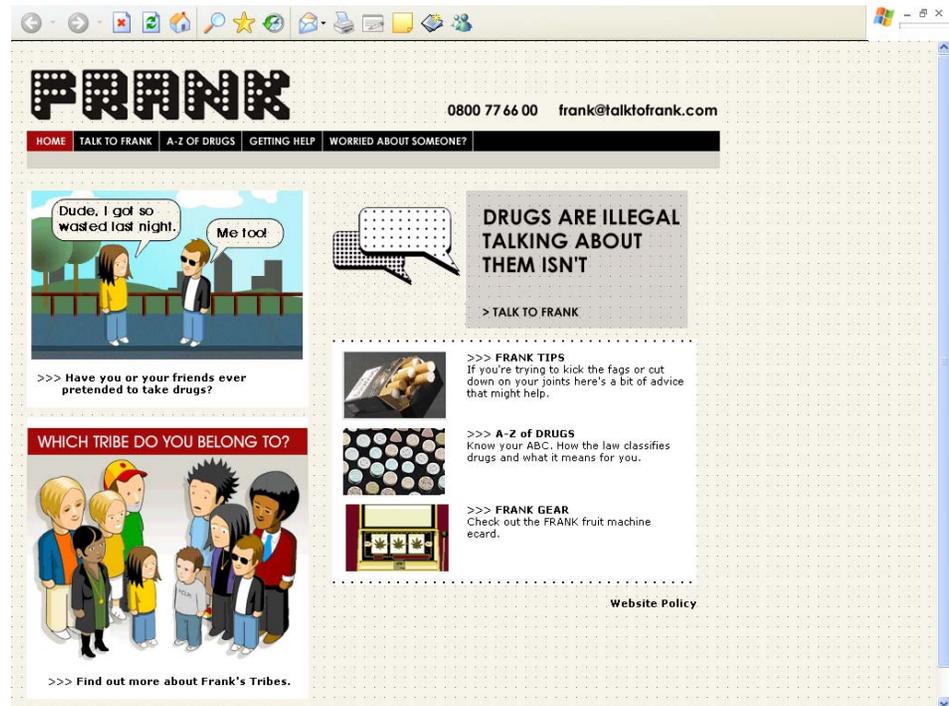
Directgov





Making sure web links work in perpetuity

- Configuration of open source software
- Apache and Microsoft IIS Web Servers
- Enables users to be redirected to web archive instead of receiving a 404 Page Not Found error; does not replace existing redirects on live websites
- Will need to be installed on government web servers





Web Continuity Community of Practice

Communities of practice for local government

Logged in as: Amanda Spencer

[My home](#) | [All Communities](#) | [People Finder](#) | [My profile](#) | [Logout](#)

Web Continuity

[Home](#) [Forum](#) [Events](#) [Members](#) [Documents](#) [Wiki](#) [News feeds](#) [Blog entries](#)

You are here: [All Communities](#) > [Digital People @ COP](#) > Web Continuity

Web Continuity

Welcome to the Web Continuity community of practice and thank you for joining. As a member you will be able to download the components and guidance you need to ensure web links work in perpetuity. We've also created this forum to share ideas, stories, resources and good practice, and to contribute to community-led solutions - so please do go online regularly to interact with the content, post your comments, or contact other members. If you need more information, email webcontinuity@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Latest forum posts

Collaborate with other community members. ?

[Update on Pages](#)
12 May 2008 11:57 | Amanda Spencer

[View all topics](#)

Upcoming events

Add events of interest to community members here. ?

[View all events](#)

New members

Please give a warm welcome to the latest members. ?

[Elaine Adu-Poku](#)
Senior Interactive Services Manager | Central Office of Information

[Jeremy Gould](#)
Head of internet communication | Ministry of Justice

[Katie Woolf](#)
Communications and Advice Manager | The

Latest documents

Share your documents with other members. ?

[View all documents](#)

Font size

Choose size: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

Search

[Search](#)

Facilitator Tools

- [View metrics](#)
- [New sub-community](#)
- [Community settings](#)
- [Membership requests](#)
- [Edit search sites](#)

Active users

[Amanda Spencer](#)

Tagged Items



Greater capture of content

- Greater stakeholder expectation
- Promoting use of XML sitemaps through guidance and training in partnership with Third Party provider
- Working directly with content creators to encourage best practice in website development
- Working with the European Archive to improve technical capture; benefitting from their experience in Research and Development



Single, centrally hosted government website database

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'UK Government Website Database' interface. The user is logged in as Amanda Spencer. The page title is 'The National Archives' and the page content is 'UK Government Website Database'. The navigation menu includes 'Department details', 'Domain details', and 'Help'. The 'Domain details' section is active, showing a list of departments: BERR, Businesslink, CLG, CO, DCMS, DCSF, DECC, DEFRA, DFID, DFT, DH, Directgov, DIUS, DWP, ECGD, FCO, GEO, HMRC, HMT, HO, MOD, MOJ, NHS, NI, Other, SCOT, and WALES. The 'Domain(s):' field is set to 'National Archives' with a 'Create new domain' button. Below this is a table of domain details:

Domain	www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
Domain homepage URL	http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
Domain name	National Archives
Domain type	Domain
Domain status	Active
Domain classification	Non-Ministerial Department
COI Ref	X1167
TNA series ref	
TNA scope	In scope for TNA (domain or independent sub-site)
Scheduled crawl date	02/10/2009
Crawl frequency (months)	4
Syndication URL (e.g. sitemap)	http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/sitemap-08-08-08.xml
Syndication date	08/8/2008
Linked websites	Link to a website

Below the table is an 'Edit' button and a 'Sub-Domain(s):' field with an 'Add sub-domain' button.



Improved presentation in Web Archive

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the National Archives website. The browser's address bar is empty, and the page title is "The National Archives". The main navigation menu includes "About us", "Visit us", "Research and learning", "Search the archives", "Services for professionals", "News", and "Shop online". The breadcrumb trail reads: "You are here: Home > Services for professionals > Preservation > Digital preservation > UK Government Web Archive".

The page content is titled "UK Government Web Archive" and includes a search box with the text "http://" and a "Search >" button. Below the search box is a "Categories" section with a collage of images and a list of categories:

- Business, industry, economics and finance
- Culture and leisure
- Environment
- Government, politics and public administration
- Health, well-being and care
- International affairs and defence
- People, community and housing
- Home affairs, public order, justice and rights
- Transport, communication and technology
- Work, education and skills
- Information on web archiving
- Notes for webmasters

The "Categories" section also includes a list of categories with blue links:

- [Business, industry, economics and finance](#)
- [Culture and leisure](#)
- [Environment](#)
- [Government, politics and public administration](#)
- [Health, well-being and care](#)
- [International affairs and defence](#)
- [People, community and housing](#)
- [Public order, justice and rights](#)
- [Transport, communication and technology](#)
- [Work, education and skills](#)

At the bottom of the page, there are two sections: "In the news" and "Website of the month".

In the news
The National Archives are studying how archived...

Website of the month
The We Were There website - showing Britain's ethnic...



Improved presentation in Web Archive: Search

Advanced Search Search >

Find results (enter keyword(s) in **one** or **more** of the search boxes)

all these words

none of these words

this exact wording or phrase

Results in this format

Date range

from (dd/mm/yyyy or yyyy)

to (dd/mm/yyyy or yyyy)

Search all departments
 one or more of the following departments:

- Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Home Office
- Department for Children, Schools and Families
- Leader of the House of Commons
- Other
- National School of Government
- Department of Health
- Central Office of Information
- Leader of the House of Lords
- Ministry of Defence
- Attorney General's Office



Improved presentation in Web Archive

[ARCHIVED CONTENT] The National Archives - Mozilla Firefox

This is archived web content selected for preservation by The National Archives. This snapshot was taken on 09/12/2008. See all dates available for this archived website. External links, forms and search boxes may not function within these archived websites. Find more about web archiving at The National Archives.

CabinetOffice

About The Cabinet Office | News | Publications | FAQs | Contact us | Sitemap | Viewing advice

You are here: Home >

Last updated: 02 December 2008

The Cabinet Office is at the centre of government, making government work better. This website brings together information from units in the Department.

Fair rules for strong communities

The Prime Minister has set out the Government's 'fair rules' agenda, outlining a wide range of policy initiatives designed to support strong communities. The 'Fair Rules for Strong Communities' strategy sets out a comprehensive series of reforms covering welfare reform, crime and policing, children and young people, business rules, immigration and communities, which are designed to bring people together and steer the country through the global economic downturn.

- Fair Rules for Strong Communities [PDF, 1.2MB, 65 pages]
- News release: 'Fair rules for strong communities'

Getting on, getting ahead

The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit has published 'Getting on, getting ahead,' an independent research paper analysing the evidence base on social mobility. The discussion paper identifies key trends and drivers of social mobility, highlighting four key areas where the Government can have the most significant impact on improving social mobility.

- Getting on, getting ahead: A discussion paper: analysing the trends and drivers of social mobility
- News release: 'Government publishes analysis of independent research on social mobility'

Search
Enter Query
Find

Cabinet Office sites

Latest News

- 09/12/2008
Independent research into licensing public charitable collections
- 03/12/2008
Civil servants celebrate diversity
- 02/12/2008
Fair rules for strong communities

Related Links

- Cabinet Office "Have your say" topics
- CIVILSERVICE
- Directgov
- COI News Distribution Service
- info4local website

Website Feedback



Challenges and Influencing

Challenges:

Identifying people to influence

Reaching the target audience

Complex IT arrangements in Government departments

Lessons learned:

Crucial to influence policy makers e.g. COI and Web Standards

Crucial to influence decision makers e.g. Heads of e-Comms
across government

Helpful to have levers – for example the tool developed to
monitor and report on broken links on UK Central Government
websites



Project Milestones 2008

- **Spring 2008** Brochure and briefings
- **September 2008** technical briefings to government; Sitemaps guidance and training
- **October 2008** Solution piloted with MoJ, software and technical guidance available
- **November 2008** Stripe implemented; Comprehensive archiving implemented
- **December 2008** Web Archive pages re-launched



Project Milestones 2009

- **January 2009** Archiving and Managing URLs guidance available
- **June 2009** Monitoring begins; Database available
- **September 2009** Web Archive Search available
- **October 2009** Official launch of Web Continuity



The National Archives

nationalarchives.gov.uk