How to exit our service design Groundhog Day experience?

→ Making end-to-end service design finally happen

This is a workshop

Clara Greo
Designer, researcher, and trainer
🇬🇧

@claragt.bsky.social

Kara Kane
Head of Design, Test, Learn and Grow, Cabinet Office 🇬🇧

@karakane-kk.bsky.social

Martin Jordan
Head of Design and User Research, DigitalService of the Federal Government 🇩🇪

@martinjordan.com

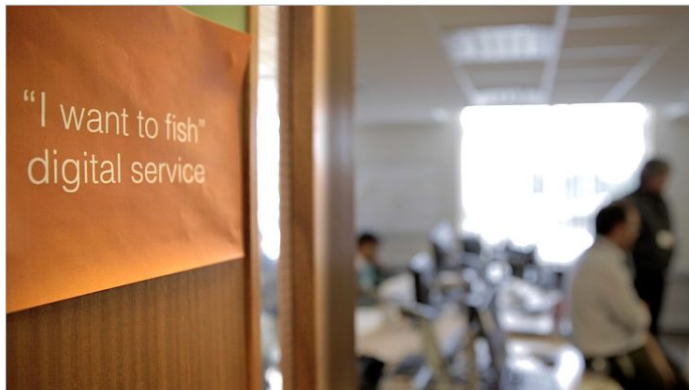# A recap of things past

On end-to-end ==service design== for whole ==services==

Blog

Government Digital Service

Organisations: Government Digital Service, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

What we mean by service design

Lou Downe - former Director for Design and Service Standards, Government Digital Service, 18 April 2016 - Service design

Our aim over this parliament is to transform the relationship between the

We design whole services:

- **from end-to-end**: this means from when the user starts trying to achieve a goal to when they finish - including both content and transaction agnostic to the department providing it
- **from front to back**: this means the user-facing service, internal processes, supporting policy or legislation and organisational, financial and governance structures of the service
- **in every channel**: digital, phone, post, face to face and physical elements

"

What we will do by 2020
[...]

● design and deliver joined-up,
end-to-end services

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[Blog](#)

Government Digital Service

Organisations: [Government Digital Service](#), [Department for Science, Innovation and Technology](#)

What do we mean when we talk about services?

[Stephanie Marsh](#), 4 April 2018 - [Service design](#), [User research](#)

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A whole service is everything the user and government needs to do to achieve an outcome

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" A whole service is:
end-to-end: from when the user
starts trying to achieve a goal to
when they finish [...]

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Service Standard

2. Solve a whole problem for users

Give feedback about this page

Work towards creating a service that solves a whole problem for users, working with other teams and organisations where necessary.

Contents

Why it's important

Services that do not work well with other related services make it hard for users to do what they need to. For example, working out which of several similar schemes they're eligible for or choosing the right form to fill in out of several near-identical options.

However we should be careful not to build big, complicated services that are not intuitive to use because they try to do too much.

And it does not mean trying to fix everything at once. Making incremental and frequent improvements benefits users.

Just make sure the increments are working towards bringing related content and services together into a journey that makes sense to users, irrespective of which department or team they 'belong' to. Because users should not have to understand how government works in order to use public services.

What it means

"

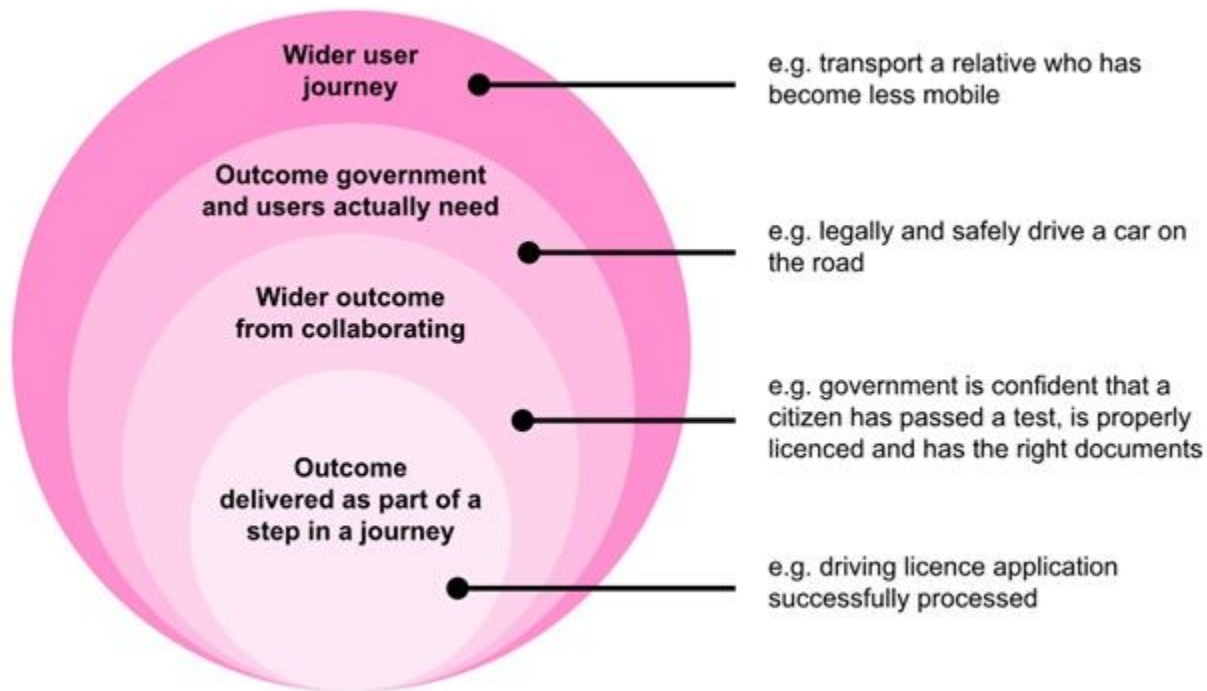When we talk about a service, we mean all the things that government collectively provides to deliver an outcome for all of its users, through any path a user takes to reach their goal.

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"

What we mean by an outcome
An outcome is made up of 2 elements:
- something a user actually needs or a goal they want to achieve
- something government has to deliver, like a new policy

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Wider user journey — e.g. transport a relative who has become less mobile

Outcome government and users actually need — e.g. legally and safely drive a car on the road

Wider outcome from collaborating — e.g. government is confident that a citizen has passed a test, is properly licenced and has the right documents

Outcome delivered as part of a step in a journey — e.g. driving licence application successfully processed

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SERVICES

INFRASTRUCTURE
ORGANISATION
INTENT

CULTURE

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Where is the end-to-end service design in the public sector?

Who of you has successfully transformed a service end-to-end?

How far did you get?

What were your barriers?

Why this matters

State of digital government review

A review of technology and data in the public sector: successes, challenges and root causes

January 2025

CP 1251

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Even where the public sector provides great digital services, users must join them up across disparate offerings. Someone moving home needs to contact 10 separate organisations.

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"
Managing a long-term condition or disability requires interaction with more than 40 services across nine different organisations.

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The average UK adult citizen spends a week and a half dealing with government bureaucracy every single year.

£45 billion

per year of unrealised savings and productivity benefits

Why we think
it's like this

Why we think it's like this:
- siloed leadership and power structures
- narrow focus and short-termism
- changing leadership and tenure
- incentives and funding
- legislative constraints
- distractions and other urgencies

So what?

Not making end-to-end services happen means:
- failing people
- losing public trust
- wasting time and money

What can work?
What could work?

At your table, collect ideas and examples to work towards end-to-end services and to overcome the barriers.

STOP!

Provocations

What if we cannot have end-to-end services?

What if it's impossible?

Then, what are the alternatives?

1-2-4-all

Making end-to-end service design finally happen

In 5 words, what is it?
....
....
....

What barrier is it addressing?
○ Governance
○ Structures
○ Culture
○ People & skills
○ ....

In a sketch, what does it look like?

In a few more words, how does it work?
....
....
....
....
....

Anything that influences
the system to work differently.

→ 3 minutes by yourself

→ 6 minutes with your neighbour

→ 6 minutes in your half-table group

Share back

One example

Parental benefits
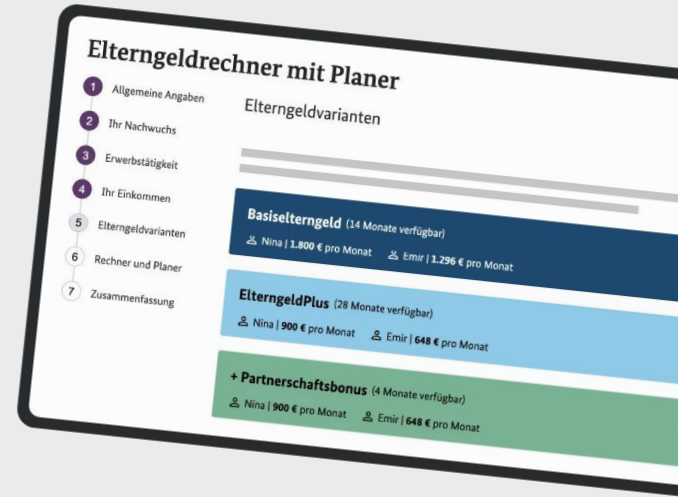
Calculate parental benefits

↓

Apply for parental benefits

↓

Receive parental benefits

Family benefits

Elterngeldrechner mit Planer

Elterngeldvarianten

1. Allgemeine Angaben
2. Ihr Nachwuchs
3. Erwerbstätigkeit
4. Ihr Einkommen
5. Elterngeldvarianten
6. Rechner und Planer
7. Zusammenfassung

Basiselterngeld (14 Monate verfügbar)
Nina | **1.800 €** pro Monat   Emir | **1.296 €** pro Monat

ElterngeldPlus (28 Monate verfügbar)
Nina | **900 €** pro Monat   Emir | **648 €** pro Monat

+ Partnerschaftsbonus (4 Monate verfügbar)
Nina | **900 €** pro Monat   Emir | **648 €** pro Monat

Calculating associated cost
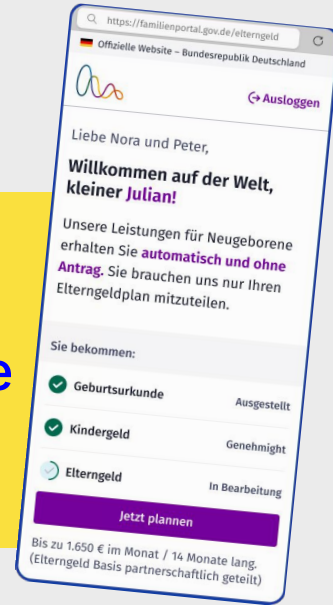
Approach-ing director of another unit in the dept

Doing a radical redesign of the paper form

Proposing work on a key shared component

Talking to stakehold-ers about changing the law
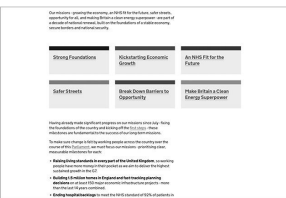
Requesting API data access from other dept

Creating a vision prototype

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Government missions

— a set of government-wide goals to drive progress and national renewal across the country, with specific, measurable milestones to be achieved by the end of the Parliament
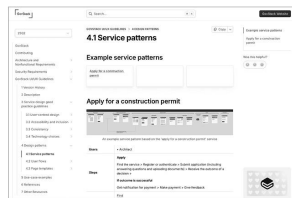

→ https://www.gov.uk/missions

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GovStack building blocks

— a collection of internationally informed standards, guidance, and patterns for designing consistent services

→ https://specs.govstack.global/govstack-ui-ux-guidelines/4-design-patterns

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Making end-to-end service design finally happen

Service communities

— a networks of people from across the public sector who work together to design and deliver an end-to-end service, like 'start a business' or 'get health benefits'


→ https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2019/08/13/why-you-should-set-up-a-service-community/

Making end-to-end service design finally happen

GOV Reuse Library

— a collection of reusable elements that already exist in other parts of government to reduce duplication, increase transparency and promote cross-government collaboration
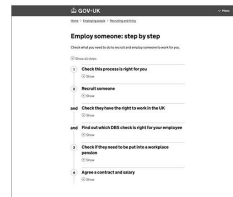

→ https://reuselibrary-dev.apps.cloud-platform.service.justice.gov.uk/
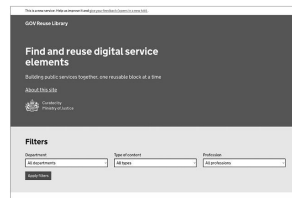
Making end-to-end service desig

Step by ste

— a navigational pattern to join up the guidance, transactions and ser for a whole service journey e.g. 'Le drive a car'

→ https://design-system.service.g patterns/step-by-step-navigation/

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What's next?

We'll blog about this, your ideas and examples.

Read more in the Service Gazette

THE SERVICE
Gazette

VOL. 10, NO. 1   AMSTERDAM USER NEEDS FIRST CONFERENCE EDITION   EU € 5 / UK £ 4.50 / US $ 5.80

Digital service resilience
What endures when government innovation units close
BY HILLARY HARTLEY

When we created 18F in 2013, our vision was to transform how government builds and buys technology — bringing modern practices into government to create digital services that truly work for the American people. Following the UK's Government Digital Service (GDS) model, 18F inspired digital service teams worldwide, including the Ontario Digital Service (ODS) I later helped build in Canada.

The recent shuttering of 18F and the dramatic restructuring of ODS was met with shock and disbelief by the global digital government community. For those of us who built these teams, it feels deeply personal — years dedicated to driving change in digital government, only to see our structures dismantled.

Yet this is not a eulogy. By working in the open from day one, 18F created blueprints not just for digital transformation, but for building inclusive team cultures where delivering services for all people meant respecting and supporting all people on the team. The

elimination of a self-funded organization that delivered exceptional value reveals deeper tensions in how governments approach modernization.

The true resilience of digital government isn't in organizational structures but in the people, practices, and cultural shifts that outlive any single team. What matters most is not whether specific teams endure, but how their impact continues to ripple outward long after they're gone.

Beyond efficiency: the real value at stake.
The dismantling of digital service units is often justified as "efficiency" or "streamlining." However, 18F operated on a cost-recovery model where agencies chose to work with them because they delivered immense value and savings. In the U.S. federal context, the timing of 18F's closure suggests something beyond routine reorganization. It appears to be part of a systematic effort to remove internal technical

expertise from government. Digital service units represent a fundamentally different approach to government technology — prioritizing user needs and building services with rather than for people. The removal of these teams creates a vacuum inevitably filled by contractors without adequate oversight. Without in-house expertise that understands delivery, who's left to evaluate whether these contractors are actually building what people need?

Meanwhile, ODS's restructuring had its own complex drivers, but most concerning is what these closures signal about how governments value digital expertise. Many digital units began with a start-up-like ethos, emphasizing speed and autonomy. While this allowed for rapid innovation, it also sometimes led to a perception of digital teams as separate from, rather than integral to, the machinery of government. Leadership's failure to recognize this expertise as core to modern governance relegates digital

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POLICY DESIGN
How do we design in, for and with the EU?

Across Europe, governments are embracing design for policy to create more user-centred governance. Design is still emerging within EU institutions, for example, at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the EU Policy Lab. The vision is to create coherent approaches building on local experiences and to build a European community.

→ PAGE 4

CHANGE
Can we end austerity-era service design?

Lou Downe is calling for an end of austerity service design, namely designing services merely to save money or raise revenue. This approach has been present in the UK since 2009 and has led to many negative incentives. Instead, Lou gives practical recommendations on how to design with scarcity following a different approach to long-term change.

→ PAGE 6

SUSTAINABILITY
How can we design sustainable services?

For government services, there is a potential to reduce emissions at scale. The article suggests five different ways that digital public services can reduce emissions: hosting, file sizes, feature scoping, device support and the power you have to ask questions. Hopefully, these recommendations can help to build more sustainable digital services.

→ PAGE 12

We are looking forward to talking to you!

Clara Greo

🦋 @claragt.bsky.social

Kara Kane

@karakane-kk.bsky.social

Martin Jordan

@martinjordan.com