

The Club service for web hosting and content management

Open to new members...



Welcome to The Club

Looking for a secure, stable and innovative online environment to meet your public sector website needs?

Since 2007 The Club, a collaboration between Government departments working with Steria, has delivered a fully managed service to meet e-Government communication needs. It already handles the public information sites of the Department of Health and Directgov and supports common requirements for a robust, resilient and fully convergent online platform that has been successfully independently benchmarked.

Each site has its own look, feel and identity, so that it is appropriate to its owner, subject and audience. And each shares the benefits of high performance, economies of scale and convergence. Club-hosted sites are developed against Government guidelines and offer solutions that are more readily accessible, easy to navigate, fast and fully available day or night.

This low risk, value for money, web hosting and content management service can be rapidly delivered by Steria to new members. All will benefit from the collective experience and expertise of existing members and will reap the rewards of a quality service that is fully supported and fit for the demands of delivering Government services online.



Membership of The Club offers:

- Fully supported, managed and security accredited web services
- Content management services
- A robust, secure, hosted platform
- A rapid engagement model to access the above services.

And since The Club is managed by Government for Government, it puts members in control of a solution to meet their needs. Membership also enables the wider sharing of best practice and puts teams in touch with what is going on elsewhere in public sector online communications.

The result: A reliable, adaptable and cost-effective solution to e-Government communications challenges.

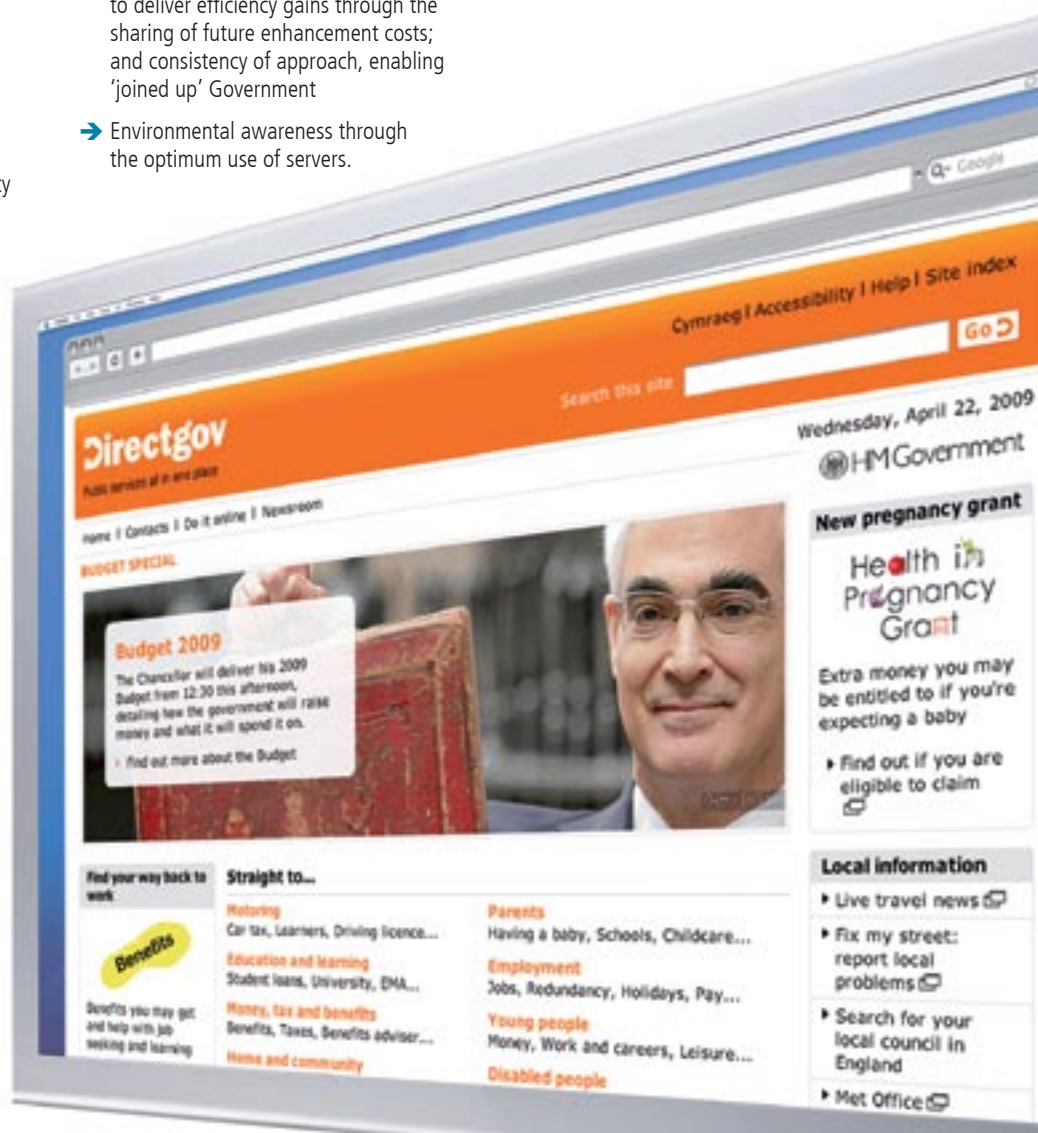
The Club: delivering today

“Our down time now is virtually zero, which is consistent with our SLA of 99.8%. Our users – and by that I mean central government departments and local authorities in England and Wales as well as members of the public – know that whatever happens, we’re there.”

Will Stengel, Head of Service Operations, Directgov

A low risk, proven and operational solution:

- Highly available and scalable managed service infrastructure, including disaster recovery
- Pre-existing and extensive contract removes the need, and significant cost, of progressing a procurement exercise. Shared service framework readily available with CIO-recognised champion status
- Certification under the ISO 27001 Information Security Management standard by third-party CLAS consultants developed in line with Government security, web accessibility and COI standards
- Shared development capability resulting in lower costs for the delivery of shared functionality
- Shared infrastructure resulting in lower costs per member than if purchased individually
- Flexible architecture designed to scale without impacting performance
- Access to a shared service community to deliver efficiency gains through the sharing of future enhancement costs; and consistency of approach, enabling ‘joined up’ Government
- Environmental awareness through the optimum use of servers.



Your Solution Checklist

DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS		THE CLUB SOLUTION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
IT, technical and channel management	Policy, communications and publicity	Functionality, features and support	
Site-specific templates and style sheets allow for fully branded and tailored digital and online services	Services can be tailored to deliver content in a format that addresses the specific needs of a campaign or initiative	Hosted web content management solution enabling the creation of a branded website for any Government department or agency	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fully compliant with Cabinet Office recommendations for best practice web design and delivery	Meets or exceeds usability expectations	Designed for Government by experienced architects in line with the latest standards	<input type="checkbox"/>
High availability	Always on	99.8% availability level, 24x7 site monitoring of infrastructure, application, log analysis, availability and security	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comprehensive technical support, backup and contingency	Reliable	Regular backup for ensured business continuity and full off-site disaster-recovery capabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full resilience and high performance	Timely and responsive	Use of caches to improve responsiveness and reduce the load on members' servers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scalable solution	Scalable solution	Designed to cater for the needs of multiple organisations simultaneously, having the ability to host multiple sites and to increase or decrease access to underlying infrastructure as needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content management consistency and intuitive navigation	Ability to manage and present content easily	Standard yet adaptable content templates provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extensive and accurate search facility	Easy for audiences to find what they need	Market-leading search engine option, full meta-data standards compliance and controllable search results	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate level of security and protection	Assured service	Security-accredited solution with anti-virus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secure to host and use	Assured service	Security accredited with secure authoring and display with single-step workflow	<input type="checkbox"/>

DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS		THE CLUB SOLUTION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
IT, technical and channel management	Policy, communications and publicity	Functionality, features and support	
High-level accessibility	No barriers to use	W3C WAI AA compliance and multi-language support	<input type="checkbox"/>
High-level accessibility	Two-way information sharing, dynamic content and support for campaigns	RSS (inbound and out), decision tools and campaign management	<input type="checkbox"/>
High-level accessibility	Downloadable media	Downloadable digital assets including support for PDF, Word, multimedia streaming	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site and services development in line with usage patterns	Service can be refreshed regularly	Tools to support site monitoring, management reporting and service evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assured and smooth implementation	Invisible transition to The Club solution	Experienced and proven project team to build, integrate and manage website's inclusion in The Club results in a low risk option	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service management	Service management	Full range of ITIL-compliant services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speedy procurement	Speedy procurement	Pre-existing and extensive contract removes the need, and significant cost, of progressing a procurement exercise. Shared service framework readily available with CIO-recognised champion status	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value for money	Value for money	Solution recognised by an independent benchmarking exercise as offering strong value for money against a reference group of similar organisations and services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional skills development and opportunity for shared learning across multiple channels and departments	Best practice and guidance shared	Use of a common web services and content management solution enables expertise, experience and resources to be shared	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solution aligns to the requirements of the Transformational Government Strategy	Quality services available consistently, enabling better access to Government information and services online	A top tier content management solution developed to support the delivery of desired transformational outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>

Membership: benefits at a glance

“Three years on, thanks to The Club, the Department of Health is successfully dealing with an average of six million hits on its website every month. At times of flu epidemics, including swine flu, or other health scares, the site can cope with much greater volumes.”

Rosie Meredith, Senior Manager, Department of Health

- Effective online communications meeting the needs and expectations of increasingly sophisticated consumers
- Supports Transformational Government strategy and e-Government agendas for more streamlined services
- Delivers better value and efficiencies whilst satisfying user demand
- Shared service economies of scale, yet a solution unique to each customer
- Intelligent customer function, a central Government delivery and 'Agreement' management body. Removes the need for several vital roles to be provided by individual member organisations, therefore reducing overall resourcing expectations
- Club-hosted sites are readily accessible, easy to navigate, fast and fully available day and night

For more information please contact The Club project office:
theclubicf@dh.gsi.gov.uk or 0207 972 5612

Case study: Directgov

Let it snow

In January 2009, the UK suffered some of the worst winter weather in decades. Roads were blocked. Schools were closed. Rail services were suspended or severely delayed. The chaos went on for days.

At least one thing, however, worked as smoothly as ever: Directgov, the online site for 'public services all in one place'.

And the public certainly put Directgov through its paces. 'We had 13 million visits in January. That was a record for Directgov,' says Will Stengel, Head of Service Operations. 'And it showed that people expect us to provide them with rapidly changing information as soon as it's available. Our performance in January also demonstrated just how reliable and resilient Directgov has become.'

Directgov is a founder member of The Club, a group of central Government departments with a common requirement for a robust, resilient and fully convergent online platform. 'Getting what we needed as individual departments would have been prohibitively costly, with lots of duplication of effort. It

would also have gone against the entire concept of joined-up Government. So we took a pragmatic decision and, in 2006, joined forces with two other Government departments. Will recalls. 'After going through the usual procurement procedure, we decided to work with Steria to help build, implement and constantly improve a shared and cost-effective platform.'

'The biggest benefit from membership so far is that we've got a robust, resilient, reliable platform that's there when people need to access it. You can't have trust if a system doesn't work. On the one day when the public really needs it, there's no room for explaining why Directgov wasn't available. The web is 24/7 and so is Directgov.'

'Our down time now is virtually zero, which is consistent with our SLA of 99.8%. Our users – and by that I mean central Government departments and local authorities in England and Wales as well as members of the public – know that whatever happens, we're there,' Will says.



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Will Stengel, Head of Service Operations, Directgov

Case study: Department of Health

Health check

When doctors, nurses and other professionals in England want to tap into one of the biggest repositories for medical information, they know just where to look: the Department of Health's website. And when they do, they know they can rely on easy and instant access to whatever data they need.

That's because in 2006 the Department was one of the founders of The Club, a group of central Government departments determined to pool their knowledge, expertise and resources into creating a single, highly adaptable and affordable online public information platform.

'We wanted reliable hosting, good service management and the ability to develop and enhance the website. And we knew that all of that would be beyond our individual capabilities and budgets,'

says Rosie Meredith, Senior Manager, Website Development and Service Delivery. Having decided on the key requirements, they initiated a procurement process for a supplier that would deliver the goods.

Three years on, thanks to The Club, the Department of Health is successfully dealing with an average of six million hits on its website every month. At times of flu epidemics, including swine flu, or other health scares, the site can cope with much greater volumes and easily handle usage peaks and troughs.

'For me, from the start the great thing about The Club has been the seamlessness of implementation. When we moved over from our previous site, no one noticed – which is precisely what we wanted.'

That is not to say there haven't been any problems. 'Recently we wanted to update a page with a PDF – normally a simple thing to do. But it just wouldn't work. So we contacted Steria, the company that runs the site for us. They were back on the phone with the right solution in a matter of minutes,' Rosie says.

Because changing and improving the site is so easy, the Department has started a major update on its look and feel. That means new templates and colours, prettier pages and – more significantly – changed architecture. We've also added video and audio streaming. And all of that's been done since our implementation, with no down time,' Rosie says.

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