Summary

On 18 January 2016 we conducted user testing on the live version of the Tenants Portal. The purpose of the session was to gauge the usability of the design and navigation and to specifically determine what was working or not working from the participants' perspective.

Six participants were selected by the Involvement Officer, including some that had been involved previously with the development of the Tenants Portal. Participants were encouraged to bring in and use their own devices, resulting in testing on a Council laptop (x2), an iPhone (x2) a Samsung smartphone and a Samsung Galaxy tablet.

A number of tasks were developed to test all aspects of the Portal. Due to the differing skills and confidence of the participants it was not possible to complete more than two tasks, and the methodology used had to be changed part way through testing to accommodate this.

Overall the new repairs form itself performed well;

- Participants worked through the form quickly and easily, finding navigation straightforward and easy to use

- The ability to make an appointment online was valued

In other areas there were issues that resulted in tasks failing;

- Navigating to the repairs form page was not clear to participants

- The registration page caused issues for participants less experienced with using online forms, and only one successful registration was made

- The form progress indicator was often mistaken for clickable links

- There were some technical errors that occurred during three of the sessions

- There was not enough time, or enough successful accounts created, to test the repairs history function

General observations and comments made by participants

- Participants found the repairs form itself "straightforward" or "easy to use", and there were positive comments made about the use of images and list of options to choose from.

- Five participants, when asked, said they would recommend others to use the online form. One qualified this by saying they would need to help the person to use it.

- One participant was very much in favour of providing additional information on the repair as she felt this helped the Council determine the level of urgency that the repair demanded

Tasks given to participants

1. Finding the repairs form on the Council website
2. Create a tenants portal account and log in
3. Report a problem outside the house: Leaking roof
4. Report a problem inside the house: Dripping tap in the Bathroom / Floorboards loose in the living room
5. Report a problem that that cannot be completed online: Broken window in Kitchen
6. Find an old repair and see what date it was completed.

1. Finding the repairs form on the Council website

1.1 Description
You want to report a repair so need to find the repairs form on the Council website. Use whatever method you would normally use to do this.

1.2 Expectation
Participants would either use search to find the Council website, or the housing repairs landing page on the website. They would be able to navigate through the website to find 'Report a housing repair' via Housing > Report a Housing Repair

1.3 Findings
- The majority of participants were able to complete the task without issues

- Participants all used search to find the appropriate page rather than type in the website address.

- One participant selected 'Oxford County Council' as a suggested result and then had to be prompted to use the City Council search result as no progress was being made.

- One inexperienced user had problems with the way Google presented results for 'Oxford City Council' as it promoted their map view. Another used voice search on his mobile phone which produced good results.

- No participants used the expected navigation route while on the website. One participant said she expected to see a link on the home page

- A link to the (now) unused Lagan form is still shown as the 4th highest link on google search results for 'oxford city council housing repairs'. This was used by one participant. When visited the form states it is no longer in use, but the link to the correct form (present on the screen) was not used.

- The google search result for the Housing Repairs does not carry sufficient information to help guide users to reporting a repair.

1.4 Recommendations

- Improve the metadata and descriptions for the Housing Repairs landing page to produce improved results in Google *(actioned, awaiting google refresh)*

- Look to create a prominent link on the home page to encourage take up of online repairs reporting

- Use a javascript redirect on the older Lagan form to automatically send users to the correct repairs form from Google while it continues to drop in the Google rankings from reduced use

- Promote an alias (e.g. www.oxford.gov.uk/repairmyhouse) on publications to make it easier to find the repairs form

2. Create a tenants portal account and log in

2.1 Description
When you find the housing repairs form, choose the option to register an account before you report your repair

2.2 Expectation
Participants would choose one of the two links present on the 'Report a Housing Repair' page to 'Sign up' or 'register an account'. They would then progress through the registration screen, sign up for an account using their personal information, receive email confirmation and

2.3 Findings

- There were four attempts to complete this task but only one success. The only successful participant was very comfortable in going online and described herself as "tech savvy"

- The length of the form confused some participants as it required scrolling down to see the outcome of some selections, or what to do next.

- The Date of Birth selector does not work properly on a desktop PC as it allows negative values to be entered for the dates (using the scroll buttons). This is not the case for mobile devices which prompted manual entry. One participant stated she would expect to see a calendar selector used for this rather than manual entry.

- When one participant was asked to do this as a final task, she used site search to find 'how to register' which did not produce any results.

- Some participants struggled to use the address entry/postcode lookup properly.

  - Three participants lived at sub-addresses (i.e. 43C Lake Street rather than 43 Lake Street). As the addresses in the select list are listed in UPRN order, these are listed lower down on the selection list and not immediately apparent.

  - The fact that empty fields for the manual entry of an address were present below the postcode lookup results clearly confused a number of participants, as they abandoned the lookup button and began to complete these empty fields instead

  - The first address field is just titled 'Address' and one participant completed this with his complete address. He later stated this would be his expectation.

o   The use of the Country field was commented on as "a bit daft"

2.4 Recommendations

- Ensure that negative values cannot be entered in the date of birth field, and investigate the use of a calendar for date entry

- Hide manual address fields unless the user cannot find their address using the postcode lookup. This would also make the page shorter.

- Change the Address field label to clarify that only the first line of the address is used

- Ensure that search promotions are used to direct users to the My Account page for registration when searching *(actioned, awaiting google site search to go live)*

- Investigate the reordering of postcode search results to group similar addresses together.

- Remove 'Country as a required field' on the address

- Additional testing be undertaken on this functionality once changes have been made given limited success with the task

3. Report a problem outside the house: Leaking roof

3.1 Description
Use the report form to report a leak in your roof where there is water coming in through your ceiling.

3.2 Expectation
From the Repairs form, participants would progress past the initial screening page and onto reporting via Outside House > Roofing or Guttering Repair > Roof is leaking to report the necessary repair, then make an appointment and receive a confirmation

3.3 Findings

- This task was only allocated to one participant.

- At the screening page, the participant chose 'I have a severe leak' as the text does not specify a leak from a water pipe

- Although an unanticipated result, this did allow to test perceptions of the screening page results. The participant did not initially realise the page advised her to make a phone call, and thought the report had been made with a repair within 24 hours.

3.4 Recommendations

- Change 'I have a severe leak' to 'I have a badly leaking water pipe' to ensure roof leaks are picked up by the online form.

- Make the need to telephone clearer for diverted users, perhaps using a telephone icon?

4. Report a problem inside the house: Dripping tap in the Bathroom/ Floorboards loose in the living room

4.1 Description
Use the report form to report i) a dripping bath tap in your bathroom ii) loose floorboards in your living room (participants given either one or the other)

4.2 Expectation
From the Repairs form, participants would progress past the initial screening page and onto reporting via

i)   Inside House > Bathroom > Bath > Tap dripping
ii)   Inside House > Other Room > Floorboards loose/coming up

then make an appointment and receive a confirmation

4.3 Findings
- A total of four participants undertook one of these two tasks, three of which completed it successfully.

- A problem with the form 'looping' for one participant was experienced, making it not possible to complete the task. This was due to a test error where a new browser session was not started for the new participant, which does not represent a true result. A server connection problem with Lagan was experienced with another participant, and resulting in prompting to refresh the page to make the form work again.

- All participants successfully navigated through the screening page, and read the choices carefully before progressing.

- Currently the Lagan form does not populate signed-in users' details in the report form as the cookie developed by Jadu is encrypted.

- Most participants were confused by the form progress indicators used, thinking they acted as buttons. The large size of these indicators also pushed down other page content

- All participants responded positively to the use of images to assist their navigation through the form to the correct repair, and all managed to complete this section quickly.

- Those participants that asked about text messaging were enthusiastic about their use when explained, indicating these are a helpful addition to the process.

- Some participants experienced confusion with the available appointment times, initially not realising that grey boxes represented no appointments available. This confusion resolved itself when available appointments presented themselves

- The appointments table and disclaimer are currently not responsive, meaning participants using mobile phones had to use horizontal scrolling to see the table in full. Not being able to see the whole table meant that appointment slot timings (left hand side) were not visible while looking at available slots on the right hand side of the table, and vice versa.

- At present, Saturday and Sunday are shown on the appointments table although appointments are not offered for these days.

- For most repairs there is no ability to enter supporting information as this cannot be picked up by repairs staff on their mobile devices. One participant was very keen on the use of this additional text field to help clarify her repair needs.

- Three of the four participants undertaking this task described the form as "straightforward" or "easy", and would readily use it. They would also recommend it to neighbours. One participant who lived close to St Aldates mentioned at numerous points in the process that he wouldn't bother and would just call in to the office to make a report.

4.4 Recommendations

- Ongoing problems with Lagan server connections be investigated and resolved to prevent outages for users completing Lagan forms *(already actioned via escalation to Paul Fleming)*

- Ensure the form cookie can be unencrypted to allow the Lagan form to be populated for signed-in users *(already actioned in an email to Jadu)*

- Review the design of the form progress indicator to make them look less like navigation buttons

- Review the design of the appointment's table; remove weekend times; make non-appointment days more obvious; improve responsive behaviour for use on mobile devices

- Review the decision to exclude additional text fields on some repairs reports.

5. Report a problem that that cannot be completed online: Broken window in Kitchen

5.1 Description
Use the report form to report a cracked window in your kitchen. (This was clarified with the participant to confirm it did not mean a broken window, which may have been classed as an emergency, with a different repair route chosen)

5.2 Expectation
From the Repairs form, participants would progress past the initial screening page and onto reporting via Inside House > Another Room > Window Repair > Other is leaking to report the necessary repair. As the use of 'Other' leads to the generation of a form for the Contact Centre there was no expectation of repairs appointments being made.

5.3 Findings
- Only one participant attempted this task, which was completed successfully and quickly

- The disclaimer screen was not read in full, with the participant admitting "I'd probably just read the first two lines", but the 'accept and understand' box was ticked as required.
- The confirmation screen and reference number were seen as useful for the participant

5.4 Recommendations
- No specific recommendations from a participant perspective

6. Find an old repair and see what date it was completed

6.1 Description
While logged in to your account, view your historic repairs and find the date the last repair was completed.

6.2 Expectation
Participants would already be logged in, and would navigate via the My Account page to view a repairs history, selecting the detail of the most recent report to find the completion date.
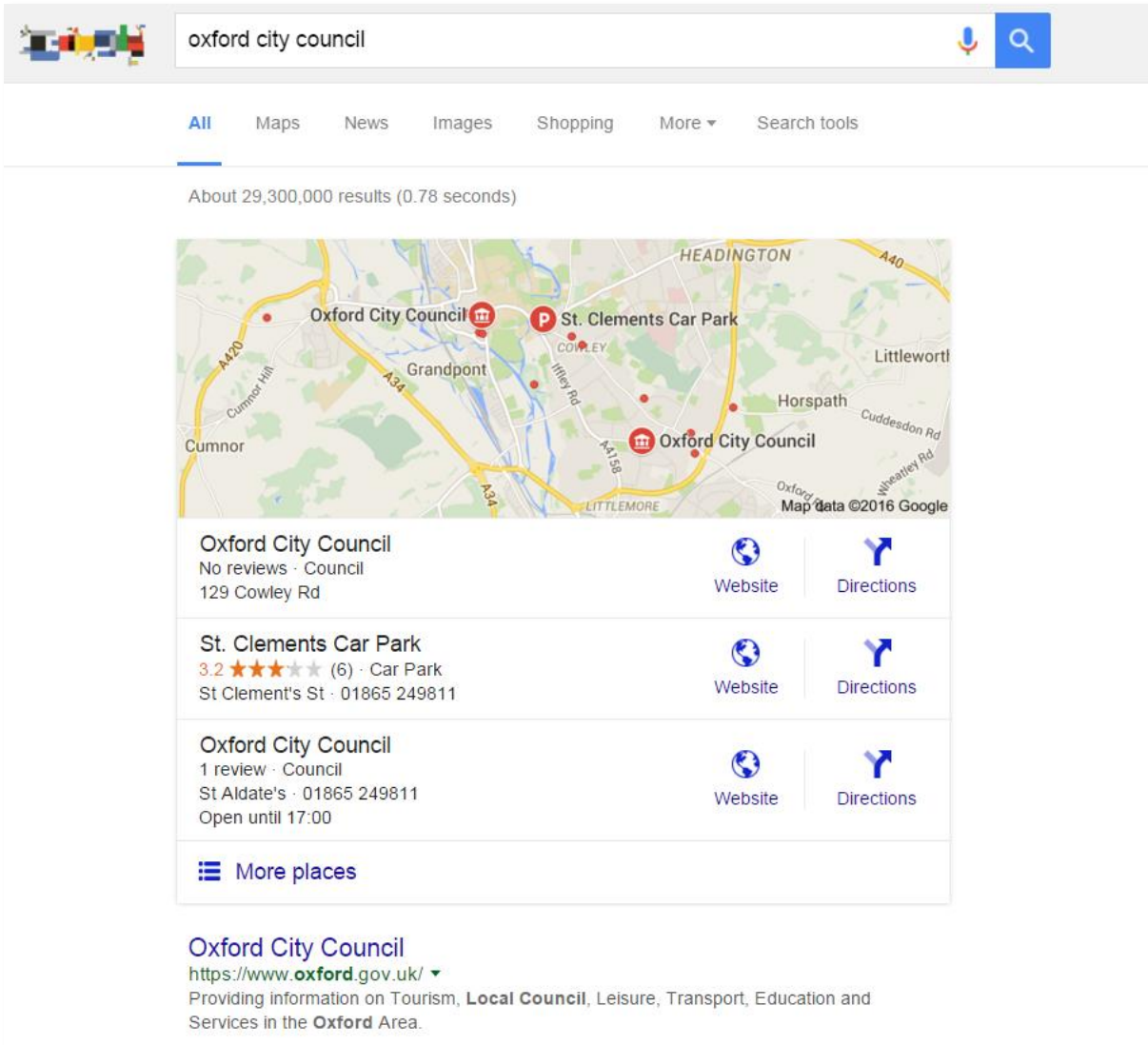
6.3 Findings
- No one was able to undertake this task due to limited time and only one participant having been able to register successfully
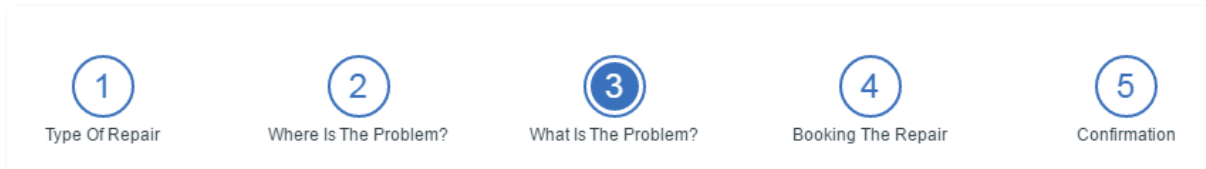
6.4 Recommendations
- Further user testing be carried out to include this task to judge how useful tenants find it.

Appendix 1: Screenshots

A1. Google search results for 'Oxford City Council'

A2. Form Progress Indicators

A3. Disclaimer and appointment display on mobiles

a police Crime Reference Number (CRN) is need

- You are responsible for any repairs to any change property. If we attend and the repair is to a fixture we may not carry out the repairs work.

☑ **I accept and understand.**

For us to carry out your repair, someone over 16 the property to provide access at the date and tim

* Please select an appointment time

	Mon Jan 18th	Tue Jan 19th	Wed Jan 20th	Thu Jan 21st
Morning 8:00am - 12:00pm			○ Available	○ Available
Afternoon 12:00pm - 4:30pm			○ Available	○ Available
All Day 8:00am - 4:30pm			○ Available	○ Available
School Run				