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Usability testing and Analysis

**UX and Interaction Design**

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## Goals of the usability testing session

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One of the first things that we as a group decided was that we wanted to make sure that we had both difficult and simple tasks for the user to carry out on our website, making the simple tasks appear more difficult and the more difficult tasks appear more simple allowing us to provide as least help to the user as possible. This would help ensure that the user is not expecting anything difficult or simple. There were five main tasks that we felt were important and centered around the usability and accessibility of the website. These tasks were narrowed down from ten as they were the most crucial tasks which must be completed by users successfully in order of the website to be successful in its main goals. The two usability related questions were to change the text size and contrast of the website and the others focused on performing the most important tasks of the website, donating and adopting as well as becoming involved in the events.

It was of the utmost importance that from this testing we would be able to gain a detailed insight as to how users would interact with the website thus revealing if there are any flaws in the design or navigation that we did not initially see. The importance of this stems from the fact that the website's success depends firmly on the user's success in using it. It was from the website's aims that the questions were constructed and it is from the participant's speed of performance, success, and satisfaction that I could form an evaluation and improve the website's overall design and accessibility. As an extra precaution and to avoid lengthy waiting times, which could potentially harm the user's focus, I opened each page in a separate window so if there is any problem with the internet connection or the page simply does not load I can change the page and say "Okay so this is where that link takes you".

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## How testers were recruited

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The testers chosen were both between 60 and 65 years of age, our target user group based on the research previously collected. I thought of obtaining two individuals from different parts of London, one in Willesden and the other in Hillingdon which was relatively simple as I had relatives and friends in both areas giving me an area to carry out the usability testing. This also helped with keeping the sample varied as these were two completely different areas with different people. I decided to choose one female and one male tester as I wanted to keep my sample as varied as I possibly could. I also made sure that the room each test was conducted in was a casual room with a computer in it which would be the most likely setting that the users would be using their computers. To ease the testers into the moment I let them know that they did not have to do anything that they felt uncomfortable with and that it was a relaxed session designed to test my website and not their computer skills. I also let them know that I would like them to say what they are thinking as they navigate through the website.

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## Description of the tasks

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When thinking of what tasks to create for the usability tests, it was important that they were real-world tasks that would be performed by most of the users that visit the website. I also wanted to make sure that the tasks were not general, but more specific and relating to a reason why you would perform the general task. For example, "How would you find when we are next hosting the group dog walk?" is much more suitable than "Find the group dog walk event" as it is a real task that would be performed by users.

There were five tasks that I needed the testers to carry out and for each of these tasks I expanded them into scenarios whilst avoiding using the same terms as the web page names or button and link names which would allow the user to use their intuition rather than simply link words. It also helps cloud the task at hand so the user is forced to imagine a real situation and find the data the way they would naturally without the guidance of the person who designed the website.

**Task 1:** Change the text size on any of the pages. (Usability focused)

**Expanded:** "If you thought that the text was hard to read properly, what would you do to improve it and how would you do it on the website?"

**Task 2:** Make a donation. (Accessibility focused)

**Expanded:** "Now imagine you agree with our cause and are willing to pledge your support. How would you do this? How would you support us?"

**Task 3:** Browse through rescue page and adopt a dog. (Accessibility focused)

**Expanded:** "Now imagine you want to adopt a dog and find out information about the available dogs. How would you do this?"

**Task 4:** Change the contrast. (Usability focused)

**Expanded:** "Show me what you would do if there was an issue with the contrast, how would you fix it on the website and not on your computer screen?"

**Task 5:** Locate our next group dog walking event. (Accessibility focused)

**Expanded:** "How would you find when we are next hosting the group dog walk?"

The first task was designed to test whether the user was able to change the size of the text with ease. This was a usability focused task and the simplest out of all of them. This would also help ease the user into the session and build their confidence towards the other upcoming tasks. The second task was more difficult but the primary function and purpose of the website. It was primarily accessibility focused and testes whether the user could find one of the numerous donate buttons and navigate to the donation box before attempting to make a donation. The speed at which this task is completed will reveal whether the design was correct or still needs tweaking as the path to the donate box needs to

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be the simplest in the website. The third task required the user to navigate through the website and adopt a dog on the rescue page. This is also accessibility focused and the second most important function of the website so there needs to be a straight forward navigation with multiple paths.

The fourth task simply tests whether the user can successfully change the contrast of the website. The contrast symbol is not as universally known as the font size symbols but that was also to be the main purpose of this task. This is strictly a usability task and would vastly improve viewing for those hard of seeing so an easy to find contrast setting is essential. The fifth and final task is the most difficult as it tests whether the user is able to locate and obtain the details of a specific event. It was also important that the event to be found was not the first one or at the top of the list, making the user actually look for the event rather than simply scanning the page. This task also tests the user with the most complicated task of the website so it is essential that they can still complete it with general ease. This will also determine whether there would need to be any changes to the navigation of the website.

These five tasks also have clear beginnings and ends as it is clear when the user has been successful in completing a given task. This makes observations much easier to carry out and it also makes it easier to identify any problems or hesitations that the users experience. I also asked a friend to carry out the tasks in case there were any misunderstandings in the task which I could rectify before the real tests.

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## Major problems uncovered and how they would be resolved

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Although the contrast symbol is known to the majority of computer users, it is not as well known as the text sizing symbols. Both the first and second participants displayed difficulty in finding and identifying the contrast control. This only made it more confusing for the users as they see it as complicated as changing the contrast on the screen itself so it is imperative that this would need to be resolved. The first participant searched for the site's settings which do not exist but provides a useful new approach to the usability of the website. A possibility could be a settings tab in the place of the text sizing and contrast icons and when the settings tab is selected a clearer options menu drops down with clearly written words and sliders to change the values of the contrast and text size. The settings tab could also consume an arbitrary amount of space as it can be closed once used.

Another major problem is that both users were unable to see that the images of dogs (on the rescue page) and the event titles (on the events page) could be clicked. These were initially supported by some text but the first participant only just read the text while the other did not see it at all which led to confusion when asked which dog she would have liked to adopt. If this problem was left unchecked then some of the dogs would not be adopted and the events would not have many viewers as they would be unaware of the location and dates. A simple way to resolve this problem would be to have larger text, perhaps another color and above the images they refer to. As the human eye reads from top to bottom it seems only logical to place the text before the images.

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Fig. 1

### Minor problems uncovered and how they would be resolved

A minor problem worth looking into is the fact that the first participant displayed hesitation as he thought there would be a large form to fill out. This could be a potentially large issue as the idea of large forms could throw off potential supporters, even though the actual form on the website is simple and relatively easy to fill out. In order to make future users aware of this a small area of text in the description stating something like "Only a few simple steps and you're there! It's really that easy!" could ease potential supporters.

Another minor problem was that the second participant selected the monthly donate option but instead of proceeding, she waited for the page to update. As this is a common feature in most websites (such as updating shopping carts etc) it would seem more appropriate and perhaps clearer if there were simply two buttons, one for monthly and the other for one off payments.

## Reflection on the Usability Testing

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I feel that the usability testing was very successful as problems and solutions were discovered that would never have been discovered otherwise. The tasks were well thought through and allowed the key issues with the accessibility and usability of the website show through as there was no help provided in the wording of the tasks. The main issues were surrounding the usability (mainly the contrast control). Both users enjoyed their overall experiences and liked the design very much. From my observations it was also easy to see that navigation and accessibility was relatively straightforward and simple. The only issue was in placing text in certain areas (Fig. 1) and clarifying the usability icons. Judging from both participants' body languages it was easy to see that they navigated through the website with confidence, allowing them to concentrate on the tasks at hand and actually take in what the website was about. Most importantly, they both enjoyed their experience navigating through the website. I do however feel that more tests could have been carried out with more participants to specify the key issues within the website. I also would have perhaps asked more in the Post-Testing Interviews as this was the best time to get the participant's true views of their experiences with the website.

Overall I have understood that there are two implementations that I would make to the website, after the usability testing. The first change would be to slightly enlarge the text which explains that certain images could be clicked on to expand or enlarge as they contain key elements to the website's functions and experience. Another important change I would make is by replacing the text size modifier and the contrast modifier with a simple settings or page settings tab which, when clicked, would expand and clearly show the two (or possibly more) options. These two options would be Contrast and Text size, clearly written with sliders besides them, enabling the users to see the options much more clearly.

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## Appendix 1: The Usability Tests

### Test 1: (Participant 1)

<p><b>Location and date: London, Willesden on 27/03/2013</b></p>	
<p><b>Task 1: Change the text size on any of the pages.</b></p> <p>"If you thought that the text was hard to read properly, what would you do to improve it and how would you do it on the website?"</p> <p>(for this task I set the text to the smallest size so the user would understand what I meant with greater ease)</p>	
<p>Questions and comments (tester)</p>	<p>"I know this one, I've seen it on some other sites"</p> <p>"There we go"</p> <p>"What's next?"</p>
<p>Observations (student)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- User seemed to be aware of the method of changing the text size. This may be as the three A's are universally used on many websites.</li> <li>- The user felt and looked confident about this task and found the three A's with ease.</li> <li>- The user asked "What's next?" with confidence</li> <li>- The tester laughed and appeared very confident about this task.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task 2: Make a donation.</b></p> <p>"Now imagine you agree with our cause and are willing to pledge your support. How would you do this? How would you support us?"</p> <p>"Please take your time, there is no rush".</p>	
<p>Questions and comments (tester)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The user asked "what type of support?" to which I replied, "How ever you would like to support us".</li> <li>"I'm not too good at filling in all of the details" to which I responded</li> </ul>

	<p>"don't worry, you won't have to fill in any details"</p> <p>"Oh, that was easy"</p>
<p>Observations (student)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- User seemed fairly comfortable with navigating my website although slightly under pressure.</li> <li>- The user chose to support us by donating one time (not monthly)</li> <li>- To make sure the user understood that there were two options when donating money to our charity I asked if the user saw the drop down menu (which asked if the user wanted to make a monthly or one off payment). The user replied immediately "Yes I know but I've chosen to make a one off payment this time".</li> <li>- The user seemed relieved that the process was very easy and the page was located easily as well.</li> <li>- The user began leaning forward which indicates involvement and that the user is not intimidated as they would probably be from a more complicated site.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task 3: Browse through rescue page and adopt a dog.</b></p> <p>"Now imagine you want to adopt a dog and find out information about the available dogs. How would you do this?"</p>	
<p>Questions and comments (tester)</p>	<p>"So should I go to 'Volunteer', oh no wait, 'Rescue a Dog' looks like the one"</p> <p>"That a nice pup, looks like my nephew's one"</p> <p>"There we go, a nice obvious button"</p> <p>"What's this, 'Click on a dog to learn more about it and to proceed with adoption'" (spoken slowly)</p> <p>"Ah so that's talking about these images, these dogs"</p> <p>"I'll take this one"</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Although the user appeared to be heading to the wrong page and appeared uncertain (spoke very slowly), they then quickly realised and seemed confident (spoke much faster).</li> </ul>

Observations (student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Began to have a conversation about the dog on the page, showing that they are at ease and enjoying their time on the website.</li> <li>- The user seemed confused that the text below the images of dogs actually described the images, and did not know that they could be clicked on until the user had read the text below.</li> <li>- The form was straight forward and simple for the user.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task 4: Change the contrast</b></p> <p>"Show me what you would do if there was an issue with the contrast, how would you fix it on the website and not on your computer screen?"</p>	
Questions and comments (tester)	<p>"I don't even know how to fix it on my computer screen (laughs)"</p> <p>"I can't see a 'settings' page, so let's click this circle because it looks like the contrast button on my TV"</p> <p>"Ah, it worked"</p> <p>"that's much better, easier to see"</p>
Observations (student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The user seemed slightly confused as to how they would change the contrast as they do not know how to do it on a computer screen.</li> <li>- The user first looks at the navigation for a 'Settings' tab and leans forward when one can't be found</li> <li>- The user appeared pleased that they found it next to the text size modifier</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task 5: Locate our next group dog walking event</b></p> <p>"How would you find when we are next hosting the group dog walk?"</p>	
Question and comments (tester)	<p>"Hmm let me see"</p> <p>"So I'll first go back to the home page and see if you have any information on the group dog walk"</p> <p>"Hmm, I don't see anything at the moment"</p>

	<p>"Ah, here it is, it's in the upcoming events box"</p> <p>" 'View all' "</p> <p>"There it is again, the group dog walk, 5th of April"</p> <p>"Oh, I can click on these too"</p> <p>(says the details of the event)</p> <p>"Ah there's that message again that says you can click on these buttons"</p>
Observations (student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The user did not wait and look at the navigation bar and instead went straight to the Home Page and located the event there.</li><li>- The user appeared to find the events with ease, but only after a moment or two to scout the page.</li><li>- The user seemed to have found the even on the events page with ease, although they did not know that the even could actually be clicked on which would expand the tab, revealing detailed information about the event.</li></ul>

Test 2: (Participant 2)

<p><b>Location and date: London, Hillingdon on 30/03/2013</b></p>	
<p><b>Task 1: Change the text size on any of the pages.</b></p> <p>"If you thought that the text was hard to read properly, what would you do to improve it and how would you do it on the website?"</p> <p>(for this task I set the text to the smallest size so the user would understand what I meant with greater ease)</p>	
<p>Questions and comments (tester)</p>	<p>"Umm, I think I would use these letters next to the search bar, ah I can see they change size"</p> <p>"Oh I think something just happen" (The user accidently clicked on the contrast button)</p>
<p>Observations (student)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- User seemed to concentrate at the screen but shortly after spotted the three A's</li> <li>- The user seemed slightly distressed and frustrated when the contrast button was clicked as she did not initially know that to change it back; you had to click on the contrast button again.</li> <li>- The user clicked on all three A's after having learned that they were three different buttons rather than a single one and then accidently clicked on the contrast button and thought she had caused a problem in the site.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task 2: Make a donation.</b></p> <p>"Now imagine you agree with our cause and are willing to pledge your support. How would you do this? How would you support us?"</p> <p>"Please take your time, there is no rush".</p>	
<p>Questions and comments (tester)</p>	<p>"So if I wanted to support you I would donate money"</p> <p>"I should click here for that I think"</p> <p>"This should be more clear because it is in the bottom corner and it only</p>

	<p>says learn more"</p> <p>"I'll make a donation, a monthly one because I like this cause"</p> <p>"Why isn't anything happening?"</p>
<p>Observations (student)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The user did not seem to pay attention to the main navigation bar and instead searched the Home Page for the option to donate.</li> <li>- The user chose to support us by donating one time (not monthly)</li> <li>- To make sure the user understood that there were two options when donating money to our charity I asked if the user saw the drop down menu (which asked if the user wanted to make a monthly or one off payment). The user expected something to change when 'Monthly was selected' and did not proceed until she had realised that she would have to press donate button.</li> <li>- User is a member of PayPal and felt it was a safer because the website allowed payments using PayPal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task 3: Browse through rescue page and adopt a dog.</b></p> <p>"Now imagine you want to adopt a dog and find out information about the available dogs. How would you do this?"</p>	
<p>Questions and comments (tester)</p>	<p>"Umm ok, I think I'll go to the 'Rescue a Dog' page and see what's there because I can't imagine it being on any other page here"</p> <p>"Ah, wonderful, I'll just click 'Adopt Now'"</p> <p>"Who are these dogs? I think I'll opt to be matched up"</p>
<p>Observations (student)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The user immediately understood what page to go to and began paying attention to the navigation bar as there was no link elsewhere.</li> <li>- The user appreciated the large 'Adopt Now' button but did not look at the dogs that can be adopted which led to her not understanding who the dogs in the selection fields were.</li> <li>- The rest of the form was simple and straight forward.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Task 4: Change the contrast</b></p> <p>"Show me what you would do if there was an issue with the contrast, how would you fix it on the website and not on your computer screen?"</p>	
<p>Questions and comments (tester)</p>	<p>"Ah I already did that I think, when the page changed before, I think it's this circle that's half black. It's a bit small isn't it" (laughs)</p> <p>"Oh I see, it makes the text stand out, very good"</p>
<p>Observations (student)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The user may not have known that this was where the contrast button was located as she had found it by accident at the beginning</li> <li>- The user seemed to squint at the contrast symbol as she could not see or understand what it was</li> </ul>
<p><b>Task 5: Locate our next group dog walking event</b></p> <p>"How would you find when we are next hosting the group dog walk?"</p>	
<p>Question and comments (tester)</p>	<p>"So that'll be an event so I should go to the 'News and Events' page"</p> <p>"So it's not on this side. Ah I can see it on this side, and I can see all of the details for the event, very nice"</p>
<p>Observations (student)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The user went straight to the navigation to search for the likely page containing the event information</li> <li>- The user scanned the page by column and found the event on the second column</li> <li>- By hovering the mouse over each part that the user scanned over, she was able to see that the event boxes changed colour and the mouse pointer changed so it was simple to see that these boxes could be clicked, which is how she found the event information</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Post-Testing Interview

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### Participant 1:

**Q: How did you feel about the website overall?**

**A:** *"I found it quite easy to use and I liked the design, it's really simple and I love dogs. I like the way things are easy to find and I didn't get lost which happens quite a lot when I go on some websites".*

*"I think that the contrast and changing the text size can be a bit confusing for people who don't know how to do it, I was slightly lost when you asked me to change the contrast, I think there should be settings or options button somewhere or something that could make it clearer".*

**Q: Was there anything that you found difficult or confusing in any of the tasks or in any part of the website overall?**

**A:** *"That time I was trying to adopt a dog I didn't know that you could click on the images of the dogs to find out until I read that small text underneath that said I could click on them; I think this was the same for that events page, I didn't know I could click on those until I read that text again but it was above this time so it was better".*

**Q: If you could add something to the website, what would it be?**

**A:** *"I think that I would make it a bit more obvious that those things could be clicked on which would be a great help but other than that the website was really good and easy to use".*

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## Participant 2:

### **Q: How did you feel about the website overall?**

**A:** *"I absolutely loved the look of it, it was so simple and easy to read but I must say that I did get panicked when I thought I had broken the website when I accidentally clicked that contrast button, oh and that's another thing, it's very small and it's hard to tell what it is".*

*"whenever you asked me to find or do something the first place I would look is at the top menu, and I always found what I needed so I definitely think that's worth mentioning because in my past experiences it's definitely easy to get lost in some websites".*

### **Q: Was there anything that you found difficult or confusing in any of the tasks or in any part of the website overall?**

**A:** *"Other than what I mentioned there was nothing else that I found confusing or difficult. As I said, I could find everything I needed from the top menu so that was very useful".*

*"There was also a time when I selected a different payment method and waited for something to change but I think that may have just been my mistake".*

*"Other than those minor issues I think that this was a very good website and I most certainly would donate, especially since you allow PayPal".*

### **Q: If you could add something to the website, what would it be?**

**A:** *"I think that the font sizing and the contrast small icon should have something that perhaps explains what they are but other than that there is nothing I would add".*

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