

Chesterfield Borough Council

Style guide

A standard style for written English

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Introduction

This editorial style guide covers the use of written English for Chesterfield Borough Council, both internally and externally.

The vast majority of the people we communicate with do not know the internal structure of our departments, nor do they understand our internal jargon. For this reason, it is important that the English we use is clear, direct and consistent.

We are all responsible for ensuring that we communicate clearly and effectively, and this is particularly crucial when we communicate with the outside world.

It is important that all our communications are of a high professional standard to best present our work. Using consistent language, spelling and terminology helps us to achieve this.

Our publications and website may be written by hundreds of different people, but our aim is for 'one voice' – the voice of Chesterfield Borough Council – which is clear and written in plain English.

This style guide establishes our preferred spellings and terminology. It also offers general guidance on English grammar, style and usage. There is a useful section on common editorial mistakes, together with a list of recommended reference books.

Communications and marketing service.

1. Spelling

1.1. Chesterfield standard spelling

The standard spelling used by the council is the *Oxford English Dictionary* alternative spelling, which appears in brackets in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Council preferred spellings, council terminology, and a list of council abbreviations and acronyms can be found in the annexes.

1.2. Capitalisation

Overcapitalisation is common and is often used incorrectly for emphasis or to assign importance to a person. There are strict grammatical rules governing when words should be capitalised that are explained in this style guide.

Overcapitalisation can quickly get out of control. For example, the word ‘councillor’ is a simple noun that should not be capitalised. If you capitalise ‘councillor’, then why not Tenant, Pupil or Resident or Teacher?

Remember, overcapitalisation slows down reading speed by about 70 per cent.

1. Use initial capitals for proper nouns and names.

Chesterfield Borough Council
The Pomegranate Theatre
Queen’s Park Sports Centre

2. Capitalise the names of books, films and other major works. Capitalise first words and all words apart from prepositions and conjunctions.

The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame

3. Use capitals for people’s titles, but use lower case when referring to the office, post or appointment.

He saw Prime Minister David Cameron.
He saw the British prime minister.

We met Queen Elizabeth II.
We met the queen of England.

“Welcome, Chief Executive Huw Bowen.”
Huw Bowen was appointed chief executive of Chesterfield Borough Council.

Alexis Diouf, Mayor of Chesterfield, handed out the service awards.
Alexis Diouf has been appointed mayor of Chesterfield.

4. Use upper case for definite geographical places, regions, areas, titles and countries. Use lower case for more general regions or areas.

South Derbyshire
southern Derbyshire

5. Use lower case for committees and teams. Even though it is a name, they are not true proper nouns. Do not give special importance to committees, teams, departments or units.

senior leadership team
human resources department

6. Use lower case for rough descriptions or references that come after the first instance of the term.

the corporate plan (Chesterfield Borough Council Corporate Plan)
the framework (the Local Development Framework)
the programme (the Great Place, Great Service programme)
the government (exception)

7. Use lower case for points of the compass.

east
west
north
south
Hospitals in the north-west of the country treat over 1,000 patients a day.

8. Use lower case for seasons of the year in running text. Use upper case for seasons in the title of a publication.

The strategy will be updated in spring 2014.
Borough Bulletin, Spring 2014

1.3. Hyphens

There are no simple rules for hyphens in English and dictionaries vary significantly. However, there are some cases where hyphens must be used. If in doubt, refer to the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

1. Hyphenate compounds when used attributively (before a noun).
Do not use hyphens when used predicatively (after a noun).

The out-of-date research paper
The research paper is out of date.
He carried out a short-term review.
The review was carried out face to face.
An 80-year-old woman
The woman is 80 years old.

2. Hyphenate fractions (whether nouns or adjectives).

two-thirds
four-fifths
one-sixth

3. Hyphenate quarters of the compass.

north-west
south-east

4. Words with prefixes such as anti-, neo-, non- and pro- should generally be hyphenated.

anti-government
non-existent
pro-European

Exceptions are:

nonconformist
nonplussed
neologism

5. Hyphenate all nouns formed from prepositional verbs. A prepositional verb is a verb that is extended or changed in meaning by the use of a preposition. When such a verb is used as a noun, it is always hyphenated.

At the end, the chairman will round up the discussion. (verb)
The discussion ended with a round-up by the chairman. (noun)

Other examples in common use are:

build-up
take-up
set-up

6. Hyphenate adjectives composed of two or more words.

day-to-day problems
up-to-date information
ten-year plan
Arabic- and French-speaking interpreters
flood-affected towns

Note the difference between simple adverbial use and the adjectival form.

The council is well organised. (adverbial)
A well-organised council will make a greater impact. (adjectival)

7. Use hyphens with short adverbs only, for example, **well**, **ill**, **most**.

ill-advised action
most-favoured area

8. Do not use with adverbs ending in -ly.

the relatively expensive house
the increasingly active youth programme

9. The presence of a hyphen can change the meaning of some words and phrases.

represent	= act as, stand for, fill the place of
re-present	= present again
to resort to	= turn to
to re-sort	= sort again
the little-used car	= the car that is not used often
the little used car	= the small second-hand car
thirty-odd people	= about 30 people
thirty odd people	= 30 people who are odd

10. Another important use of the hyphen is to mark word breaks at the end of lines. Avoid using too many word breaks as they slow down reading speed. Break words into their constituent parts and avoid making unintentional words.

heat-
hen or
butt-
ress

1.4. Accents

1. If a foreign word has been accepted in English usage, do not include the accent unless it would change the pronunciation. If in doubt, refer to the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

café (pronunciation would change to cay-f)
cliché (pronunciation would change to clee-sh)
façade (pronunciation would change to fak-ard)
elite (pronunciation would not change)

2. Accents should always be used on foreign names.

José Mourinho
François Hollande

1.5. Prefixes

1. The normal rule is to use a hyphen to avoid a doubling of the same vowel.

re-elect *but* **readopt**
pre-empt *but* **prearrange**

2. Usage has changed in recent years so that the *Oxford English Dictionary* and *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage* both abandon the hyphen in **cooperate**, **coordinate**, but retain it in words such as **co-opt** where pronunciation is a problem.

1.6 Double consonants

1. Consonants are often doubled when a suffix is added.

expel and **expelled**
fulfil and **fulfilled**

2. All other consonants are doubled when the pronunciation stress falls on the final vowel before the suffix.

focus and **focused** and **focusing**
regret and **regretted** and **regrettable**
commit and **committed** and **committing**
credit and **credited** and **creditable**

2. Standard usage

2.1. Apostrophes

The apostrophe is used in English to:

- indicate possession
- indicate that something is omitted or contracted

Possessive apostrophes

1. Do not confuse **it's** (it is) with **its** (the possessive pronoun).

It's a successful institution. (contraction)

Its staff are motivated and its programmes are well planned. (possessive)

2. Use the normal possessive ('s) after singular words, including words that end in -s.

the officer's report

the boss's car

3. If a personal name ends in -s, and you would naturally pronounce the extra -s when saying the word out loud, then use the normal possessive ('s).

Mr Jones's house

Thomas's filing cabinet

If a personal name ends in -s, but the extra -s would not be spoken, then just add (s').

St Thomas' house

Connors' finest performance was in 1991.

4. Use the plural possessive (s') on plurals that end in s, including plural names and certain other names that take a singular verb.

The bosses' cars are being serviced.

The Derbyshire Times' article is incorrect.

If you aren't sure about an organisation's name, you can check it on the organisation's website.

5. Use the normal possessive ('s) after plurals that do not end in s.

children's toys

people's complaints

the women's hats

the media's attention

6. Use an apostrophe for the meaning 'worth of'.

He has five years' experience.

He has been working for five years. (no apostrophe)

He will go on holiday in a month's time.

7. Sometimes in modern English, the possessive is avoided by using the noun as an adjective. For example:

The council's team in Brimington... (proper possessive)

The council team in Brimington... (adjectival use)

Apostrophes for contraction or omission

1. The apostrophe is also used to show something is omitted. For formal writing, do not use contraction.

it's (it is)

I'd (I would)

2. It is no longer necessary to write the apostrophe before **'phone**, **'cello** or **'plane**.
3. Do not put apostrophes in decades or abbreviations which are straight plurals.

TROs

the 1940s weekend

DVDs

TVs

2.2. Punctuation

Full stops and exclamation marks

1. Do not use full stops in abbreviations and acronyms.

NHS

SFRA

LDF

PO Box 372

2. Do not use full stops in lower case abbreviations, such as **eg** and **ie**.
3. Do not use full stops after titles:

Dr

Mr

Ms

Mrs

Rvd

4. For royal titles, use the following abbreviations:

HM (Her Majesty or His Majesty)

HRH (His Royal Highness or Her Royal Highness)

TRH (Their Royal Highnesses)

Commas

1. The position of a comma can change the meaning of a sentence.

However, we learnt it was going to be a slow process.

However we learnt, it was going to be a slow process.

2. Use commas after expressions of time when they begin a sentence.

**Yesterday, the councillor met members of the community.
On 3 December 2013, the Christmas lights will be switched on.**

3. Do not use a comma before 'and' in lists unless it is needed for clarity. This is sometimes called the Oxford comma or serial comma. Compare the following:

**The items are available in black, white, red, yellow and green.
The items are available in black, white, red, and yellow and green.
The items are available in black and white, red and yellow, and blue and green.**

Exclamation marks

1. Do not use exclamation marks in serious, non-fiction writing.

Brackets, en dashes and parenthesis

The *Oxford English Dictionary* describes parenthesis as “a word, clause or sentence inserted as an explanation or afterthought into a passage which is grammatically complete without it, and usually marked off by brackets, dashes or commas”.

1. Use commas for a routine, weak parenthesis.

**A survey conducted by the council, in November 2006, found that...
All staff, including part-time staff, can benefit from...**

2. Use round brackets to mark a strong but unemphatic parenthesis. This is often used to explain rather than to comment.

**A profit is expected in the next financial quarter (April to June).
The Local Development Framework (LDF) is...**

3. Be careful where you place the full stop when using parenthesis.

**When the parenthesis forms part of a sentence, the full stop comes after the second round bracket (as here).
(However, when the whole sentence is a parenthesis, as here, then the full stop comes before the second bracket.)**

4. Use square brackets for a parenthesis that is added by the writer or editor to explain or to comment.

According to the report: “The reduced availability of transportation and curfew [due to the conflict] had a significant impact on...”

5. Use en dashes (–) to mark a strong and emphatic parenthesis. They are used to comment rather than to explain.

The other organisations – the vast majority councils – were able to see the benefits of expanding their web communications.

Colons

1. Use a colon to separate a general statement from specifics, usually putting the general statement first.

The council provided emergency kits: sandbags, torches and food parcels.

2. Use a colon before a whole quoted sentence, but not before a quotation that begins mid-sentence.

She said: “It will never work.”
He retorted that it had “always worked before”.

3. Use a colon for antithesis or contrasts.

The rich get richer: the poor get poorer.

4. Colons can also be used to introduce bulleted lists and numbered lists (see also: Bulleted lists and numbered lists).

Bulleted lists and numbered lists

1. Lists that are not whole sentences should start with lower case. Do not add full stops, semicolons or commas at the end of the bullet. Such lists should start with either all nouns or all verbs. Do not mix nouns and verbs if at all possible.
2. In lists that include infinitive verbs, ensure ‘to’ appears before the colon (not a semicolon) and ensure the ‘to’ is not repeated each time.

The conference is a unique opportunity to:

- **identify and analyse major challenges**
- **coordinate action**
- **reach out to communities**
- **tackle social exclusion and discrimination**

3. In general, use bullets not numbers unless the number of items is important.

Such an approach constitutes three main elements:

1. **ensuring effective, evidence-based subsidies for agricultural inputs**
2. **enhancing market access for inputs and outputs**
3. **strengthening the linkages between science and policy**

3. If lists are whole sentences, start each item with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

The study highlighted the following issues:

- **The Corporate Plan has focused activities on community solutions.**
- **A local focus has been successful in some areas.**

2.3. Dates, time, numbers and measurements

Dates

1. Use the British date format and not the American one. Format dates in the following order and style: day, month, year.

12 August 2014 (*not 12th August 2014 or 12th August 2014 or August 12, 2014*)
Saturday 5 August 2013

Note: Word will automatically convert the ‘th’ or ‘nd’ to superscript. You can undo this.

2. Do not use figures for dates, such as 11/01/14.
3. When using a date range with a preposition, use 'to' and not an en dash.
from 2005 to 2006 *not* from 2005–2006
4. Write out date ranges in full, using an en dash (–) and not a hyphen (-) to separate the years. An en dash means 'to'.
2013–2014 *not* 2013-14
5. Use: **the 2000s** (or **the noughties**), **a woman in her 30s**, **her 33rd birthday**.
6. When writing about centuries, spell out to tenth century and use figures from 11th century onwards.
seventh century
21st century

Time

1. Use the 12-hour clock written as **9am** (*not* 09:00 or 09.00) or **9.45pm**.
2. Use **noon** *not* midday and *not* 12 noon.
3. Use **midnight** *not* 12am and *not* 12 midnight.

Numbers

1. Write out in full all numbers up to ten.
We needed ten trucks to make the deliveries.
2. Use figures for numbers from 11 and above.
The hall was 11 miles from the railway station.
There were 40 people attending the conference.
3. Use figures for numbers below and above ten in the same sentence.
There were 19 small boxes, 10 medium-sized and 8 large ones.
4. Use figures with percentages.
7 per cent, 8.2 per cent, between 5 and 15 per cent
5. Use figures for sums of money. Do not use k to indicate thousands.
The centre cost £60,000 to build.
6. Use figures for resolutions and articles.
Article 1 states that...
Resolution 12 of Chesterfield Borough Council's code is...
7. Use figures for the results of a vote.
Resolution 12 was adopted with 45 votes for, 7 against and 3 abstentions.

8. Use figures with the words million, billion, etc.

6 million people
£1 billion

9. Never start a sentence with a figure. Write the number in words instead, or turn the sentence round.

Seventeen children were stranded.
The number of children stranded was 17.

10. Write out in full numbers used figuratively.

I've told them a hundred times.

11. Write **million** in full unless **m** is obvious by the context. Use **billion** to mean a thousand million. Only use **m** for million and **bn** for billion in tables to save space.

The market hall cost £4 million to build.

12. Use commas with numbers of four digits and over in general text.

19,650
12,250,100

13. Use figures for decimals, using a full stop.

6.7
0.25

14. Hyphenate fractions and spell out in words.

two-thirds
one-fifth

15. Use common fractions or percentages rather than decimals where possible.

The workers at the council are three-quarters women.

16. Write per cent, percentage. Use the % sign in tables to save space.

17. Do not use Roman numerals. Not everyone is familiar with them. However, there are situations where convention requires them to be used.

Queen Elizabeth II

Where Roman numerals appear in the title of a conference or other events, they should be maintained.

XXII Winter Olympic Games (*not* 22nd Winter Olympic Games)

VII International Conference (*not* 7th International Conference)

Note: **Second World War** (*not* World War II or WW2)

Measurements

1. Except when the specific context demands it, use metric forms in the English spelling.

metres *not* meters

Note: meter can be used for an item that measures, such as an electricity meter.

litres *not* liters

tonnes *not* metric tons or MT (ton = US or Imperial ton)

kilometres (km)

kilograms (kg)

hectare (ha)

centimetres (cm)

millimetres (mm)

2. When writing out measurements, the figure should be followed by a space then the unit of measurement.

300 kilometres

50 kilograms

20 hectares

3. When using the abbreviated form, there should be no space after the figure.

300km

50kg

20ha

2.4. Italics and quotations

Italics

Italics are used for foreign words and the titles of publications.

1. There is no clear-cut definition of a foreign word. If it has become thoroughly anglicised, such as **status quo**, **ad hoc** or **apartheid**, it does not need italics. Newer, less familiar words may take italics.
2. Use italics for the titles of books, newspapers and publications, plays, radio and television programmes, and films. If the definite article (the) is part of the title, then this should also be italicised.

The Economist

the Financial Times

the Yorkshire Post

the Derbyshire Times

Quotations

1. Council style is to use double quotation marks.

The chief executive said: “This is the worst flooding this century and the landscape will take years to recover.”

2. When quoting someone for the first time, introduce them before the quote.

Huw Bowen, the council’s chief executive, said: “Chesterfield Borough Council has taken into account everyone’s opinion.”

Note: because the quote is a complete sentence, it is introduced by a colon, it starts with a capital letter and the full stop comes before the second quotation mark.

3. Quotations within quotations take single quotation marks.

He said: “I really meant to say, ‘I’m sorry’.”

2.5. References and bibliographies

Published works should be listed in alphabetical order. Examples of council style for references and bibliographies, covering a range of different types of sources, are listed below. Follow the formatting given, depending on the type of source quoted.

1. For books:

Smith, John Aldred and Campbell, Lauren. *Getting customers to think digitally*. London: Routledge, 2014.

Filch, A. and Bonito, S. (eds.). *Leading public sector change in an uncertain context*. Geneva: OECD, 2014.

2. For articles in journals and magazines:

Bulis, C. ‘Can we do it? Yes we can.’ in *Change Management Today*. Department for Work and Pensions, London, June 2013.

Forrester, D. ‘Life through the lens’ in *British Journal of Environmental Managers*, Vol. 97, pp. 245–281, 2013.

3. For newspaper articles:

Smith, F. ‘How councils are balancing the books’, *The Economist*, 11 September 2013.

4. For news reports:

BBC. Chesterfield’s new theatrical works, *BBC News*, 10 May 2012.

2.6. Place names

Some place names can be tricky to get right.

Brimington *not* Brimmington

Staveley *not* Stavely or Stavley

Horn’s Bridge *not* Hornsbridge or Horns’ Bridge

St Helen’s *not* St Helens

St Leonard’s *not* St Leonards

New Whittington *not* New Whittington or New Wittington or New Whit

Holmewood *not* Homewood

Calow *not* Callow

2.7 Abbreviations and acronyms

1. Do not write out in full any abbreviations or acronyms that are very well known to everyone.

BBC
ITV

2. For little known abbreviations or acronyms, use the full name at the first mention, with the abbreviation in round brackets, and use the abbreviation thereafter.

The Local Development Framework (LDF) was updated.

3. Avoid the heavy use of acronyms and abbreviations by using rough references, if it is clear what is being referred to, for example, **the council**, **the borough**.
4. Although the abbreviation CBC is widely used in internal communications, do not use it in published documents and reports.

Chesterfield Borough Council *not* CBC *or* Chesterfield BC
the council

5. Use 'council' on its own if it used as an adjective.
Creating sustainable business is a council-led process.
6. Use upper and lower case for abbreviations which can be pronounced and which use more than initial letters.

Defra
Ofsted

2.8. Collective nouns

1. Some writers use a plural verb after nouns with a collective sense, for example, “the council are...” Do not do this. If the sense is a single entity, use a singular verb.

The council is...
The police is...
The government is...
The team is...

2.9. Council departments and job titles

1. In general, use lower case when referring to the specific names of departments.
The human resources department has...
2. Use lower case when referring in general terms to the role or function of a department.
The council's finance department has...
3. Use lower case when referring to the department in general terms.
The department has...
4. Use lower case when referring to job titles.

Joe Bloggs, operations manager, is out of the office.
Joe Bloggs, the council's operations manager, is responsible for...

2.10. Miscellaneous points

Web addresses

1. Most (but not all) web addresses and the online locations of documents begin with `http://`. Write all such addresses without this prefix as it is generally assumed that the full address will begin with `http://`.

www.chesterfield.gov.uk *not* `http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk`

2. Write out all other online addresses in full.

http://procurement.chesterfield.gov.uk *not* `procurement.chesterfield.gov.uk`

3. Use a full stop after a web address when this appears at the end of a sentence.

For more information, visit www.chesterfield.gov.uk.

E-mail addresses

1. A person's name is not always obvious from their e-mail address. When using an e-mail address as a contact, also use the person's name. Add a full stop when the e-mail address appears at the end of a sentence.

For more information, contact John Smith at john.smith@chesterfield.gov.uk.

Due to, owing to, because

1. At the beginning of a sentence, use 'owing to' or 'because of'.

Owing to a lack of funding, the centre had to close.
Because of the sensitive nature of the subject, information is limited.

2. Use 'due to' mid-sentence.

He resigned due to differences of opinion.

Fewer, less

1. For countable nouns, use 'fewer'.

There were fewer councillors than officers.

2. For non-countable nouns, use 'less'.

There was less wine than water.

Ampersands (&)

1. Do not use the ampersand (&) unless for book titles and authors, or if it forms part of an organisation's name. Use 'and' for running text.

Forward slash (/)

1. Do not use / (forward slash) to mean 'or' in running text. Use only in tables when space is limited.

Trade marks

A trade mark is a brand, symbol or word registered and protected by a manufacturer by law in order to prevent others from using it, for example, Fibreglass, Land Rover, Sellotape.

1. Do not use trade marks unless they are important to the text. Use a generic equivalent instead, such as **sticky tape** instead of **Sellotape**.

That or which

As a general rule, if a clause cannot be deleted without removing information essential to the sentence, use 'that'. If the information in the clause can be removed without the main clause becoming meaningless, then use 'which'.

1. Use 'that' in defining clauses.

The houses that the council built have now been repaired.

2. Use 'which' in informative clauses.

The houses that the council built, which were designed to be affordable, have provided new homes for over 200 families.

3. Never use 'that' or 'which' to refer to a person. Use 'who'.

4. Avoid the unnecessary use of 'that'.

She said she was going to call.

3. A few usage problems

3.1 The passive voice

The passive voice can be pompous in English and should be used with care.

The impersonal passive (it is thought that... it is believed that... it appears, etc.) is often used by writers to obscure a lack of information or to fudge an issue. For example:

It has been reported that two councillors were involved.

Who reported to whom? Does the writer know and not want to tell, or is the writer implying the information is unreliable?

There is a place for the passive in English, but if the active voice can be used, then it is usually better to do so. The active voice improves clarity and is considered plain English.

“Please be advised that...” comes across as rather pompous. Similarly, “It should be understood that...” also sounds rather arrogant. It might be used with the intention of being polite, but it can easily be misinterpreted. They are also unnecessary words that increase the length of copy on websites or in publications.

3.2. Sub-clauses

Long and complicated sentences can lead to confusion. Sentences such as the following are simply poor English and should be reworked.

Although the roads were passable, and despite the best efforts of the local council, even with its depleted manpower as a result of sickness, to find enough gritting trucks, the supermarket was not opened until Thursday.

3.3. Split infinitives

Split infinitives are quite common in spoken English and are no longer condemned by the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Fans of television series *Star Trek* will be aware of one of the most common forms of split infinitive: “to boldly go...”

Split infinitives can be distracting and misleading when they weaken the force of the verb rather than strengthening it.

We need to completely and extensively review the policy.

It is better to write:

We need to review the policy completely and extensively.

But sometimes the split infinitive is the best option:

The campaign was the first to really unite local communities.

4. Find out more

The following are useful reference books for editors.

Dictionaries

There are many versions of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, but it is important to note that other brands of dictionary, such as Collins, offer completely different hyphenation and spelling rules.

Spelling and grammar guidance

One of the best and most authoritative guides to usage is *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage*, third edition. The third edition takes account of modern and global English usage.

Plain English

If you are interested in the principles of plain English, you can find out more on the Plain English Campaign website at www.plainenglish.co.uk.

5. Top ten mistakes

1. The council

Use the full name of the organisation, Chesterfield Borough Council. Do not use the abbreviation CBC, unless in internal documents.

- CBC's main office is in Chesterfield.**
- Chesterfield BC's main office is in Chesterfield.**
- Chesterfield Borough Council's main office is in Chesterfield.**
- The council's main office is in Chesterfield.**

2. Apostrophe misuse

Do not use the apostrophe for straight plurals.

- He became chief executive in the 1990's.**
- He became chief executive in the 1990s.**
- They imposed two TRO's.**
- They imposed two TROs.**

3. Inverted commas

Only use inverted commas if you are defining a new term or using a term in a completely different way to its usual meaning.

- He set up a community 'network'.**
- He set up a community network.**

4. Overcapitalisation, particularly in headings

The council's style is minimum capitalisation.

- Committee and Member Services** (heading)
- Committee and member services**
- She set up a Working Group.**
- She set up a working group.**

5. Overuse of definite articles

Avoid the unnecessary use of the definite article (the) with abbreviations and acronyms.

- The DCLG is reviewing the policy.**
- DCLG is reviewing the policy.**

6. Per cent and %

Use per cent. Use the % sign in tables to save space. (Note: percentages are always written in figures.)

- European funding accounted for 23% of all donations.**
- European funding accounted for 23 per cent of all donations.**

7. Misuse of the ampersand

Do not use the ampersand (&) unless for book titles and authors, or if it forms part of an organisation's name. Use 'and' for running text.

The council is awarding grants & funding.

The council is awarding grants and funding.

8. Singular versus plural for collective nouns

Do not use a plural verb after nouns with a collective sense, for example, "the council are..."
If the sense is a single entity, use a singular verb.

The council are holding a meeting.

The council is holding a meeting.

9. Double spacing

Once used in the days of mechanical typewriters, double spacing is now not necessary as modern word processing tools automatically adjust the tracking between characters. Always use a single space after a comma and full stop.

Always carry out a search on double spaces and replace with a single space once you've finished a document.

Annex 1: Council preferred spellings

This is an alphabetical list of some common problem words and expressions. If a word is not in this list, please consult the *Oxford Dictionary of English* or the corporate communications team. The most important point to remember is that usage should at least be consistent throughout a document.

A

ad hoc (*not* italicised)
advice (noun)
advise (verb)
affect (verb)
ageing *not* aging
analyse
antenatal
anti-social behaviour
audiovisual
awareness-raising

B

back-up (noun)
back up (verb)
billion = thousand million
break-up (noun)
break up (verb)
by-law

C

capacity-building
caregiver, caregiving
case study
catalyse
CD-ROM
centre
changeover (noun)
change over (verb)
childbirth
childcare
coal miner
coexist
co-management
cooperate, cooperation
coordinate, coordination

D

data (whilst this is plural, it should be used as a collective singular noun: data was collected...)

data bank
database
death toll
decision-maker, decision-making
dependant (noun)
dependent (adjective)
drawing-board

E

e-commerce
effect (noun)
e-mail (noun)
email (verb)
enquiry¹
en route (*not* italicised)
enterprise
euro (currency)
eurocentric
ex officio (*not* italicised)
extranet (lower case)

F

far-reaching
feedback
first aid
focused, focusing (*not* focussed, focussing)
follow-up (noun)
follow up (verb)
foothold
forego (to precede)
forever
forgo (to relinquish, give up)
formulas *but* formulae (scientific or mathematical)
forums (*never* fora)
front line *but* front-line operations
fulfil
fulfilment
full time *but* full-time job
fundraise, fundraising, fundraiser

G

goodwill (of a firm) *but* good will (virtuous intent)
grass roots *but* at the grass-roots level

¹ Use enquiry for the act of asking a question, especially of a person. Use inquiry for an investigation, especially an official one.

guideline(s)

H

half-hour *but* half an hour

handbook

hand-picked

hard-line

headteacher

healthcare

high-income families

high-quality products *but* the product is of high quality

high-risk areas *but* the community is at high risk

high-tech material

I

ill-advised

ill health

inasmuch as

information-sharing

inquiry²

in so far as

interact, interaction

intergovernmental

internet

interpersonal

interregional

interrelate

intranet (lower case i)

intra-regional

J

judgement

judgment (legal)

K

kilogram

kilometre

know-how

knowledge-sharing

L

large-scale operation *but* on a large scale

learnt (*not* learned, *as in* lessons learnt)

licence (noun)

² Use inquiry for an investigation, especially an official one. Use enquiry for the act of asking a question, especially of a person.

Appendix 5 – Style guide

license, licensing (verb)
lifesaving or lifesaver
lifestyle
like-for-like (as *in* like-for-like comparison)
long term *but* long-term trends
loophole
low-income families
low-tech

M

macroeconomics
man-made
manpower
market research
metre (100cm)
meter (implement for measuring)
microfinance
Ministry of Health, *but* the ministry of health and external affairs
multidisciplinary
multilateral
multi-purpose

N

nationwide
no one
North, the, *but* the people live in the north of the country
northern Derbyshire

O

ongoing
online
overrate

P

paralyse
per cent (use % in tables to save space)
(Note: percentages are always written in figures: 6 per cent, 17.5 per cent)
policy-maker, policy-making
post-natal
post-war
power-sharing
practice (noun)
practise, practising (verb)
premise
prenatal
prise (to force open)
prize (to value highly)

problem-solving
programme *but* a computer program
profit-sharing
pro rata *but* on a pro-rata basis (*not* italicised)

R

radioactive, radioactivity
real time *but* real-time assessment
-related (*as in* pregnancy-related diseases)
represent *but* re-present (to present again)
the River Rother *but* the Rother river
round table *but* round-table talks

S

scaling-up (noun) *but* to scale up (verb)
schoolchild and schoolchildren *but* a pre-school child
self-interest
short-term losses *but* in the short term
small-scale project *but* on a small scale
socio-economic
South (the) *but* the south of the region was flooded
southern Derbyshire
starting point
stationary (meaning not moving)
stationery (paper, envelopes, etc.)
subcommittee
sub-standard
subtotal

T

task force
team player
team spirit
teamwork
think tank
toolkit
turnout

U

ultra- (*as in* ultra-expensive solutions)
uncooperative
underpay
underrate
under way (*as in* negotiations are under way...)
underuse
up-to-date information *but* the information is up to date

W

web

website

well-being

West (the) *but* the programme was carried out in the west of the country

western Europe

Western (of or relating to the West)

worldwide

X

X-ray

Annex 2: Council terminology

Use this...	Don't use this...
Assembly Rooms	Assembly rooms
Borough Bulletin	BB, borough bulletin
Chesterfield Borough Council	CBC, Chesterfield BC
Community Assemblies	Community Forums
Customer Service Centre	Revenues Hall
Department for Communities and Local Government	DCLG
Derbyshire Time	DT
Destination Chesterfield	
Derbyshire County Council	DCC, Derbyshire CC
European Regional Development Fund	ERDF
Executive member for environment	Executive member for the environment
Great Place, Great Service	GPGS, Great place, Great service
Healthy Living Centre	HLC
Queen's Park Sports Centre	Queens Park Sports Centre, QPSC
Putting our communities first	Putting Our Communities First
SpirePride	Spire pride, Spire Pride
The Pomegranate Theatre	Pommy
The Winding Wheel	the Winding Wheel
Townscape Heritage Initiative	THI
transfer of funds	virement
Visitor Information Centre	VIC, Tourist Information Centre, TIC