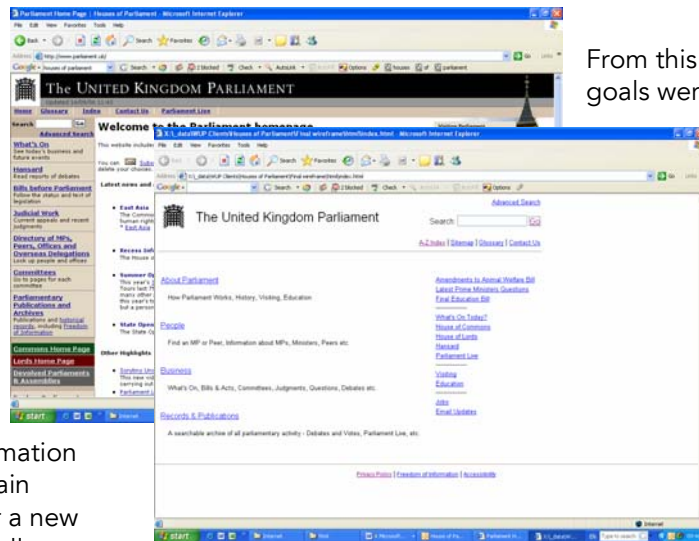


## ⇒ Case Study

Houses of Parliament – Information Architecture April 2006

### The Brief

The Houses of Parliament were aware that their website was difficult to use, with large numbers of subsites with different layouts. As the first stage of a complete redevelopment, it wished to carry out a thorough review of the website's information architecture, and obtain recommendations for a new approach to the overall navigational structure.



From this research 50 main user goals were identified. Card sorting research was then undertaken with 12 respondents. Each goal was written on a card and respondents grouped these in ways that made sense to them, indicating their confidence of the 'fit' of each card in the groups.

With this evidence, a prototype Information

Architecture was developed. This was then tested with 12 respondents to see where they would click for each of the 50 key user goals - amendments were made in light of this feedback.

### How we responded to the brief

We proposed a project in 4 parts:

- Understanding user goals – with an online survey
- Understanding how the site is used – by undertaking usability testing
- Developing a prototype – by understanding how users 'chunk' and label tasks with card sorting research
- Developing and testing the prototype Information Architecture

### What we did

The online survey was conducted to identify user goals on the site. The main question in this survey asked: 'Why did you come to this site today - what information did you want?' The survey also collected demographic information. 844 responses were collected over two weeks.

Thirteen respondents usability tested the Houses of Parliament site and were interviewed to gain greater insights about their goals on the site.

### The outcomes

The proposed information architecture reduced the primary level links to 4 from about 20. As a result of this and other changes, respondents managed to select the 'correct' link for 50 key user goals 95% of the time on first or second attempt, 86% of the time on first attempt. User confidence in the link labels was high, in marked contrast to the feedback from the usability testing.

*"I'm really pleased with the results and feel confident we'll be able to implement the basics of your proposed IA sooner rather than later."*  
Dominic Tinley – HOP Web manager

### Timing and costs

The project was conducted in spring 2006 and took 8 weeks to complete at a cost of approximately £29,000.