

Plain English Campaign Annual Award Winners 2013

It's Plain English Awards time again and, as usual, we have a suitable selection of heroes and villains for your appreciation and entertainment.

We congratulate those who are committed to clear communication and deliver their message in a way fit for as wide an audience as possible. They provide a great service that has not gone unnoticed, and here's our chance to appreciate and thank them.

Sadly, those failing to keep to our principles are failing dramatically and are, if anything, getting worse. There are some culprits within the following pages producing textbook examples of what not to do – but they are, as usual, not necessarily trying to be clear. They're using impenetrable language to mask their lack of eloquence and to deliberately confuse.

So, little changes. There are those happy to adopt our principles and make life easier for everyone and those still happy to use the same tired and empty buzzwords.

And yet, we have the opportunity once again to pour scorn on the year's atrocities of language and speech and, more importantly, bring to your attention those we feel show the way forward.

Such as Gary Neville, so impressively clear as a communicator for Sky Sports that he arguably contributed to a shake-up at BBC Match of the Day. And Elmore Leonard, great US crime author, who sadly passed away in 2013, but not without leaving an often scathing legacy of plain English and some well known guidelines for writing clear, unpretentious prose.

Out goes 'innit'

Back in October, Harris Academy in south London took the bold step of banning a selection of words it deemed unsuitable. So out went 'innit', there was much less of 'extra' and 'bare' was quickly blanketed, among other slang terms.

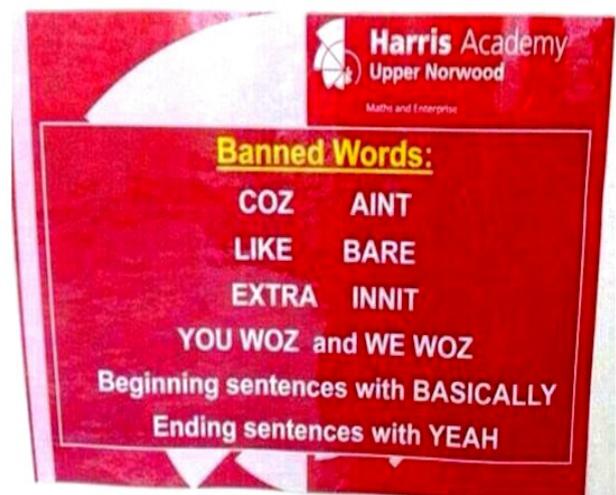
Plain English Campaign does not have any problem with slang terms, but agrees with MP David Lammy that there's a time and a place for them.

"The issue here isn't about slang itself, but about the context it is used in," said Lammy. "Language is an important part of any culture, and young people will always have their own slang.

"But young people need versatility; using slang is fine in some situations, but the ability to also speak good English is absolutely crucial in any workplace, and it is something that every school should be teaching its students."

Harris Academy deserves a lot of credit for taking such a stand. Some critics have poured scorn on the move as outdated, overly interfering and pointless.

This is nonsense: slang will always thrive outside the classroom. It needs to be kept in check during school hours for the good of students' prospects once they've left.



It would, in any case, be impossible (not to mention unethical) to traffic and control the spontaneous exchanges between young people. But schools are there to set an example, and Harris Academy has made an impressive one. No-one expects conversations, let alone those between kids, that stick to rigid rules of perfect English, but standards are slipping, and measures such as this may turn out to be hugely important.

Plain English Campaign 2013



You just don't understand Our impact 2012/2013

The family has been informed

These publications are written to help parents and professionals deal with the aftermath of a death and they are written in a clear, unambiguous language and style. Although dealing with a difficult subject, the books are well-designed, bright and contain invaluable support.



PROSTATE CANCER UK

Prostatitis

Diet, activity and your risk of prostate cancer

What do you know about your prostate?

Follow-up after prostate cancer treatment

What is my risk of prostate cancer?

These well-written and well-designed booklets and leaflets give straightforward answers to many of the questions men and their families may have. The information is clear, easy to read and presented in a conversational, non-threatening way.

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**



Feel more like you

This book explains changes that might occur to skin, hair and nails during cancer treatments and how to deal with these changes. It is written in clear, straightforward language and presents information in short paragraphs and bulleted lists. At a stressful time, clear, well-written information is vital and this booklet provides just that.



Staff handbook

This is one of the best staff handbooks that we have judged for a Plain English award. It is clear and unambiguous. It explains quite simply what the company expects of an employee and what an employee can expect of the company.



Recycle week special

Recycle for Pendle

Although recycling is not the most exciting of subjects, staff at the Borough of Pendle have produced material that is well-written and attractive. If residents need encouragement to read anything about recycling, this is the sort of material that will get their attention.



Don't let drink sneak up on you

Although this booklet doesn't conform to our usual design guidelines, we feel that its 'cartoon' feel and bright colours are likely to appeal to its intended audience.

The tone is friendly and the emphasis is on changing behaviour to reduce drinking rather than stopping drinking altogether. The language is clear and even though cartoonish characters are used, the serious message about cutting back on alcohol is not lost.

Imagine Publishing



These magazines give clear, simple explanations and instructions that even the most inexperienced photographer can follow. As you would expect, the illustrations are excellent and support the step-by-step instructions.

Although the title is 'Photography for beginners' it is hard to believe even more seasoned photographers won't find something of interest in these well-written and designed publications.



social care
institute for excellence

Social care jargon buster

This jargon buster explains what 52 commonly-used social care words and phrases mean. It uses clear language and short sentences to explain some of the terms which are widely used. It is written for people in the care system and, by using personal pronouns (you, your) it makes the definitions relevant to the reader.

Midlands Co-operative Society
Leicestershire Partnership Board
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust

Healthy eating 5 a day recipe pack

This book, with its emphasis on tasty, healthy food, would encourage anyone to have a go at cooking. Each ingredient, each piece of equipment and each stage of the recipes is illustrated, making this ideal for anyone who has problems reading and understanding standard recipe books.

Award winners and diplomas

Plain English Diplomas

Tracey Dawson – Pensions Advisory Authority

Tony Geudens – IdeoScript

Fiona Gordon – MOD

Rebecca Guntrip – Kent County Council

Steve Harrison – Sandwell MBC

Liisa Lehtio – Skandia

Alison Muir – Hertfordshire Partnership

Guy Robinson

Sam Wooller – Skandia

Kick in the Pants Award



Helen Grant
Minister for Sport, Tourism and Equalities

Leicester City Council

Pat on the Back Award

Andrew Rawnsley
(Observer)

The Observer's award-winning Chief Political Commentator and Associate Editor.

Plain English Media Awards

Best Newspaper
The Times

Best Radio Programme

Radio 4 Thinking Allowed

International Award

Health Canada
The Plain Language Labeling Project

Best Publication
The Week

Best Television Programme

Amanpour (CNN)

Plain English Communicator Awards

Gary Neville (Sky Sports)

This much-praised football commentator for Sky Sports is also a member of the England coaching staff. He has been praised for his meticulous research and the fact he appears neutral despite his long career with Manchester United.

Web Award

The Automobile Association
www.theaa.com

The Woodland Trust
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Chrissie Maher Award

Charles, Prince of Wales

For putting the spotlight on the pensions industry.

Foot in Mouth Award



Godfrey Bloom
Independent MEP
Criticised recently when he referred to "bongo-bongo land" and joking that a fringe meeting was "full of sluts" who did not clean behind their fridges.

Osborne Memorial Award

Elmore Leonard

The late American novelist and screenwriter wrote westerns, crime fiction and thrillers. His 10 rules of writing are frequently quoted.

Golden Bull winners 2013



We received this notice about an open seminar at the University of Essex Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies

Between the unspeakable and the speculum:
Poetry and Psychoanalysis

This paper will be a reflection on what endures and on the archaeology of utterance – an archaeology that is intimately connected to castration. As a Symbolic artefact poetry stands between the darkness of the unknowable – Freud’s navel – and Lacan’s mirror of semblance in which false architectures of the self, emerge as a parody of the truth.

Alan Cox of Swanage nominated this paragraph from a letter sent by Alliance Trust Savings

How will I be impacted?

We have confirmed with the Fund Managers that the rebate paying share classes you are invested in, listed overleaf, have an equivalent within the ‘clean share’ class. The new share class has a lower or equal net AMC to the fund that you are currently invested in and so you will either pay the same, or less, than you did previously when taking any previous rebates into account.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change

One of our supporters received a long letter about the energy grants system. It included the following useful information.

The second part consists of an Occupancy Assessment (OA) that adjusts the standardised EPC estimates based on information about the occupants...

GDARS build upon the information in the EPC by incorporating additional information gathered from the OA about how the occupants in the property actually use energy... I hope this is helpful.

An anonymous jobseeker sent us this Celtic Carvery & Alehouse ‘Bar Manager / Manageress’ job advert

Job Purpose

Provides beverages by procuring beverage ingredients.

Duties

Accomplishes bar human resource objectives by recruiting, selecting, orienting, training, assigning, scheduling, coaching, counselling, and disciplining employees.

Achieves bar operational objectives by contributing information and analysis to functional strategic plans and reviews. Plans beer, wine, and spirits drink menus by researching mixology techniques.

Here is a quote by SEGRO’s Chief Investment Officer about its sale of a business park

The sale is very much in line with our ongoing focus on recycling capital out of assets at the appropriate time in the cycle in order to crystallise gains from higher value uses and redeploy into other profitable growth opportunities in our core markets.

One of our supporters received this response from HMRC after attempting to email them a file

The submission of this document has failed due to departmental specific business logic in the Body tag. Your submission contains an unrecognised namespace.

Brian Garner sent us Manchester City Council’s proposals about the sale of the former BBC site on Oxford Road

The former BBC site sits within the Corridor: Manchester which is Greater Manchester’s (GM) central business and education district, critical to the flow of people, goods and ideas through the GM area.

Key development principles:

- Create enhanced public pedestrian connections and active frontages along Charles Street and Brancaster Road.
- Provide a legible framework of linked public spaces.
- Create a positive response to the River Medlock frontage...