

# Plain English

The voice of Plain English Campaign

Summer 2007 Issue 68

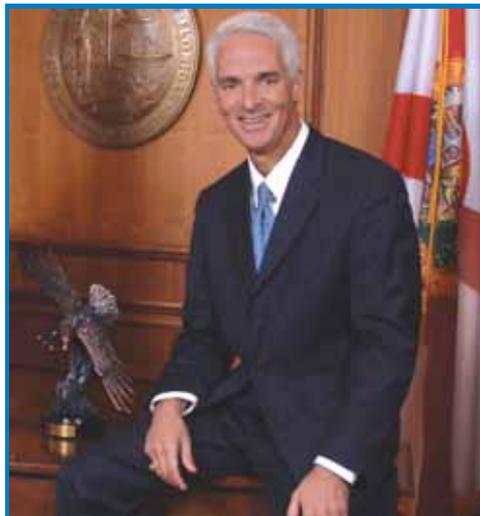
## Sunshine state sends out a plain message

Millions of people know Florida as a centre for fantastic holidays. Now America's 'sunshine state' has a new world-wide reputation: being a beacon for plain English.

Governor Charlie Crist is pushing through a plain language initiative, which will give the people of Florida a 'first-rate customer service at a level never before seen in state government'.

He is following in a great American tradition of encouraging plain English, with President Clinton and his deputy Al Gore in the front line. California Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, has also been a supporter of plain language.

Plain English Campaign director Chrissie Maher said: "America can produce the best and the worst. Some of their plain language efforts are brilliant. But the US is also the home of



**Governor Charlie Crist**

some of the worst gobbledygook, which many people around the world pick up and use.

"We are delighted that Florida's governor is making such an effort. He is giving his citizens one of the greatest rights, language they can understand."

Governor Crist set up the plain language initiative earlier this year. He recently visited the state's key health care agency, which now has

a team making the plain language changes work. Andrew Agwunobi, secretary of the agency, said: "Focusing on the individual is a top priority for me and my staff. Health care decisions are extremely sensitive and personal. By using plain language, we provide Floridians with the opportunity to make informed choices."

The agency's plain language team has created a training workbook, used by 200 key staff. All new employees are being taught plain language techniques. Fifty documents are being revised, after they were found not to meet plain language standards. All new documents, publications and the website will be converted to plain language.

The governor said: "Plain language increases government's transparency and accountability. (We) are making government more accessible by speaking plainly and working to ensure a higher standard of customer service."

Plain English Campaign - working for clearer communication

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# Media language gets worse

by Peter Griffiths

In April I was invited to talk to a conference at Moscow State University about radio and television language today. The audience included the principal, lecturers, students and representatives of Russian radio and television stations. This is a summary of what I said to them.



Some of the delegates at the meeting in Moscow

“When I was young, radio programmes in the UK were broadcast by the BBC.

The language in these programmes was strictly controlled. Correct pronunciation was vital. The words used were grammatically correct. Certain accents were regarded as ideal, such as those used by the upper-classes, but regional accents from cities like Liverpool, Newcastle and Birmingham were looked down on. The BBC would not allow them on air. They were simply regarded as inferior.



Vladimir Slavkin, a professor at Moscow State University

As a result, a sort of BBC or film language emerged. If any of you have seen or heard British films and programmes made in the 1950s and 1960s you will understand what I mean.

Things started to change when commercial radio and television opened. A wider variety of programmes was suddenly available. At the same time new local radio and television stations started operating. More and more people were needed for broadcasting and so compromises were needed to fill all the posts.

This encouraged the broadcasters to use people who spoke with regional accents, and people whose use of grammar was less than perfect. The barriers were coming down.

Today the massive changes are continuing. Some are definitely good but unfortunately many are bad. Regional accents are now valued for their variety and colour (though they can cause problems for listeners who are not familiar with them).



Irina Alexandrova from the Faculty of Journalism

Poor grammar is tolerated or maybe not even noticed. Today speakers on television and radio mix up singular and plural, past and present, and mispronounce words and use lots of slang. Maybe it is a problem for the UK only, but I suspect it is spreading across the world, and maybe even to Russia!

Another problem in the UK is that swearing is becoming a normal part of speech. Swear words litter sentences and appear to be almost a type of punctuation.

And this has spread into our television and radio programmes and even into family viewing. It is now common to hear young children using swear words in their normal conversation. This horrifies people of my generation.

I am sure that the children are not using the words intending to shock. It is what they regard as perfectly normal because they hear it both in their daily activities and in the mass media.

And we have yet another problem. The UK is part of the European Union. The European Union encourages organisations across Europe to co-operate and to use new ways of operating. The European Union has created thousands of terms to help the process. It has taken English words and given them meanings which differ from their ordinary English meaning.

Then, over the airwaves, we hear these words coming out of the mouths of our politicians. And because the meaning has been twisted it is difficult to understand what our politicians are saying. It filters into our day-to-day lives almost by accident because we hear them so often.

We hear words like these all the time:

- sustainability
- entrepreneurship
- outputs
- project cycle
- project cycle management
- transnational and
- dissemination.

Most people are not comfortable hearing terms like these and especially so if they do not understand.



**Svetlana Ostapenko from TV Russia**

Here are some examples of terms like these with the EU's explanation of their meaning first and then our plain English translation.

**Activities - EU's version:**

The specific tasks to be carried out during a development partnership's life in order to obtain outputs.

**PEC's version:**

What you must do to create sales (or turnover).

**Sustainability - EU's version:**

The ability to generate outputs after external support has ended. While a development partnership is limited by time, the benefits should continue and the activities should be developed long after the development partnership has ended, without the need for external inputs. This is a key requirement for a successful development partnership.

**PEC's version:**

You must make sure that you have created enough sales for your business to operate successfully once EU support finishes.

For the past 17 years Plain English Campaign has given annual awards to radio and TV programmes which use plain

English and avoid using jargon and gobbledeygook.

We do this to raise publicity for the plain language movement. The winners are invited to our awards ceremony in London. They are so happy to get the award that they usually announce it on their news programmes and generate publicity for us. It encourages the others to try harder to communicate clearly with their audiences."

My talk ended here but it generated lots of comments and questions. It turns out that Russia suffers the same problems that I outlined for the UK. Maybe it's time for us to use our website to survey the whole world and to ask for solutions.

# Training in India

A man who moved from one end of the UK (Orkney) to the other (Surrey) is very happy to travel. Thorfinn Johnston, now Glasgow-based and a trainer with Plain English Campaign since October 2006, has just returned from a 12 day working trip to India.

The trip included seven days of executive training for senior staff of the British High Commission dealing with visa applications, as well as training for local Indian support staff. Thorfinn said: "It was an excellent trip, and the feedback was very good. India, of course, has more English speakers than the UK. All the Indian people on the course had been taught English grammar at school." Thorfinn worked for 34 years in



**Trainer Thorfinn, standing centre, with local staff in Chennai**

the Civil Service in London, ending as a Senior Executive Officer in the Employment Service. He has also taught English as a foreign language in France.

" I also gave a trainer-training course for two of their staff. One of them was doubtful about teaching an unfamiliar subject, especially as

she'd only previously given one-to-one training. After the course she said her doubts had been cleared up by what she'd heard and seen.

"The India visit was a surprise, but I had a great reception. I worked in Delhi, then Chennai (formerly Madras) and Mumbai (formerly Bombay)," Thorfinn said.

# More than your gobbledy-job's worth

Everybody is welcome to the plain English party! A recruitment website got into the headlines with some of the daftest gobbledygook job descriptions.

Birmingham-based jobs2view.com did its own survey of some descriptions that had come through its services. The winner – what most people would call the worst – was vision clearance engineer. To everybody else that's a window cleaner!

The runner-up was education centre nourishment production assistant – school dinner lady.

Plain English Campaign has been using ridicule for years in an

attempt to stop nonsensical job descriptions. Still one of the classics is ambient replenishment controllers (shelf-stackers). And who could fail to laugh at regional head of services, infrastructure and procurement – a caretaker!

Jobs2view shows video profiles of companies and the jobs they seek to fill. Applicants can put their details on the site, possibly with a photo clip. This is like a preliminary interview. Later the job advertiser would get in touch with applicants they wish to meet.

What's the daftest job description you have seen? Plain English Campaign is keen to keep our gobbledy-job lists up to date. E-mail any new examples to: [gobbledyjob@aol.com](mailto:gobbledyjob@aol.com)

## Jobs2view website TOP 5

- 1 **Vision clearance engineer** (window cleaner)
- 2 **Education centre nourishment production assistant** (school dinner lady)
- 3 **Waste removal engineer** (bin man)
- 4 **Domestic engineer** (housewife)
- 5 **Knowledge navigator** (teacher).

## Plain English Campaign TOP 5

- 1 **Space consultant** (estate agent)
- 2 **Ambient replenishment controller** (shelf-stacker)
- 3 **Revenue protection officer** (ticket inspector)
- 4 **Foot health gain facilitator** (chiroprapist)
- 5 **Head of verbal communications** (secretary).

## Plain English Campaign

### Gaining a Plain English Diploma



[www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk)

or ring 01663 744409

or e-mail on [info@plainenglish.co.uk](mailto:info@plainenglish.co.uk)

You will be glad you did!

**PO Box 3, New Mills, High Peak, Derbyshire, SK22 4QP.**

## Bits and pieces

### Shades of meaning

A horse seriously injured in a race in Kentucky was 'euthanised after the race', according to the International Herald Tribune. Columnist Richard Williams in The Guardian noted the meaning of euthanasia as 'a gentle and peaceful death'. Now, he said, it seems to have joined such American euphemisms as 'pacification' and 'friendly fire' to describe more shocking deeds.

### 2007 Plain English Awards

Please send your best examples of plain English and worst examples of gobbledygook to: Plain English Campaign, Awards desk, PO Box 3, New Mills, High Peak SK22 4QP.



**Catherine Tate**

University students with poor writing skills have been in the news once more. We have frequently highlighted this growing problem. Each time, the day gets nearer when a chief executive or a company chairman will be barely able to spell, punctuate or write a credible report.

Is this what our education service is coming to?

At the same time as this debate was getting underway, more educational concerns were being expressed over catchphrases such as ‘Am I bovvered?’

University lecturers are seeking a public debate on literacy standards before it gets too late. They call some of their students ‘functionally illiterate’ and point

# Are we bovvered? Too true, we are

out that their lack of skills is going to make them unemployable even if they get a degree.

Some lecturers claim that fail grades were reversed to allow some students to stay on their courses.

Professor Tony Marcel of the University of Hertfordshire described the English and writing skills of some students as ‘appallingly bad’. He added:

“It comes down to the failure of secondary education to teach the importance of clear and accurate written communication. Spelling and punctuation are only part of the problem. Their vocabulary is poor and mistaken. They have little idea of syntax, cannot punctuate and seem to have no idea of what constitutes a sentence.

“I tell students that if they can’t write a report, then employers won’t want them.”

The catchphrase concerns from a teachers’ organisation arose

after a survey revealed the most common phrases used by children. They included:

- Whatev-ah! (Catherine Tate)
- Am I bovvered? (CatherineTate)
- Doh! (The Simpsons)
- Innit? (Little Britain) and
- Computer says No (Little Britain).

Plain English Campaign is not against humour. The shows from which these phrases come are among the funniest on TV. But according to the 160,000-member Association of Teachers and Lecturers, some of the catchphrases are responsible for a rise in aggression and bad manners in the classroom.

Sometimes, a phrase like ‘Am I bovvered?’ is used as an insult against the teacher. That can’t be good. Our Campaign is partly about teaching pupils to be good communicators. But we are concerned about anything that means children can leave school with low language skills. That’s why we are ‘bovvered’!



## Words from No 10

Tony Blair’s legacy as Prime Minister has still to be decided. He must hope that the following example of Blairspeak is not being considered. The Guardian printed this excerpt from a Blair podcast interview with historian Simon Schama: “History was always, along with English, my favourite subject at school. And I think it is fascinating, provided you can teach history in the right way, though, I think sometimes when, I mean you obviously have to know when all the kings and queens came, and I can’t remember, now.”

# Plainly better,

## Gobbledygook in Europe is not dead, but Mrs Merkel strikes a blow

Plain English Campaign has gone to war against gobbledygook in the European Community. We challenged civil servants in Brussels, Strasbourg and throughout the EU: Give up gobbledygook for one day, to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EU. You might like it so much, you will never go back to convoluted language.

Well, so far the civil servants have not made a very positive response. But German Chancellor Angela Merkel has done her best for plain language, and given the PEC some encouragement.

As president of the EU during the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations earlier this year, Mrs Merkel promised that the Declaration of Berlin – the official birthday statement – would be in ‘people-friendly’ language. There would be no ‘traditional language of the EU’ or bureaucratic technical terms, she said.

Well, the civil servants had quite a good stab at achieving that. PEC director Chrissie Maher said: “There were short sentences and a lot of clear words – but some terrible ones, like ‘inviolable, inalienable and in concert’. But it was a first, and for that reason we congratulate Mrs Merkel.

Keep going, Angela, and put the pressure on the pen pushers to produce less and less gobbledygook.”

Chrissie has now repeated her challenge to the civil servants to drop gobbledygook: “If the most important woman politician in Europe supports plain language, what are you waiting for? The documents you write, or translate, affect millions of people. What’s the point of making things more difficult to understand? You have a responsibility to tell things as clearly as possible.”

Plain language campaigners in Europe, who are linked to PEC through the EU-supported Grundtvig project, have been following events. Karine Nicolay, who edits an easy language newspaper in Belgium for people with reading difficulties, said: “A lot of what the EU people write is incomprehensible to ordinary people. They have a great chance to change. Mrs Merkel has a big task to get that to happen. We will be happy to help.”

The Grundtvig project seeks to improve adult education across Europe. Along with the PEC, groups from Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Finland are involved, meeting regularly.



**Chancellor Angela: a first attempt**

Chrissie Maher said: “It is good to have friends in the heart of Europe. It might take a long time to eradicate gobbledygook, but with like-minded colleagues we will get there one day.”

We were impressed by a recent article by Jamie Smyth, the Irish Times correspondent in Brussels. Triggered off by Mrs Merkel’s ‘people friendly’ pledge, he said Eurospeak is “the sworn enemy of journalists, whose job is to try to make some sense of the complicated Brussels bureaucracy to an apathetic public.”

# Angela!



**Still the same old story - when people don't understand, they lose out**

Age Concern has highlighted a problem which has been around for years – the failure of older people to claim millions of pounds in benefit.

Much of the problem is still due to the difficult language used in government documents. They often baffle people and prevent them picking up benefits they are entitled to. Plain English Campaign has fought over the years to get government and official bodies to use plain language in all their documents. Our fight goes on.

Tony Robinson, the TV presenter, who supported Age Concern's most recent campaign, said: "You wouldn't throw your money out of the window – yet this is what thousands of elderly people do by not collecting benefits due to them. We pay our taxes and National Insurance all our lives – let's make sure we get the proper return on our investment."

A spokesperson said the complex system and forms put many people off. "A lot of people find government forms difficult – there is a lot of variation in them."

People needing advice should get in touch with their local Age Concern office.

...mpt at plain language, but a long way to go

## Europe in plain English

*Good try at clear language*

**Opening lines of the Berlin declaration: 'For centuries Europe has been an idea, holding out hope of peace and understanding. That hope has been fulfilled. European unification has made peace and prosperity possible. It has brought about a sense of community and overcome differences. We, the citizens of the European Union, have united for the better.'**

## Europe in old gobbledygook

*Not long before old ways return*

**But then there is this: 'The individual is paramount. His dignity is inviolable. His rights are inalienable ... There are many goals which we cannot achieve on our own, but only in concert. The European Union will continue to thrive both on openness and the will of its member states to consolidate the Union's internal development. Europe is our common future.'**

# Our Green Queen

## To carbon offset or not – that is the question

In this green world, language is constantly changing. But look at this, from a report in the Daily Telegraph: “The Queen is to carbon offset one of her official state visits for the first time, Buckingham Palace announced.”

The verb ‘to carbon offset’ appears to have arrived. Not that the Palace used that phrase. A spokesman simply said it was the first time “that one of the Queen’s official state visits will have a carbon offset.”

The Daily Mail put it even more clearly: “The Queen embraced the green revolution by declaring she will be off-setting the carbon cost of her foreign travel.”

Off-setting payments are often made through a company specialising in carbon neutral travel. It then invests in tree planting or to support projects in developing countries.

The Plain English Campaign view: We hate an artificial verb like ‘to carbon offset’. It is in the same



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

category as ‘hospitalise’. We welcome developing language, which has made English such a joy. But let’s keep carbon offset well under control.

## In a phrase, what you like about the clearest language

This is the first of an occasional series of favourite or pithy plain language quotes. We invite you to send your favourite quotes or maybe one you have just made up – for inclusion in a future edition of Plain English magazine. Send them to Quotes, Plain English Campaign, PO Box 3, New Mills, High Peak, SK22 4QP. Or e-mail to [pecpressoffice@aol.com](mailto:pecpressoffice@aol.com)

“All politicians are guilty of slipping into jargon – and all of

us deserve scrutiny from the Plain English Campaign.” - David Cameron, Leader of the Opposition.

“The chief virtue that language can have is clearness, and nothing detracts from it so much as the use of unfamiliar words.” - Hippocrates.

“Broadly speaking, the short words are the best, and the old words when short are best of all.” Winston Churchill.

“Think like a wise man, but communicate in the language of the people.”- William Butler Yeats.

“The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do.” - Thomas Jefferson.

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.” - Leonardo da Vinci.

“Men of few words are the best men.”- William Shakespeare.

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# Paradigms lost

Conservative policy chief Oliver Letwin has got into hot water with a speech that is a potential Foot in Mouth award winner. Talking of future Tory policy, he referred to 'a shift from an economo-centric paradigm to a socio-centric paradigm'. And the even more baffling 'to internalise those externalities' added to the puzzlement.



**Oliver Letwin**

His leader David Cameron once told Plain English Campaign: "All politicians are guilty of slipping into jargon – and all of us deserve scrutiny from the Plain English Campaign. Complicated initials, official jargon, bureaucracies that over-complicate things to boost their own self-importance – all these things help to build barriers between government and people."

So why did Oliver Letwin indulge in so much gobbledygook? This is his explanation:

"There is a reason why I have been using this ridiculous, high faluting language. I want to make the point that ridiculous high faluting language is not the sole prerogative of Gordon Brown with his post neo-classical endogenous growth theory.

"You shouldn't think that, just because someone used

complicated words, they have a coherent theory. And you shouldn't think that, just because someone tries most of the time to speak in plain English, they don't have a theory.

"Cameron Conservatives have a strong attachment to plain English. That is because we think that it is easier to think clearly in clear language. But this has misled some people who think that theories come in complicated language to think we haven't got one. My point is that we do have a theory. It can be expressed in complicated language or in much simpler terms."

A senior Tory official summarised the future direction of policy: "Instead of economics, it's now about the whole way we live our lives."

Oliver Letwin called that a bull's-eye. Plain English, we call it. And Letwin quoted an earlier statement from Cameron: "The mission of the modern Conservative party could not be clearer. It is to bring about Britain's social revival: to improve the quality of life for everyone in our country, increasing our well-being, not just our wealth."

But then Letwin was back to the gobbledygook. Eyes glaze over as he talks about Cameron Conservatism as "an attempt to shift the theory of the state from a provision-based paradigm to a framework-based paradigm, within which the government ... is conceived principally as an agency for enabling individuals, families, associations and corporations to internalise externalities."

There's much more. But Oliver Letwin finished his speech with: "To win a battle of ideas is always a hard task. But having an idea is certainly a good starting point." Plain English Campaign believes, as we always have, that to get any idea across needs the clearest language. To paraphrase another famous Oliver (Twist): Please sir, can we have no more! Or that other Oliver (Hardy): Another fine mess you've got us into!

## And a reminder of Gordon Brown's endogenous lead

Gordon Brown showed on TV how he deals with a tricky question. In the run-up to his becoming Prime Minister, he was asked if Tony Blair "had hung around too long and damaged you in the process." This was Mr Brown's reply: "Yes, well, that, you have, you have to establish."

That was, admittedly, clearer than his famous speech back in 1994, when he won A Foot in Mouth award from Plain English Campaign.

Talking about new economics, he referred to "ideas which stress the growing importance of international co-operation and new theories of

economic sovereignty across a wide range of areas, macro-economics, trade, the environment, the growth of post neo-classical endogenous growth theory and the symbiotic relationships between government and investment in people and infrastructures...".

# Good IDeA helps councils to clean up the jargon

The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), which works for local government improvement so councils can serve people and places better, have introduced a new plain English initiative.

It aims to improve communication between local government and the public. IDeA, which is owned by the Local Government Association, is hoping its on-line tool-kit will help council staff to write more effectively, and teach them how to spot 'unplain' English.

Their website contains a great deal of information about how to improve your writing skills. It names Plain English Campaign in the process and includes three of our tips for producing clear public information:

- avoid long and over-complicated sentences
- get rid of jargon and technical terms and
- make sure language is direct and concise.

The tool-kit is aimed at 'recently-elected councillors trying to get to grips with new terminology' and 'council officers writing information for the public'. Their crash course is designed to cover the basic principles of plain English. It gives examples of council jargon to avoid, such as 'local strategic partnership' and 'results-oriented'.

The website advises that, when used properly, plain English 'should not over-simplify writing, nor should it dilute meaning. Instead it helps you to communicate so that your audience understands, using appropriate and precise language.'

Other helpful resources on the website include a 'plain English MOT'. There's a test for visitors to spot inappropriate words and phrases in a company newsletter.

The Improvement and Development Agency was set up in 2001 to link good council

practices so that all councils can benefit from using them. The 'Beacons Scheme' identifies excellence and innovation in local government, allowing authorities to learn from each other and deliver high-quality services. The plain English tool-kit is its latest initiative.

Speaking to The Guardian, a spokesman for PEC welcomed the initiative.

He said: "The financial and legal sectors are worse than councils at communicating clearly. But the point is that councils issue a huge amount of documents and letters to members of the public. They need to do this as clearly as possible."

We have done a huge amount of work with council organisations over the past 25 years, and it is clear that some progress has been made. Most London borough councils are corporate members of PEC, and around 20 of the UK's councils have more than 50 Crystal Mark documents each. However, there is still some way to go until all council communications are clear and easy to understand.

It is very encouraging to see a centralised organisation take such a positive step. We hope that those responsible for writing council information make use of the tool-kit, as well as our own guidance. A spokesman for IDeA says: "The initiative is not a universal solution but something that councils can use and adapt to suit themselves." You can find plenty more information about this welcome and fascinating initiative on IDeA's website, which you can find at: [www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)

## Plain love text

Plain English Campaign has often written about mobile phone texting. Although useful for quick communication, we fear texting is already damaging language and spelling skills. We condemn the very few examination markers who accept text language in some students' work.

But now, there is an example of texting which may make some people think again. One of the winners in a competition to find Britain's 'txt laureate' was

Eileen Bridge, a 68-year-old grandmother from Accrington, Lancashire.

This ode to her husband of six months won her £350:

O hart tht sorz,  
My luv adorz.  
He mAks me liv,  
He mAks me giv  
Myslf 2 him,  
As my luv porz.

Do you think in 100 years, our Valentine cards will be like this?

# A four colour, full bleed, single page automotive print execution.

(In plain English, a press ad.)



It seems like a lot of nonsense is spoken about most things these days, even a simple advertisement for our Passat. At least you won't have that problem with the car itself.

Quite simply, the Passat is a well-engineered, generously equipped vehicle. It's not fitted with any silly gimmicks or pointless accessories, just everything you'd expect to find in a quality car. For example, features like semi-automatic air conditioning, a push button parking brake and 16" alloy wheels all come as standard.

In fact, the only thing the Passat doesn't come with is an exaggerated title. It's simply a Passat. To request a brochure, or test drive, call **0800 333 666**, or visit [www.volkswagen.co.uk/passat](http://www.volkswagen.co.uk/passat)



# Training dates for 2007 (open courses)

For more details, please call our training administrator, Heidi Selkirk, on 01663 744409. Or e-mail us at [info@plainenglish.co.uk](mailto:info@plainenglish.co.uk).

## Belfast

Tuesday 30 October  
(Plain English)

## Birmingham

Tuesday 11 September  
(Grammarcheck)  
Wednesday 12 September  
(Plain English)

## Edinburgh

Tuesday 9 October  
(Grammarcheck)  
Wednesday 10 October  
(Plain English)

## Glasgow

Thursday 21 June  
(Plain English)

## London

Thursday 31 May  
(Advanced grammar)  
Wednesday 20 June  
(Advanced grammar)  
Thursday 21 June  
(Plain English)

## London (continued)

Wednesday 11 July  
(Grammarcheck)  
Thursday 12 July  
(Plain English)  
Tuesday 14 August  
(Plain English)  
Thursday 20 September  
(Plain English)  
Tuesday 25 September  
(Report writing course)  
Thursday 27 September  
(Writing for websites)  
Tuesday 2 October  
(Plain English and forms design)  
Tuesday 16 October  
(Grammarcheck)  
Wednesday 17 October  
(Plain English)  
Tuesday 6 November  
(Writing medical information)  
Thursday 15 November  
(Plain English)  
Wednesday 28 November  
(Plain English)  
Thursday 29 November  
(Advanced grammar)  
Tuesday 11 December  
(Plain English)

## Manchester

Thursday 7 June  
(Plain English)  
Thursday 9 August  
(Plain English)

## Manchester (continued)

Tuesday 18 September  
(Advanced grammar)  
Tuesday 23 October  
(Grammarcheck)  
Wednesday 24 October  
(Plain English)  
Wednesday 5 December  
(Plain English).

## Welcome aboard! The following organisations have recently earned their first Crystal Mark.

Environment Agency  
Permanent tsb  
Yorkshire and Humber Chambers  
of Commerce  
Resolution plc  
East Renfrewshire Council  
Department of Enterprise, Trade  
and Employment (Dublin)  
GlaxoSmithKline  
Liverpool PCT  
NHS Yorkshire and the Humber  
Hempsons Solicitors  
Hilton International.

## The following organisations have recently become corporate members of Plain English Campaign.

Academy for Sustainable  
Communities  
School Food Trust  
Grampian Police  
Experian  
SHIN Limited  
Maidstone Borough Council  
Poole Borough Council  
VEN Group  
One Vision Housing Limited  
Rochford District Council -  
Revenues and Benefits Dept  
Harlow Council - Housing Dept  
Maidstone Housing Trust.

### Help the public to understand your documents - with a Crystal Mark

Nearly 14,000 documents now carry our Crystal Mark as a sign of clarity. It has now become firmly established as the standard that all organisations should aim for when they produce public information. This is because we will not allow the Crystal Mark to appear on any document unless our testing shows it can be read, understood and acted upon by the intended audience.

**For more information, please contact Tony Maher on 01663 744409 or e-mail [info@plainenglish.co.uk](mailto:info@plainenglish.co.uk).**