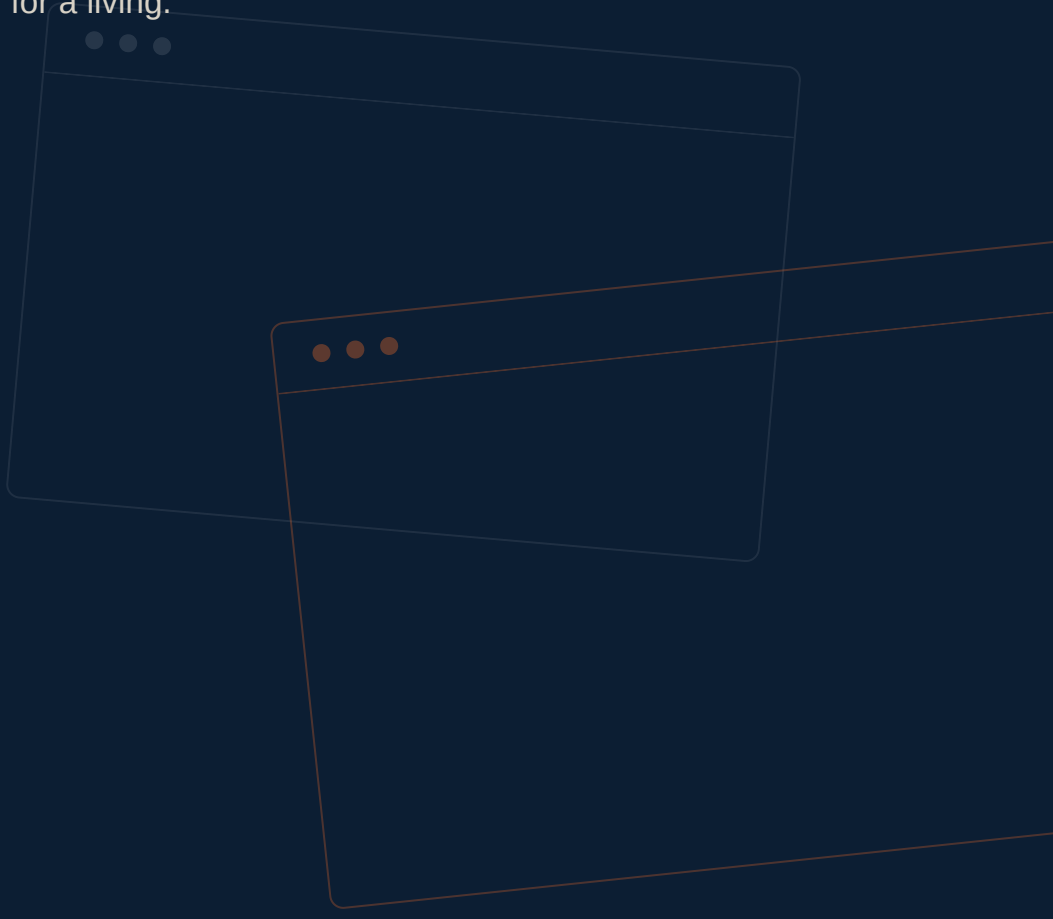
THE ZENLIO PLAYBOOK SERIES

The Honest Website Playbook

Everything a trade or local service business needs to build a website that actually gets found, gets calls, and wins the job, written by someone who builds them for a living.



zenlio.

zenlio.io

BEFORE YOU START

Read this bit first

I'm Dan. I run Zenlio. We build websites for trades and local businesses, and I write most of what we learn doing that on the Zenlio blog. This book is that advice, all of it, pulled into one place and put in order.

It's genuinely everything. How to decide whether to build the thing yourself or pay someone. What your site actually needs, and the ten things you can safely ignore. Then a full walkthrough, step by step: choosing a platform, mapping out your pages, the exact template for a service page and an area page, setting up Google Business Profile click by click, and adding the technical bits without knowing any code. After that: how Google, and now ChatGPT and Perplexity, actually decide who gets found, how to turn the visitors you already get into people who call you, what the law now actually requires on cookies and accessibility, and how to keep the whole thing working after it launches, because a website is never really "finished."

I'm not going to pretend I don't have a business to run. Every so often you'll see a short note showing where Zenlio fits, in case you'd rather hand a piece of this off. But the advice above those notes is the same advice I'd give a mate down the pub, and it works whether you build the site yourself, pay a freelancer, or come to us.

No scare tactics. No pretending this is more complicated than it is. Just the honest version, chapter by chapter, with the actual steps included this time.

Dan, Zenlio

CONTENTS

What's inside

PART ONE: THE DECISION

1. DIY or done-for-you: the honest maths
2. What it actually costs in 2026
3. The free website trap
4. Seven questions that sort the pros from the cowboys

PART TWO: THE FOUNDATION

5. Your website is a flat-pack
6. Six things every site needs (and ten to skip)
7. Why one page isn't enough
8. "Local SEO" is the wrong question

PART THREE: BUILDING IT YOURSELF, STEP BY STEP

9. Choosing your platform
10. Your site map, on paper, before you touch a builder
11. The service page template
12. The area page template
13. Setting up Google Business Profile, click by click
14. The technical bits, without knowing code

PART FOUR: GETTING FOUND

15. How to show up in the Google Maps box
16. Getting recommended by ChatGPT, Google AI and Perplexity
17. Reviews prove you're good. They don't get you found.
18. Why your best customers Google you before they call

CONTENTS, CONTINUED

What's inside

PART FIVE: TURNING VISITORS INTO CALLS

19. Why your website isn't getting you calls

20. Visitors but no enquiries: the 10-minute diagnostic

21. The anatomy of a page that converts

22. The slowest page on your site is costing you the deal

PART SIX: STAYING LEGAL

23. Cookie consent in 2026: what you actually need

24. Accessibility: what UK law actually requires

PART SEVEN: KEEPING IT WORKING

25. The site isn't finished at launch

26. Your 90-day action plan

CLOSING

If you'd rather this was done for you

PART ONE

The decision

Before a single page gets built, work out whether you should be the one building it, and if not, who you should trust to do it instead.

CHAPTER 1 STRATEGY

DIY or done-for-you: the honest maths

A website that looks good but never gets found is an expensive hobby.

Every website costs two things: money and time. The DIY builders are honest about the first one and silent about the second, which is why they feel free when they're not.

A Wix or Squarespace subscription runs about £15–£30 a month. Cheap. But a site that's actually built to rank (proper service pages, area pages, the technical bits Google and AI search need) takes 30 to 60 hours to do well. At a modest £30 an hour, that's £900–£1,800 of your own time, usually paid in evenings and weekends taken from billable work or rest.

The three hidden costs nobody mentions

- **Your time.** Learning the platform, writing content that actually ranks, wiring up the technical elements Google needs. Builders make the pretty page easy and that part hard.
- **Work you never win.** Most DIY sites only rank for their own business name. They don't rank for "boiler repair Winchester" (the searches that actually bring in jobs) because that needs dedicated pages, not one homepage trying to cover everything.
- **The fixes you'll need later.** Sites built in a hurry tend to need redoing within a year, once the gaps become obvious. People often end up paying twice: once in time for the DIY version, then again to fix it.

30–60 hrs
to build a site that's actually built to rank, not just look nice

1 job
is usually all it takes for a proper site to pay for itself

The breakeven test

Forget the monthly fee for a second and ask one question: what does one missed job cost you? If an average job is worth £800 and a professionally built site costs roughly £1,000 in year one all in, it pays for itself the moment it wins you a single extra job you'd otherwise have lost to a competitor who simply showed up first.

Most people don't notice the moment this flips. They keep tinkering with the DIY site long after their hour is worth more spent working than fiddling with a page builder.

When DIY genuinely makes sense

Not never. It's the right call when you're just starting out with very few jobs to lose and not much budget, when your work already comes from long-standing contacts rather than search, or when you honestly enjoy the tinkering and your time isn't yet worth more elsewhere.

The trap in the middle: false economy

Two options look cheap and aren't. A one-off £150 designer looks fine on day one, then there's no support, no updates, and nobody answering the phone when something breaks. And a favour from a mate or relative has no deadline, rarely gets the technical groundwork done properly, and quietly gets abandoned the moment they get busy with their own work. Both tend to cost more over two years than doing it properly the first time.

WHERE ZENLIO FITS

Our done-for-you build is one 10-minute form. You don't write a word. We build the homepage, service pages, area pages, forms, and the technical structure search engines and AI tools need, live in under a week, from £500 build + £49/month. No 36-month lock-in: three months minimum, then cancel whenever you like, and you keep everything.

FREE TOOL

Revenue gap calculator → — work out what a weak website is actually costing you every month, before you decide.

CHAPTER 2 STRATEGY

What it actually costs in 2026

The price on the brochure is rarely the price you pay.

There are really only four routes into a website, and each one has a real, three-year cost once you stop looking at the headline number.

Option	Upfront	Monthly	Rough 3-year total	You own it?
DIY builder (Wix, Squarespace, WordPress)	£0	£15–£30	£540–£1,080 + 30–60 hrs of your time	Yes
Subscription website company	£0	£79–£199	£3,564–£7,164	Usually not: the site can disappear if you stop paying
Traditional agency	£2,000–£8,000	£15–£30 hosting	£2,540–£9,080, plus £75–£400 per change requested	Usually yes
Done-for-you (Zenlio model)	£500–£1,500	£49–£129	£2,264–£5,164, updates included	Yes, fully exportable

Three fair-price tests

1. **The ownership test.** Ask directly: do I own this outright, or am I renting it under a platform licence? If you cancel after twelve months, do you keep the website?
2. **The three-year test.** Multiply the monthly fee by 36 and add the build cost. A £99/month subscription looks nothing like £99 once you do this: it's £3,564 minimum.
3. **The deliverables test.** Hosting alone costs £5–£15 a month. Anything charged above that should be buying you something real: content updates, blog posts, a performance report, actual SEO work. If it isn't, you're just paying rent on a webpage.

Agencies aren't the enemy here, but their maintenance pricing catches people out: £75 to update a phone number, £200–£400 for a new service page, £150 for a blog post. Sites on that model tend to go stale within two years simply because every small change costs money, so people stop asking for them.

ASK THIS BEFORE YOU SIGN ANYTHING

"What will I have paid, all in, after twelve months?" A good provider gives you a number on the call. If the answer starts with "it depends" and never lands on a figure, that's your answer.

CHAPTER 3 STRATEGY

The free website trap

The sites that win work aren't the prettiest ones. They're the ones somebody kept turning up for.

"Free website" offers come from three different places, and only one of them should worry you.

PORTFOLIO BUILDER

Someone newer to the trade, building sites for experience and testimonials. Fine, as long as they're upfront about the arrangement.

LOSS LEADER

The build itself is free; hosting and support carry a monthly fee. Fine too, provided every cost is written down before you commit.

VOLUME MERCHANT

Builds fast, grabs a screenshot for their own marketing, then disappears. Here, the build was never the product. The build was the advert.

Why the free part was never the real cost

Search engines reward evidence of an active business, not a finished website. A site that launches and then never changes again stops producing that evidence: new pages, fresh reviews, updated details. Rankings don't collapse overnight; they fade, quietly, over months, which is exactly why nobody notices until a competitor with a maintained site has been quietly taking the calls instead.

AI tools make this worse, not better. ChatGPT and similar cross-check your details across your site, your Google profile, and directories. Inconsistent or outdated information reads as unreliable, and unreliable doesn't get recommended.

> *A bathroom fitter with a maintained site winning one extra £4,300 job a month over an unmaintained competitor is £51,600 a year, a gap no hosting fee comes close to.*

Five questions before you accept any free or cheap offer

- [ ] Why is this free, specifically? Get a real answer, not a shrug.
- [ ] What will this cost me, in writing, over twelve months?
- [ ] Who owns the domain, and is it registered in my name?
- [ ] Who updates the site after month one, specifically, and how do I reach them?
- [ ] If this provider vanished tomorrow, could I export my content and keep my domain?

If a provider holds your domain, your hosting, and your content, and then vanishes, you're not just without a website. You're starting completely from scratch, having lost whatever ranking you'd built too.

FREE TOOL

Website Provider Scorecard → — already have a “free” or cheap site? Score whoever built it against what a good provider should deliver.

CHAPTER 4 STRATEGY

Seven questions that sort the pros from the cowboys

You're not testing whether they use AI to help build your site. You're testing what's left once you take the AI away.

If you decide to pay someone rather than build it yourself, ask these seven questions on a phone call, not by message. It's much easier to hide behind a chatbot-written reply than a live answer.

1. "Why these pages, and not others?"

Good answer: they explain how customers actually search: "boiler repair Solihull" is a different search to "boiler repair Redditch," so each needs its own page.

Red flag: "That's what comes with the package." A template with no reasoning behind it.

2. "What happens in month two?"

Good answer: a named rhythm: what gets added, refreshed, and reported, and when.

Red flag: silence, or a cheerful "it's all yours now, off you go!" A website treated as a one-off deliverable rather than an ongoing asset.

3. "If we fall out, what do I keep?"

Good answer: an instant, specific answer on domain ownership, content ownership, and whether the site is fully exportable, ideally in writing.

Red flag: the domain, hosting, and logins are all kept by the provider "to keep things simple."

4. "How will somebody actually find it?"

Good answer: specifics: Google Business Profile, area pages, schema markup, reviews, consistent listings, and a mention of how ChatGPT and Google AI now affect local search.

Red flag: a vague "SEO is included" with nothing behind it.

5. "Show me one you built a year ago."

Good answer: a live site, still updated, still ranking, with an owner who'd vouch for them.

Red flag: a portfolio entirely from the last eight weeks. No track record to check.

6. "What will I have paid in twelve months, all in?"

Good answer: a concrete number on the call, covering hosting, domain, and any updates, for example "£500 build plus £49 a month."

Red flag: "it depends," with no figure ever landed on. Hidden monthly fees tend to live here.

7. "Why did you do it that way?"

Good answer: an immediate, experience-based explanation, including lessons they've learned the hard way.

Red flag: every answer needs a follow-up look-up, or clearly comes from a chatbot rather than the person on the call.

PATTERN, NOT PERFECTION

One uncertain answer is normal. Nobody has every figure memorised. A pattern of deflection across several questions is the actual warning sign.

FREE TOOL

Website Provider Scorecard → — turn these seven questions into a score. Use it on your next call, or on the site you already have.

PART TWO

The foundation

What a website actually needs to do its job, and the architecture underneath it that most small business sites are missing entirely.

II

CHAPTER 5 STRATEGY

Your website is a flat-pack

The standard you hold for your craft doesn't match the standard you've accepted for your marketing.

Picture a joiner who cuts proper dovetail joints and scribes every worktop to the wall, running a website built from a generic template with stock photography and boilerplate copy. If a customer asked him to build a kitchen to the standard of his own website, he'd politely show them the door.

This happens for two honest reasons: most business owners genuinely don't know what "good" looks like online, and the market has spent years treating websites as a commodity: "a website is a website." It costs you in three separate ways.

1. **The gut feeling.** Customers don't consciously notice your typography or colour choices, but they feel the difference. Comparing two quotes, they pick the one that "felt right" without being able to say why, and a flat-pack site loses that moment silently.
2. **Search ranking.** Flat-pack sites are homepage-heavy and rank for almost nothing specific. Studio-built sites have a dedicated page per service and per area, and dedicated pages are what actually rank.
3. **AI recommendations.** As ChatGPT and Google AI increasingly do the recommending, they cite specific, structured, well-considered content. Generic template sites simply don't register.

What "studio-built" actually means

Element	Flat-pack	Studio-built
Typography	Whatever the template shipped with, usually Arial	A deliberate pairing: a headline font with character, a clean face for body copy
Colour	Scattered, no logic ("the homepage needed green")	Two or three colours, each with a specific job
Photography	Stock: smiling clipboard holders, a Mediterranean garden	Real photos of your actual work
Words	"At [Business Name], we take pride in delivering high-quality..."	Plain English, specific to your business, short and direct
Structure	Five pages: home, services, about, contact	A page per service, a page per area, a page per completed project

Of all five, photography is the single biggest tell. One real photograph of a patio you laid last summer is worth more than fifteen stock shots of someone else's.

Check your own site right now

- [ ] Does the typography look considered, or did the template just choose it?
- [ ] Are the colours doing a job, or scattered around like a fruit salad?
- [ ] Are the photos your actual work, or stock?
- [ ] Do the words describe what you specifically do, or could a competitor copy-paste them onto their own site tomorrow?

Then the harder question: if you were the customer comparing two quotes, and the other site was studio-built, would yours win the job?

> **WHERE ZENLIO FITS**
>
> Getting this right yourself is entirely possible. It just takes a weekend once you know what "considered" actually looks like, which is most of what this chapter just gave you. If you'd rather skip the weekend, it's the default standard on every Zenlio build, not an upgrade you pay extra for.

CHAPTER 6 STRATEGY

Six things every site needs (and ten to skip)

A website that wins work isn't a brochure. It's a tool. Six things right, ten things ignored: that's the whole game.

The six essentials

1. **Deep service pages.** Aim for around 1,200 words on a competitive service page, 600+ if you're being efficient. Cover what's involved, how long it takes, rough costs, what's included, and what to expect on the day. A 200-word page tells Google you're guessing; a 1,200-word page tells Google, and ChatGPT, and Perplexity, that you're the real deal. The only question left on the page should be "how soon can you start?"
2. **Genuine area pages.** One page per town or area you actually work in, with real local detail, not "we cover Basingstoke and surrounding areas" copy. Someone searching "electrician Eastleigh" wants to land on something that proves you know Eastleigh.
3. **Real social proof.** Actual reviews on the page itself, not just linked elsewhere. Real job photos: your van, the finished work, dated. Real accreditation logos. Customers trust other customers, not your own claims about yourself.
4. **An accessible phone number.** Clickable, top of every page, sticky on mobile scroll. Around 70% of trade searches happen on a phone. This isn't a design choice, it's the bare minimum.
5. **A low-friction form with a real next step.** Name, phone, postcode, and a one-line problem description, nothing more. Then a confirmation that actually uses their name ("Thanks, Sarah, I'll be in touch within two hours") and an auto-reply within 30 seconds. A form is the start of a relationship; treat it like one.
6. **Structure built for AI search.** FAQ blocks with direct-answer paragraphs, and schema markup that plainly states who you are, what you do, and where. ChatGPT and Perplexity read structured data very differently to a human skimming a page.

The ten things to leave out

Skip this	Because
Chatbot widgets with fake names	Customers can tell, and tap straight back to Google
"Meet the team" pages for solo operators	"Hi, I'm Dave, fifteen years in the trade" beats a fabricated bio every time
Stock photos of tradespeople	Spotted in a heartbeat, worse than no photo at all
Animated hero videos	Beautiful in a portfolio, useless to someone who's already left
AI-written blog content, unedited	Google spots it, customers spot it
14-field intake forms	Every extra field is a lost enquiry
Homepage carousel sliders	Nobody clicks past slide one
Dead social media feeds	A graveyard reads as "this business may not exist anymore"
Generic award badges	Nobody is fooled by a self-awarded platform badge
Live visitor counters	"Two people viewing this page." One of them is you

Build for the customer who needs you, not for design awards you'll never enter.

CHAPTER 7 STRATEGY

Why one page isn't enough

Google ranks pages, not businesses. It doesn't look at your firm and decide you're the best plumber in the area. It picks the single best page for a single search.

Nobody searches generically. They search "boiler repair Winchester" or "emergency electrician Eastleigh": specific service, specific place. A homepage that tries to speak to every service and every area at once is competing as a generalist against rivals who've built one focused page for exactly that search. It rarely wins.

The two page types you need

SERVICE PAGES

One per offering. Address the specific problem ("boiler not firing up"), cost ranges, the process, and photographic proof. This does double duty: it ranks better and it converts better, because it matches exactly what the visitor was worried about.

AREA PAGES

One per location you genuinely cover. Real local job examples, area-specific detail, honest timeframes. If your site never clearly says you work in Eastleigh, Google has very little reason to show you to someone searching from Eastleigh.

The maths of it

Five services across five towns is 25 distinct service-and-location combinations customers might search for. A single page can't rank well for any of them. Proper structure lets you capture several of those searches at once, and even one extra job a month at, say, £800, is £9,600 a year you were otherwise leaving for a competitor with more pages.

THE RESIDENCY TEST

Would someone who actually lives in that town find your area page genuinely useful, or is it the same paragraph with the town name swapped out? Google can tell the difference, and so can they.

This scales cleanly as you grow. Adding a new service or a new area later just means one more focused page, not a full rebuild. Part Three, coming up, is the actual template for both page types.

WHERE ZENLIO FITS

Writing 25–40 pages properly, in your own voice, is real work: a weekend if you know what good looks like, longer if you don't. Our done-for-you build turns one 10-minute intake form into that full structure automatically.

CHAPTER 8 STRATEGY

"Local SEO" is the wrong question

Your website doesn't rank in your town because you're trying to win every search with one page.

Most local SEO advice treats ranking as a list of tactical activities: get reviews, list yourself in directories, post on social media. That's not wrong, but it's finishing work. It amplifies pages that already exist. It cannot create a ranking out of a page that was never built.

The real unit of competition in search is the individual page, not your business as a whole. Reviews and citations are skirting board. They make a properly built room look better. They don't build the room.

The four-step method

1. **List your money searches.** The actual searches that generate paid work in your trade and your patch, things like "boiler service Cosham" or "loft conversion Romsey." Not vanity searches, not your own business name.
2. **Audit what you have.** For each money search, does a dedicated page exist that is genuinely about that search, or does it just get a passing mention on the homepage? This usually reveals a bigger gap than people expect.
3. **Build what's missing.** A tradesperson offering nine services across fifteen areas needs 40–50 pages minimum, not five. Each one needs a specific headline, pricing for that specific service, FAQs locals actually ask, genuine local knowledge, and schema markup declaring exactly what the page is for.
4. **Then, and only then, do the finishing work.** Reviews, citations, Google Business Profile polish, ongoing content. These amplify a properly built site. They cannot substitute for one.

> *No explicit page, no citation. No second place. You're not competing on page two. You're not in the competition at all.*

The same logic now applies to AI search. ChatGPT and Perplexity don't poke around your site looking for hints. They look for the page that most explicitly answers the question, and cite that one.

One reason this advice is rarely given plainly: a properly built 40-page site, built once, doesn't need much ongoing billable work, and that doesn't suit a business model built on recurring "SEO management" fees for a five-page site that was never going to rank regardless of how many reviews it collects. The next part is that list, step one, actually done.

FREE TOOL

AI Visibility Test → — ask ChatGPT, Gemini and Perplexity about your business live, and see whether AI search actually knows who you are.

PART THREE

Building it yourself, step by step

Not the theory this time. The actual steps: the platform, the site map, the page templates with worked examples, Google Business Profile click by click, and the technical bits without knowing code.

HANDS-ON WALKTHROUGH

III

CHAPTER 9 HANDS-ON

Choosing your platform

This is the least important decision in the whole book. Get it roughly right in an afternoon and move on to the parts that actually matter.

Three realistic options for a solo operator or small local team, and a fourth for anyone genuinely comfortable with a steeper learning curve.

Platform	Best for	Learning curve	Typical cost	Handles 40+ pages?
Wix	Fastest start, visual drag-and-drop	Low	£16–£27/mo	Yes, but gets sluggish to manage past ~30 pages
Squarespace	Design quality straight out of the box	Low–medium	£16–£40/mo	Similar ceiling to Wix, stronger blogging tools
WordPress (self-hosted)	Full control, no real ceiling on page count	Medium–high	£5–£15/mo hosting + free–£60 theme	Built for exactly this at scale, but you're the IT department
Webflow	Designer-grade control over structure	High	£14–£39/mo	Most powerful for structured pages, steepest curve

How to actually decide

1. **How many hours can you actually give this in month one?**
   Under three hours a week: stick to Wix or Squarespace. More than that, and comfortable learning a new system: WordPress opens up real advantages once you're past 20 pages.

2. **Do you have any tech support at all?**
   A tech-comfortable friend, a family member, or budget for the odd hour of freelance help. If genuinely nobody, that alone should rule out WordPress and Webflow, whatever their other advantages.

3. **Are you eventually building 40+ pages?**
   If you can already see, from Chapter 7's maths, that you'll want that many service-and-area pages, leaning WordPress now avoids a full rebuild later. A handful of pages only, for now: Wix or Squarespace is genuinely fine, and you can always move later.

THE ONE RULE THAT MATTERS MORE THAN THE PLATFORM

Buy your own domain name from day one (roughly £10–£15 a year) on every platform, including the free tiers. A site living at yourbusiness.wixsite.com/yourbusiness looks unfinished and is far harder for anyone to find, remember, or trust than yourbusiness.co.uk.

WHERE ZENLIO FITS

We build on our own managed stack, so this decision simply doesn't exist for a Zenlio client. If you're doing it yourself, the logic above is genuinely the same advice we'd give walking past your desk, platform choice included.

FREE TOOL

CMS cost calculator → — add up what your current platform, plugins, hosting and maintenance actually cost across a year.

CHAPTER 10 HANDS-ON

Your site map, on paper, before you touch a builder

The single biggest DIY mistake: opening a builder and improvising, before deciding what you're actually building.

1. **List every service, separately**
   Not "general building work." Actually: "kitchen extensions," "loft conversions," "garage conversions," "structural walls removed." Each becomes its own page later, so split them out now.

2. **List every area you'll genuinely travel to**
   Honestly, not your whole county. The towns you'd actually want more jobs in, and could reach without the travel eating your margin.

3. **Multiply services by areas**
   That's your ideal page count. Six services across eight areas is 48 possible combinations. Nobody starts with 48, and you shouldn't either.

4. **Prioritise your first pass**
   Rank combinations by what actually gets searched. Type "boiler repair in" into Google in an incognito window and read the autocomplete suggestions. Check the "People also ask" box. Or just ask five past customers what they'd have typed. Build your top 15–20 combinations first, add the rest over the following months.

5. **Add your fixed pages**
   Home, About / Why Us, Reviews, Contact. That's the full list. Resist adding more "just in case," every extra page you don't need is a page you have to write, and maintain, for nothing.

6. **Write the whole thing down before you open the builder**
   A spreadsheet, or literally a page in a notebook. One column for the page title, one for the URL you'll give it. This is the single step that turns "a website" into "a plan for a website," and it takes twenty minutes.

WORKED EXAMPLE

First-pass site map for a Winchester-based electrician, 3 services x 4 areas

```
Home                                  /
About / Why Us                        /about/
Reviews                               /reviews/
Contact                               /contact/

Rewiring                              /rewiring/
Rewiring in Winchester                /rewiring-winchester/
Rewiring in Eastleigh                 /rewiring-eastleigh/
Fuse Box & Consumer Unit Upgrades     /consumer-unit-upgrades/
Consumer Unit Upgrades in Winchester  /consumer-unit-upgrades-winchester/
EICR & Landlord Certificates          /eicr-landlord-certificates/
EICR Certificates in Winchester       /eicr-winchester/
… continue the pattern for every remaining
    service-and-area combination on your list
```

WHERE ZENLIO FITS

This exact worksheet is what our own 10-minute intake form fills in for you, cross-matching your services and areas automatically, so nobody has to sit down with a notebook and do the multiplication by hand.

CHAPTER 11 HANDS-ON

The service page template

The template that turns a blank page into 600–1,200 words that actually rank, without staring at a cursor for an hour.

TEMPLATE

Fill in every bracket, in order

```
H1: [Service] in [Area] (or just [Service] if it's area-agnostic)

Opening (2–3 sentences): the problem in the customer's own
words, reassurance you fix it, how fast you can start.

What's Included: a bulleted list of specifics, not vague
promises. "Same-day quote, DBS-checked engineers, 12-month
guarantee on parts and labour" beats "quality service."

What It Costs: an honest range, what changes the price,
and a call to action to get an exact quote.

How It Works: 3–5 numbered steps of the actual process,
start to finish.

Why Choose Us For This: 2–3 concrete proof points specific
to this service, not generic claims that fit any tradesperson.

FAQ: 3–5 real questions, each with a direct-answer paragraph
(this is also what AI tools quote back).

Closing: repeat the phone number, one line removing risk.
```

The template, filled in

Boiler Repair in Winchester. Boiler stopped firing, or making a noise it shouldn't? We get to most Winchester jobs the same day, and diagnose the fault on arrival, no guesswork over the phone. **What's included:** full diagnostic, parts from stock where possible, a fixed quote before any work starts, 12 months' guarantee on the repair. **What it costs:** most repairs run £120–£280 depending on the part, callout included; we'll always quote before starting. **How it works:** 1) call or fill in the form, 2) we book a same-day or next-day slot, 3) diagnose on site and quote on the spot, 4) fix it there and then in most cases. **Why us:** Gas Safe registered, based in Winchester so no long callout drive, 200+ boiler repairs completed locally in the last two years. **FAQ:** "Can you fix any boiler make?" Yes, we carry parts for the most common brands and can order same-day for the rest.

Two rules that matter more than the words themselves

- [ ] Write like you talk on the phone to a customer, not like a brochure. If you wouldn't say it out loud, don't write it.
- [ ] Say the service and area names naturally, a handful of times, not stuffed in every sentence. One unnatural repeat and a human reader clocks it; so does Google.

CHAPTER 12 HANDS-ON

The area page template

The same discipline as the service page, aimed at proving you actually know the town, not just that you've typed its name.

TEMPLATE

Fill in every bracket, in order

```
H1: [Service or "Trades"] in [Town]

Opening (2–3 sentences): name the town naturally, a
specific local detail if you have one, and confirm you
cover it properly, not just "surrounding areas."

Areas We Cover Nearby: a short list of the neighbouring
towns or postcodes, so one page can help rank several.

Local Proof: a recent job in that specific town, named
generally (a street, an estate, a postcode district) if
you're comfortable, or "recently completed a rewire for a
family on the outskirts of [Town]" if not.

Response Time: an honest statement, e.g. "usually on site
within the hour for [Town] callouts."

FAQ: 2–3 questions a local resident would actually ask.

Closing: phone number, one line removing risk.
```

The template, filled in

Electrician in Eastleigh. We cover Eastleigh and the surrounding estates regularly, usually on site within the hour for anything urgent. Also covering Fair Oak, Bishopstoke, and Chandler's Ford from the same base. **Local proof:** completed a full rewire on a 1930s semi near Eastleigh station in March, and regularly handle EICR certificates for landlords with rental properties in the town centre. **Response time:** same-day for most non-emergency callouts booked before 2pm. **FAQ:** "Do you cover flats above the shops on the High Street?" Yes, we regularly work on the older buildings in that stretch and know the access is often through the rear.

Five things that make it genuinely local

- [ ] A real job you've actually done in that specific town, even loosely described
- [ ] Neighbouring areas named, so the page earns nearby searches too
- [ ] An honest response-time statement specific to that area, not a generic "fast response"
- [ ] At least one detail only someone who's actually worked there would know
- [ ] A question a local resident would specifically ask, not a generic FAQ copied across every area page

THE SWAP TEST

Copy your area page, paste it into a document, and swap the town name for a different one you cover. If nothing else needs to change for it to read convincingly, it wasn't a local page. It was a template with a find-and-replace.

CHAPTER 13 HANDS-ON

Setting up Google Business Profile, click by click

Free, and more likely to get you the first call than the website itself. Twenty minutes, done properly.

1. **Go to google.com/business and sign in**
   Use the Google account you'll keep long-term for the business, not a personal throwaway you might lose access to.

2. **Add your business, using your real trading name**
   Not "Dave's Boilers Best Boiler Repair Winchester." Google penalises keyword-stuffed names, sometimes by suspending the listing entirely.

3. **Choose your primary category as specifically as possible**
   "Electrician," not "Home Services." Add two or three genuinely relevant secondary categories on top.

4. **Mark yourself as a service-area business**
   If you travel to customers, which most trades do. List every town and postcode you actually cover, matching Chapter 10's list.

5. **Verify immediately**
   Postcard by post (around five days), or phone or email verification if Google offers it for your business. This is the most-skipped step, and everything else stalls until it's done.

6. **Fill in hours, phone, website, and a short description**
   Phone number must match your website exactly. See the template below for the description.

7. **Upload photos: logo, cover photo, and at least ten real job photos**
   Add a handful more every month. An abandoned-looking profile ranks poorly regardless of how good the actual work is.

8. **Start the review habit that same week**
   Use the message template below the moment you finish a job, while the customer is still pleased.

COPY THIS

"From the business" description, fill in the brackets

```
[Business name] provides [service, e.g. "electrical
installation and repair"] across [main town] and
[nearby areas]. [Number] years' experience,
[relevant accreditation, e.g. "NICEIC registered"], and
[one honest differentiator, e.g. "same-day callouts
for urgent jobs"]. Call [phone number] for a free quote.
```

COPY THIS

Review request text, send right after the job

```
Hi [name], thanks again for choosing
[business name] today. If you had a good
experience, a quick Google review really helps a small
local business like ours — here's the link:
[your Google review link]. No worries at all
if not, thanks either way!
```

FREE TOOL

Google Business Profile Scorecard → — just finished the walkthrough above? Score the result: 8 questions, 5 minutes, no signup.

CHAPTER 14 HANDS-ON

The technical bits, without knowing code

Three things that sound technical, take about an hour combined, and need zero coding ability.

A. Schema markup

Use a free generator (search "Merkle schema markup generator" or "Google structured data markup helper"), select "LocalBusiness," and fill in your details. It hands you a block of code called JSON-LD. Paste it here, depending on your platform:

- [ ] **Wix:** Settings → Custom Code (or the SEO panel on Business plans and above)
- [ ] **Squarespace:** Settings → Advanced → Code Injection → Header
- [ ] **WordPress:** a lightweight plugin such as "Insert Headers and Footers," or your theme's header file if you're comfortable

Then test it with Google's free Rich Results Test: paste in your page's URL, and it should come back with no errors.

COPY THIS

Minimal LocalBusiness schema, fill in the brackets

```
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "LocalBusiness",
  "name": "[Business name]",
  "telephone": "[Phone number]",
  "url": "[Your website address]",
  "address": {
    "@type": "PostalAddress",
    "addressLocality": "[Town]",
    "addressCountry": "GB"
  },
  "areaServed": "[List of towns you cover]"
}
```

B. Your robots.txt file

Type yoursite.com/robots.txt straight into your browser and see what's there. Most builders generate a sensible default automatically. Look for any accidental "Disallow: /" line, which blocks the entire site from search engines. If you're on WordPress, double-check your SEO plugin (Yoast, RankMath) isn't set to "discourage search engines from indexing this site," a setting sometimes left on from when the site was in development.

C. Quick speed wins

- [ ] Compress every image before uploading, with a free tool like Squoosh.app or TinyPNG.com. Aim for under 200KB per image, usually with no visible quality loss.
- [ ] Remove any app, plugin, or widget you installed once and never actually use. Each one adds load time whether you're using it or not.
- [ ] Run your homepage through Google PageSpeed Insights, note your mobile score, and fix whatever it flags in bold first.

> **WHERE ZENLIO FITS**
>
> Every Zenlio build ships with schema, a clean robots.txt, and a Lighthouse performance target built in from day one, so this chapter is simply never a task on a Zenlio client's to-do list.

PART FOUR

Getting found

Google Maps, Google's AI Overviews, ChatGPT, Perplexity, and the reviews that tie it all together: how customers actually discover you in 2026.

CHAPTER 15 STRATEGY

How to show up in the Google Maps box

The map box at the top of the results is a different contest entirely. What competes there isn't your website. It's your Google Business Profile.

Only three businesses show up in that box. Everyone else sits on the second page of a map nobody scrolls to. Google ranks that box on three factors.

Factor	What it means
Relevance	Does your primary category match your core service exactly? Pick "Electrician" precisely, and you show up for electrician searches. Leave it vague and Google shows someone else.
Distance	Have you told Google every town you actually cover? This is what gets you showing up for "near me" searches across your whole patch, not just your own street.
Prominence	Trust signals: reviews and activity. Between two equally close, equally relevant businesses, the one with more recent reviews and a livelier profile takes the slot.

Chapter 13 already walked through setting this up click by click. This is the why behind those steps: relevance, distance, and prominence are the entire scoring system, and every step in that walkthrough feeds directly into one of the three.

A proper website isn't required for the map box itself, but it strengthens your profile's authority and captures the searchers who are comparing options rather than ready to call immediately, and it's what lets AI tools confidently recommend you alongside your map ranking.

FREE TOOL

Local Presence Scorecard → — 8 questions covering Google, mobile, reviews and AI search: a score that shows exactly where you stand.

CHAPTER 16 STRATEGY

Getting recommended by ChatGPT, Google AI and Perplexity

The businesses that win AI search aren't the loudest. They're the easiest for a machine to understand and trust.

ChatGPT reached roughly 900 million weekly users. Google now shows AI Overviews inside its own results. Perplexity has gone from curiosity to a genuine way people find a business. Increasingly, customers don't get ten links to sift through. They get two or three direct recommendations. Your job has changed: it's not to rank in a list anymore, it's to be the answer.

These are three different machines

- **ChatGPT** leans on encyclopedic sources and third-party mentions: reviews, directories, and local write-ups matter as much as your own site.
- **Perplexity** runs a live web search for every query and rewards freshness. A new page can be cited within hours of going live.
- **Google AI Overviews** sit on top of the normal Google index. Good SEO is the entry ticket, and it quotes pages that answer immediately, with real figures and clean structured data.

All three reward the same underlying things: clarity, currency, trustworthiness, and content a machine can actually parse.

Six tactics that move the needle

1. **Answer first, explain second.** Open with the direct answer, not a welcome message. "A house rewire in Southampton typically costs £3,500–£6,000 and takes 5–7 days." Machines quote the answering sentence, not the throat-clearing before it.
2. **Clean schema markup.** Chapter 14 covers exactly how to add this without knowing code. Organization, LocalBusiness, Service, and FAQPage schema remove the ambiguity that makes AI systems skip a business entirely.
3. **Date your content visibly.** An "updated 2026" label signals currency to every engine, especially Perplexity, without needing a rewrite.
4. **Build genuine off-site mentions.** Real Google reviews, directory listings, local write-ups. ChatGPT weights external verification heavily, and your own website can't manufacture that alone. Five relevant mentions outweigh fifty generic directory listings.
5. **Let AI crawlers in.** Check your robots.txt isn't accidentally blocking search-focused crawlers like OAI-SearchBot, Claude-SearchBot, and PerplexityBot, separate from the training crawlers (GPTBot, ClaudeBot) you may want to block instead.
6. **Add an llms.txt file, with realistic expectations.** Cheap insurance, not magic. Treat any claim that it's the secret to AI search with suspicion.

Specific reviews outperform generic ones

"Great service, would recommend" gets ignored. "Completed our rewire in Eastleigh in four days, on budget, left the place spotless" gets quoted. Specificity is what gets you cited; vagueness is what gets you ignored. Don't script reviews. Just give people a couple of prompted questions to answer when you ask.

TEST IT YOURSELF

Open ChatGPT and Perplexity and ask: "Who's a good [your trade] in [your town]?" Note who comes up. Repeat monthly and track whether you start appearing.

Nobody can honestly promise you'll be ChatGPT's top pick by Friday. But most local markets haven't optimised for this yet, which means the window is wide open right now, and the cost of moving early is small compared to the cost of catching up later. **Run the free AI Visibility Test →**

CHAPTER 17 STRATEGY

Reviews prove you're good. They don't get you found.

A directory rents you a stall. A website is your own front door.

Reviews are a closer, not an opener. They only do their work once someone has already found you. They don't rank for "plumber near me," and increasingly they don't appear in the AI answers that are starting to replace that search entirely.

The eight-second moment

Someone gets a referral, "use this electrician, he's brilliant," and before they call, they Google your name. That brief search decides everything. If nothing convincing turns up, they quietly try someone else, and you never find out it happened. Most owner-operators never learn about the jobs lost this way.

What each piece is actually for

Reviews alone	A proper website
Prove you're trustworthy once found	Gets you found in the first place, through search structure
Tip a decision between two options already being compared	Loads fast on mobile, where most searches happen
Live on your Google profile and directories	Displays those same reviews prominently, alongside the work
Rarely surface in AI answers on their own	Is what AI tools actually read to build a recommendation

Facebook pages rank poorly in Google and rarely appear in AI answers. It's rented space Meta controls, not yours. Directories like Checkatrade or MyBuilder put you alongside fifty competitors, charge ongoing fees, and put you in a straight price race. Neither replaces owning your own front door.

The numbers make the case plainly: losing one £1,500 job a year to a competitor who simply had a better web presence costs about the same as an entire year of a basic website. Every job recovered after that is pure profit.

Word of mouth still matters enormously. A website doesn't replace it. It protects it, by making sure the verification step every referral now goes through leads back to you, not a competitor.

FREE TOOL

Google Business Profile Scorecard → — reviews live on your profile, not your site. Score whether that profile is actually pulling its weight.

CHAPTER 18 STRATEGY

Why your best customers Google you before they call

"Use this electrician, he's brilliant, I've got his number." And then, before they ring you, they Google your name anyway.

This is the modern shape of every referral. It doesn't reduce the value of word of mouth. It adds a gate in front of it. What people find in that quick search decides whether the referral actually converts.

What people search for

Usually one of three things: your name as a person, your business name, or a service-plus-location search if they didn't quite catch the name properly. All three need to lead somewhere convincing.

What kills the moment

- [ ] No search results at all, nothing to click on
- [ ] A Facebook page that hasn't posted in two years
- [ ] Only a bare directory listing with no real detail
- [ ] No photos, nothing that looks like proof of real work

Facebook alone rarely rescues this: Meta doesn't want Google indexing its platform deeply, and Google doesn't prioritise social profiles in local search results, so a Facebook-only presence is close to invisible at exactly the moment it matters.

What a trustworthy result actually shows

- [ ] Clear, specific descriptions of what you do
- [ ] The specific areas you cover
- [ ] Genuine customer reviews
- [ ] A working, clickable phone number
- [ ] A contact form for people who'd rather not call first

If even one in ten referrals hits this gap and quietly goes elsewhere, that's real, measurable revenue, and it's revenue you will never see missing from a spreadsheet, because a referral that goes cold doesn't leave a trace.

PART FIVE

Turning visitors into calls

Getting found is only half the job. Here's what actually happens between someone landing on your site and picking up the phone, and where it quietly breaks.

CHAPTER 19 STRATEGY

Why your website isn't getting you calls

Nobody hires the nicest-looking website. They hire the one they could find, and were able to call.

Website failure is a chain, and it breaks at its weakest link. The first three reasons stop people reaching you at all. The last three get them there, then lose them.

They never reach you

1. You're invisible in search

Fix: dedicated pages per service and area, a fully completed Google Business Profile, consistent listings, and schema markup so search engines and AI tools can read your business properly.

Test: are most of your visitors people who already knew your name? Then new customers can't find you at all.

2. Your site is slow

Fix: compress every image, audit and remove unnecessary plugins, check your page builder isn't shipping excessive code.

Test: open your site on your phone, on mobile data, having not visited it today. Count the seconds. Desktop on wifi feels fine; that's not what your customer is using.

6. Your content is stale

Fix: add pages as your offering grows, publish new reviews as they arrive, post updates that show the business is active.

Test: when did anything on your site last change? If you can't remember, Google is assuming the same thing about your business.

They reach you, then leave

3. The message is about you, not them

Fix: lead with the customer's immediate problem, for example "Boiler gone cold in Redditch? We're out to most jobs same day," not "Established 2004."

Test: read your homepage's first line aloud. Is it about your business, or their problem?

4. The call-to-action is buried

Fix: a prominent, one-tap phone number repeated through the page, and a short form for people who genuinely can't call.

Test: from your phone, try to call your own business from your own website. More than one tap is too much friction.

5. There's no proof, and nothing sets you apart

Fix: real reviews under real names, real job photos, transparent pricing, visible accreditations.

Test: could a rival paste their name over your homepage and nothing else would need to change?

FIX IN THIS ORDER

Visibility first: a site nobody finds can't fail on the later reasons. Then speed. Then friction. Design and polish come last, not first. A slow site that also buries the phone number loses the same caller twice.

FREE TOOL

Landing page teardown → — paste in your homepage URL and get an honest, specific teardown of what's costing you calls.

CHAPTER 20 STRATEGY

Visitors but no enquiries: the 10-minute diagnostic

Traffic without enquiries is a conversion problem, not a visibility problem. A completely different fix.

Work out which problem you actually have

Monthly visitors	What it usually means
Under 50	A visibility problem, go back to Part Four
50–200	Should produce 1–5 enquiries. Zero means something on the page is blocking them
200+, zero enquiries	A specific, fixable barrier is stopping action, this chapter is for you

Five common blockers

1. **Hidden phone number.** Over 70% of trade searches happen on mobile. If the number needs scrolling, a menu, or several taps, most visitors simply leave. Fix: a fixed "Call now" button at the bottom of the screen on mobile.
2. **Oversized forms.** Every extra field reduces submissions. Every single one. Cut down to name, phone, and a short message. Qualify further on the call, not the form.
3. **No pricing at all.** Hidden pricing forces a phone call visitors aren't ready to make yet, and most will bounce instead of committing to that uncertainty. Fix: a realistic range on every service page ("Most rewires £3,500–£6,000, every job is different, call for a free quote"). It filters the time-wasters and reassures the genuine ones.
4. **No clear next step.** People hesitate when they don't know what happens after they act. Spell it out: "Call us → free quote within 24 hours → no obligation."
5. **Weak trust signals.** Inviting a stranger into your home is a real psychological barrier. Surface certifications, star ratings, named testimonials, van photos, and insurance details on every page, not buried on an about page nobody visits.

THE 10-MINUTE PHONE TEST

On your phone, pretend you just searched "[your trade] [your town]." Time three things: finding and tapping your phone number, finding the price for one specific service, and completing the contact form. Each should take under 15 seconds and feel reassuring. Anything slower is your biggest leak. Fix that one thing first, wait two weeks, then move to the next.

A working site with the friction removed is worth more than a beautiful site that still doesn't convert.

FREE TOOL

Revenue gap calculator → — put a number on the traffic you're already getting but not converting.

CHAPTER 21 STRATEGY

The anatomy of a page that converts

A page doesn't convert worse because it's ugly. It converts worse because it asks the visitor to make too many decisions, and the easiest decision is always to leave.

A landing page (a service page, a campaign page, your homepage) exists to make one thing happen: book the call, start the quote, leave a number. Every element on it should either move that along or get removed.

THE ONE HONEST TEST
For every element on the page, ask: if I removed this, would we lose a conversion? If the honest answer is no, it isn't decoration. It's friction.

Five things that quietly kill conversions

- **Too many competing calls-to-action.** A demo button, a newsletter signup, a pricing link, full navigation, and a chat bubble all fighting for the same click. They cancel each other out.
- **An ask too big for cold traffic.** Someone who just clicked an ad isn't ready for a 45-minute consultation. That's a marriage proposal on a first date. Offer a smaller first step.
- **Weak or generic proof.** "Trusted by thousands" convinces nobody. Named customers, real quotes, real numbers do the work instead.
- **Self-focused headlines.** "We build enterprise-grade platforms" undersells against "Get your quote today, same-day response." Lead with what the reader gets.
- **No urgency, no risk removed.** Address the hesitation directly: "Free to cancel. No card required. Live in a week."

The structure that works, over and over

- [ ] Headline that names the outcome the reader actually wants
- [ ] Subheading that makes the promise concrete, in one sentence
- [ ] One obvious primary action
- [ ] The same action repeated further down the page
- [ ] Proof, named and specific, positioned near the ask, not buried
- [ ] Three or four real objections, answered plainly
- [ ] One line removing the risk, right beside the button
- [ ] Nothing else: no navigation escape routes, no competing offers

Length should follow the ask, not a rule of thumb: a low-commitment offer converts fine on a short page; a bigger purchase needs more evidence and more objections answered. Video and images should support the words, not replace them. A stock hero image that pushes real content below the fold does more harm than good.

CHAPTER 22 STRATEGY

The slowest page on your site is costing you the deal

Speed belongs to everyone, so on most sites it belongs to no one.

~30.5

sales per 1,000 visitors at a 1-second load time

~10.8

sales per 1,000 visitors at a 5-second load time, roughly a 3x gap

Bounce probability climbs 32% going from a 1-second load to 3 seconds, and 123% going from 1 second to 10. On a campaign of 5,000 visitors, moving from a 5-second load to a 1-second load turns roughly 54 conversions into roughly 152. At £200 of value per enquiry, that's around £20,000 sitting in a single slow page.

Five usual causes

- Third-party script bloat: tracking code added over time and never audited
- Unoptimised images, often ten times larger than they need to be with zero visible difference once compressed
- Render-blocking CSS and JavaScript loading before the page can even paint
- Heavy page-builder overhead generating far more markup than the page needs
- No caching or CDN set up, serving everything from a single, distant server

Fast and well-designed aren't actually in conflict. Slowness is nearly always accumulated technical debt, not a design decision. A clean build can be visually rich and still load in under a second. Chapter 14's speed section is the concrete fix list; this is the reason it's worth the hour.

TEST IT PROPERLY

Open your homepage on your phone, on mobile data, not wifi, having not visited it earlier that day so nothing is cached. That's the experience most of your customers actually get.

FREE TOOL

Landing page teardown → — get a free, specific teardown of your homepage, speed included.

PART SIX

Staying legal

Two areas of UK law that changed in the last two years and now genuinely apply to every business website, regardless of size.

VI

CHAPTER 23 LEGAL

Cookie consent in 2026: what you actually need

The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 loosened the rules slightly. It's a narrower loosening than most people assume.

Four new exemptions, all conditional

- **Analytics**, but only if the data stays anonymised and is used solely to improve your own site. Standard Google Analytics likely doesn't qualify, because Google can use that data for its own purposes. Keeping GA inside your consent banner is still the safer call.
- **User preferences**: language, layout, dark mode, and similar settings need no consent.
- **Core service delivery**: cookies genuinely necessary for something the user actively asked for, including fraud prevention and logins. This is a narrower reading than many assumed before.
- **Emergency assistance**: geolocation used solely to provide emergency aid.

Still needs consent, no exceptions

All advertising and retargeting cookies, frequency capping, audience profiling, cross-site or cross-device tracking, affiliate pixels, and anything serving more than one purpose at once.

What to actually do

- [ ] Audit what cookies your site actually sets, using a scanner tool
- [ ] Sort each one: clearly exempt, clearly needs consent, or genuinely uncertain
- [ ] Treat anything uncertain as requiring consent until you've verified it properly
- [ ] Make "Accept all" and "Reject all" equal in visual weight, no dark patterns
- [ ] Actually test that "Reject" blocks what it claims to block
- [ ] Give users a simple, free way to opt out, even for exempt cookies

Current ICO fines are capped at £500,000, with a proposed alignment to UK GDPR levels of up to £17.5 million or 4% of global turnover. Enforcement currently targets high-traffic sites first, but the rules apply regardless of size. Note this only covers UK operations. If you have EU visitors, the stricter EU ePrivacy Directive and GDPR still apply on top.

CHAPTER 24 LEGAL

Accessibility: what UK law actually requires

"Reasonable adjustments so disabled people aren't put at a substantial disadvantage." This has applied to websites since 2010, with no small business exemption.

Equality Act 2010: applies to everyone

WCAG Level AA is the practical benchmark for what counts as "reasonable." Enforcement happens through civil claims from disabled customers, not regulatory fines, but that makes it no less real a risk.

European Accessibility Act: only if EU customers can transact

In force since 28 June 2025, and applied on a market-access basis: if an EU-based customer can complete a transaction on your site, you're in scope, regardless of where your business is based. If they can't transact, can't book, can't buy, you're outside scope.

- A local trade business with no EU customers: out of scope
- Hospitality taking bookings from EU visitors: potentially in scope
- Any site selling to EU buyers: in scope

Five common failures worth checking today

- [ ] Contrast: pale grey text on white, or white text on a busy background
- [ ] Missing alt text on images, for screen reader users
- [ ] Forms using placeholder text instead of persistent labels
- [ ] Anything that can't be operated without a mouse
- [ ] Video without captions

Check with an automated scanner (WAVE or axe DevTools), then manually tab through your site without touching the mouse, and run a Lighthouse accessibility score, aiming for 95+.

ONE THING TO ACTIVELY AVOID

Accessibility overlay widgets bolt a layer on top of a broken page rather than fixing it, and several have already faced legal challenges as a result. They're not a shortcut. Fix the page itself.

PART SEVEN

Keeping it working

A website is never actually finished. What to do after launch, and the order to do everything in this book in.

VII

CHAPTER 25 MAINTENANCE

The site isn't finished at launch

A site that launches and never changes again stops producing evidence, to Google, and to the customer deciding whether you're still trading.

Search engines reward activity, not a finished-looking website. A site frozen for two years or more signals, quietly and gradually, that the business behind it might not be either.

Five things to do every month

- [ ] Add or refresh content: a new review, a new project, an updated page
- [ ] Keep your name, address, and phone number consistent everywhere
- [ ] Keep schema markup current as your services or areas change
- [ ] Check performance: is anything getting slower, are enquiries holding up
- [ ] Respond quickly to anything that needs changing, rather than letting a backlog build

The financial case for this is straightforward: a maintained site that wins one extra £4,300 job a month over an unmaintained one is £51,600 a year, a gap no amount of hosting fee comparison shopping will ever close.

> **WHERE ZENLIO FITS**
>
> This is the part people underestimate when they compare "£15 a month DIY" against "£49 a month done-for-you." The difference isn't the hosting, it's whether anyone is doing this list every month. Our Professional plan includes two blog posts monthly, quarterly refreshes, schema updates, and a monthly report, so it's someone's actual job rather than a task competing with the rest of yours.

CHAPTER 26 MAINTENANCE

Your 90-day action plan

Everything in this book, in the order to actually do it.

Days 1–30: decide and lay the foundation

- [ ] Run the breakeven maths from Chapter 1 and decide DIY, freelancer, agency, or done-for-you
- [ ] If hiring someone, put all seven questions from Chapter 4 to them on a call
- [ ] If building it yourself, choose your platform (Chapter 9) and buy your own domain
- [ ] Get the six essentials from Chapter 6 in place: deep service pages, real proof, an accessible number, a low-friction form, and the start of an AI-search structure

Days 31–60: build the structure

- [ ] Write your site map on paper (Chapter 10), then build service and area pages against it using the templates in Chapters 11–12
- [ ] Claim and fully complete your Google Business Profile (Chapter 13), with the correct category and full service area
- [ ] Add schema markup, check your robots.txt, and compress your images (Chapter 14)
- [ ] Start your review habit: two or three requests a month, every month

Days 61–90: fix the leaks and lock in compliance

- [ ] Run the 10-minute phone diagnostic from Chapter 20 and fix your single biggest leak first
- [ ] Test and fix page speed on mobile data, not wifi
- [ ] Check your cookie banner against the current rules, and fix your accessibility basics: contrast, alt text, labels, keyboard navigation, captions
- [ ] Set a recurring monthly slot in your own diary for the five maintenance tasks in Chapter 25, and actually keep it

None of this needs to happen at once, and none of it needs to be perfect on day one. It needs to happen in roughly this order, and it needs someone (you, or somebody you've paid properly) still doing it in month six.

FREE TOOL

Local Presence Scorecard → — before day one, get your starting score. Re-take it on day 90 and see the difference.

CLOSING

If you'd rather this was done for you

Everything in this book is genuinely enough to build and run the whole thing yourself, templates and click-by-click walkthroughs included. That was always the point of writing it down properly rather than teasing half of it and holding the rest back.

But if you've read this far, maybe even started on Part Three, and thought "I know exactly what needs doing, I just don't have a spare thirty hours to do it," that's what Zenlio is for. One 10-minute form. You don't write a word. We build the homepage, the service pages, the area pages, the forms, the schema: everything covered in Parts Two and Three, live in under a week.

Plan	Build	Monthly	Includes
Starter	£500	£49	Core site, hosting, ongoing support
Professional	£1,000	£79	40+ pages, two blog posts monthly, quarterly refreshes, schema updates, monthly report
Growth	£1,500	£129	Everything above, built for scale across more services and areas

No 36-month contract. Three months minimum, then cancel any time, and you keep everything: content, domain, the lot.

Either way: build it right. Just build it.

P.S. Not ready to talk yet? Every tool mentioned in this book, scorecards, calculators, the AI visibility test, lives free at **zenlio.io/tools →**

ABOUT ZENLIO

Websites that win work.

Zenlio builds websites for trades and local service businesses across the UK: electricians, plumbers, builders, dentists, hairdressers, accountants, and any owner-operator who needs the phone to ring.

Done-for-you sites that get found on Google and recommended in ChatGPT, live in days rather than months, honestly priced, with no lock-in and no agency nonsense. Twenty years of experience across the marketing stack, brought to every project.

---

hello@zenlio.io

07737 548 072

zenlio.io

zenlio.

© 2026 Zenlio Limited