Building a
Global Experience Language
for the BBC

BBC UX&D

We are evolving a global experience language for the BBC's digital services.

The **GEL** guidelines are a reference point for all designers creating BBC websites. For further information on applying GEL across Mobile, IPTV and Tablet devices go to **www.bbc.co.uk/GEL**

The design philosophy underpins everything we do as a user experience and design team. It informs the way our services look, the way they behave and the way we operate as a team.

The foundations should be used by all. They include a vertical grid, baseline grid and recommended templates.

The building blocks help create consistent interaction and visual design across the site; from typography to iconography.

Our design pattern library will offer a comprehensive set of re-usable page components.

We welcome feedback and suggestions.

01 Philosophy

10 Principles
Cultural Map

01 Modern British

Our services are woven into the fabric of everyday life in the UK. They embrace a modern British design aesthetic that extends outside national boundaries. Our character is vibrant and sometimes quirky.

02 Compelling

Our voice ranges from serious and authoritative through to witty and entertaining. We sound authentic and relevant, warm and human. We engage our audiences with compelling storytelling.

03 Authentic

We value the familiarity and trust placed in us. We acknowledge the BBC's heritage of iconic design and broadcasting history with subtle references.

04 Pioneering

We pioneer design innovations that surprise and delight. We introduce the unexpected but always take our audiences with us.

05 Current

We curate a timeline of Britain; reflecting the present as it happens and adding relevant contextual links with the past.

06 Distinctive

We stand out by looking to tomorrow instead of simply referencing the design trends of today. We strike a balance between cookie-cutter design and beautiful anarchy.

07 Joined-up
All our services and platforms are one connected whole which deliver experiences sensitive to their context of use. We enable coherent journeys both within and outside familiar paths. We connect our audiences where there are shared interests and experiences.

08 Local/Global
We need to speak to everyone but we recognise the individual. Our message is scalable and localisable.

09 Universal
Our messages are clear and are communicated through simple, useful and intuitive interfaces. Our services are inherently open and accessible.

10 Best
Last but not least, we put quality first…

GEL is the glue that ties all BBC services together. The BBC masterbrand will speak directly to the audience on the homepage. A rich brand experience will still be distinctly 'BBC' on Doctor Who.
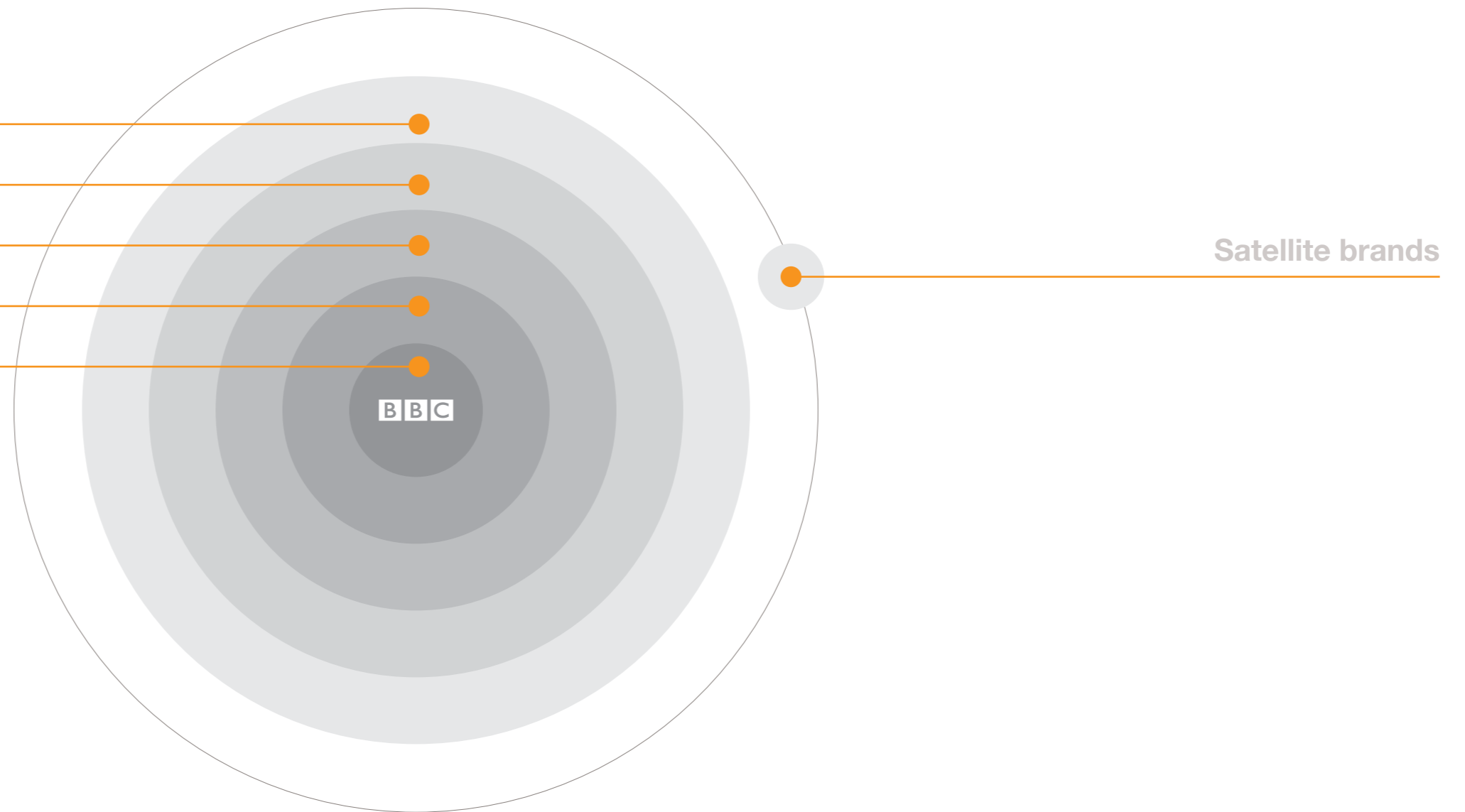
Programmes

Channels

Genres

Satellite brands
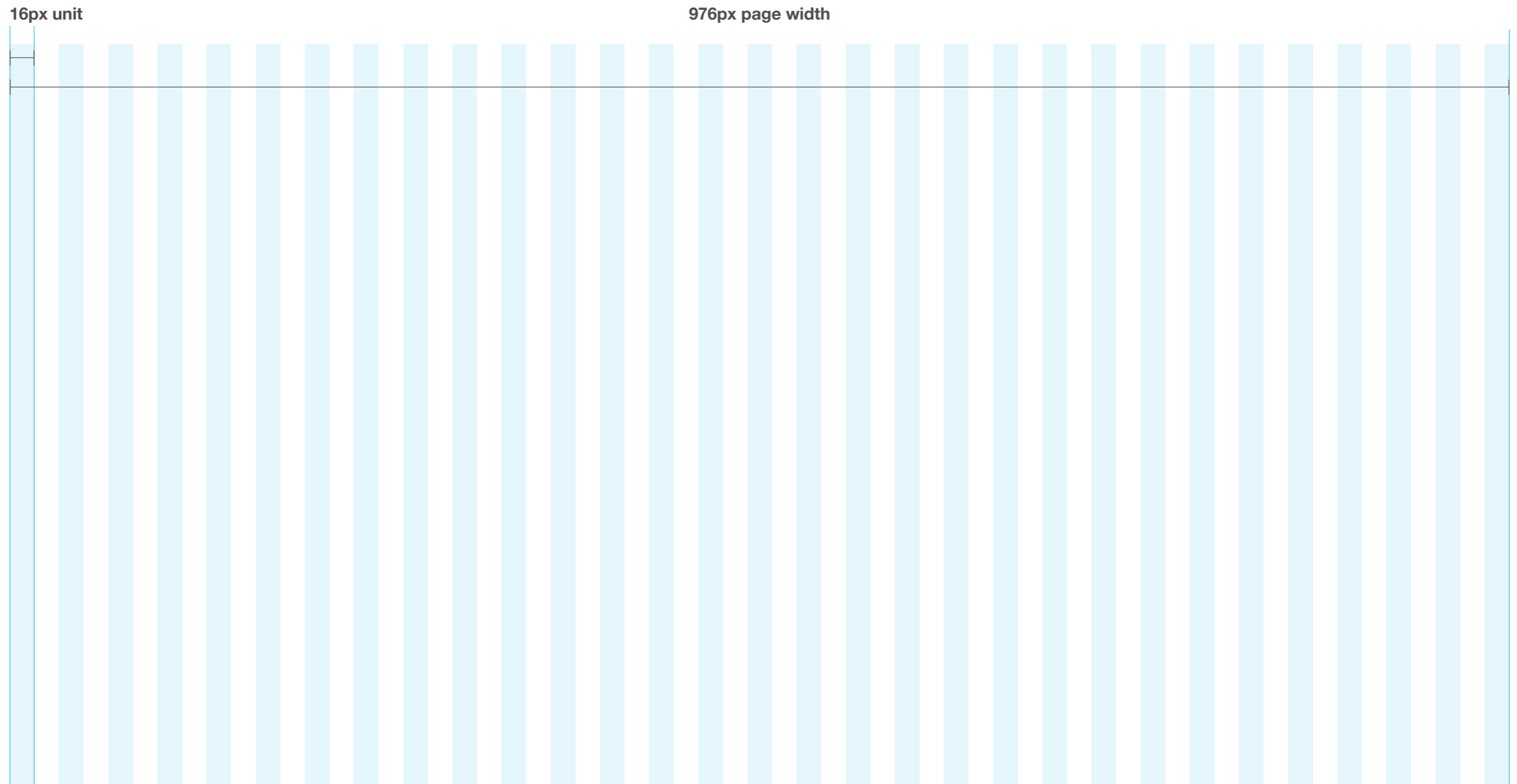
Sport, News, Weather

Homepage, Search, Help

BBC

02 Foundations

Your starting point is a universal grid, divided into **61 x 16px vertical units.** This has been created to align with existing EMP sizes, image ratios and advertising requirements.

16px unit

976px page width

The grid allows for a standard split across three columns with 16px gutters, creating a feature of the slightly wider column on the right that accommodates 'fixed panel' adverts.

304px

304px

336px
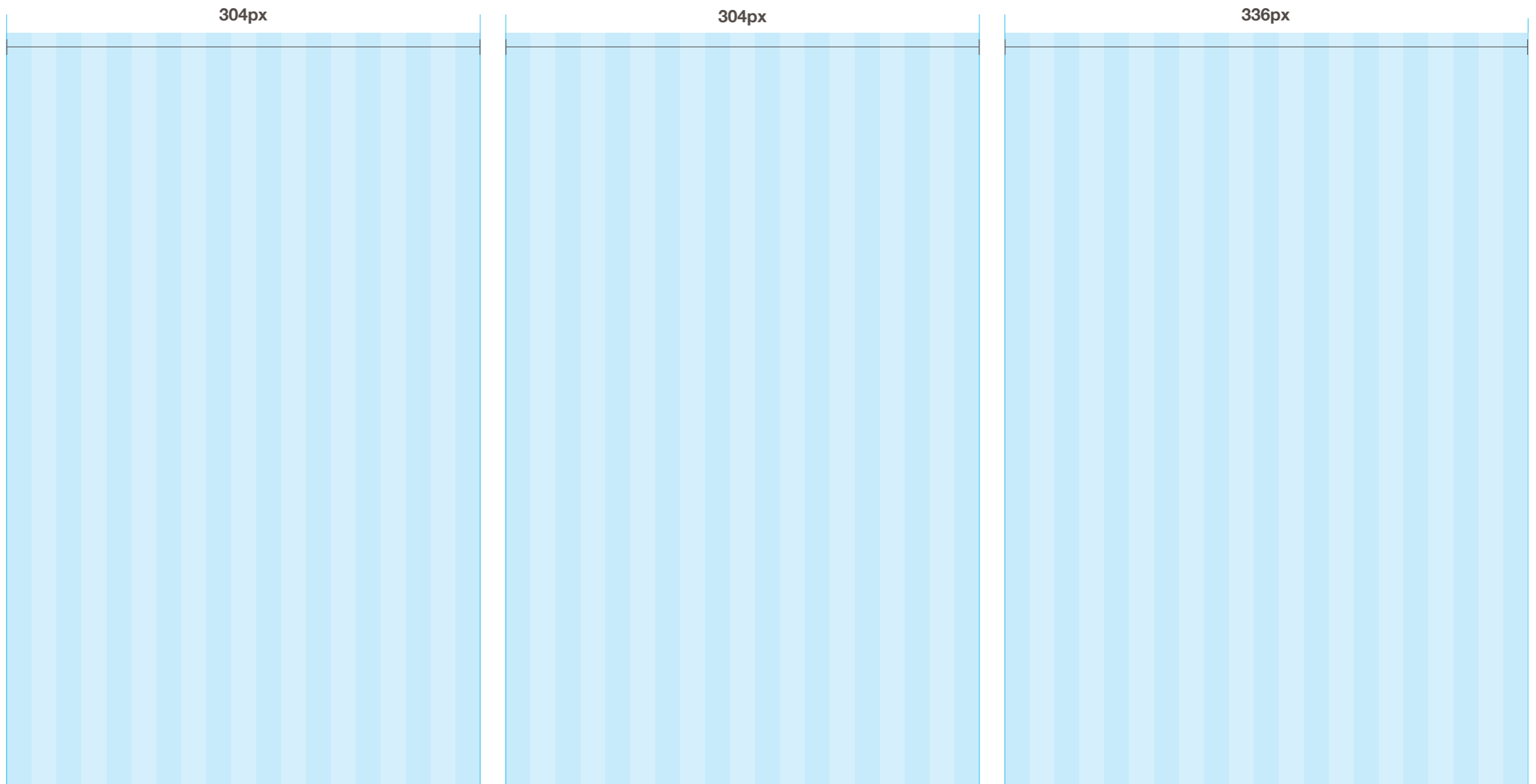
Columns can be further divided. The grid allows for a huge range of experimental layouts and templates.
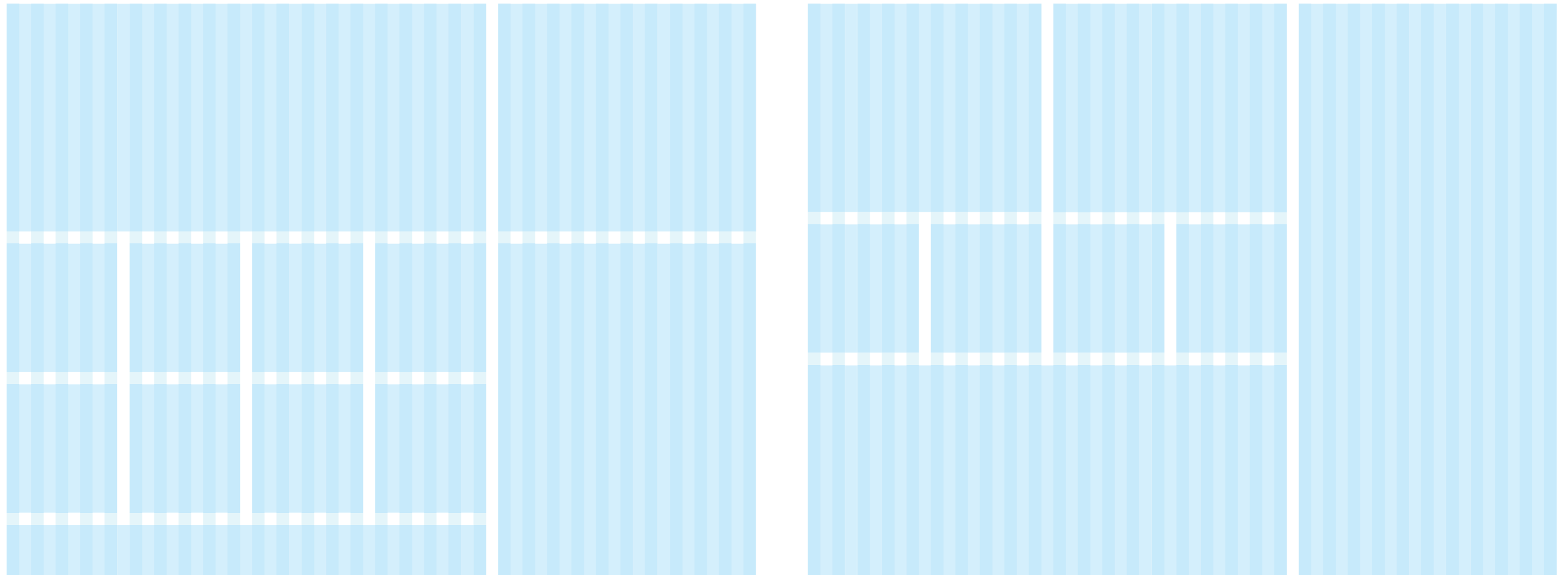
We're also employing an 8px baseline grid to help with vertical alignment of page components. Slavish adherence to the baseline isn't necessary for all typography but it does help to create vertical rhythm on the page.
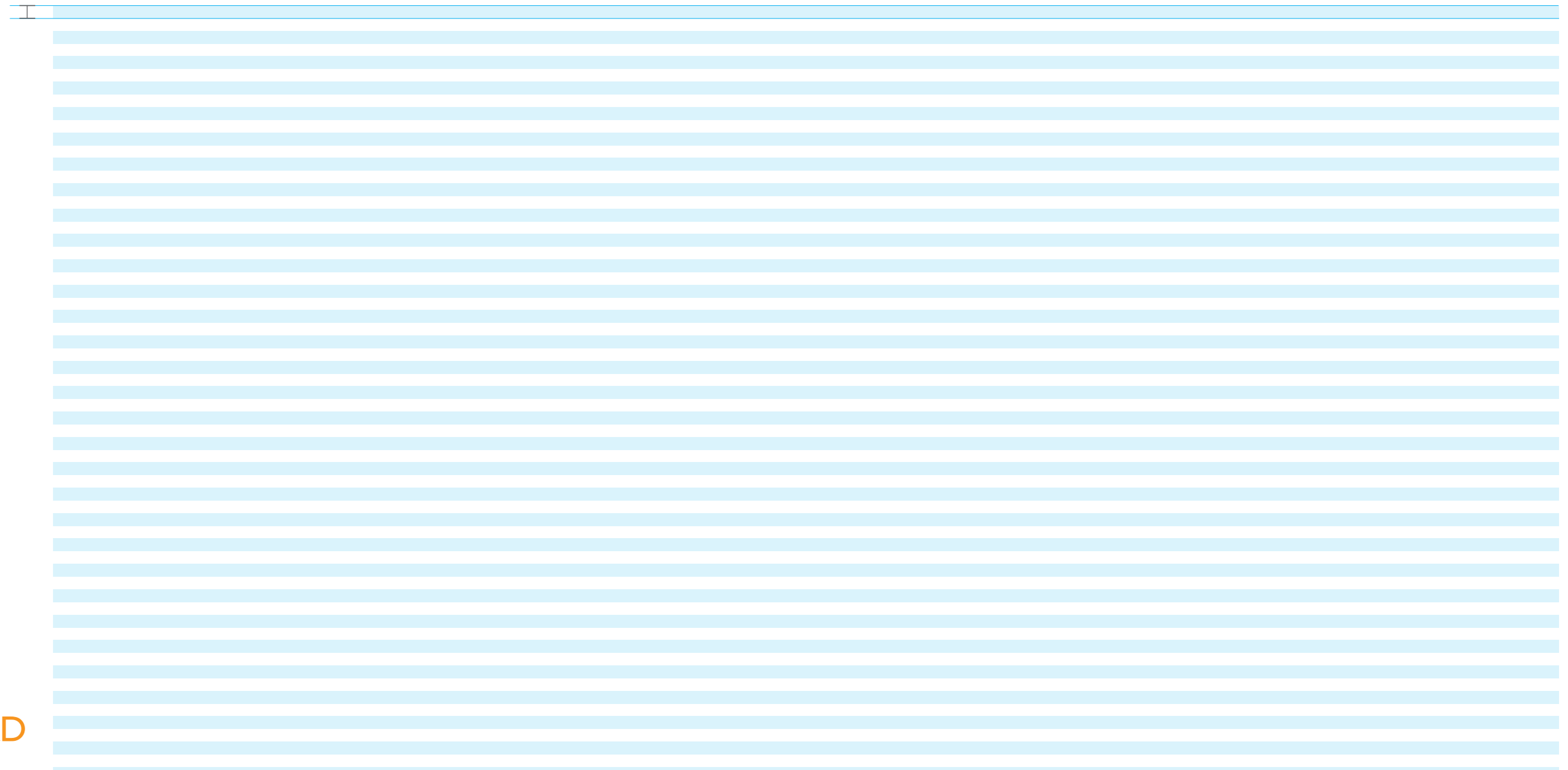
8px

The global masthead includes the global navigation links with additional links in a 'more' dropdown panel. BBC iD is positioned to the right of the BBC blocks with the Search entry field at the extreme right.

Note: A selection of masthead variations are available for use; white (as seen below), 20% black, 40% black, 70% black, grey, transparent white and transparent black.

8px   12px   12px   8px

| 8px |
| 40px |
| 7px |

B B C   🔵 Sign In   ▾   News   Sport   Weather   iPlayer   TV   Radio   More ▾   ⭕⭕⭕ London 2012   Search   🔍

Signed in state

B B C   🔵 Username 013...   ▾   News   Sport   Weather   iPlayer   TV   Radio   More ▾   ⭕⭕⭕ London 2012   Search   🔍

My Settings
Sign Out

Pushdown open

B B C   🔵 Username 013...   ▾   News   Sport   Weather   iPlayer   TV   Radio   More ▾   ⭕⭕⭕ London 2012   Search   🔍

MORE...   CBBC   Food   Learning   Nature   Full A-Z
          CBeebies   Health   Music   Local
          Comedy   History   Science   Travel News

We are proposing up to two lines of horizontal navigation with tabs and a crumbtrail solution for deeper hierarchies. More details are available in the design patterns library.

Single tier menu

| Lorem ipsum	Dolor sit amet	Consectetur adipiscing	Vestibulum faucibus	Enim at odio	Fusce fermentum	Neque sed gravida

Double tier menu

Lorem ipsum	Dolor sit amet	Consectetur adipiscing	Vestibulum faucibus	Enim at odio	Fusce fermentum	Neque sed gravida
Proin euismod	Condimentum tellus	Vulputate quam	Bibendum	Nullam auctor	Euismod lobortis	Duis auctor	Neque malesuada

Deep hierachies

Lorem ipsum	Dolor sit amet	Consectetur adipiscing	Vestibulum faucibus	Enim at odio	Fusce fermentum	Neque sed gravida

Euismod lobortis > Proin euismod | Condimentum tellus | Vulputate quam | Bibendum | Nullam auctor | Duis auctor | Neque malesuada

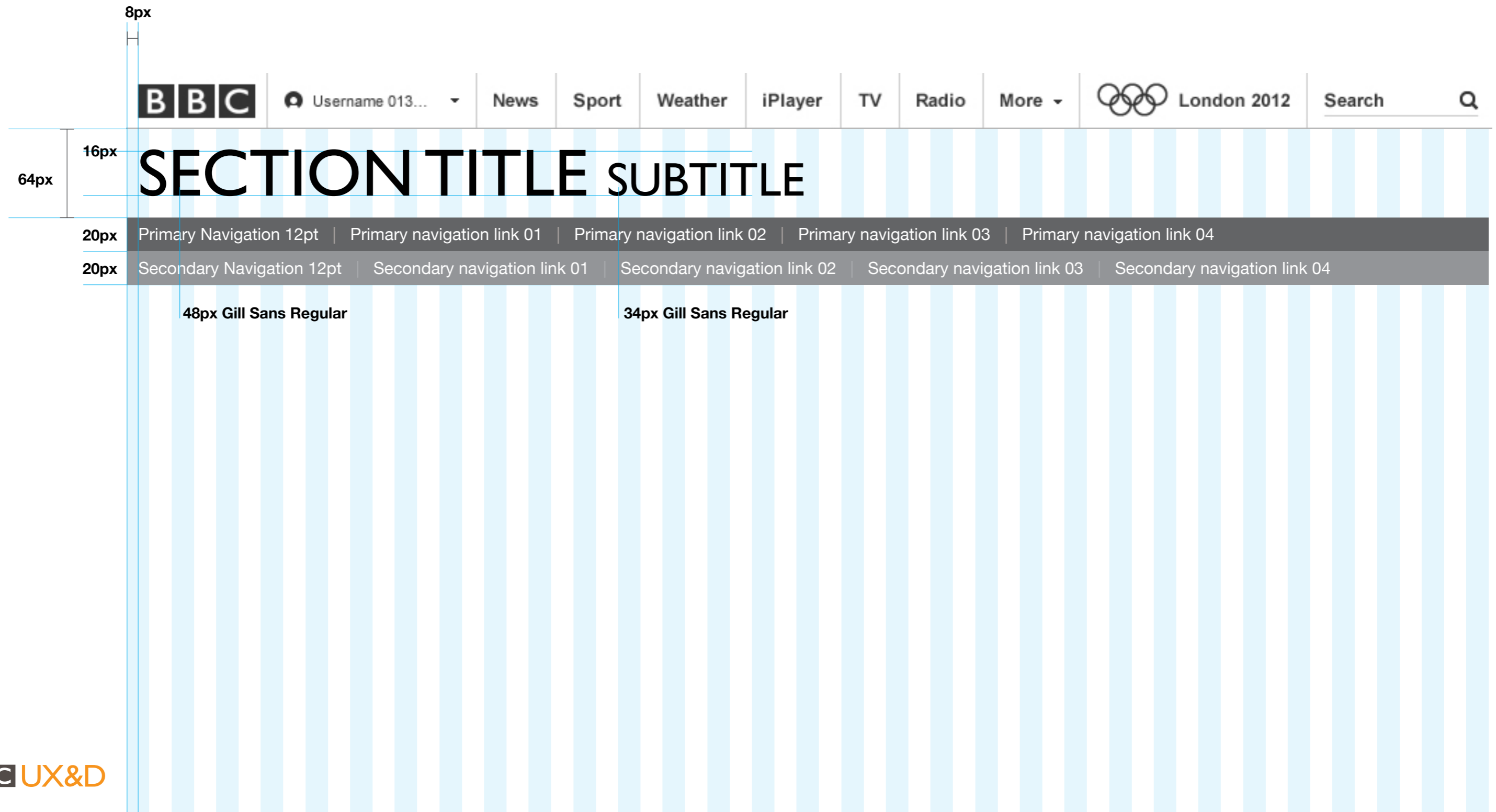# The new masthead approach provides the flexibility to accommodate various brand elements.

BBC SECTION TITLE SUBTITLE

BBC MAJOR BRAND SUBTITLE

BBC MAJOR BRAND HOMEPAGE SUBTITLE
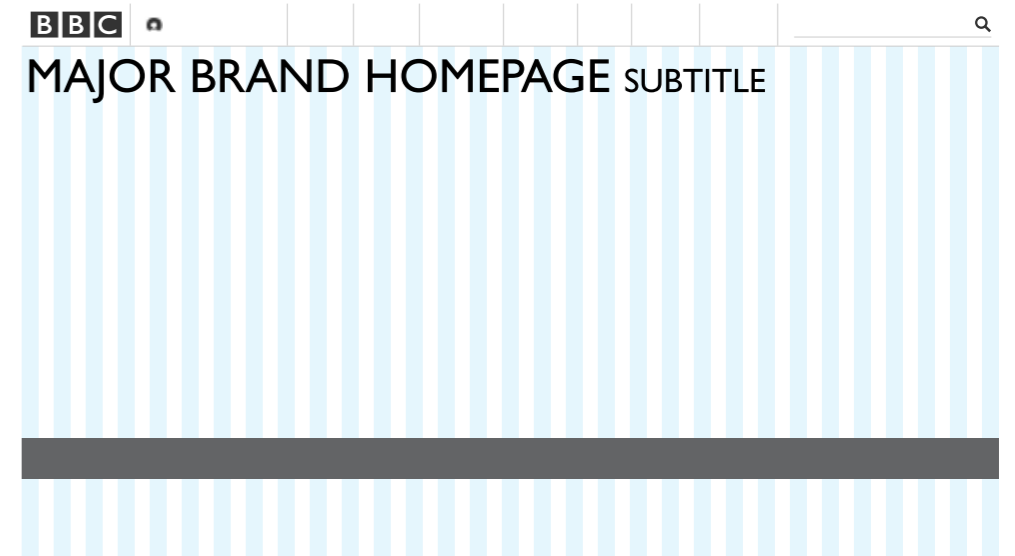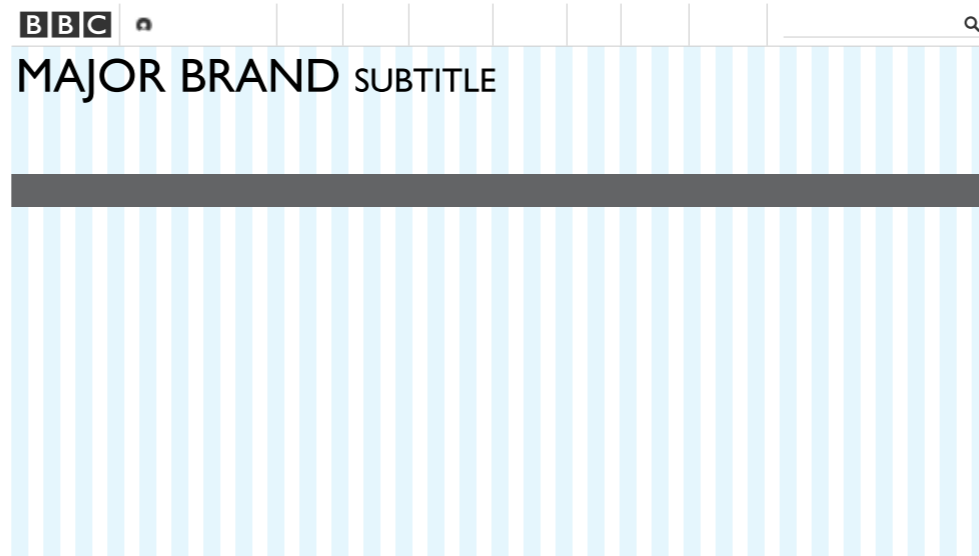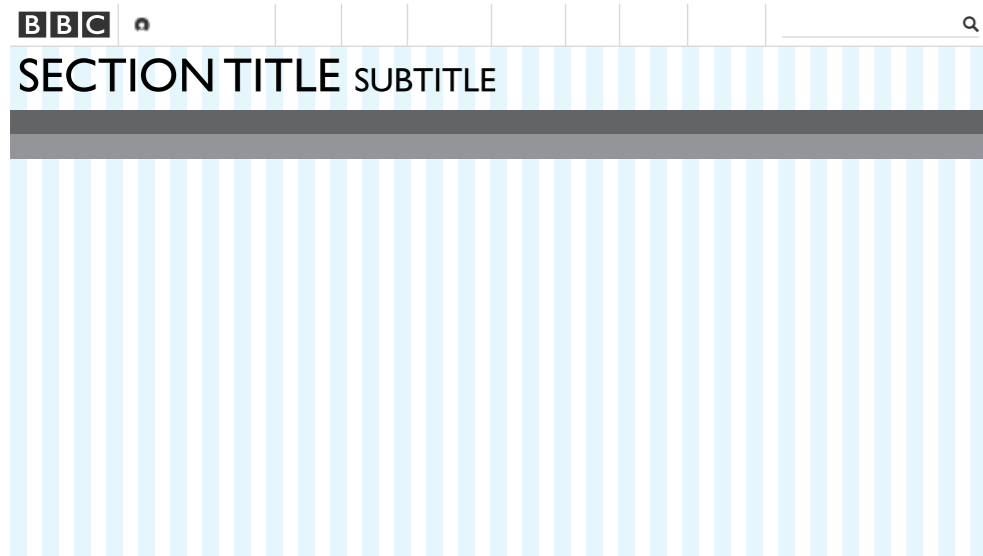
The local masthead will vary in height depending on the type of service. The minimum depth will be 64px for content heavy sites such as News.

8px

BBC | Username 013... ▼ | News | Sport | Weather | iPlayer | TV | Radio | More ▾ | ◯◯◯◯◯ London 2012 | Search 🔍

16px

64px

SECTION TITLE SUBTITLE

20px Primary Navigation 12pt | Primary navigation link 01 | Primary navigation link 02 | Primary navigation link 03 | Primary navigation link 04

20px Secondary Navigation 12pt | Secondary navigation link 01 | Secondary navigation link 02 | Secondary navigation link 03 | Secondary navigation link 04

48px Gill Sans Regular

34px Gill Sans Regular

Other brands such as Radio 1 or BBC One may be deeper.

8px

16px

Variable height

B B C Username 013... News   Sport   Weather   iPlayer   TV   Radio   More   London 2012   Search

MAJOR BRAND SUBTITLE

48px Gill Sans Regular

34px Gill Sans Regular

Primary Navigation 13pt | Primary navigation link 01 | Primary navigation link 02 | Primary navigation link 03 | Primary navigation link 04
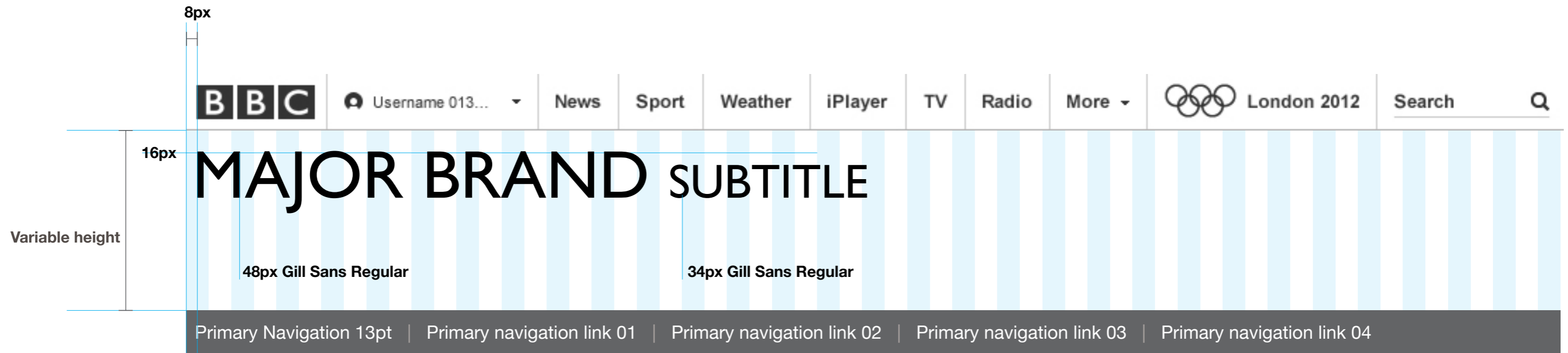
Rich programme experiences such as Doctor Who could be deeper still – up to 392px. The default font for the local masthead is Gill Sans regular (48px). Local branding should be left-aligned.

8px

16px

BBC | Username 013... ▼ | News | Sport | Weather | iPlayer | TV | Radio | More ▼ | ⬤⬤⬤⬤⬤ London 2012 | Search 🔍

MAJOR BRAND HOMEPAGE SUBTITLE

34px Gill Sans Regular

40px Primary Navigation 16pt | Primary navigation link 01 | Primary navigation link 02 | Primary navigation link 03
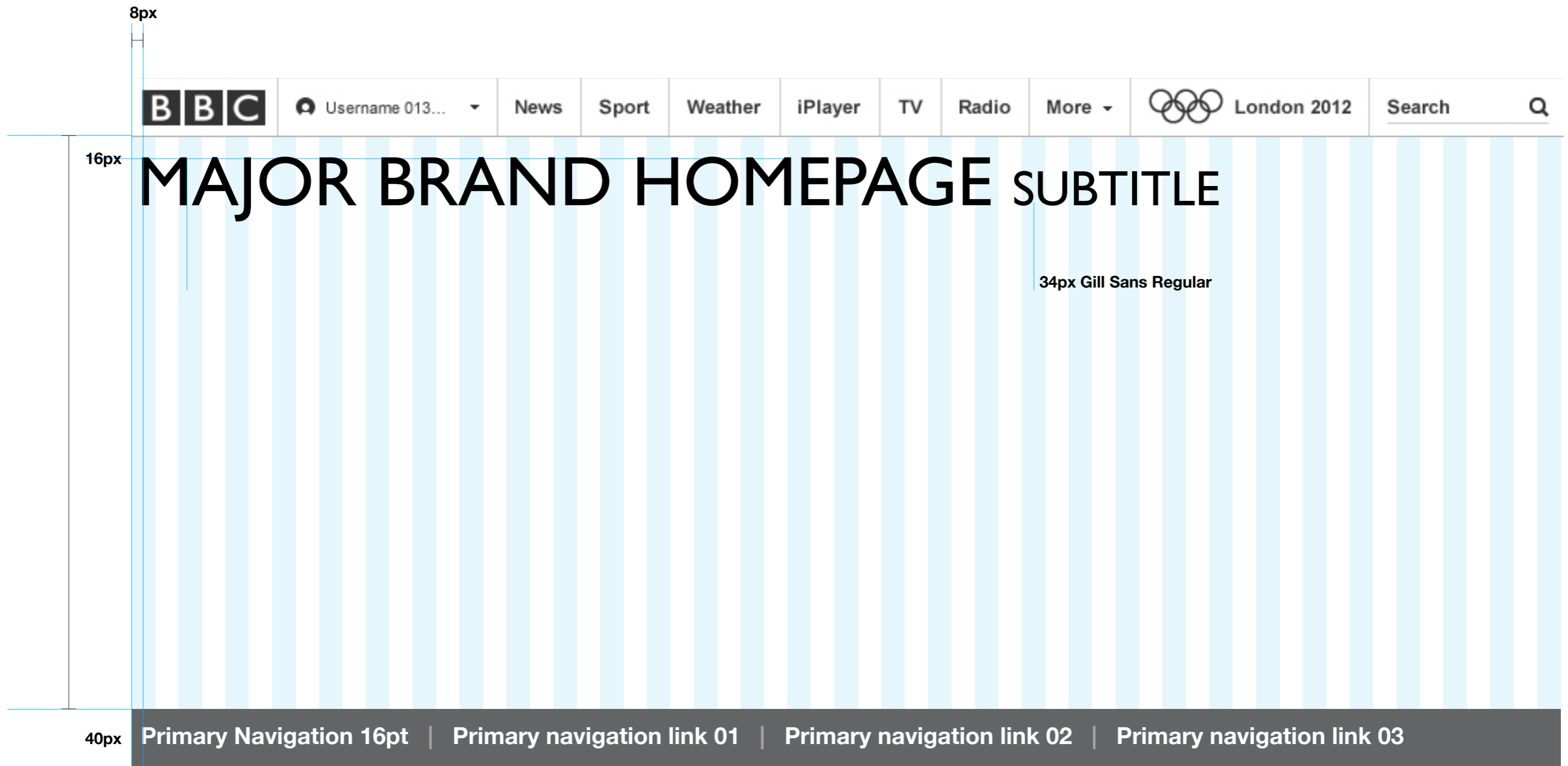
There is no longer a requirement for consistent placement of page backgrounds or page 'shoulders' across the site. Backgrounds can be white, full colour, gradient or image backgrounds and may feature within the content area, within individual panels or as free-floating elements.

CONTAINED BANNER

Primary Navigation 13pt | Primary navigation link 01 | Primary navigation link 02 | Primary navigation link 03 | Primary navigation link 04

FULL BACKGROUND IMAGE

Primary Navigation 13pt | Primary navigation link 01 | Primary navigation link 02 | Primary navigation link 03 | Primary navigation link 04
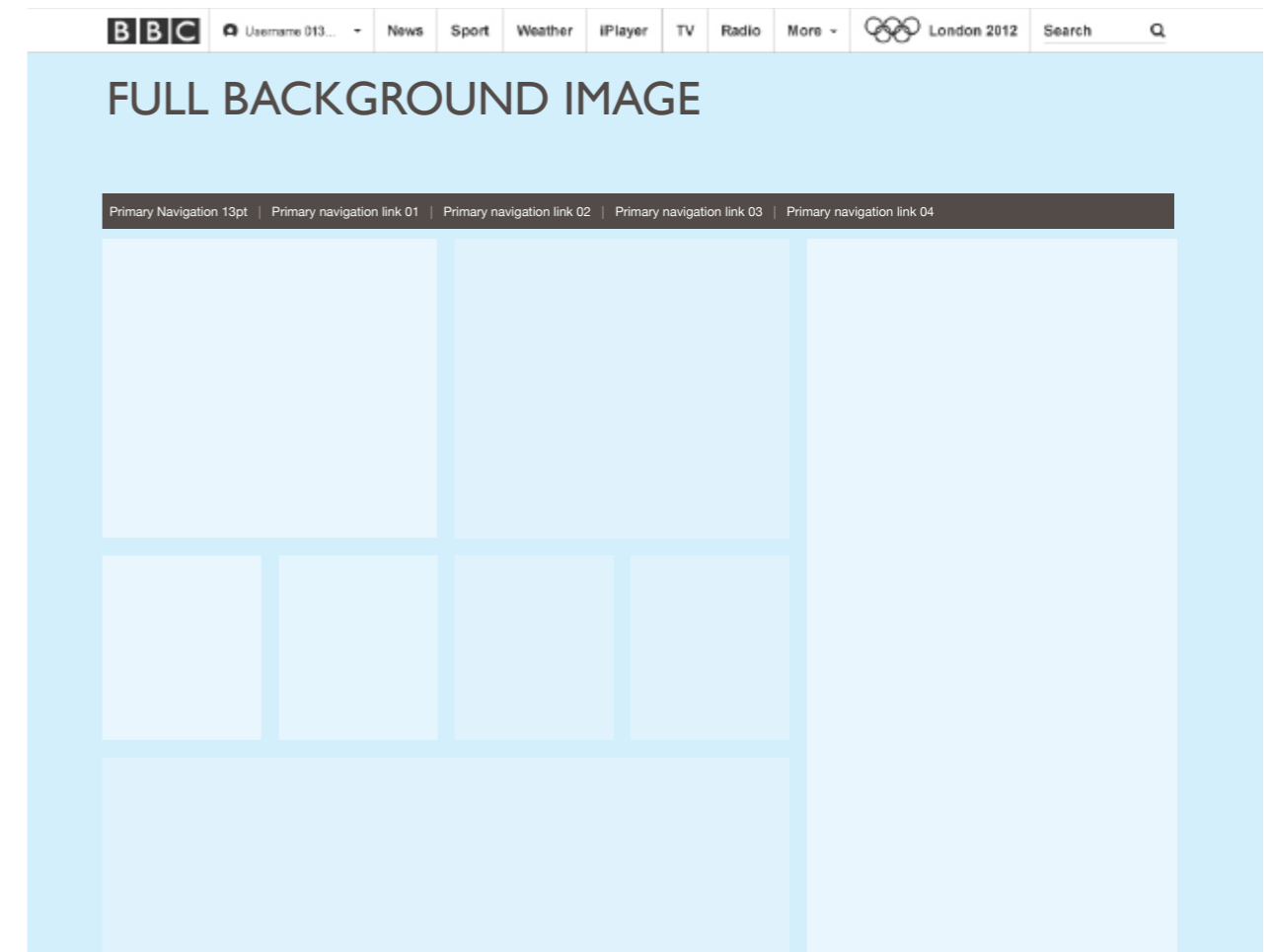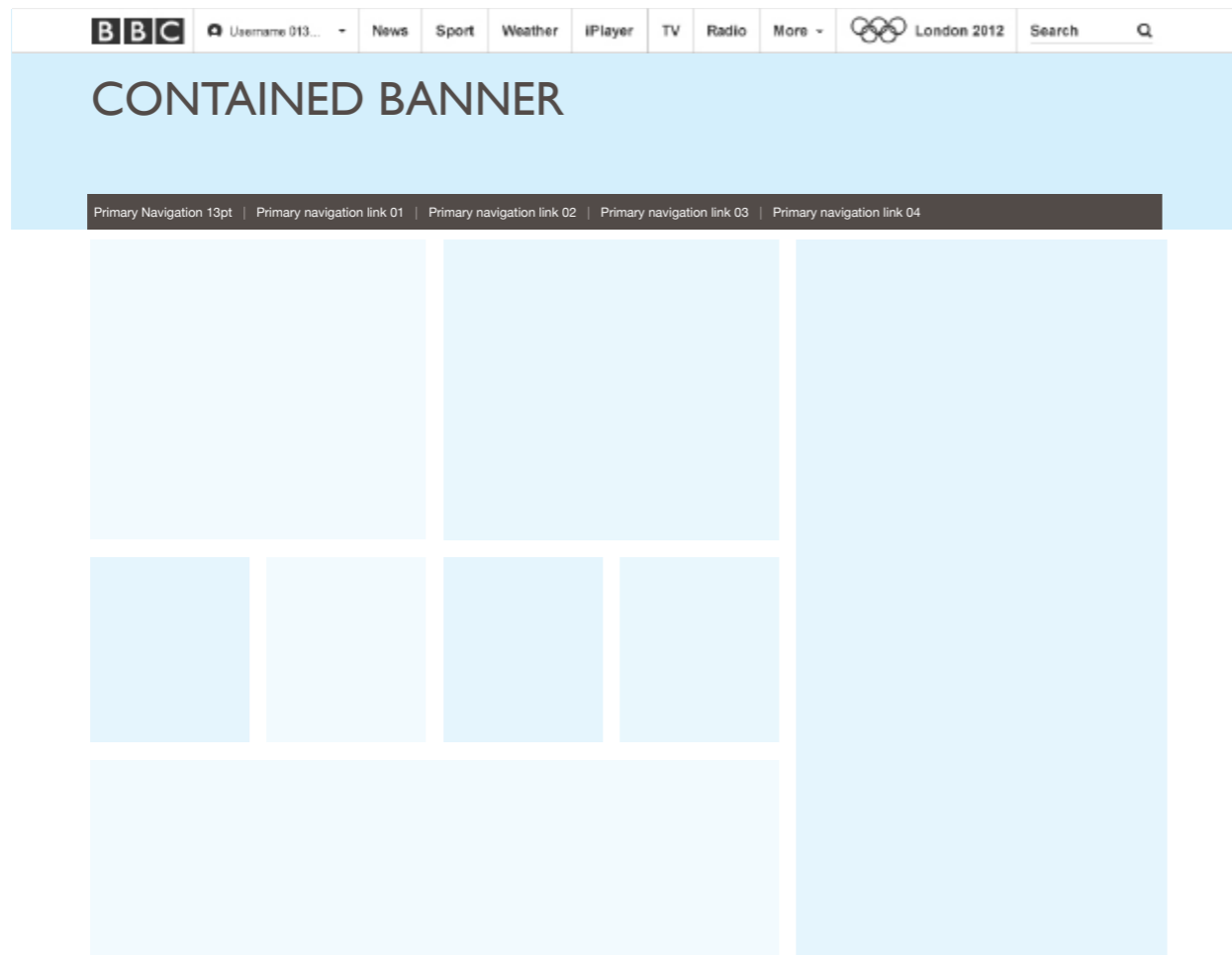
As well as the default full screen or repeated background image, images can be fixed to the top, bottom, left and/or right of the page content or browser viewport.

BACKGROUND TOP & BOTTOM

BACKGROUND LEFT & RIGHT
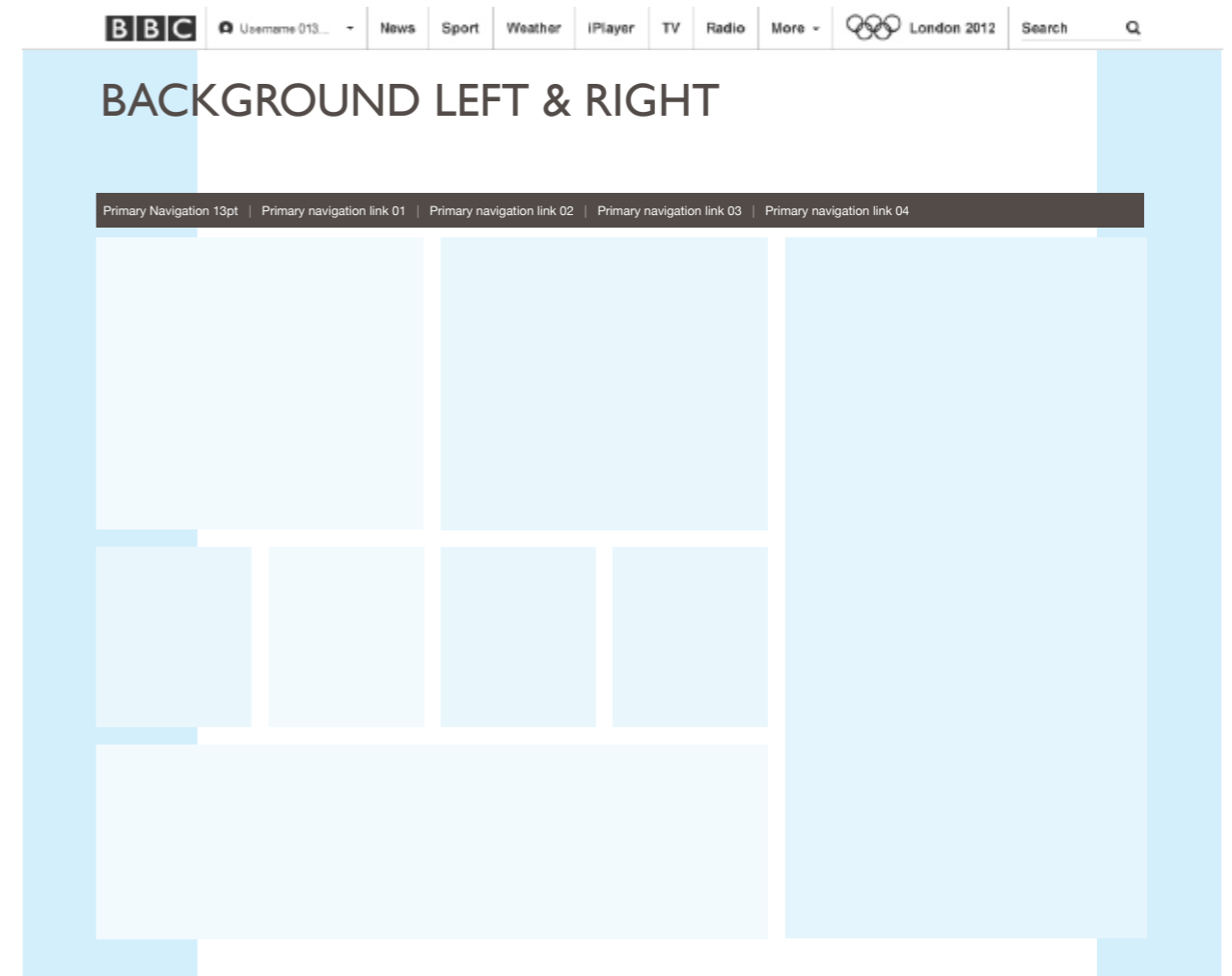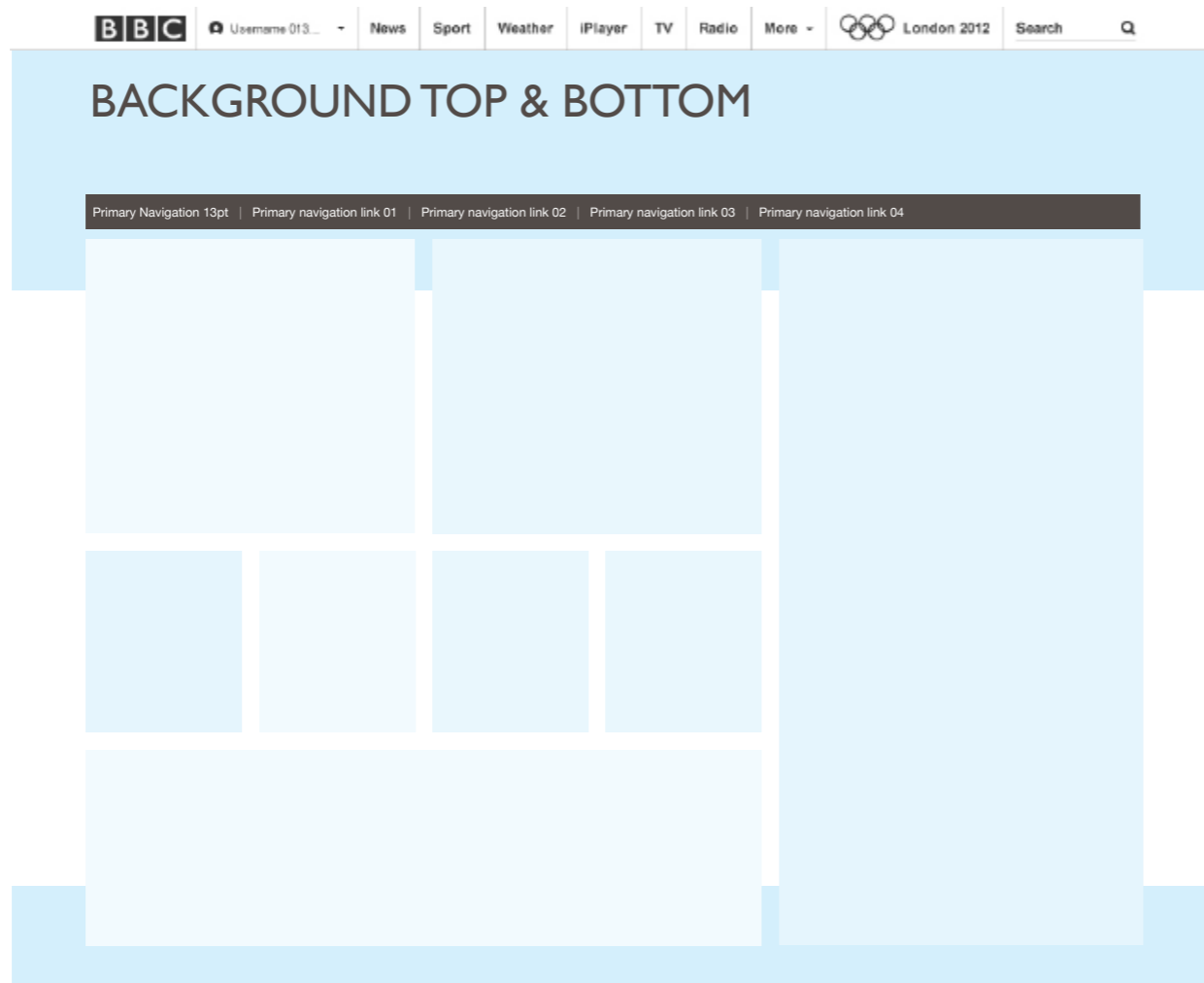
The GEL footer is a variant of the existing GVL 2.0 footer. Colour options are white, grey, black and semi-transparent over an image.
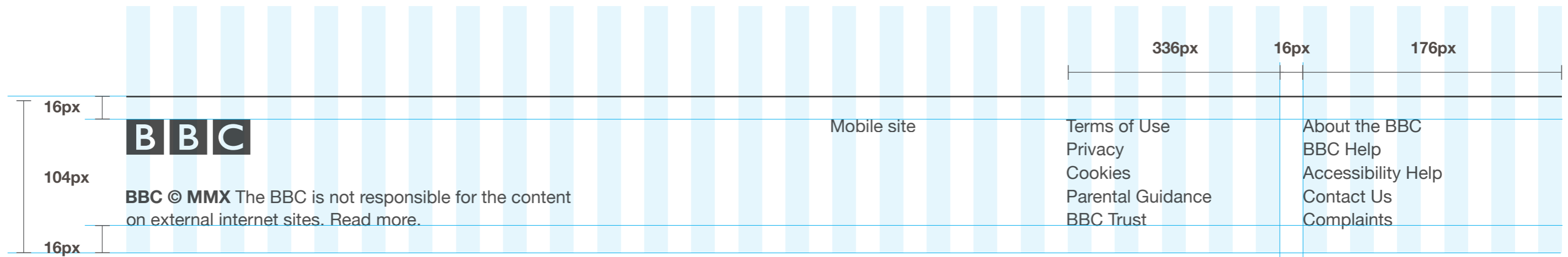
336px 16px 176px

16px

B B C

104px

BBC © MMX The BBC is not responsible for the content
on external internet sites. Read more.

16px

Mobile site

Terms of Use
Privacy
Cookies
Parental Guidance
BBC Trust

About the BBC
BBC Help
Accessibility Help
Contact Us
Complaints

03 Building Blocks

GEL uses bold typography to create stronger hierarchies and drama across the site. We're moving from Verdana to Arial as the BBC's default web font for both headers and body copy.

Arial Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890!@£$%^&*()_+

Arial Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890!@£$%^&*()_+

Gill Sans Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890!@£$%^&*()_+

Large bold type should be used to establish a clear information hierarchy. These are the recommended type sizes.

Arial Bold 48px
48px Leading / -40 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: -2px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 36px
36px Leading / -30 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 32px
32px Leading / -30 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 28px
28px Leading / -36 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 24px
24px Leading / -43 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 20px
20px Leading / -47 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 16px
18px Leading / 0 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 14px
18px Leading / 0 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 13px
16px Leading / 0 Tracking **Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing**

Arial Bold 12px

ARIAL BOLD CAPITALISED 11px

Georgia Italic should be used to denote **a short quotation** from the BBC Blogs or third party websites.

Georgia Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890!@£$%^&()_+*

The recommended type size for quotations from BBC Blogs or third party websites is Georgia Italic 16px.

Georgia Italic 16px
19px Leading / 0 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing

Georgia Italic 14px
16px Leading / 0 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing

Georgia Italic 13px
16px Leading / 0 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing

Georgia Italic 12px
15px Leading / 0 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing

Putting it together with body copy…
Arial is recommended for headings and body copy
on the page.

The use of Arial for short quotations is used to highlight article pullout quotes in a module. This treatment is consistent with the use of Arial to represent the editorial voice in the main body copy.

Super Header 36px

Header 32px

Subheader 20px

TIME STAMPS 11PT CAPITALS

Copy 13px Arial Bold on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum et, condimentum in, congue eu, tellus. Phasellus eu elit at nisi ultricies lobortis. Suspendisse porta commodo leo.

Copy 13px Arial Roman on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum et, condimentum in, congue eu, tellus. Phasellus eu elit at nisi ultricies lobortis. Suspendisse porta commodo leo. Sed tincidunt tincidunt massa.

Copy 13px Arial Regular on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Libero diam, condimentum et, condimentum in, congue eu, tellus. Phasellus eu elit at nisi ultricies lobortis. Suspendisse porta commodo. Sed tincidunt integer tincidunt massa. Cras scelerisque diam arcu. Donec egestas. Integer a mi. Aenean tempus, mi luctus imperdiet, erat ligula semper turpis, consectetur faucibus libero ante non sem. Aliquam quis diam. Pellentesque mollis nisi eget purus. Aenean iaculis metus vel sem. Integer at erat.

8px

Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condi mentum et, condimentum in, congue eu, tellus. Phasellus eu elit at nisi ultricies lobortis. Suspen disse porta commodo leo. Sed tincidunt tincidunt.

Link – Nam dictum nibh eu arcu
Link – Donec egestas integer a mi

"

An editorial pullout quote taken from the main body copy in Arial Bold.

Editorial Voice
BBC

Using Georgia Italic should be limited to highlight a short quotation within a module on the page.

Georgia Italic should not be used for full paragraphs or pages of body copy. Therefore the BBC Blogs website and comments sections on pages should continue to use Arial.

Twitter module example

Rory Cellan-Jones @BBCRoryCJ
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipis icing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.
2 minutes ago

Ignacio de los Reyes *@BBC_de_los_Reyes bbc.co.uk/gel Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa.*
3 minutes ago

Valeria Perasso *@bbc_perasso*
Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa quae ab illo.
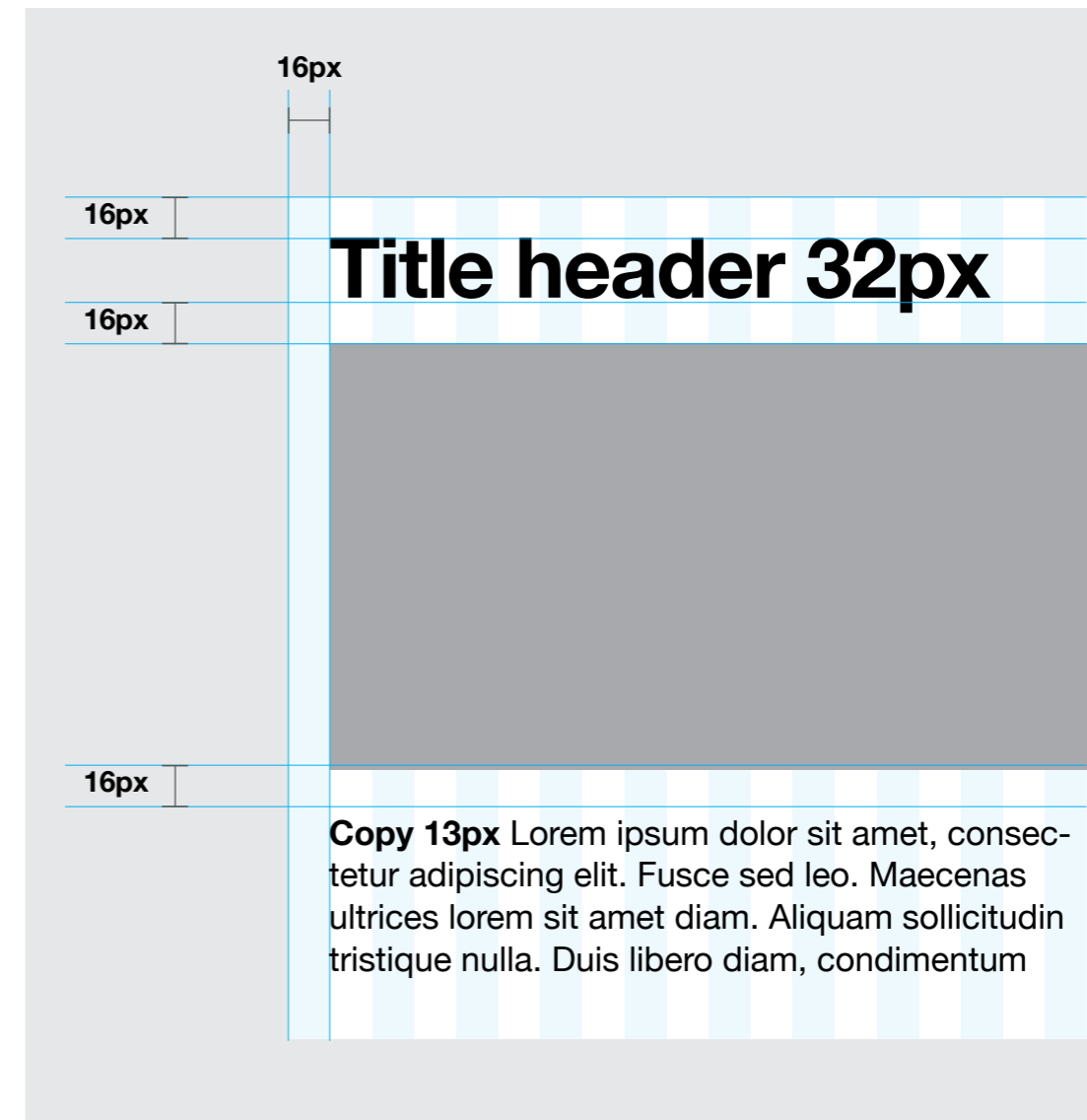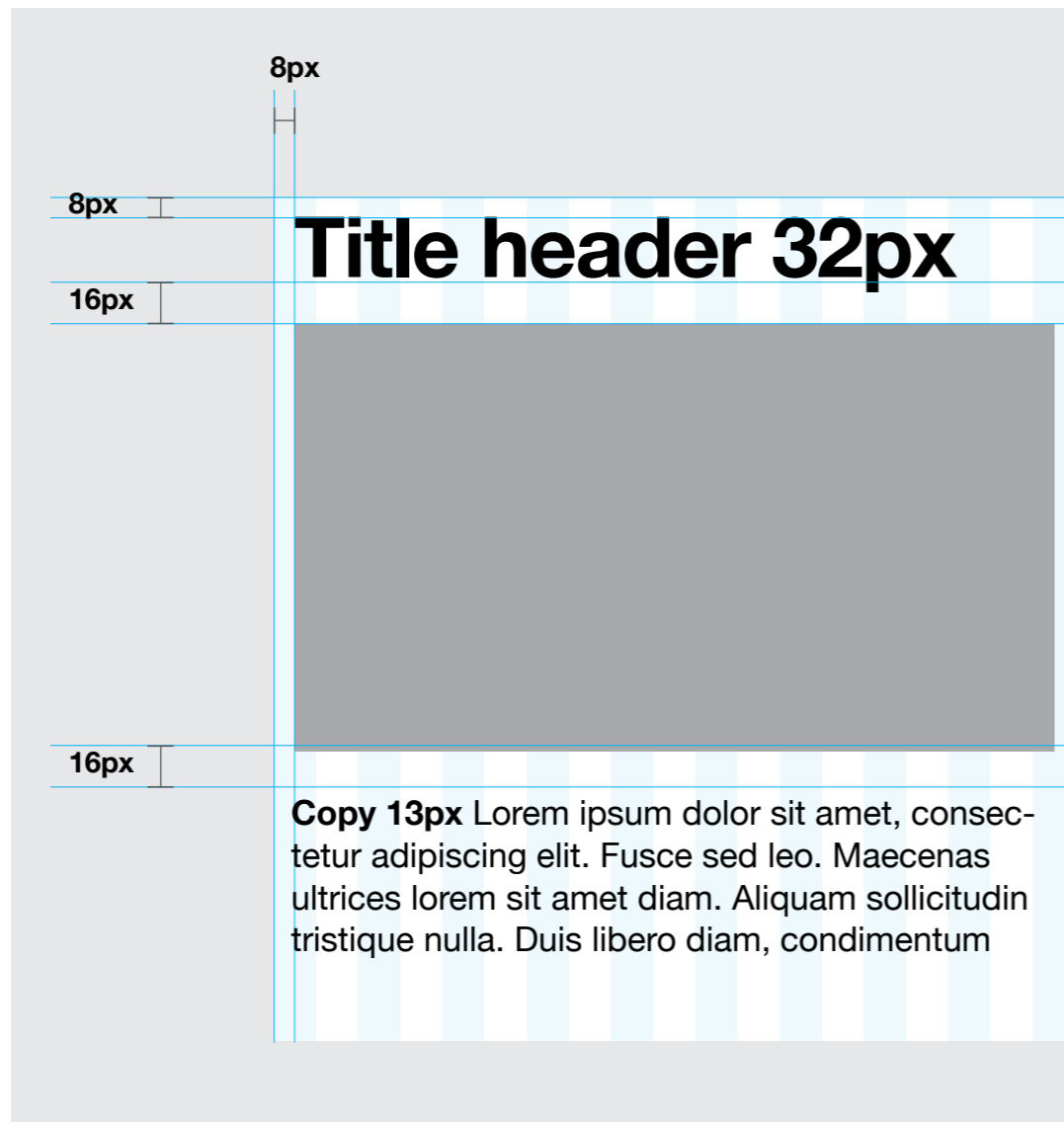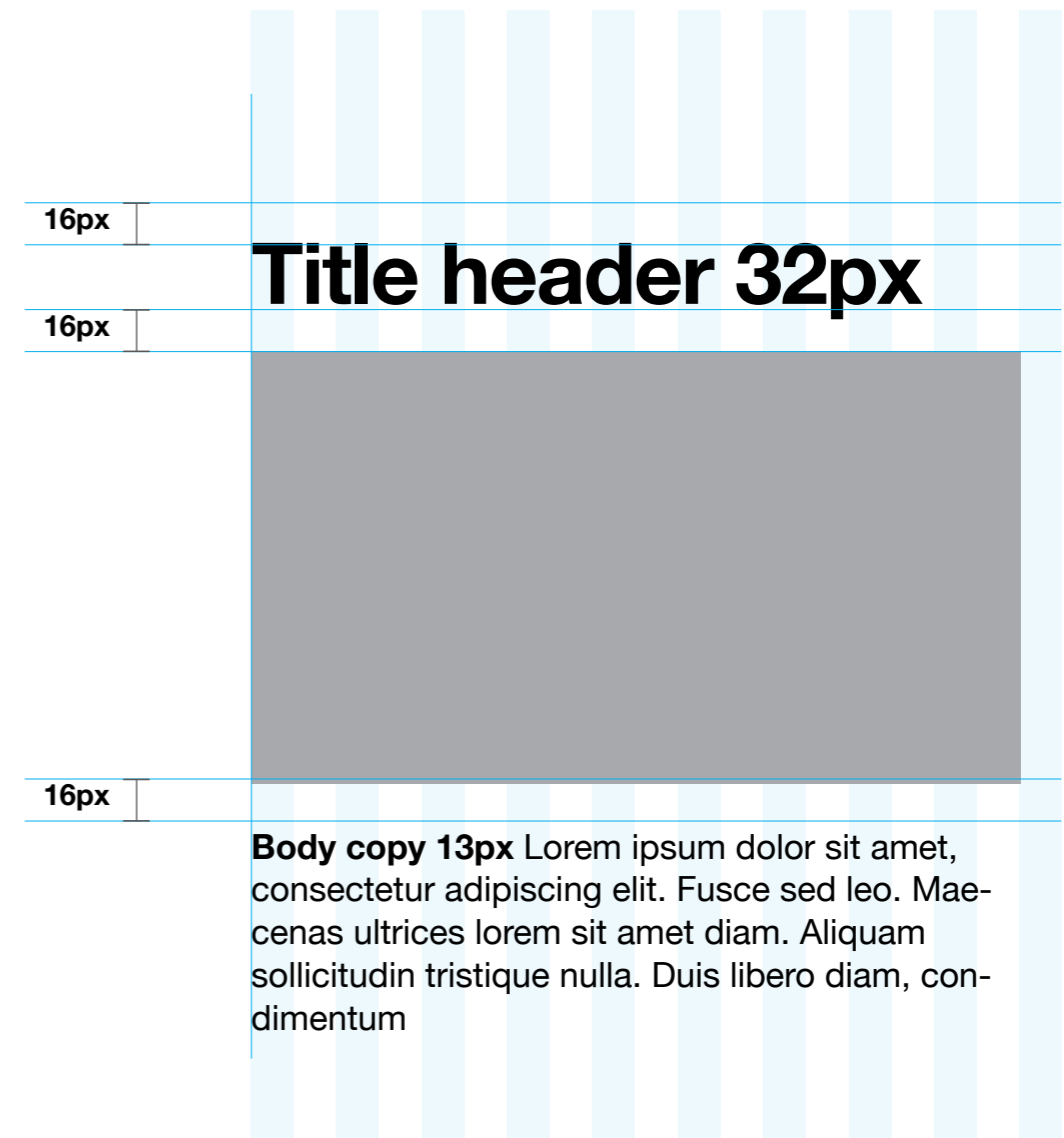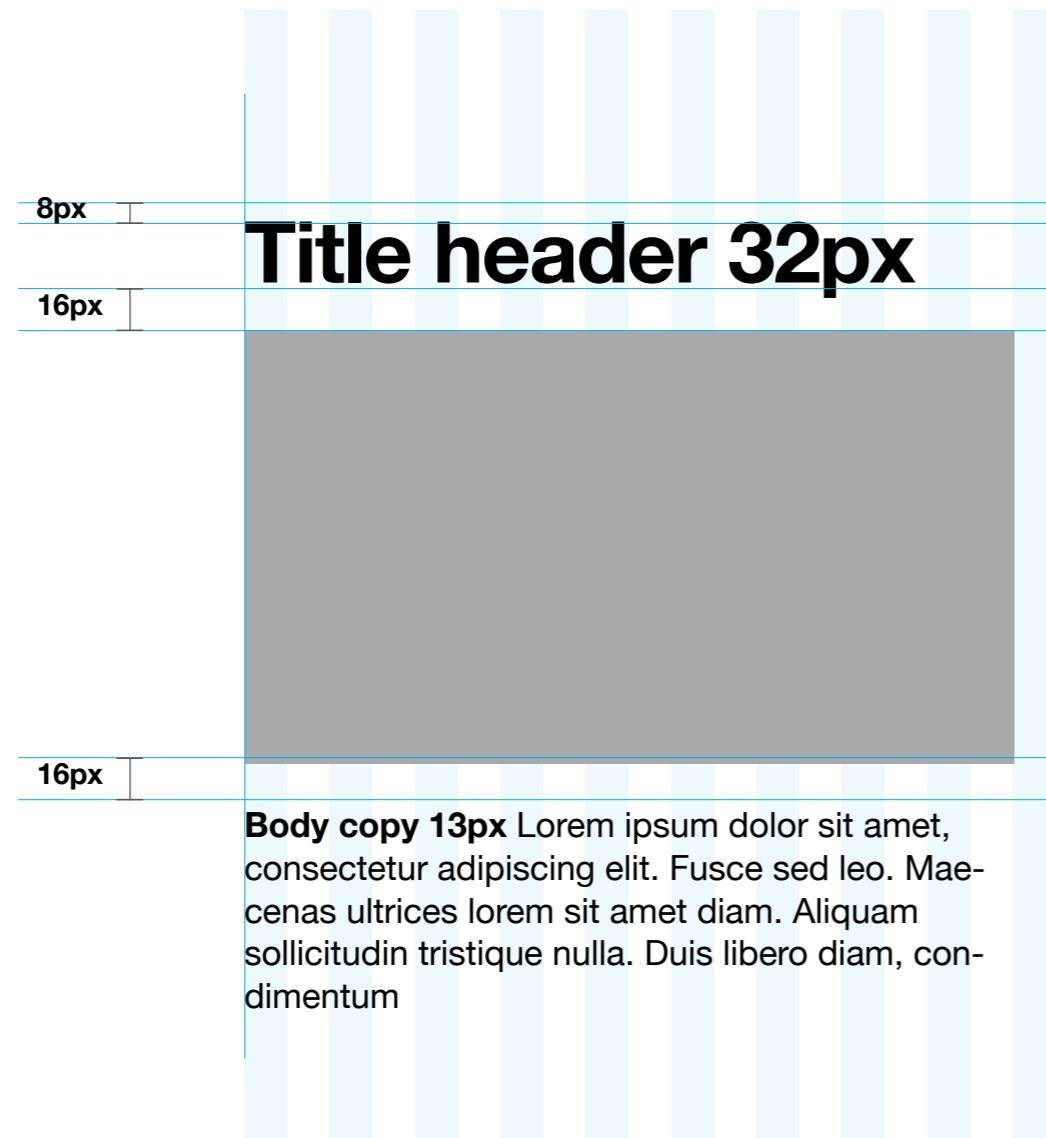4 minutes ago

Content from Twitter. Learn more

" *A quote from BBC Blogs or a short comment from a third party site. Georgia Italic makes this quote module stand out from the rest of the page which uses Arial.*

User's Name
March 2012

Our typographic style relies on tight tracking, tight leading and large headers. There should be consistent spacing around headers and body copy. Either 8px or 16px above and to the left when content is contained…

8px

8px

16px

Title header 32px

16px

Copy 13px Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum

16px

16px

16px

Title header 32px

16px

Copy 13px Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum

…or aligned to the grid when there is no container.

8px

Title header 32px

16px

16px

Body copy 13px Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum

16px

Title header 32px

16px

16px

Body copy 13px Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum

We have designed a new set of icons to work in harmony with the new visual language. The default size is 13px and icons can be used with or without a flat button container. These can be used in any colour unless otherwise specified.

For more information or for the full set of icons, visit **bbc.co.uk/gel/web/building-blocks/iconography/icons**

Previous	Next	Up	Down	To Top	To Bottom	Link to This	Download	Upload	Lock/Security

Unlock	Search	Close/Remove/No/Delete	Embed	Yes	Print	Email	Help	Info/Caption	Alert/Warning

Vocab On/Off	Refresh	Alarm/Reminder	Duration	Countdown	Expires	Settings	Degraded Content	Zoom In	Zoom Out

Grid View	List View (text)	List View (text and thumb)	Home	New/New items	Quote	Chapters	Loading	External Link	Traffic

For text links to audio and video content, icons should appear to the left of text.

Header 36px   8px

Subheader 20px

TIME STAMPS 11Px CAPITALS

Body Copy 13px Arial Bold on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla.

Body Copy 13px Arial Regular on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla.

▷ **Link to a full episode on iPlayer 13px**

▶ **Link to a video clip 13px**

◀ᴗ **Link to an audio clip 13px**

▤ **COMMENTS 11PX CAPITAL**
✉ **EMAIL 11PX CAPITAL**
🖶 **PRINT 11PX CAPITAL**

When using icons with images, media icons on image promos should sit in the the bottom left of the image and have 100% opacity. They should inherit the background colour to give the impression of 'cutting into' the image.

Programme information should sit underneath the image (with the exception of images with a width below 144px where information should sit to the right of the image).

Recommended icon sizes

	Image width range	Media icon size
Extra large image	640px to 496px	64px x 64px
Large image	495px to 336px	48px x 48px
Medium image	335px to 240px	40px x 40px
Small image	239px to 144px	32px x 32px
Extra small image	143px to 96px	24px x 24px

Programme title below image
Episode title

Programme title to the right of images with a width below 144px
Episode title
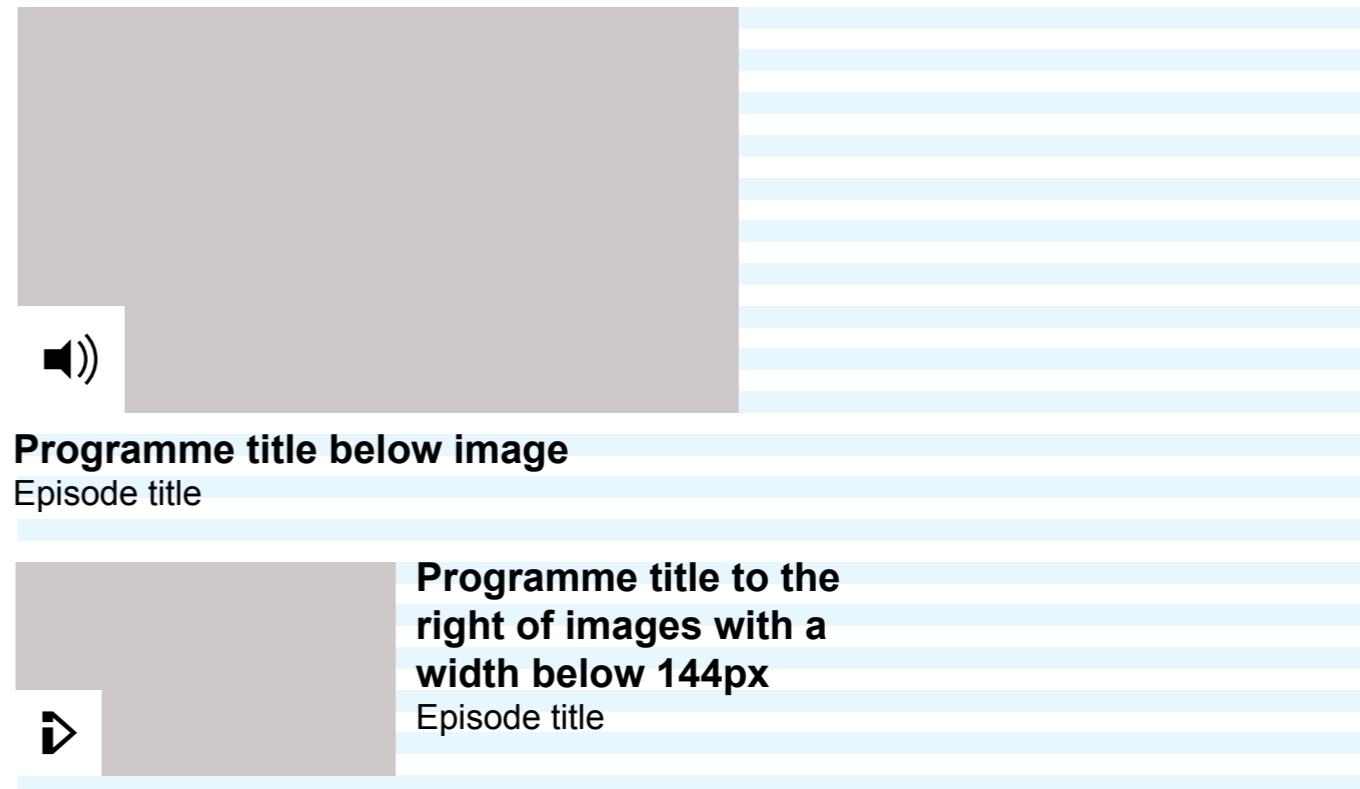
Links should comply with existing standards and guidelines. They should be easily distinguishable from body copy using a combination of bold type and colour, along with underline or underline on hover. On rollover links should change colour (and underline if under 24px).

Header 36px

8px

Subheader 20px

TIME STAMPS 11Px CAPITALS

Body Copy 13px Arial Bold on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla.

Body Copy 13px Arial Regular on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla.
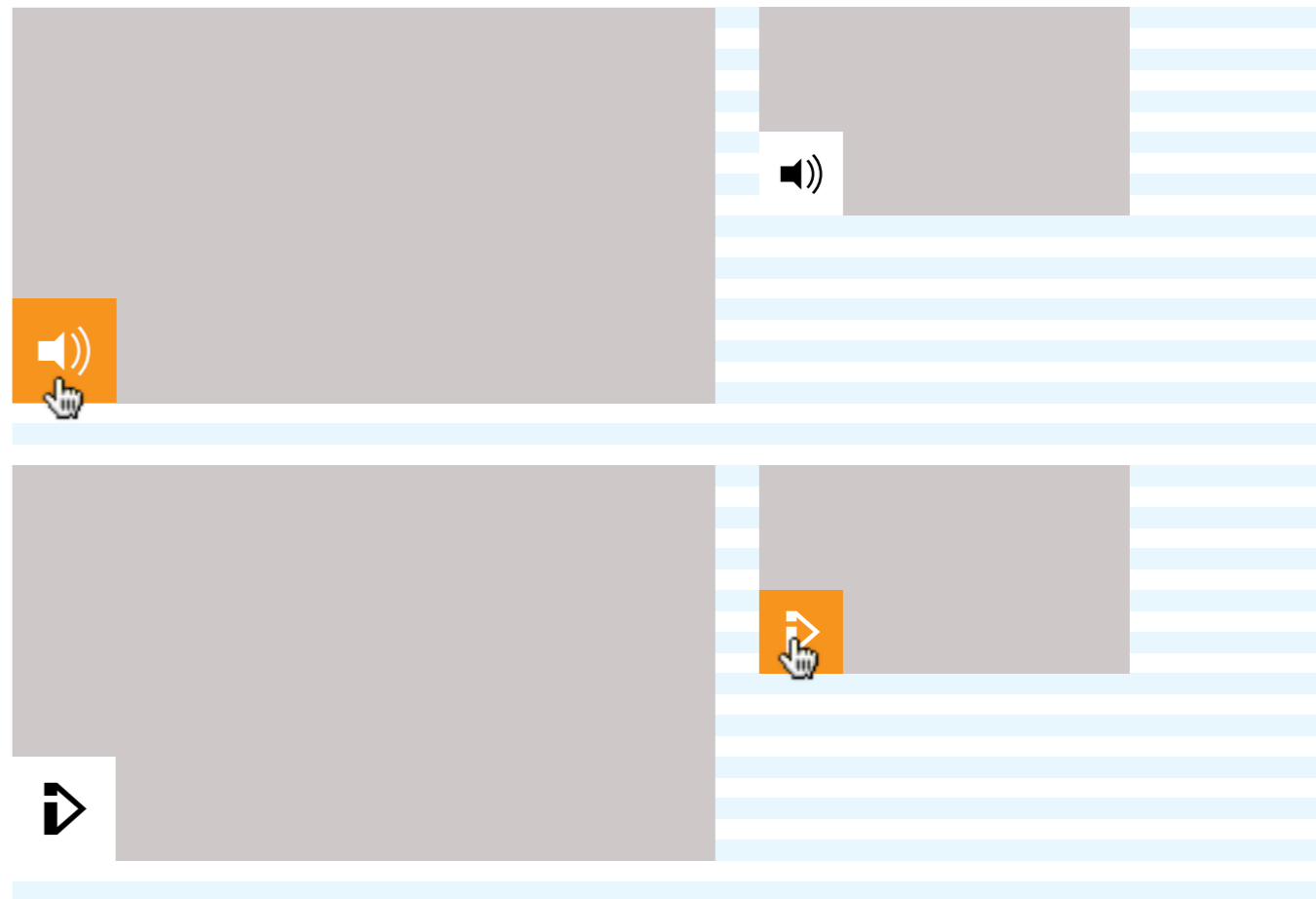
▷ **Link to a full episode on iPlayer 13px**

▶ **Link to a video clip 13px**
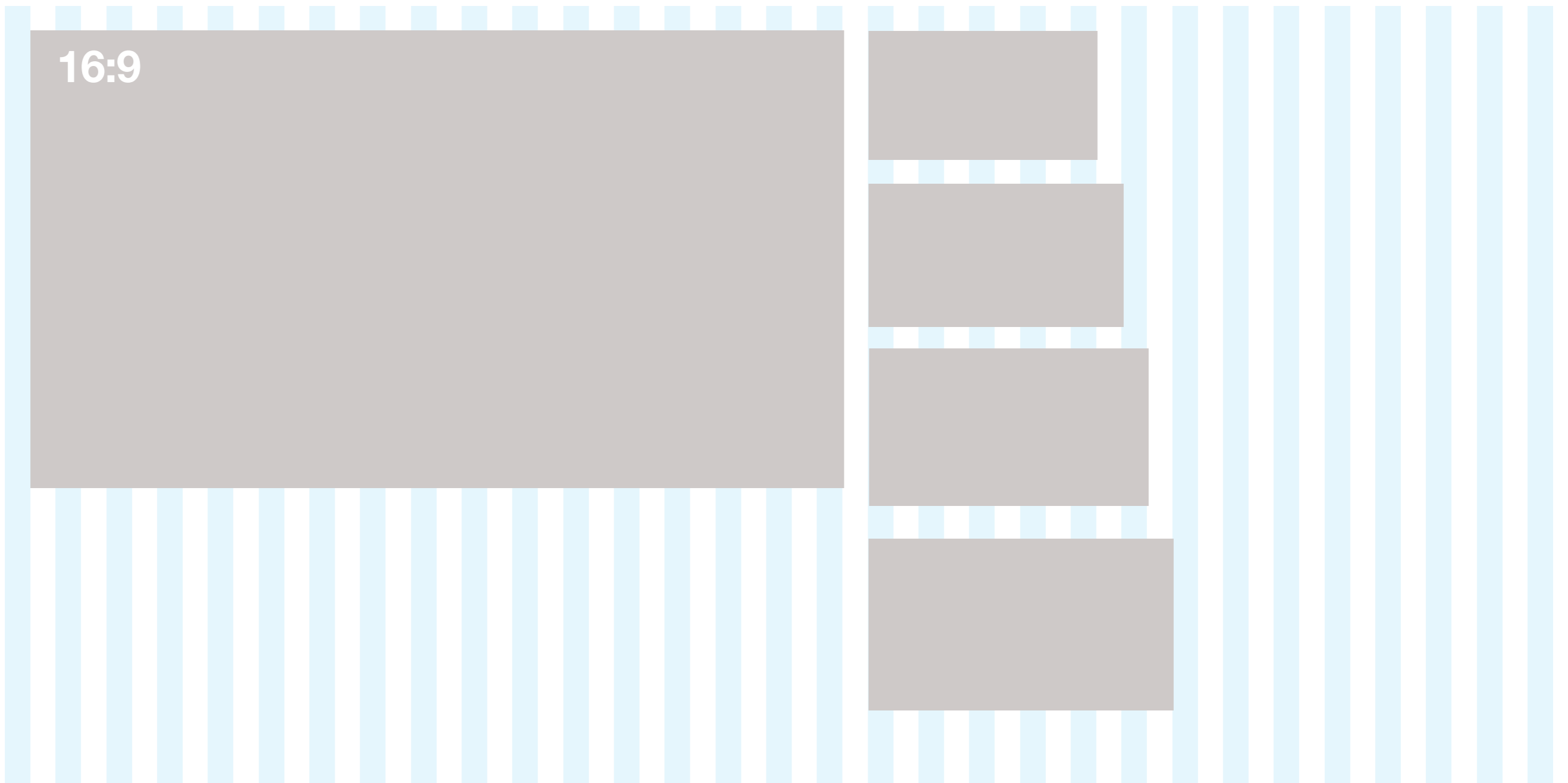
◀)) **Link to an audio clip 13px**
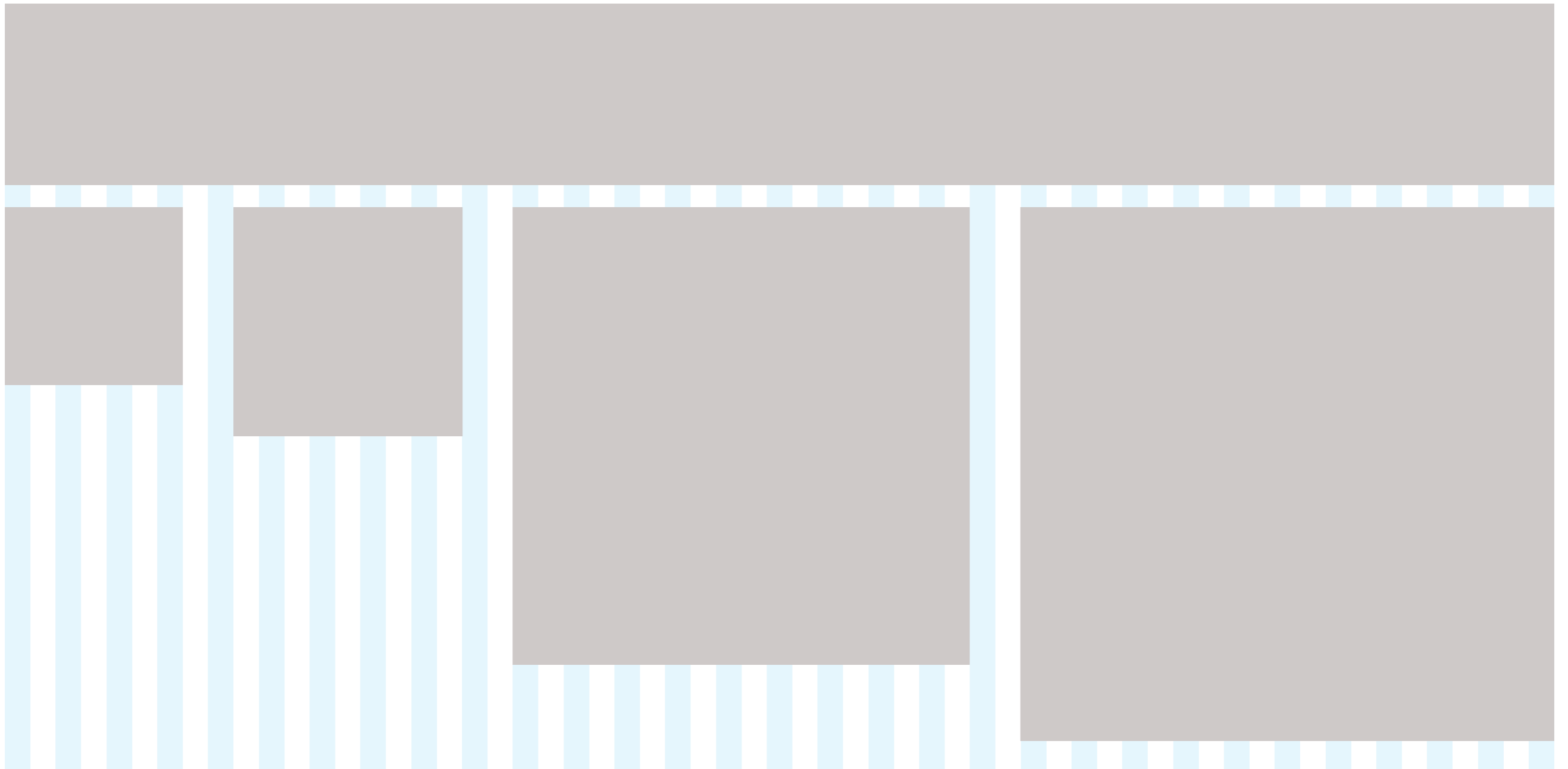
▣ **COMMENTS 11PX CAPITAL**

✉ **EMAIL 11PX CAPITAL**

🖨 **PRINT 11PX CAPITAL**

We recommend using **16:9 images at any size that aligns with the grid.** This is particularly important where there is likely to be significant re-use across BBC Online.

16:9

Backgrounds, banners, promos and cut-outs could be a variety of shapes and sizes as long as there is alignment with the universal grid.

04 Patterns

The design patterns library will be a living repository for simple, re-skinnable page components. Several of these patterns are available at bbc.co.uk/gel

Carousel
Autosuggest
Image gallery
Tooltips
Local navigation
Contextual navigation
Localisation
Pagination
Overlay panels
Identity
Infographics
Local search

Accordions
Form elements
Drag and drop
Editor
Slider
Sortable
Timeline
Mapping
Legacy content
Vote

BBC UX&D

05 Thanks

BBC

Marcelo Marer
Bronwyn van der Merwe
Liz Citron
Jason Fields
Adam Powers
Duncan Swain
Chris Sizemore
Ben Gammon
Steve Gibbons
Michael Tiffany
Paul Sissons
Yuri Kang
Mike Albers
Jo Patterson
Chris Hankins
Frances McNamara
Yasser Rashid
Andy Braxton
Sean McVeigh
Dan Ogunkoya
Neil Bramah
Lyra Xharra-Loxha

Dan Shallcross
Adam Hutchinson
Annoushka Ferrari
Sarah Challis
Olivia Rofail
Mike Atherton
Audrey Rapier
Lynsey Smyth
Sylwia Frankowska
Nourdine Arsalane
Patrick Walsh
Toby Mildon
Isabel Nunes
Mat Hampson
Tom Cartwright
Richard Hodgson
Andrew Greenham
Rowun Giles
Simon Rooney
Karen Wong
Natalie Smart

Research Studios

Neville Brody
Nick Hard
James Nelson
James Le Beau–Morley
Jeff Knowles
George Sheldrake
Phil Rodgers

Fitzroy & Finn

Paul Finn

**The GEL Steering Group, the Global Design Working Group
and all contributing designers**

BBC UX&D

For more information visit **bbc.co.uk/gel**