

# System Guideline

Version 1.3

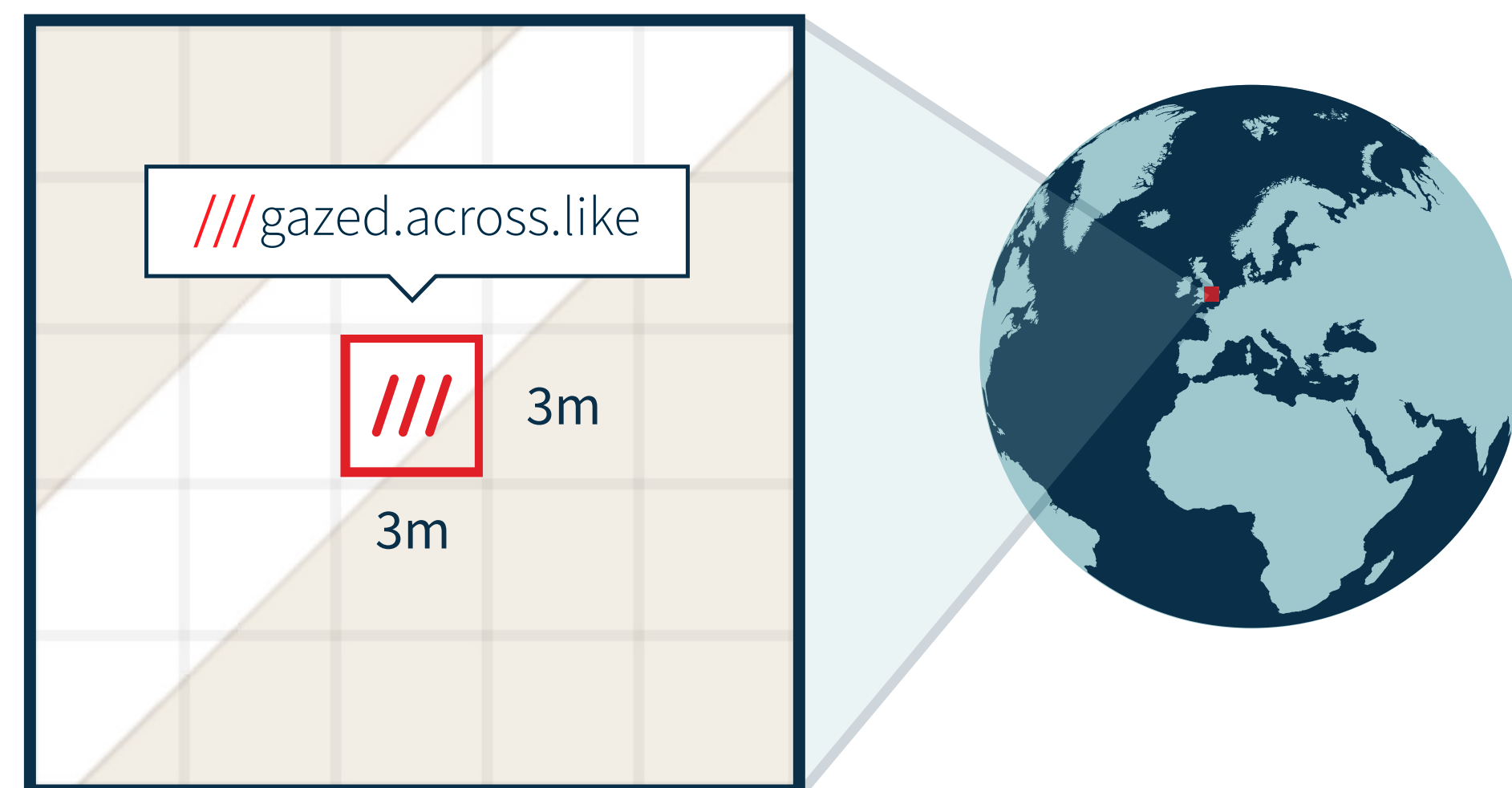


This guideline will help you to design and write a 3 word address.

It will enable you to decide how and where to apply it and to make sure it's recognisable for people and systems.

# How it works:

## The what3words system in brief



what3words is the simplest way to talk about location. It has divided the world into 3m x 3m squares, each with a unique 3 word address.

Our algorithm takes complex GPS coordinates and converts them into a unique combination of three words – a 3 word address. This is easier to remember than a postal address, and can be shared more accurately than with any other location reference system.

We always place three forward slashes before a 3 word address to help with visual identification.

A 3 word address looks like this:

**///gazed.across.like**

Everyone and everywhere now has an address.

# 3 word addresses

## Standard Latin, Cyrillic & Greek Languages

There is a specific way of writing a 3 word address in Standard Latin, Cyrillic & Greek Languages, as detailed here. It should always be set by a native language speaker.

We write them in this way for computer recognition, legibility and identification. Type 3 word addresses carefully, as spelling errors or incorrect words can lead to the wrong location being entered, or input failing completely.

Make sure to check every location against [map.what3words.com](https://map.what3words.com)

///nation.jumper.stones

**Forward slash**

- Three forward slashes, no spaces, same weight
- Use Red if applicable
- Never use the symbol

**Words**

- The character length of the word may vary
- No spaces before or after
- Same weight, same colour
- Use Black, White or Dark Blue, or base on system requirements and technical specifications, but never Red

**Dot (full stop or period)**

- No spaces before or after
- Same weight, same colour

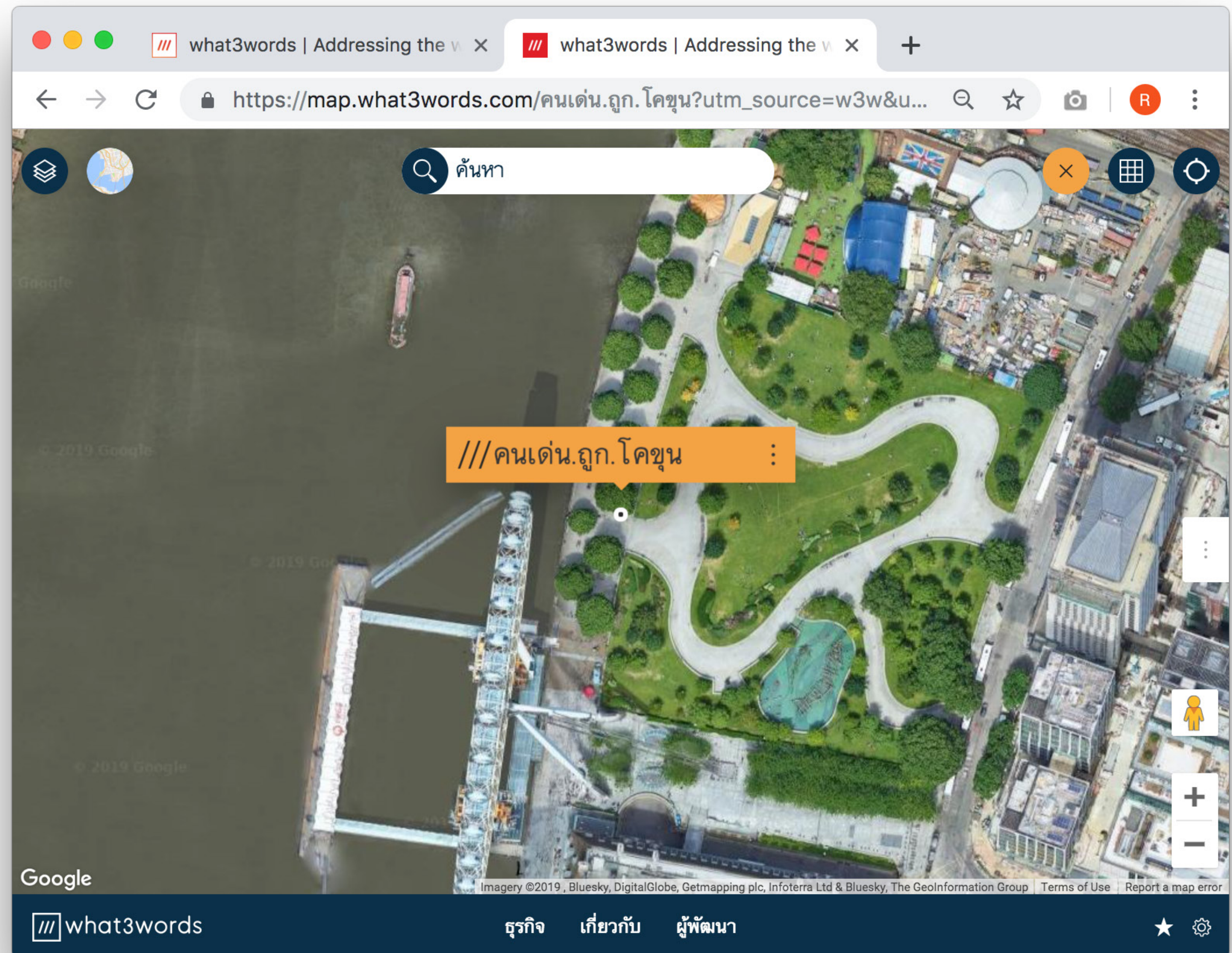


# Languages

3 word addresses are available in many languages, with more added all the time.

They are assigned independently for every language so the three words assigned to one location will be different in every language.

This means that a 3 word address can never be translated, the language must be switched using the what3words app or map site.





## Latin, Cyrillic & Greek languages

Afrikaans ///moontlik.aanbied.vashou

Dansk  
Danish ///biler.sagtens.hældes

Deutsch  
German ///fenster.ausgleichen.nahezu

English  
English ///filled.count.soap

Español  
Spanish ///alcoba.gruñón.negó

Français  
French ///conduite.richissime.empâter

Italiano  
Italian ///amavo.trattò.tendoni

Kiswahili  
Swahili ///kukodiwa.kuiunga.idadi

Монгол  
Mongolian ///сэрүүхэн.зэмсэг.дагалдах

Norsk  
Norwegian ///rett.elgitar.pugget

Polski  
Polish ///dodatki.wnikać.ważni

Português  
Portuguese ///refrigerando.valem.touro

Suomi  
Finnish ///naapurusto.jarrut.selata

Svenska  
Swedish ///lika.begära.handfull

Türkçe  
Turkish ///başvuru.yeni.buyruk

isiXhosa  
Xhosa ///nomntu.somzimba.bomntwana

isiZulu  
Zulu ///hogela.ncanyana.umanyolo

Čeština  
Czech ///dohledat.hrníček.použitá

Ελληνικά  
Greek ///ζήτησες.γύρευες.αλλάζαμε

Русский  
Russian ///проспать.грузовик.гусята



# Middle-Eastern and Asian languages

Arabic  
العربية

/// لبن.درجات.عنق

Bangal  
বাংলা

/// বীমা.আসন.ইচ্ছুক

Chinese  
中文

/// 产权.绝缘.墨镜

Hindi  
हिन्दी

/// चराते.बहू.कसने

Indonesian  
Bahasa Indonesia

/// disimak.semangka.dikurangi

Japanese  
日本語

/// こくさい・ていか・かざす

Korean  
한국어

/// 쓸모.평소.나다

Malaysian  
Bahasa Malaysia

/// mahupun.serakit.kambus

Tamil  
தமிழ்

/// கப்பல்கள்.மண்பானை.ஓய்வை

Telugu  
తెలుగు

/// వేదజల్లు.సవరణ.సంకల్పం

Thai  
ไทย

/// ช่อกบ.ป้ก.ฝักส้ด



## 3 word addresses Arabic

There is a specific way of setting a 3 word address in Arabic, as detailed here - it should always be set by a native Arabic speaker.

We set like this for computer recognition, legibility, identification and brand awareness. Any variation on this may mean missing location, inaccurate submission or ....

As it's a location, accuracy and spelling are important, ensure all locations are check against - [map.what3words.com](https://map.what3words.com)

السباك.رفاهية.محمي

### Nukta (dot, full stop or period)

- No spaces before or after
- Same weight, same colour

### Kalima

- The character length of the word may vary
- No spaces before or after
- Same weight, same colour
- Use Black, White or Dark Blue, or base on system requirements and technical specifications, but never Red

### Forward slash

- Three forward slashes, no spaces, same weight
- Use Red if applicable
- Never use the symbol



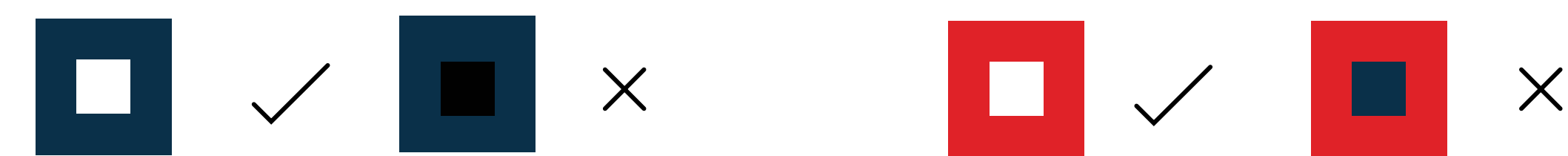
# Web accessibility

Use common sense and colour contrast tools to ensure your designs are accessible.

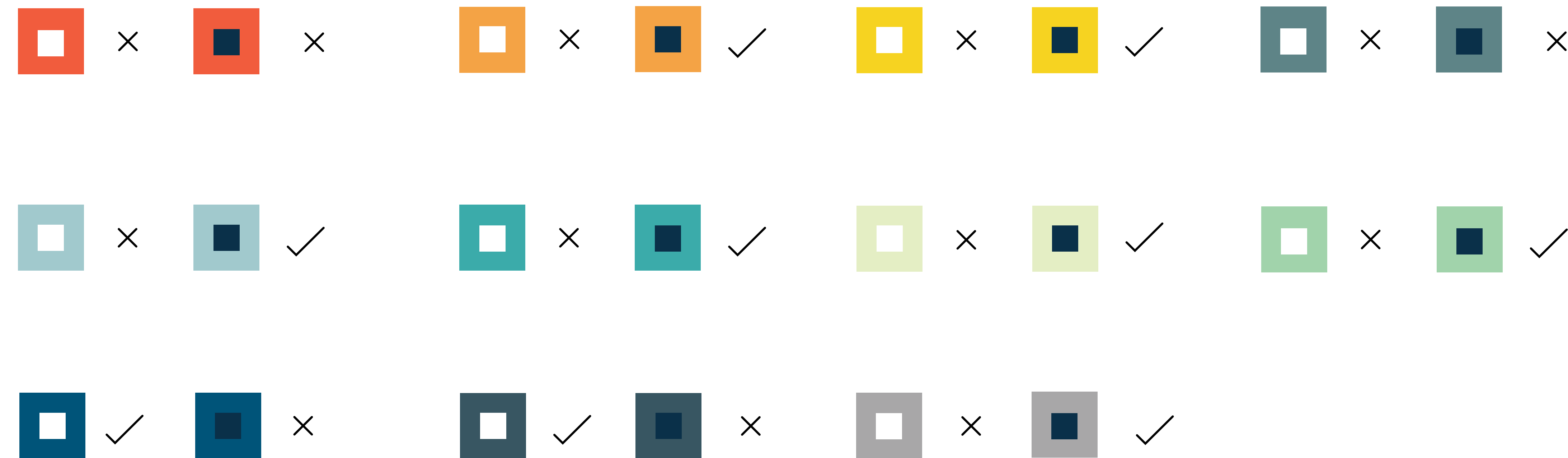
[Click here for a web colour contrast checker](#)

[Click here the web standards](#)

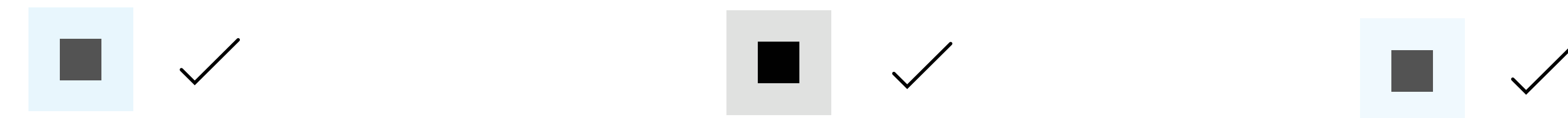
Primary colours



Secondary colours



Tertiary colours





# Colour and legibility

A 3 word address is a navigation device and needs to be seen. In most cases the background will determine the address colour.

The three slashes should stand out and grab attention, while the three words provide the information.

A 3 word address should never appear all in red.



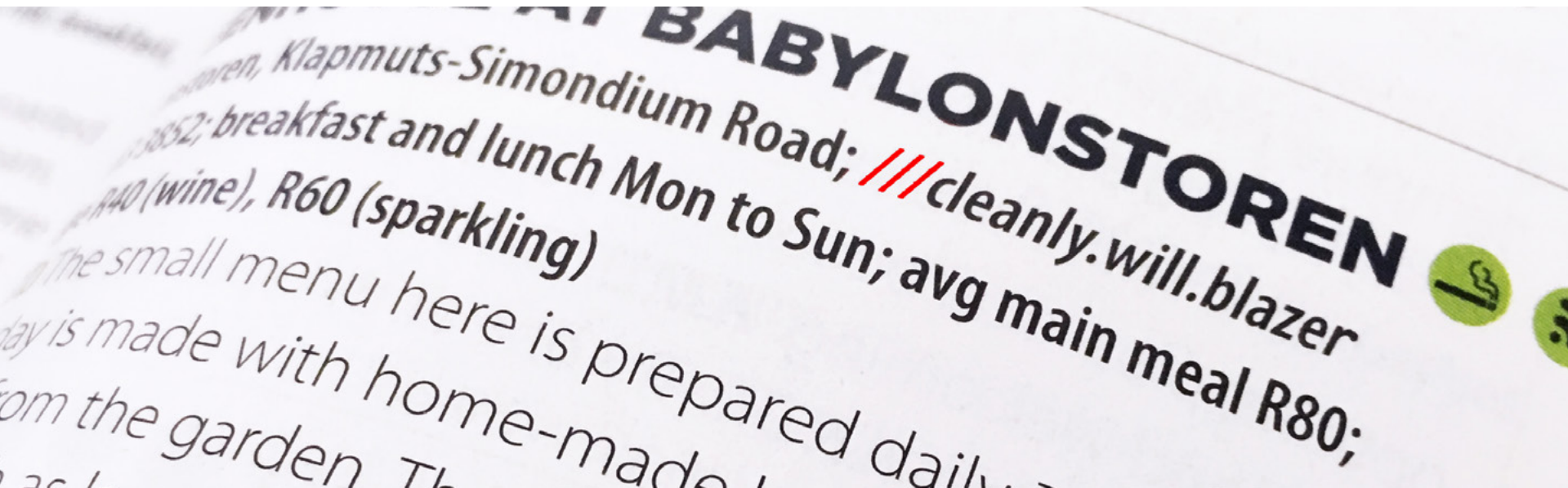


# Dos and Don'ts

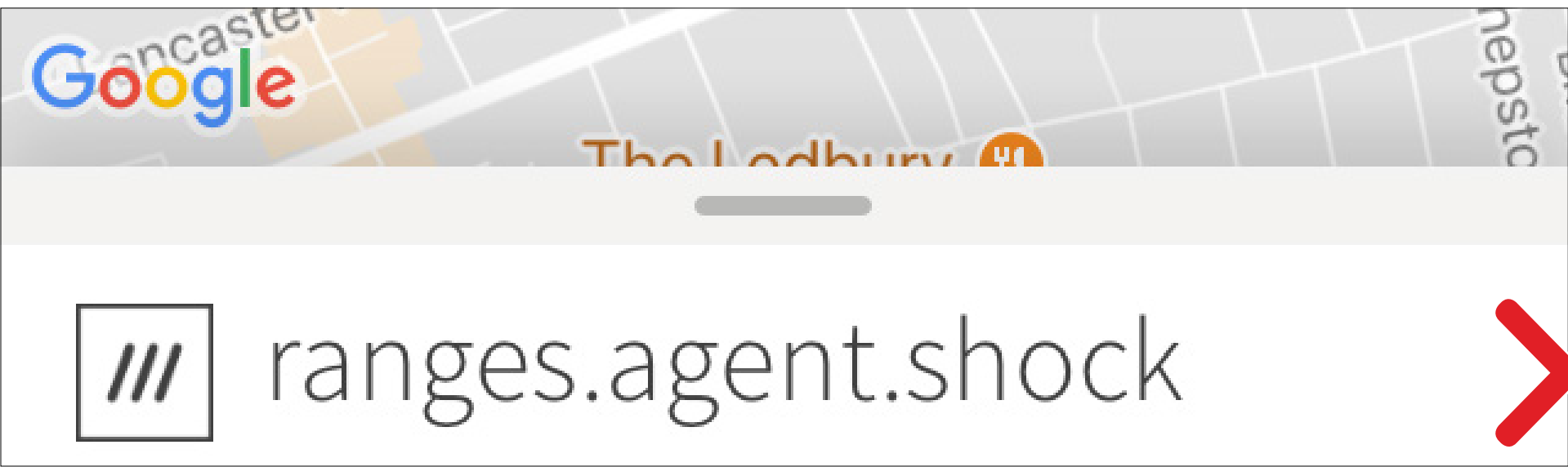
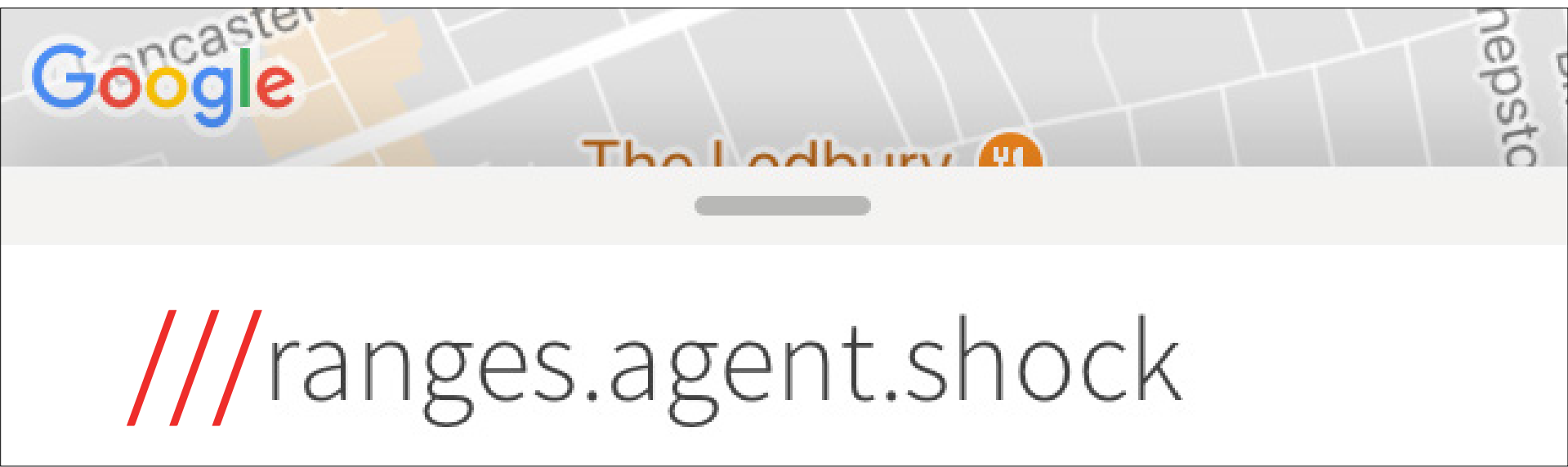
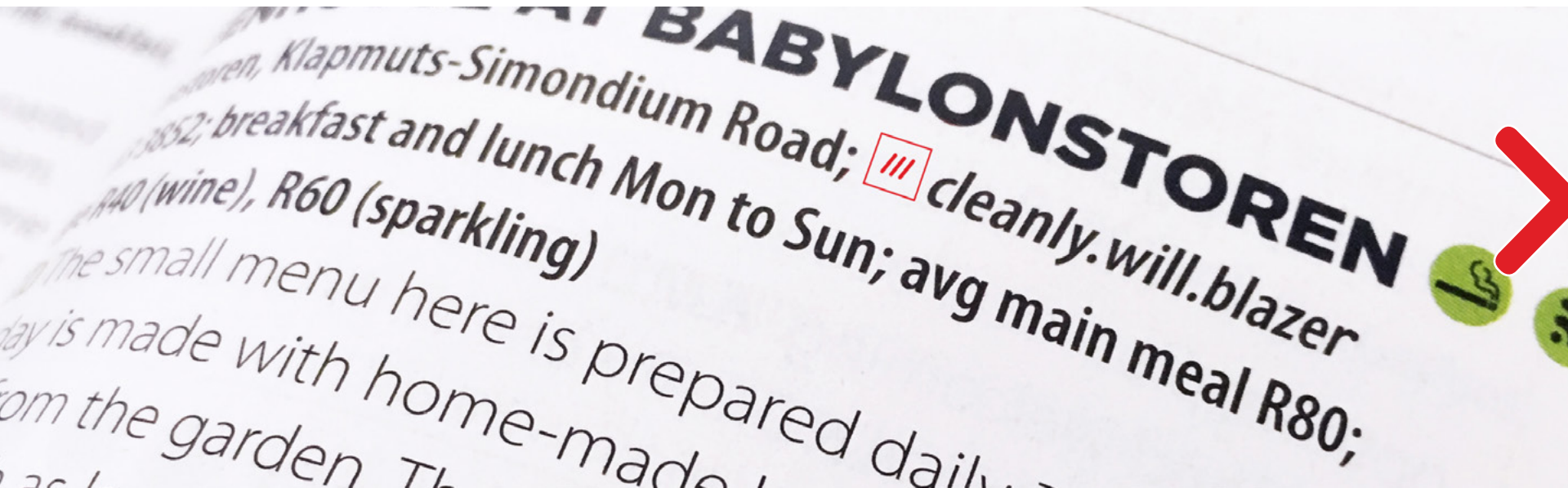
Make sure you display 3 word addresses correctly to help people read and use them easily.

Always use three slashes before the three words, never use the Symbol.

Do this



Don't do this





# In text

Use these basics when writing about our system in a sentence.

	GUIDANCE	NEVER LIKE THIS
what3words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- No capital letters, even at the start of the sentence. No spaces, never translated</li><li>- Some local languages will have their own version, it is never a direct translation</li><li>- Try to avoid starting a sentence with our brand name</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- what 3 words</li><li>- What3Words</li><li>- What3words</li><li>- WHAT3WORDS</li><li>- Never abbreviate - “w3w” or “W3W”</li></ul>
3 word address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Always numerical 3</li><li>- No capital letters</li><li>- The following are acceptable alternative uses in both singular and plural (though never plural of “word” in this context): 3 word location, what3words address, what3words location.</li><li>- In some cases where copy is not driven/ written by us nor in our control (i.e. newspaper articles, blogs) 'three word address' may be acceptable.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Threewordaddress</li><li>- three word address</li><li>- 3wordaddress</li><li>- 3 words addresses (plural of 'word')</li><li>- Never referred to as: three words, 3 Words, 3-words etc.</li><li>- 3 words (plural of “word”) address(es).</li></ul>



# Using a 3 word address





## Using a 3 word address

There are many ways to use a 3 word address, each with specific formats and guidance.

Use 3 word addresses in communications to define and share precise locations.

While the purpose of each communication may change, some simple guidance will make sure the what3words system works for you.





## Accuracy and privacy

It's important to remember that a 3 word address for a person's home or work is a sensitive piece of information.

Many of us would not want our address displayed publicly, so keep personal 3 word addresses ambiguous by obscuring the last two words. Obscuring one word is not enough, as what3words' AutoSuggest can identify a 3 word address using just two words and a region.

If you're sure an individual or business is happy to share their 3 word address, there is no need to obscure any words.

Use the Mosaic filter in Photoshop to hide the last two words of an address. Double check to make sure you can't read it by squinting your eyes.





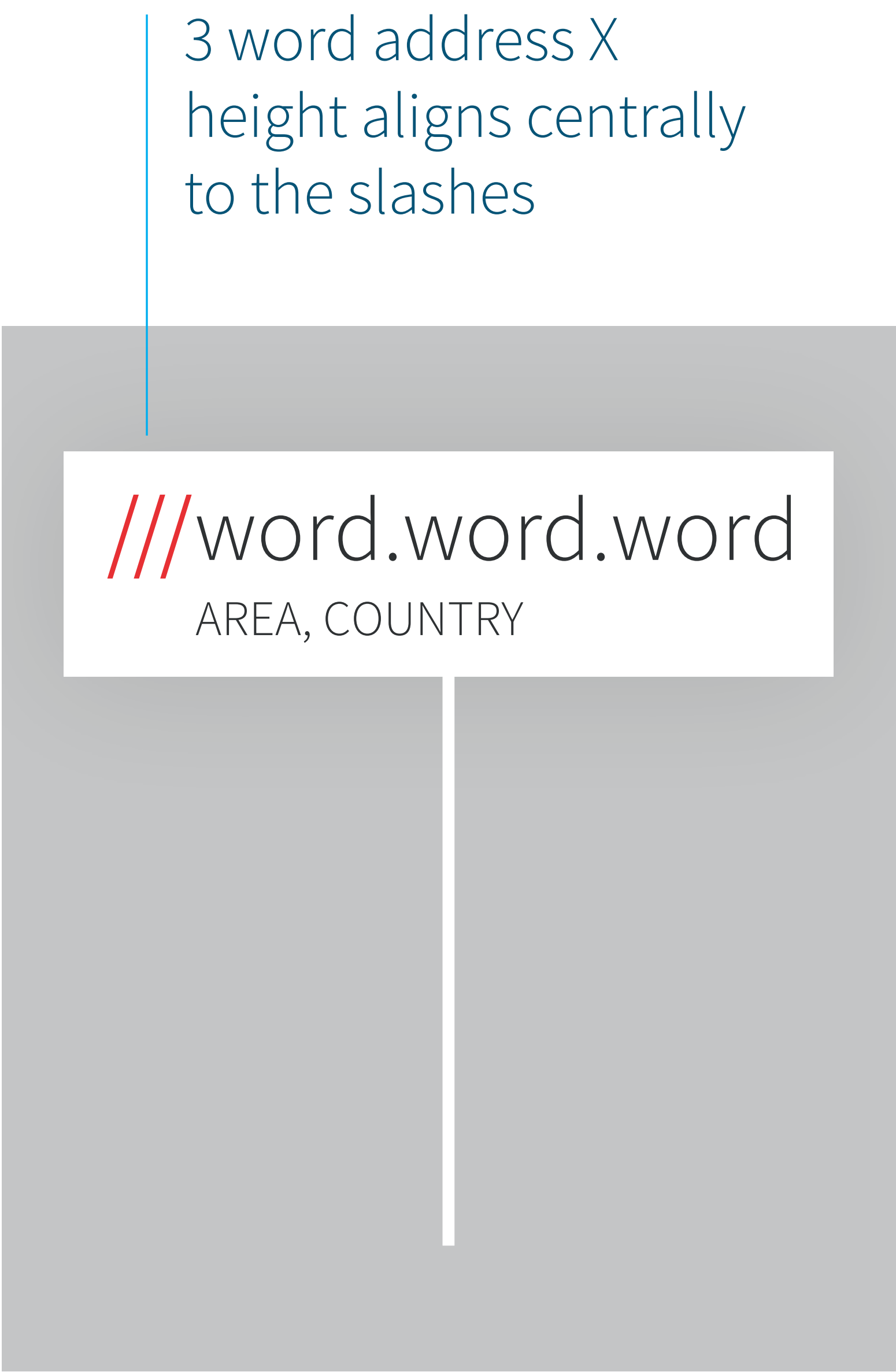
# Standard callouts

Use callouts with photography and video where a specific location is being identified. You can use this formatting for the majority of languages.

For local communications, replace 'Country' with the local region, for example: Hackney, London instead of Hackney, UK

The standard callout is the preferred treatment.

For use of the classic callout, contact our design team.





# Standard callout variations

Callouts are a flexible tool. You can customise their size, angle and location to fit your composition.





# Classic callouts

Use callouts with photography and video where a specific location is being identified. You can use this formatting for the majority of languages.

Use callouts with photography and video where a specific location is being identified. You can use this formatting for the majority of languages.

Hackney, London  
instead of  
Hackney, UK

The standard callout is the preferred treatment.

For use of the classic callout, contact our design team.

Line begins at start of 3 word address

Line pivot aligns with end of text. Avoid right angles

**///**word.word.word

Location, Country

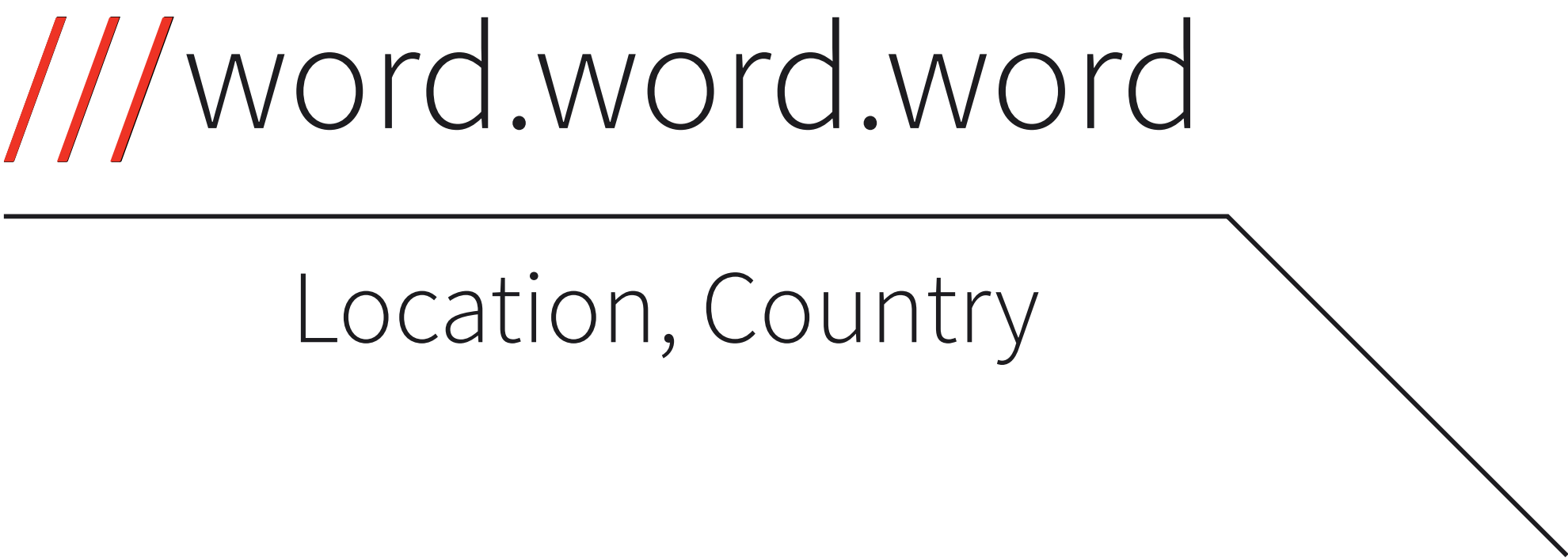
Location is 20% smaller than 3 word address, and aligned to the centre of the 3 word address

The end point must touch the ground or an object attached to the ground



# Classic callout variations

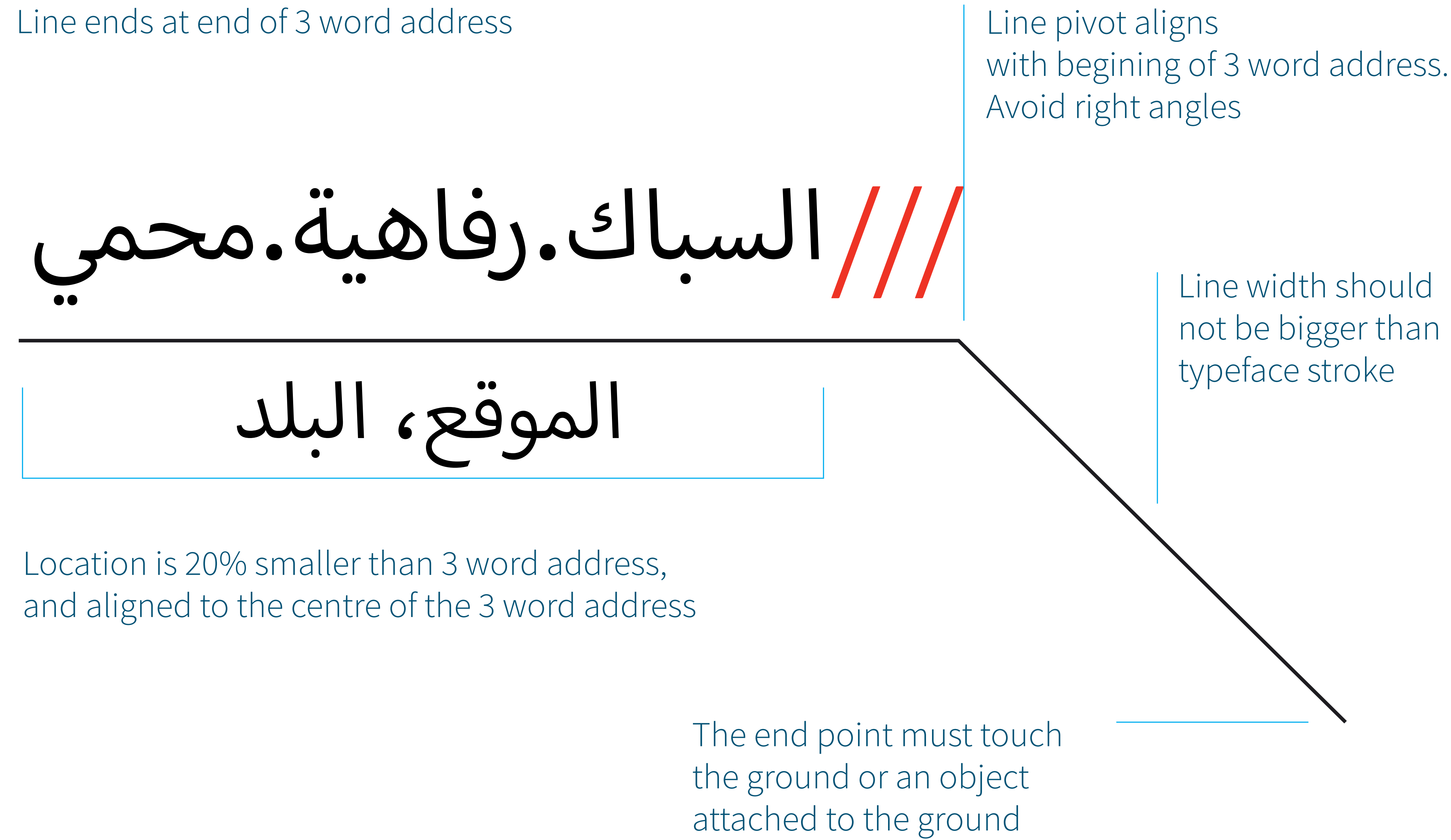
Callouts are a flexible tool. You can customise their size, angle and location to fit your composition.





# Arabic callouts

Only use this format when creating a callout for an Arabic 3 word address.





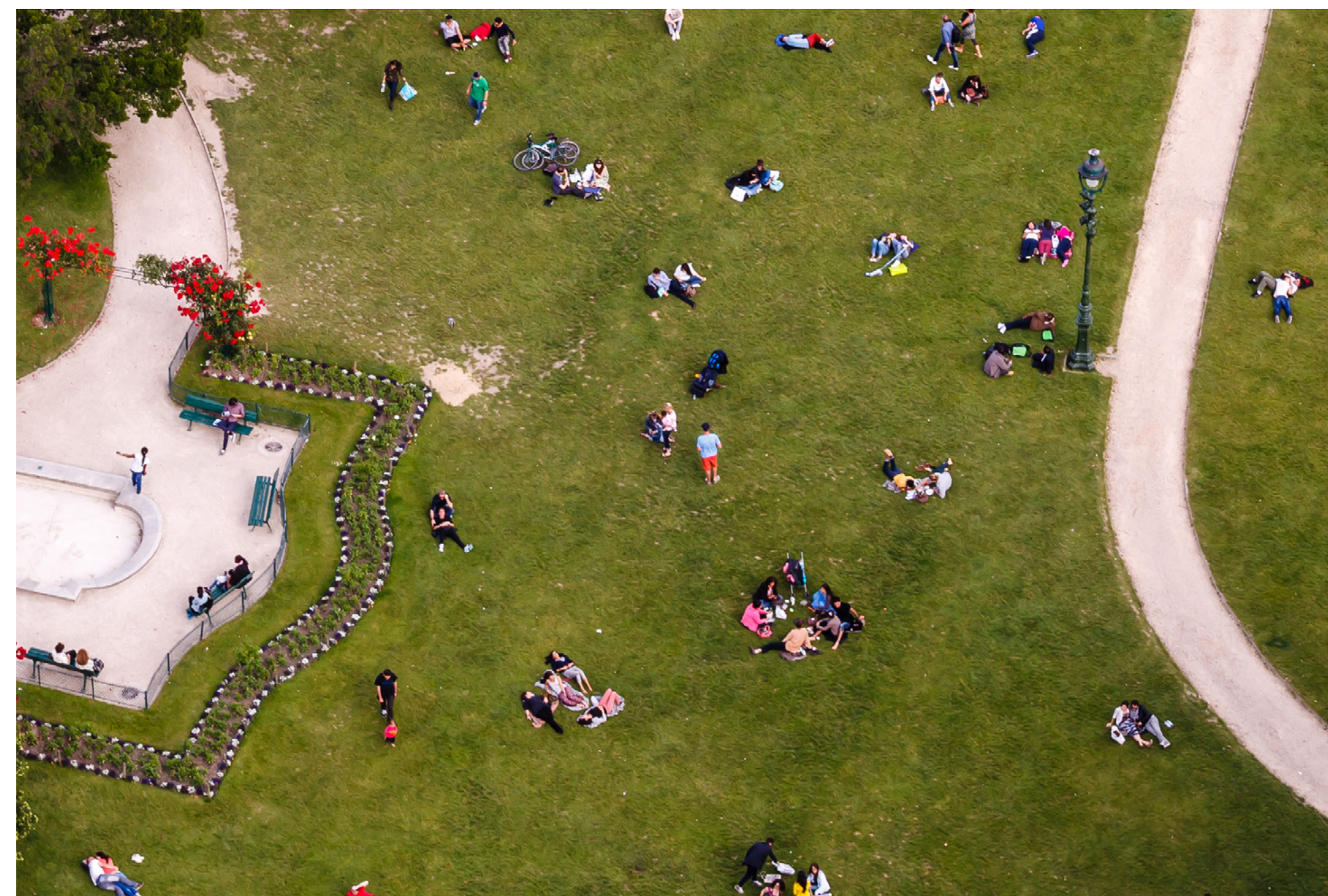
# Photography

Our photography tells stories about location, people, travel and adventure around the globe.

We want people to feel pride in their world – no matter where they live or what they do – from the domestic to the industrial.

We help solve serious issues, but our photography is bright, human centred and optimistic. Images should tell a clear story, be authentic and not abstract or interpretative.

Remember, it's important to see the ground. We always connect the idea of a 3 word address with its 3m x 3m square on the earth.





# Our photo style

Use these to help you select or commission photography.

As accurate location is important, avoid indoor photos, GPS may prevent technology from conveying location properly.

**Stay grounded**

Show the ground in your photographs, that's where our grid comes from. Don't only show sky.



**Life in colour**

Show the world as it's meant to be seen, in full colour. Don't use overly stylized or black and white images.



**Keep it real**

Always depict people who have pride in what they do and where they live. Never misrepresent a photo.



**Storytelling**

Engage the audience and create dialogue. Don't be vague or random with photography.



**In the present**

Keep in the now, we're focused on where we are, not the past or future.





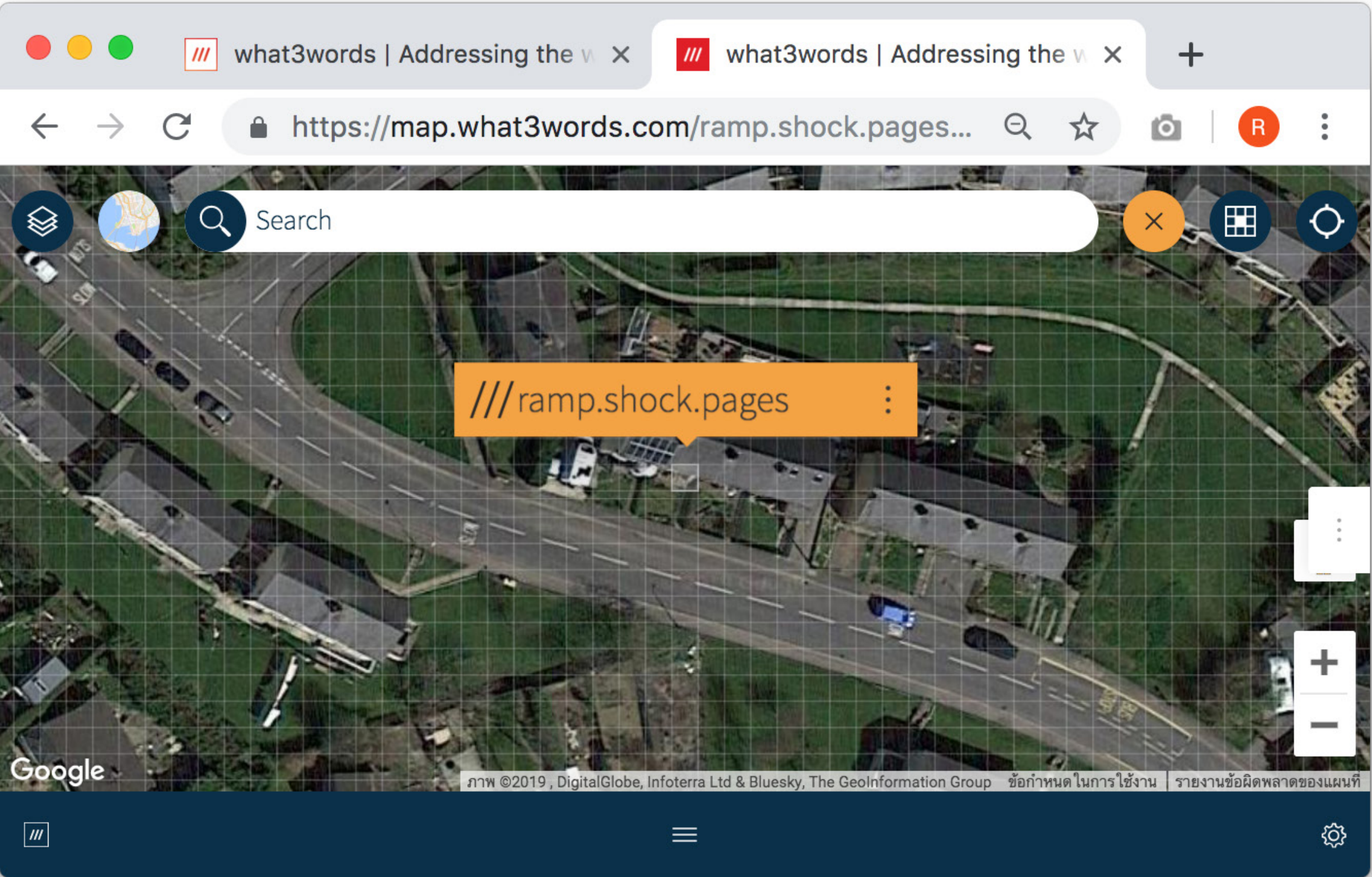
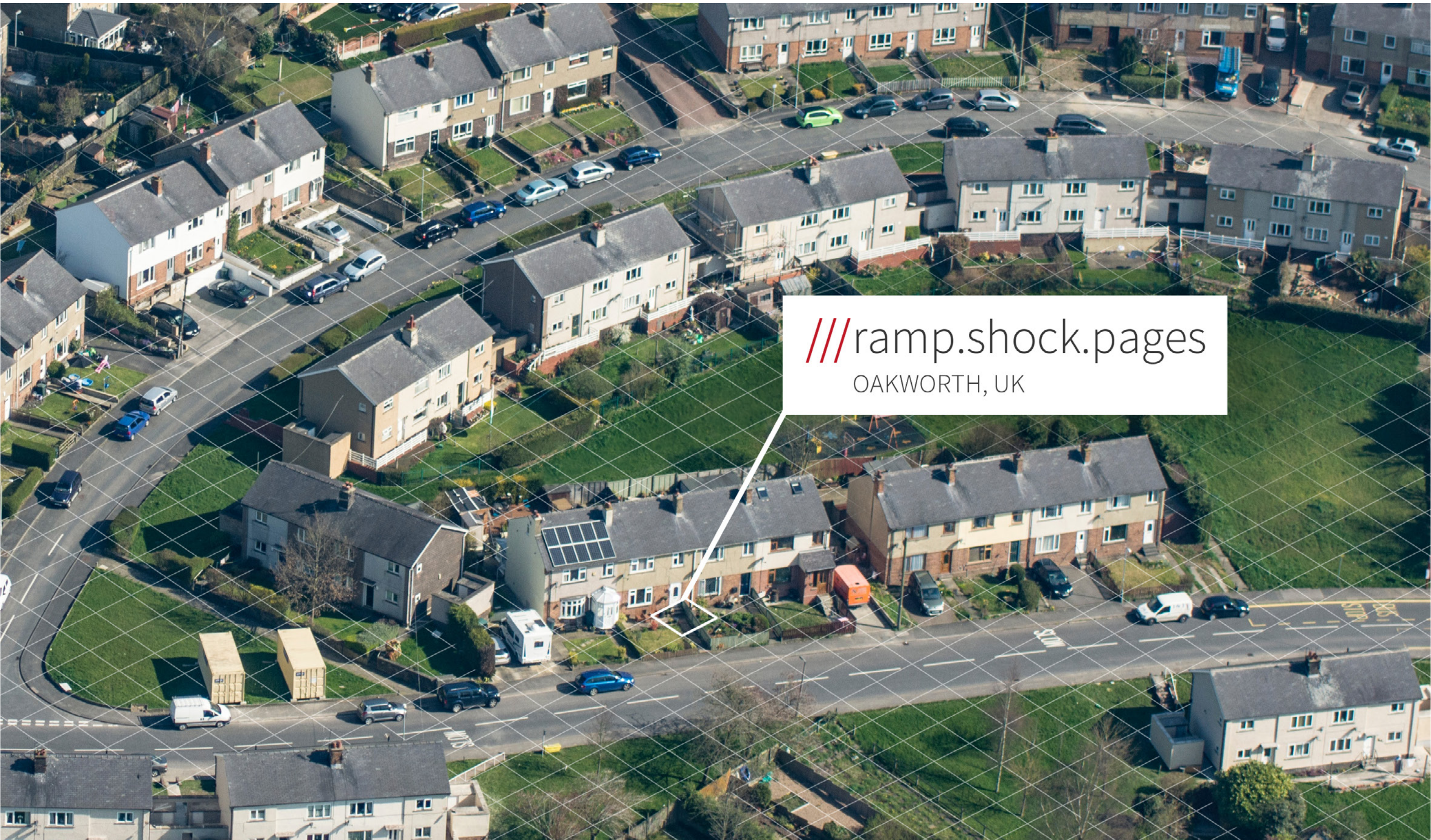
# Applying a callout

We aim to be as precise as possible when applying a callout.

It is important that the 3 word address is consistent with the location in the image.

We use a combination of metadata, geographical landmarks and satellite images from Google Maps to find the exact location for the callout.

Always check the 3 word address against the what3words mapsite to make sure the location correct.





# Displaying a callout

We combine photos and footage with callouts to give a greater sense of the technology behind what we do.

This helps people locate places, showcase stories and give greater context.

The end-point always reaches the ground, and is connected to a grid either visibly (grid treatment) or invisibly (line treatment). Avoid using both treatments within the same document.

**Grid treatment**

Should be accompanied by a highlighted square and callout



**Line treatment**





## Packages and envelopes

More information is always better, so we encourage people to add a 3 word address to their other address information.

Companies should print the 3 word address after the other address information. Most will only produce in one colour (black) and in their chosen font.

Place after the traditional address





# Signs

Signs are a permanent and visible way to display 3 word addresses on front doors, business entrances, delivery points and facilities.

They remind people of their 3 word address and encourage them to use it.

Make sure people can attach the sign or sticker to a surface easily with screws or glue

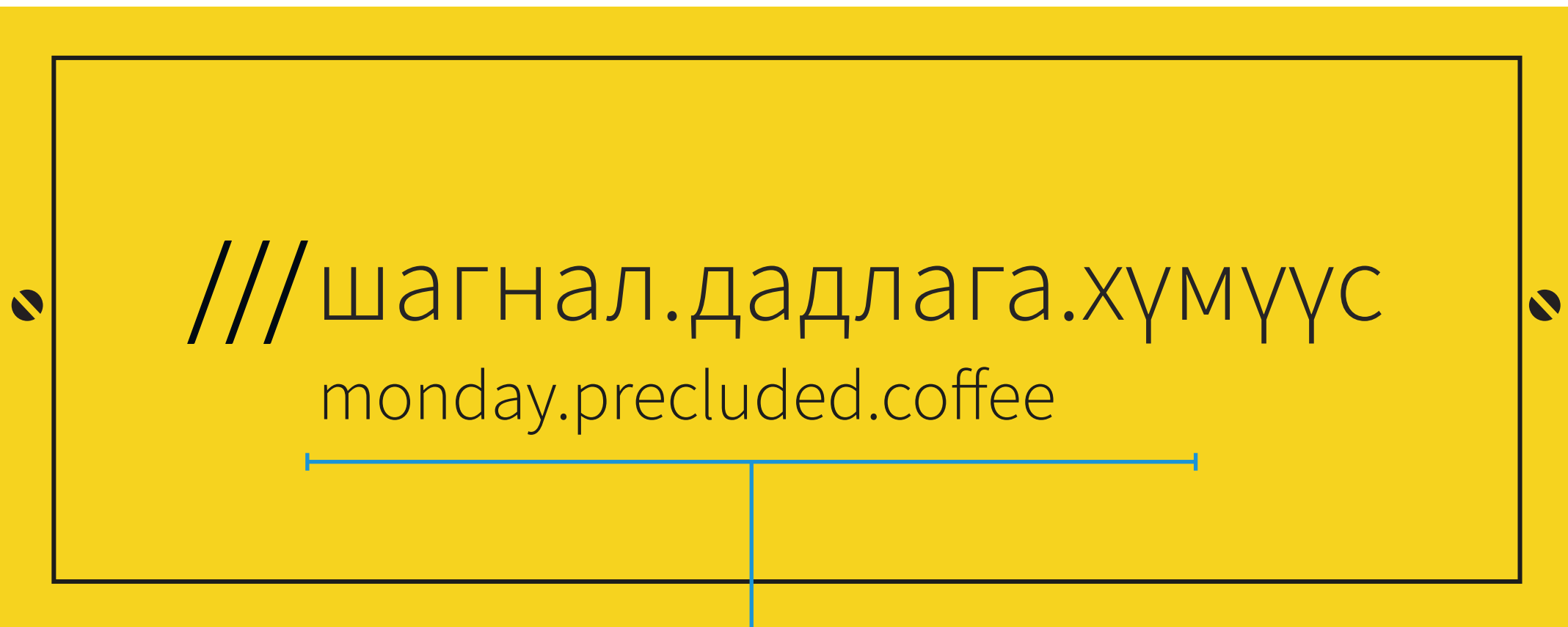
Centre the 3 word address horizontally and vertically



Use a keyline to define the sign, no thicker than the three slashes

Branding is secondary in message hierarchy and should be placed at the bottom

Always use the full logo



Where an additional language or extra information is required, make sure that it is secondary and supportive



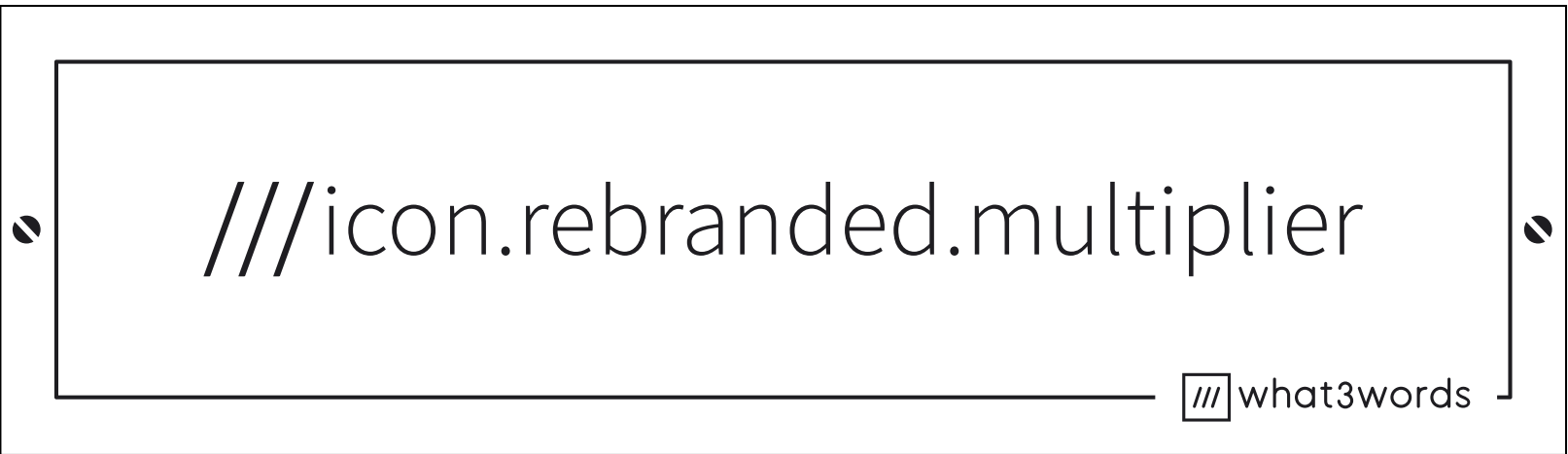
# Sign variation and material

Make signs from quality materials; we want them to last a long time. The chosen material should be appropriate for the sign's context and purpose – durable plastic for homes, and metal for important buildings, for example.



Balance co-branding on the signage

Co-branding should be kept below the 3 word address

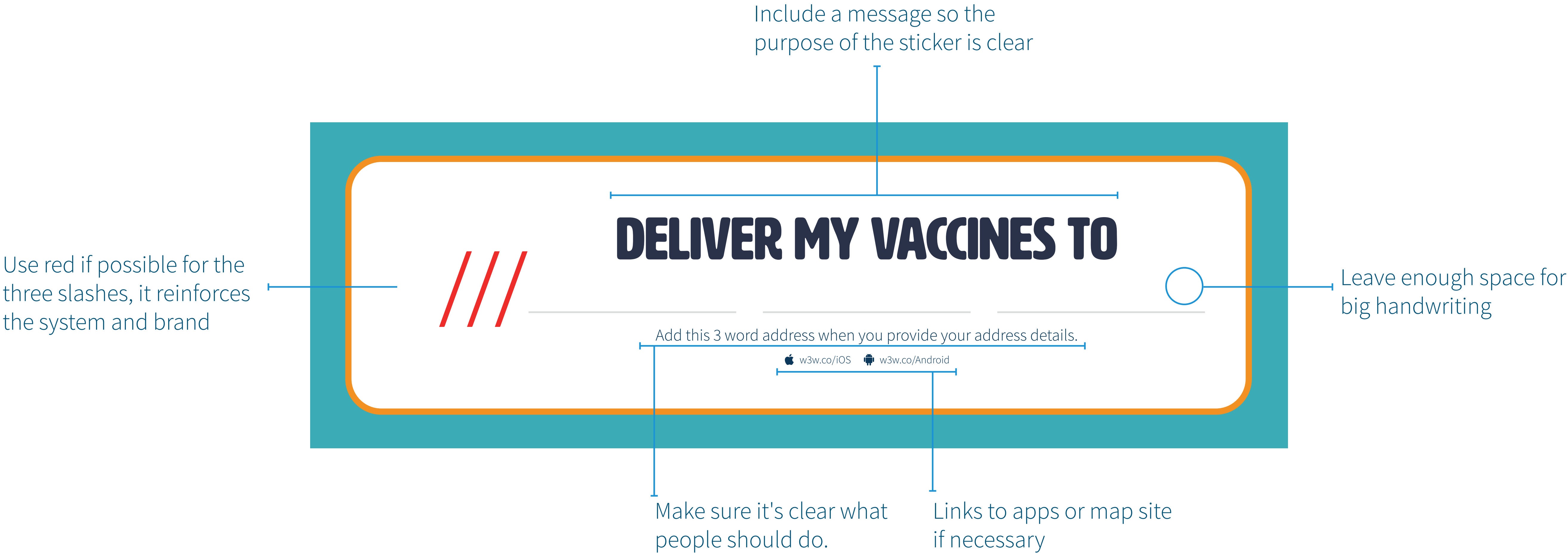


Examples of high contrast colour combinations



# Stickers

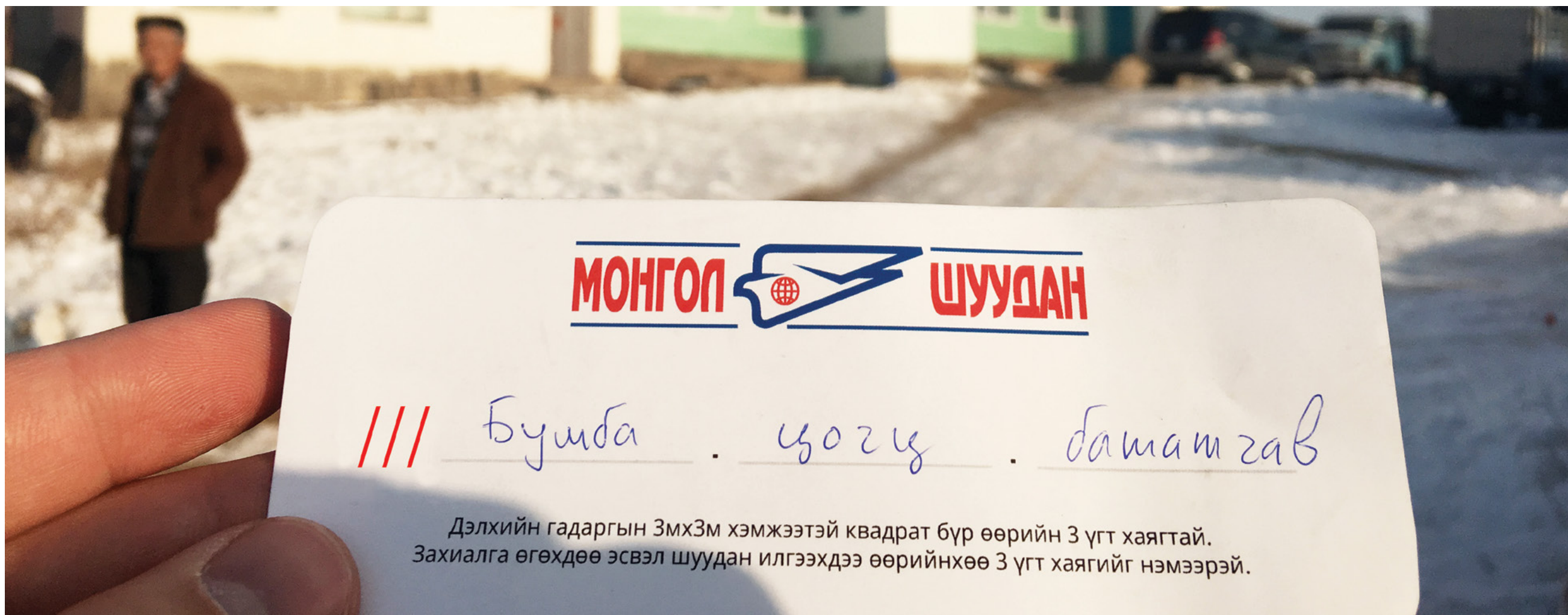
Stickers are less permanent than printed signs, and allow people to add their 3 word address in writing. Make sure they are practical to use and have enough instruction to make them easy to understand.





# Sticker examples

These are examples of companies using 3 word address stickers in real-life situations.



Mongol Post distribute handwritten 3 word addresses to homes



Tourist guide window sticker by Niislel Guide in Mongolia

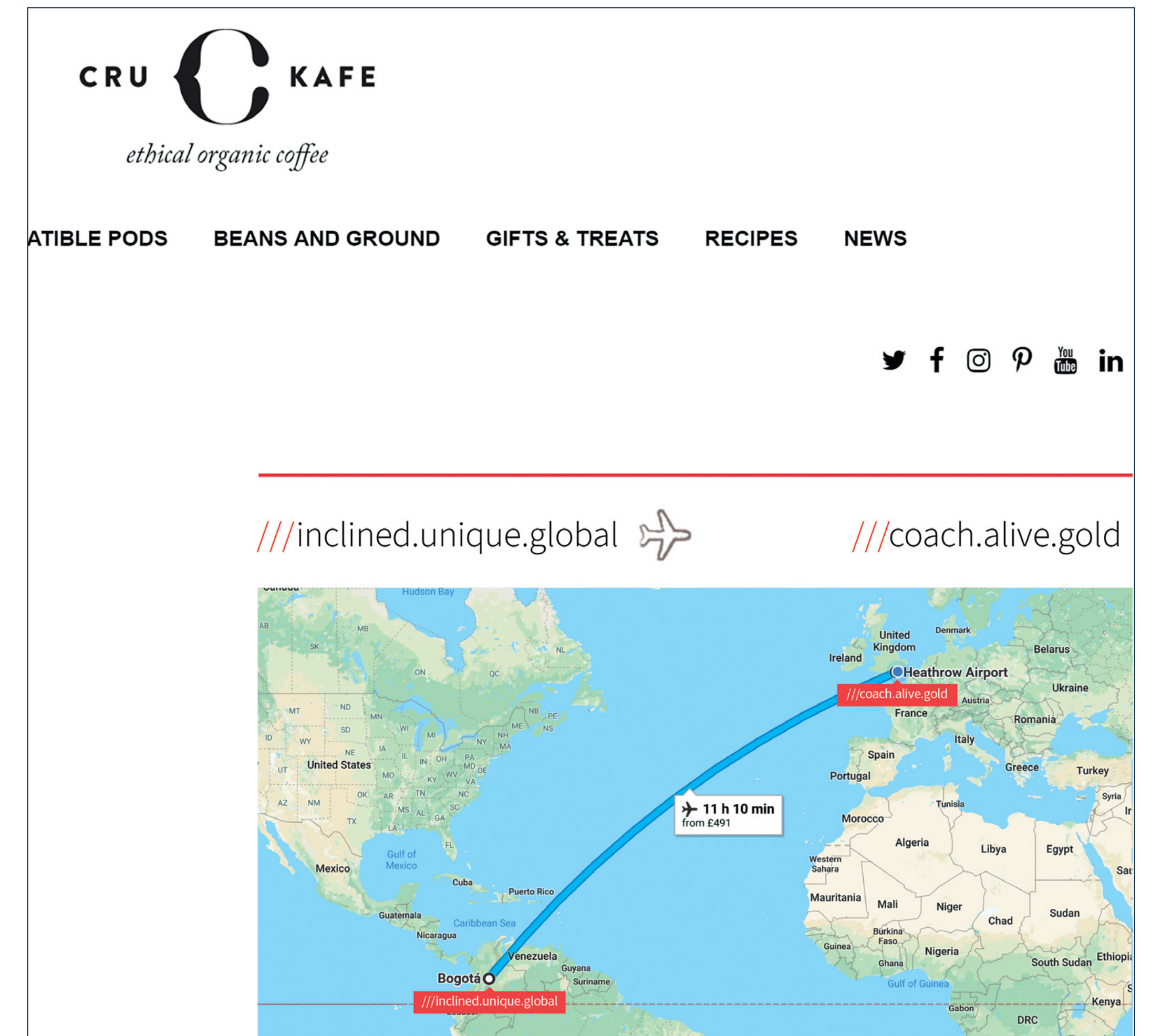
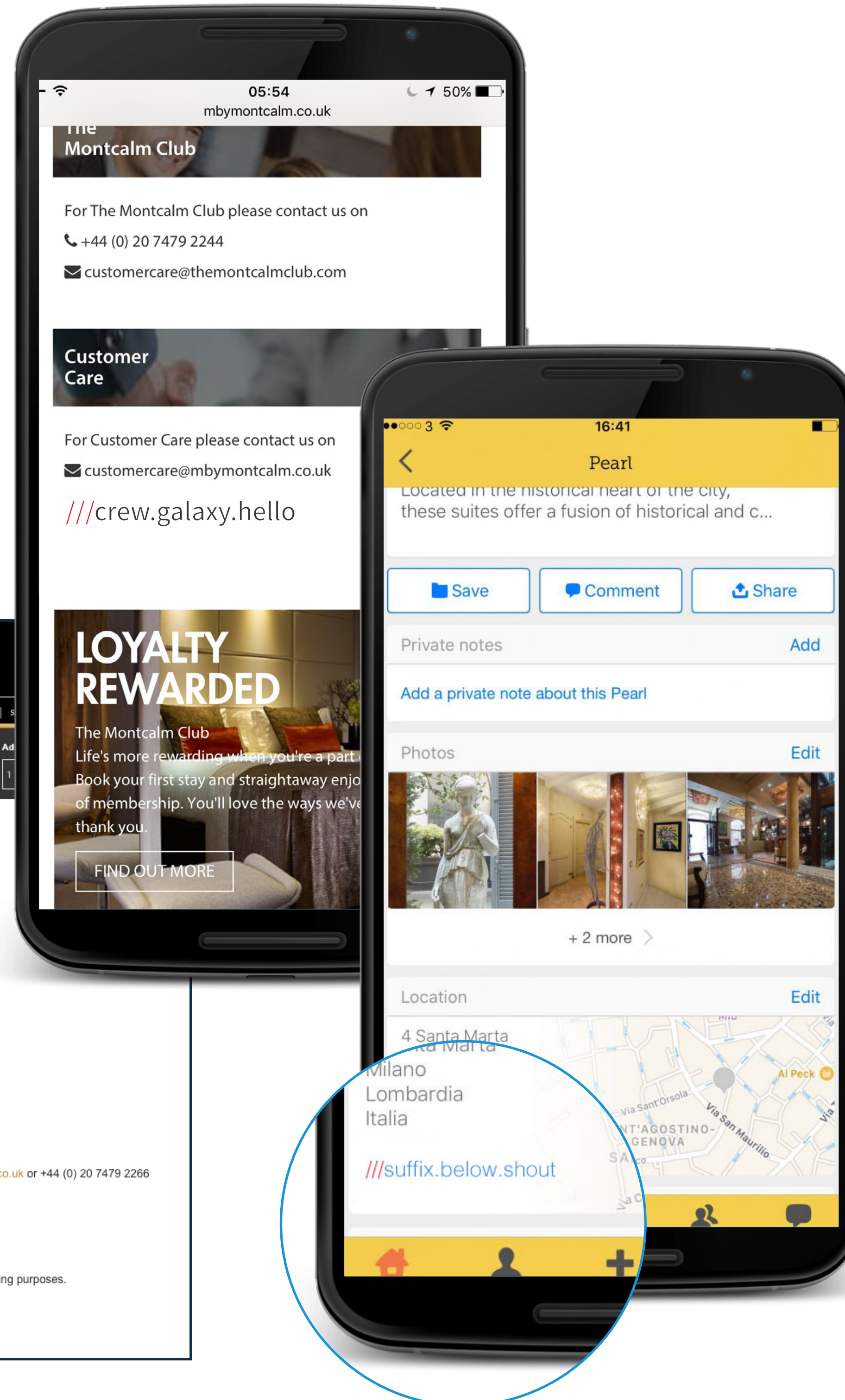
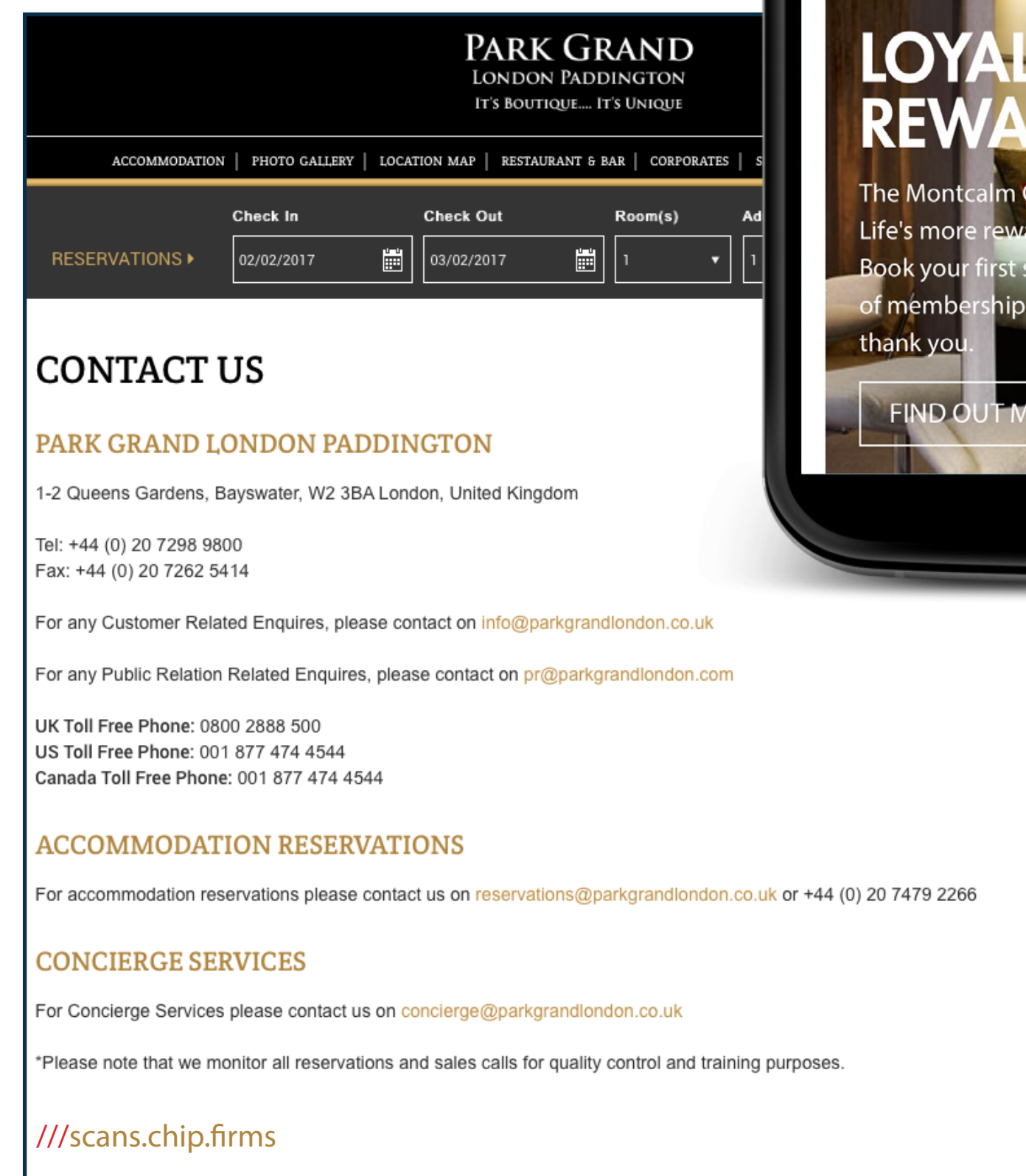


Domino's in Sint Maarten drivers help customers find their 3 word address



## On-screen

Websites and apps may have a different style of typography, layout and colours in their UX/UI systems. Make sure users can easily locate and use the 3 word address.





# On-screen display clear space

Use these clear space guides for on-screen display.

Small



Medium



Large





# On-screen checkout/confirmations

3 word addresses can be used in e-commerce checkout forms and address confirmations.

Make sure the 3 word address field is easy for users to identify. The ideal integration will display the three red slashes to make sure this field stands out.

It should be located immediately after the regular address fields, and should be accompanied by a tooltip offering a short explanation.

Include a 3 word address field so it's easy for users to identify

Show how the 3 word address will display after the customer's other address information

County

e.g. Greater London

3 word address (optional)

/// nature.liked.lifted

Billing address

Same as delivery address:

Chris Sheldrick  
242 Acklam Rd  
London  
W10 5JJ  
/// nature.liked.lifted

Enter a different address

PATCH

Delivery address

Delivery slot

Billing address

Payment

Contact Details

Email (required)  
We will send your order confirmation to this email.  

hello@w3w.com

Delivery address

We can only deliver to London. This covers all postcodes starting with N, NW, E, EC, SE, SW, W or WC.  

First name (required)  
Chris

Last name (required)  
Sheldrick

Company or organisation name  
What 3 Words

Address line one (required)  
242 Acklam Rd

Address line two  
e.g. Aurora Building, Unit 2

City (required)  
London

County  
e.g. Greater London

Post code (required)  
W10 5JJ

3 word address (optional)  
/// nature.liked.lifted

Franky  
Aloe Vera

£7.50

Vera  
Little Vera

£20.00

Pippa  
Little Pippa

£30.00

Subtotal

£57.50

Apply gift voucher

—

Delivery

—

Total

£57.50

CONTINUE TO DELIVERY SLOT

Patch now accepts 3 word addresses for faster, more reliable delivery.

///

HELP

Need to get in touch?  
Just use the smiley speech bubble to send a message to the team.  
Customer service opening hours:  
Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays) – 9am until 6pm

SECURITY

Secure payment - our systems are protected with bank-grade security. Your payment is safe with us.

DELIVERY

All our plants and accessories are delivered by our Patch drivers. Your plants won't get lost in the post. Please note we can only deliver within London (postcodes starting with N, NW, E, EC, SE, SW, W, or WC). Add your 3 word address at checkout and your deliveries will be even faster and more reliable.

PATCH PROMISE

All our plants are hand-delivered to ensure they keep their quality. We will always be here to offer you advice, and ensure you have everything you need after purchase to care for your plants. We won't quibble about returns. Tell us within 24 hours of delivery - we'll sort it.

PATCH

About Patch

FAQ

Returns Policy

Jobs

Terms of Service

Privacy Policy

Copyright © 2017 Patch. All rights reserved.

32

Example UX from Patch, an online retailer.



## Contact

design@what3words.com

## Resources, artwork or latest guidelines

what3word design assets





WHAT3WORDS