

SLEEPER CELL

A FUNDRAISING IMMERSIVE ONLINE GAME

Part of the letschangethegame.com initiative.

**Produced by Law 37
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AIM

Our aim is to create a light, comedic game that will raise funds and awareness for Cancer Research UK. We want to create opportunities for *ad hoc*, player-driven fundraising, and also to bring fundraising mechanics into the game-world without devaluing the gameplay itself. We want to contribute to CRUK's brand by emphasising their important work on a meta-level (consider [Comic Relief's](#) fun/serious duality) and creating eye-catching events that attract positive press.

We want to leave a legacy of players-turned-long-term-CRUK-supporters, and to convert existing donors (along with other groups) into players by engaging in plain-spoken promotion and accessible gameplay.

Crucially, we're committed to creating a meaningful core experience for individual players and groups, alongside more traditional massively collaborative elements. We plan on creating a modular game that gives us flexibility in development and, more importantly, flexibility for the player to pick and choose what elements they want to engage in.

The ultimate aim? Plenty of column inches, tens of thousands of players, and hundreds of thousands of pounds, all in one unforgettable game.

INTRODUCTION

Introducing Sleeper Cell, then.

Sleeper Cell is a fun, immersive and original game that invites players to participate in the epic yet kitschy battle between the forces of Good and Evil.

Participants join *The Agency*, a mysterious organisation with ancient roots working behind the scenes to make the world a lovelier place.

Players start by completing Training Missions which are the bread and butter of the gameplay experience. They are light-touch, single-player games, puzzles, and challenges that eventually progress to more adventurous real-world tasks just silly enough to attract sponsorship from their social circles. For instance:

- A good Agent always has a ready quip to hand - leave a joke on the Agency Hotline to complete this mission.
- In case of decoy operations, the Agency may be required to impersonate you. Direct your friends to this page to leave an account of your most notable mannerisms.
- Experienced Agents have finely attuned observation skills. Identify the [micro-expressions](#) in these subjects to identify who is most in need of a hug.

The more they complete the higher they rise up The Agency hierarchy, earning kudos, community recognition, advanced content, and of course further challenges.

Meanwhile, the player community as a whole co-operates to complete eye-catching Special Operations that will restore The Agency to its former glory, and defeat their sworn enemies, the Erudite Villains In Leather. Players and supporters can also sponsor their own Agency "cell" to declare their support.

The game concludes in a thrilling denouement that combines premium high octane action with a mass-participation event spreading loveliness that routs E.V.I.L once and for all.

STORY

First, let's look at the three methods we'll use to tell our story:

- incidental copy - for instance, mission descriptions are written 'by' our characters, and gameplay is tied into the story
- easter eggs - observant and dedicated players are rewarded with extra insight into the characters and the origins of the Agency (and their adversaries) by piecing together cross-mission meta-puzzles or identifying clues from larger events
- videos - updates are delivered from our characters to players, giving an insight into the comedic *The-Office-meets-James-Bond* world of the Agency. We hope these will be highly viral in their own right.

Onto the story itself...

The central organisation is *The Agency*, a shadowy taskforce with a mission to make the world a lovelier place for everyone. Think "Johnny English", "Austin Powers", or, going back a little further, "The Milk Tray Man." In fact, wrestling sharks and dangling from helicopters just to leave someone a nice box of chocolates is a classic top-level Agency-style mission. For its lofty ambitions, though, The Agency is an organisation like any other, with more than its fair share of bizarre internal protocols, larger-than-life personalities, and as players will discover, cash flow difficulties.

Players encounter a variety of specific characters from The Agency, encountering more content as they complete missions and rise higher in the Agency hierarchy. **Agent Herring** - very much a legend in his own lunchtime - inspires the players to yet greater feats of derring-do, all the better to emulate his shining example. **F** is the irredeemably secretive Boss of Bosses, encouraging others to take part while making endless references to "need to know basis", "Code Beige Protocol" and "The Kettering Incident" in his video addresses, featuring cameos from his much-loved daschund. Fortunately, the Agency's rising star **Fortuna Natterova** takes great pride in taking her colleagues down a much needed peg or two - or twelve, when the opportunity arises.

As we enter Act Two, strange things start to happen as the malign influence of the *Erudite Villains in Leather* begins to infiltrate the Agency's network, surreptitiously altering the Protocol Manuals and Employee Handbooks of The Agency's constituent "cells" (leading to a variety of unfortunate misunderstandings: "But it says right here on page 236b, 'deliver box of miscellaneous creepy-crawlies!' What did you expect me to do?") and ultimately

manifesting their own cells within the Agency network.

During this phase, active players follow the story back in time, discovering the origins of The Agency, which turns out to be an ancient institution in a distinctly Noughties guise, and also the origins of E.V.I.L, founded by **Baron von Thistlethorpe**, a disgruntled former Agent who jumped through one bureaucratic hoop too many.

The endgame commences with the players finally catching up with E.V.I.L (although they seem to be growing in strength) and joining forces with The Agency to bring them down once and for all. This leads to the final live event that sees the baddies routed and the good guys winning the day - and spreading a little loveliness to civilians while they're at it.

Our comedy is all about extreme, oddly-familiar characters with a noble mission having to work within the mundane confines of reality - and with each other.

TARGET AUDIENCE

We have two key groups to target in the run up to Sleeper Cell's full launch.

The first consists of an audience of 20 - 35 year olds, probably fairly internet-savvy folk with a reasonable disposable income. ARGs appeal to them, as does novelty - we're talking about the kind of people who've seen the [sneezing panda video](#) and perhaps passed a slow afternoon at the office with some [Desktop Tower Defense](#).

The second group are previous CRUK donors, recruited from people who receive CRUK's communications. In general, we feel the game will be well received by the fundraising community, who will understand the appeal of doing fun and unusual things - both as a way to gain sponsorship and to enjoy memorable experiences.

That said, the whole dynamic of the game encourages you to spread it - not just in the viral, online sort of way (although hey, that too) - but the nature of the missions and the story encourages contact with your colleagues, your family, and your friends, so the player base will quickly broaden from these starting groups. We aim for a broad player demographic that moves away from the stereotypical image of the "granny giver" as a charity donor to engaged players who evangelise both the game and CRUK itself. This will include young professionals and their families, the game will be suitable for men and women and boys and girls with a sense of fun and adventure from young teens and up.

CALLS TO ACTION

There are a number of routes into the game.

The first of these is a **teaser campaign** taking place before the main launch. This will drive interest in the story/world of the game via stand-alone viral comedy, lead participants into completing a simple mission to highlight interactivity, and also contain additional "cluey" elements to pique the interest of the ARG community and develop a kernel of conversation around the game. It begins with a parody conspiracy-theory site regarding sightings of trench-coated, falsely-moustached secret agents going about their business. Keen-eyed players will notice that there is more to these shakycam videos, a short trail leads to their first contact with a character; Agent Herring has a simple task for them that will enable him to start bringing The Agency's sleeper cells online. Those who do so find their name in lights, and as the teaser campaign concludes, Herring reveals that quite a bit more help happens to be needed...

Secondly, we will of course be **directly promoting** the game to existing CRUK supporters in a clear and understandable way, and also developing "teaser" content customised for this audience - operating in the same way, but with a more prominent CRUK theme. This means that while it has improved appeal for this audience they'll still be on the same page as people arriving via the other campaign.

Finally, we'll run **extensive PR** to source write-ups for launch, and more likely, the duration of the game in response to our more blockbusting gameplay elements. Aside from main press outlets we'll be reaching out to relevant blogs (on fundraising, health, and related topics) and communities.

Essentially, we think a teaser campaign will be great at creating "buzz." Yet, we also recognise the absolute importance to also communicate straightforwardly with other audiences less likely to engage with that material. This is why our meta-content before and during the game will be honed to deliver the simple message: it's fun, funny, and for a good and reputable cause.

During the game itself, we're confident that the team-based gameplay dynamic, along with fun content, idiotproof storyline and positive word-of-mouth will drive signups and allow newcomers to feel comfortable joining in at any time.

GAMEPLAY

Let's look at Sleeper Cell's gameplay in more detail.

The core interface of the game is the **Grid**. The Grid represents all of the Agency's various "sleeper cells." Each cell requires a Most Generous Benefactor in order to continue its vital work - this amounts to players being able to sponsor a square on the front page of the website and customise it with their own name, image and message. Benefactors also receive customised thanks, in-game from our characters and out-of-game from CRUK. They can even sponsor multiple cells if they raise more money ("cells sponsored" is one of the profile and leaderboard metrics).

At first just the Agency's already-operating cells can be sponsored, but as the game continues more "waves" of cells can be released, expanding the grid. *Sometimes*, a new cell receiving sponsorship will unlock a piece of content or a new mission for players to complete (information previously only in the hands of the dormant sleeper agents) - in this way, players are encouraged collectively to get more cells sponsored. The quasi-random distribution of challenges to cells still acts as a motivator to generally get more cells sponsored.

We can tweak this system manually behind the scenes, adjusting (for example) prices, cells-per-wave, how many cells unlock challenges, and so on. This allows us to respond effectively to best-case and worst-case scenarios.

The core gameplay is a solid, single-player experience, because we think it's important people new to the game can enjoy it on their own before they're confident enough to participate in a community or get their friends involved. These consist of a variety of **training missions** that see the player rise up the Agency hierarchy from "Rookie" to "Carte Blanche Agent" as they increase completion.

As stated before these will vary widely: from a simple Flash game, to puzzlesolving, to a creative challenge, or at more advanced levels, a public dare they have to document. In fact we intend that some of the hardcore missions will be the kind of classic, Comic Relief-type activities that one can use to gain sponsorship from friends, activity which will be encouraged and supported via resources on the site.

Furthermore, many missions will be restricted according to the level a player has reached. This isn't designed to frustrate the player, but instead to create a slightly more linear path through the game and make progress feel more meaningful, rewarding, and discovery-

oriented.

Global player performance will be compared and contrasted according to missions completed, mission "sets" completed, rank, cells sponsored and so on, but the emphasis will be placed on personal performance rather than global competition - global comparison is more a feature for our hardcore top-100 players.

Players can also form teams. These have the obvious function of allowing people to declare their alliances, create a Team Page, and so on, but more importantly they allow progress to be shared, with access to missions and other "lockable" content awarded collectively rather than individually. This means if you're stuck on a mission that you must complete to continue, you could invite a friend to sign up to Sleeper Cell and your team, complete it, and allow you to progress further, in the same way treasure hunt or pub quiz team members contribute different specialities. The best teams will of course be recognised in-game by characters and generally on the site itself - we can also assess the performance of teams by different metrics, taking into account those that bias against super-sized teams.

As the game continues, a new kind of mission is revealed: **Special Operations**. These are more ambitious, "global" tasks that help drive the story forward - for instance, going to find a clue at a CRUK store, or meeting an Agency stooge at a Race For Life finish line, and so on. Operations are predominantly real-world tasks that encourage the community to work together to get everything done and are plentiful enough to allow many of our "hardcore" players to experience at least one. Larger meta-puzzles (what does the pattern of E.V.I.L cells represent?) and secondary live events also live inside the Operations context.

As the game continues we approach our climactic final event. This consists of two different elements:

- A premium, 24-hour pay-to-play chase targeted at corporate partners. This is a high-octane event inspired by 'The Game'-games. Players, in teams of 4-6, race around our fair capital completing challenges demanding mental ingenuity with physical stamina and a little courage, also including elements that connect with the larger game community allowing non-attendees to follow their progress and participate too. As these teams complete their work...
- ...the mass-scale event kicks off, with hundreds of our players staging a series of impromptu flash-mob style "loveliness interventions" that defeat E.V.I.L once and for all!

We think our game structure has several advantages. Our emphasis on single-player activity means it's an accessible experience for casual audiences who can make real game-progress on their own, starting from the moment they sign up. Passing visitors can even try

various missions before they sign up- just visiting to play one particular Flash game, for instance. It also creates that "whoa, is it that time already?" effect that we associate with compelling gameplay experiences.

The team-based play is a natural route to bring new players into the game, and instantly associate them with a network of fellow players who can support them. It also encourages discussion of the game among pre-existing social networks, and provides an intermediary step between single-player participation and global collaboration for people who might not be used to that level of communication.

FUNDRAISING

There are several fundraising routes within **Sleeper Cell**.

- cell sponsorship
- merchandise sales
- social fundraising
- premium event participation
- corporate partnership

all money donated to the game by players is converted into the game-currency of bonds, a rather weak lira-level currency that makes even small donations look good... although of course it makes large donations look even better. Once donated (either by a player, or to a player) these bonds can optionally be spent on in-game things, such as sponsoring a cell or purchasing unique game merchandise. Ideally we'll encourage non-player sponsors (friends, family, colleagues) to sponsor their player via our website, thereby introducing them to the game. We can possibly go on to use this to keep sponsors updated on the progress of the player they're supporting.

As previously mentioned some of our more advanced training missions are designed to be the kind of far-out and remarkable challenges that people complete for initiatives such as Comic Relief, and the game will support players in sourcing extra sponsorship for completing these, allowing us to reach donors outside the direct player community.

Finally, we will charge for participation in the *premium* live event at the game's finale. We should be able to raise a substantial sum this way as our research into [similar events](#) shows that entrance fees of £100s-per-head / £1000s-per-team are not unheard of.

Finally, we will also explore possible collaborations with companies that might be willing to support the **Sleeper Cell** project - for instance, a mission could be co-sponsored by an organisation, such that they make a small donation every time a mission is completed, in the style of [Free Rice](#).

OTHER MEDIA

We'd love to make use of **Cancer Research UK's resources**. First of all, we think the game will be a fun and novel experience that their existing supporters would like to hear about, so we'd like to get the word out via all their existing communications; integrating Sleeper Cell directly guarantees that players know it's a game and that it aims to raise funds and awareness for CRUK. Their stores will make great bases for simple, physical Operations with excellent geographical spread, much like I Love Bees' axons. We'd be keen to work directly with CRUK in developing the meta-materials around the game which are important in converting players into legacy CRUK supporters and drawing attention to their brand. The Races for Life are ideal locations for smaller live events that have a massive ready-made audience and the potential to increase our player base with less need for from-scratch planning, players will be encouraged to run dressed as Agents. The modular nature of our game design allows us to make changes depending on what level of support we can secure.

LIVE EVENTS

Like all the most exciting ARGs, Sleeper Cell crosses over into the real world too.

First of all, we distinguish "**live events**" from mere clues or missions tied to particular physical locations (of which we anticipate there being many) - live events are things we genuinely have to actively run. We want to create a series of cool, medium-scale events around the UK that will give many players an opportunity to participate. For example, they'll be in accessible regional places like Bristol, Manchester, Newcastle and Edinburgh, all also places with regional CRUK fundraising offices. Where possible they will be web-cast live and have integrated opportunities for non-present players to participate and for all players to donate to CRUK. Contingencies will be in place in case events are completed too quickly or go awry in any way.

An example medium-scale event takes the form of an agent training exercise on a lake in canoes with 500 rubber ducks. Hand-eye coordination is critical to the agent in the field and what better way to test it than for our agents-to-be saving rubber ducks from the seething (flat calm) waters? Players can participate in teams, we actively encourage them to bring along other people if they have no-one who fancies being in the canoes themselves. Bank-side supporters and on-line watchers will also be actively involved. During the event it will become clear that not all rubber ducks are alike, some have messages on the bottom - perhaps even comments that players have made on forums during the game, perhaps photos that they've uploaded, clearly a communication, a threat?! from E.V.I.L. agents. Speaking of whom, E.V.I.L. (of course) put in a personal lacustrian appearance and their malign World of Leather influence will be foiled by players using coincidentally placed handy water-pistols. We have canoe-instructor contacts with whom we will be developing this carefully to maximise safety and enjoyment.

Our two most ambitious live events make up our finale, likely to be London-based for accessibility requirements.

Premium Experience: This is a thrilling, 24-hour race of adrenaline, action, adventure and the occasional nap as a vanguard of players strike at the core of E.V.I.L. It's a pay-to-play event and based on research we fully expect to be able to attract an audience for this, particularly amongst corporate teams. We're heavily inspired by previous events such as Challenge UK and The Game-style games. We have contacts in the Royal Marines who have a history of running similar events and will add valuable expertise and excitement to the event. It will be a grand spectacle as well as fun and unique for the pay-to-players so

that those who are participating in the Flash hug are also entertained.

Flash hug: This event, coinciding with the finale of the premium event, is for everyone that wants to take part and free to participate, as players subvert the newly disrupted and weakened influence of E.V.I.L. It's a coordinated series of "spontaneous" loveliness interventions across Central London, a sort of roving party that welcomes and delights all who encounter it. We're encouraged by events such as [Mobile Clubbing](#) and Improv Everywhere's [MP3 Experiment](#).

The finale itself involves these two aspects coming together to foil E.V.I.L. forever, or at least to laugh at their preposterous, impractical leather trouserage. CRUK will also have a crucial presence at this final event, the flash-hug serving as a promotional rally together with a final thank you to their supporters at the end location. If we can broadcast this on the side of the Houses of Parliament, so much the better.

TECHNOLOGY

We plan to customise Drupal, an open source content management system written in PHP, for the main game site. We have chosen this because it should provide much of the basic functionality that we will need, whilst being well-designed for customisation. It has various performance features as well the documentation and community support that come with a reasonably mature open-source product.

We anticipate that the main challenges that we will face will be the server load associated with the potentially high-profile nature of the site and the relatively short development time available.

Who will we need?

The main people we will need to recruit are:

- Administrator for the server - to do general server administration, configure Apache, organise database and file backups, set up a cache compiler, make sure the server is secure, sort out load-balancing if necessary etc.
- One or two extra developers - ideally including somebody able to do urgent bug-fixing during working hours if necessary
- Flash developer - there may be some places on the site where we will want to use Flash (on the home page for instance)
- Web security expert - to do a security audit, we've got a reasonably amount of expertise already, but it's always good to have somebody in a dedicated role and to have a third party who can spot things that may have been missed
- Expert on PHP/MySQL performance and scalability - ideally it would be nice to have somebody to specifically look at this and carry out load testing, profiling etc.

We've got good contacts here and reckon we know where to start looking - and in some cases, have people in mind to ask.

Infrastructure

The main tasks here are:

- Organising hosting and discuss traffic expectations with hosting company (we are assuming CRUK does not have any servers that we could use)
- Domain name registration

- Set up server - see role of administrator above. We will also need to set up a secure subversion repository for version control, a bug tracker, and a test version of the site.
- Load testing of a basic Drupal installation.
- Load testing of the customised version of Drupal

The game will require some videos - we can use YouTube for these, although this will restrict us in the sense that we can't 'hide' videos hosted there.

Custom development

The requirements here will depend on the eventual game. At a broad level:

1. Donations - We need a means for people to make donations and would need to liaise with CRUK about the technical side of this, however Google Checkout may be a possibility here. Need a way to record how much has been donated by a particular person and a way to handle sponsorship.
2. The cells - display of missions and recording completed missions. We might also need to feed the information about completed missions into a person's profile and a leader board. We would need a way to determine if missions have been completed - in some cases this could just be a particular word that needs to be entered. In the cases of photos etc, we would need a way to manage this (Amazon's Mechanical Turk has been mentioned!)
3. Sponsoring cells - we will need a means to manage this sensibly, including the upload of the images (which may need to be moderated).
4. Cell management - we'll also need an admin interface to manage the content, cell 'state', set the correct answer, and so on.
5. Teams - we will need to provide facilities for people to join/leave teams, for team profiles, for team forums and for sharing unlocked content between teams.
6. Bonds - we will need the infrastructure to cope with awarding bonds and displaying figures in profiles and leaderboards.
7. Front-end design - this will depend on the technical skills of the graphic designer, but we may have the job of turning the graphic design for the site into HTML and CSS.
8. Support for premium live event - There may be some specific requirements for the website for the live events.

We'll use an iterative development methodology, making prototypes available for testing

and evaluation as early as possible. Although the [development timeline](#) lists only lists a couple of milestones, there would be more frequent 'internal' releases. We'll beta-test with friends and non-technical members of the team. We probably won't do any formal usability testing (unless there are obvious problem areas) as beta-testing should highlight any critical issues. We plan for the security audit of the code to happen at approximately the same time as this. We'd also need to decide on a policy for browser and screen resolution support and an accessibility policy.

Other sites and technology

There will also be one or two other websites involved in the game (e.g. the website of the E.V.I.L organisation). We plan for these to be reasonably simple Drupal installations (if not just static HTML/CSS) without any custom code.

WHY SLEEPER CELL?

Why is Sleeper Cell such a strong candidate for Let's Change The Game?

Sleeper Cell offers players an unparalleled opportunity for fun, creativity and truly memorable gameplay. We believe that the entertaining challenges, engaging and comedic storyline, and simple, accessible structure will attract a wide number of players and keep them hooked. By linking the game with donations without compromising the gameplay, we make giving money fun, ensuring a sizeable kitty for CRUK by the game's conclusion. Our commitment to powerful and informative branded material on the meta-level of the game will send an important message to our players and raise CRUK's brand profile amongst new audiences, and also separates the lighthearted tone integral to our game from the serious cause it aims to support. Further, we defend the game's use of comedy as critical in attracting a wide player base and achieving maximum impact, and will outperform a comparable "Serious Game" in terms of reach.

By combining proven concepts such as our secret-agent theme and mission-based structure, Sleeper Cell is completely individual, while ensuring that our audience will see where we're coming from. This will keep the experience memorable, fresh and accessible and leaves us confident of success in meeting our [aims](#).

From a development perspective, the highly modular aspect of the design gives us the ability to amend and refine the design during development, ensuring we can detour around any massive developmental headaches. We'd like to make this game as enjoyable to develop as it will be to play!

In short, Sleeper Cell will provide an awesome game experience for our players and the Cancer Research UK brand.

BUDGET

To us, the Let's Change The Game award represents a contingency fund. We intend to beg and borrow as many resources as possible, in order to minimise expenses and create an experience true to the ambitious scope we've already detailed. We'll dedicate a volunteer to establishing partnerships with supportive organisations.

Technical

Web site hosting that can withstand high-traffic is obviously a major requirement for the game. We have a contact who jointly runs a hosting company that have donated hosting for short-term high-profile events in the past (in exchange for a link to their website) so we are reasonably optimistic that we can obtain this as a freebie. A dedicated server generally costs approximately £150 per month, so we could cover this with the budget, but sourcing this as a donation item is a priority.

Other technical expenses may include video and web cam streaming and domain name registration. Video equipment will be borrowed from a contact.

We'd also like to come to an arrangement with a Flash games portal or development group to syndicate and possibly customise their content for Sleeper Cell.

Live event

The scope of our live event is very much dictated by what we can get for free.

Priority items include:

- Actors
- Props and costumes for live events
- Travel expenses for volunteers
- Trained "stunt" staff and associated equipment (although we already know that some organisations [e.g: the Marines] have a track record of running events [e.g: abseiling off things] for charity)
- First aid
- Public liability insurance (venue should have)
- Live webcast equipment
- Radio or telephone equipment to keep contact with players and event teams
- Construction of any physical puzzles

- Refreshments

Miscellaneous

There are obviously likely to be some miscellaneous expenses that are too insubstantial to source as donations: a ream of paper, a blank DV tape, and so on.

DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Phase One: Foundations

...until end-of-February

Aims:

- Finalise the game structure
- Kick-off planning meeting, including discussions with CRUK
- Recruitment of key volunteers
- Completion of detailed project spec

In detail:

- Draft game storyboard and begin to draft copy for websites, challenges and pre-game
- Plan technology requirements; identify any additional skill requirements for programming; organise web-hosting; complete list of development items, database schema and basic user interface design for custom development
- Produce game plan; conceive and compile challenges together with over-arching metapuzzles; draft pre-game plans together with PR
- Conceive and draft look of websites and characters; plan videos
- Produce events plan; set dates of live events; research and reserve potential venues; research relevant safety aspects
- Produce draft budget; identify potential supplementary sources of income including corporate sponsorship; devise in-game donation and sponsorship systems
- Recruit key additional team members including graphic designer, additional programmers and fund-raising coordinator
- Produce comms plan and put internal team communications systems in place; ensure three-way communication with CRUK and LCTG executive producers; arrange initial meetings with CRUK; produce PR plan, incorporating CRUK's requirements and identify methods of game promotion; identify legal issues with respect to players, live events, CRUK, receipt of charitable donations and all other aspects of the game; identify target demographics/communities for game

Phase Two: V1

March 1st - mid-April

Aims:

- Produce bulk of game materials
- Prepare all aspects of game for beta-testing
- Recruit and train non-core volunteers
- Present detailed plans to CRUK for review
- Negotiate with sponsors

In detail:

- Finalise story and complete copy; script videos
- Produce website prototype with most important features ready; complete load-testing; identify potential technology requirements for live events
- Synthesise challenges with story and combine with technology ready for beta-testing; prepare pre-game; review of game direction by CRUK
- Produce artwork for websites and other media, including that required for pre-game; prepare for videos and shoot after recruitment of CRUK ambassadors
- Finalise venues and book; source and obtain resources; finalise event details and prepare for walk-through testing; training plan for event staff
- Finalise budget and allocate funds; negotiate sponsorship deals with sponsors; put in place systems for player donation and sponsorship
- Recruit CRUK ambassadors for video; recruit additional team members as needed for completion of other aspects of project plan; recruit beta-testers
- Finalise PR approaches and begin implementation, produce draft press-releases and related output; devise press-response monitoring plan and indicators of game success and demographics; ensure CRUK ambassadors and other corollary volunteers receive relevant and timely information; player communication systems drafted; ensure Data Protection compliance of website and general player communication; identify specific legal issues with booked event venues including obtaining local authority approval and informing local police forces if necessary

Phase Three: Spit & polish

15th April - June 1st

Aims:

- Editing of all component parts in response to beta-test feedback
- Final production of all game elements
- Pre-game ready for deployment
- Sponsorship in place

In detail:

- Final modifications to copy
- Website beta-testing; bug fixing and security audit; source and obtain any required event technology
- Final cut for missions and other gameplay elements; modification in response to outcomes of testing; finalise pre-game for deployment
- Finalise artwork and printing if required; compile and edit videos ready for deployment; prepare for video/photography of live events
- Walk-through event testing; modification in response to outcomes of testing; finalise events and train any required event staff; contingency plan production
- Check systems for player donation; ensure payment of services and venues used
- Recruit events volunteers and events
- PR and marketing materials finalised ready for distribution; player comms systems in place and tested; targeted media notified of approaching pre-game launch; final co-ordination with and approval by CRUK; system for monitoring press response in place

Phase Four: Game on

1st June - 1st July (pre-game) and 1st July - early/mid-Sept for main game

Aims:

- Deploy pre-game
- Run game
- Monitor all aspects of game and player experience and adapt where required
- Record game aspects appropriate for production of final reports

In detail:

- *Ad hoc* game responsive writing
- Responsive maintenance of sites and event technology during game
- Recruit players; deploy pre-game; deploy game; monitor player experience and if necessary adapt gameplay
- Video/photography of live events; *ad hoc* game responsive artwork if required
- Run events; adapt if necessary; monitor and ensure safety and enjoyment of players
- Ensure donation systems working; monitor donation levels and communicate to other game aspects so that they can adapt accordingly
- Recruitment of volunteers in case of sickness or unavailability; coordinate volunteers during gameplay
- Monitoring of press response and deployment of additional PR materials if necessary; monitoring of communications; gathering of game meta data

Phase Five: Aftermath

After a bit of a rest

Aims:

- Obtain any outstanding sponsorship and close budget
- Produce final reports for CRUK on game outcomes
- Produce reports for sponsors
- Thanks to volunteers, sponsors and players
- Have a nice sit down, a cup of tea and perhaps a Rich Tea biscuit

THE TEAM

We're Guy, Juliette, Mike and Shane, going under the moniker **Law 37** - after the 37th entry in "[The 48 Laws of Power](#)." It reads:

CREATE COMPELLING SPECTACLES /// *Striking imagery and grand symbolic gestures create the aura of power – everyone responds to them. Stage spectacles for those around you, full of arresting visuals and radiant symbols that heighten your presence. Dazzled by appearances, no one will notice what you are really doing.*

Guy Parsons, Lead Designer

Guy will be acting as Lead Designer for the project with responsibility for the project as a whole.

Guy has previously acted as Community Manager for popular commercial ARG [Perplex City](#), and subsequently acted as Game Designer for online pet game [Moshi Monsters](#). Since then he's consulted with The Reading Agency, presented at events run by Creative Partnerships, Game City, De Montfort University, and Musictank, and is currently an Associate Producer for a cross-media project at [Raw Television](#) and New Media Manager at [Spa PR](#). He blogs at www.vexappeal.com.

Juliette White, Technical Architect

Juliette will be acting as Technical Architect of the project with overall responsibility for the technical implementation.

[Juliette](#) is a web developer (Java, PHP, MySQL) in the [Institute of Educational Technology](#) at [The Open University](#). She has worked as a programmer for the last five years during which time she has developed dozens of web sites and contributed to various open-source projects including [Moodle](#) (which is used by over 10,000 schools, colleges and universities). Before this, she studied Mathematics at [Oxford University](#) where she graduated with a top first and obtained a doctorate, worked as a cryptographer in the [Information Security Group](#) at Royal Holloway, University of London and took some time out to travel across Russia and China.

Over the years, she has organised various events ranging from game-based pub crawls to assassination games and most recently jointly devised and ran the treasure hunt at [Manorcon](#), the UK's largest board games convention. She also makes [cakes](#) and has occasionally been spotted in the poker rooms of casinos.

Mike Cox, Senior Producer

[Mike](#) will be acting as Senior Producer with the project. He'll be contributing to all aspects of the project, with particular regard to establishing partnerships with supportive organisations. He is also in charge of the live events.

Mike uses his disguise as a post-doc researcher in marine microbial ecology at the [University of Liverpool](#) to conceal his ARG obsession, a medium that combines his love of diversity, people and oddity perfectly. When it became clear that he was going to hang around Unfiction for a long time they made him a mod, currently wrangling Cloverfield.

He completed a PhD at Warwick University which drew upon climate change, marine bacteria and sampling adventures on the Arabian Sea. The bits he enjoys best are bioinformatics, teaching, bodging equipment on boats, giving amusing talks with little scientific substance and learning stuff with little practical application.

His nautical skills are well complemented by the head for heights he developed working atop a lighthouse.

Shane Rynhart, Assistant Producer

Shane will be Assistant Producer for the project. He'll be assisting with overall development and story writing and managing workflow. During the game, he'll be our chief liason with the player community and potential player groups.

Shane is an undergraduate in Creative Writing & Media Studies at Winchester University, and a former community moderator for Perplex City spinoff We Love Puzzles. A gaming and Internet addict, ARGs have often felt like a natural fit for him. Over the past few years, he's stuck his fingers in many pies, writing a serialised novel, a games review site, several short plays, and occasionally embarrassing himself in front of the YouTube going populace of the world to name but a few endeavours.