

# *Managing and updating Umbraco media cheat-sheet*

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A guide to the “right way” to keep media up to date in Umbraco and avoiding the pit-falls.

## Resources:

- [Umbraco Editor’s manual](#)
- [Watch the Umbraco.tv short introduction to the media section](#)

## **Warning:**

The media area in Umbraco is open to all and does not have any form of audit trail or rollback facility.

Please exercise care when updating or deleting media.

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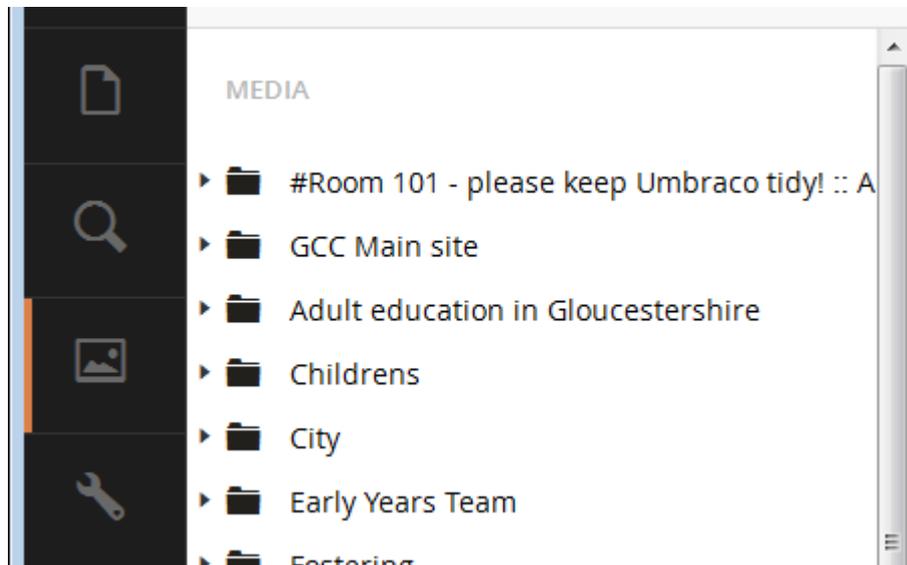
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## Uploading and organising media



Media on Umbraco is just like the folders and files on your computer or network with a few enhancements.

Create and use folders to organise your files into logical groups. Don't drop files in the root area – we will either move them (to Room 101 if we can't identify a logical folder) or delete them (if you upload something to root & it's not in use a week later).

Think carefully about the folder layout – it's certainly often easier to find content if the folder tree mirrors the content tree but in cases where media files are shared across several sections, this method can lead to duplication.

The media tree uses the standard Umbraco interactions:

- Open & close nodes on the tree with the triangles - ▶ and ▼
- Click the node label to open it (folder or file)
- Click the three dots at the right of the node label to create an item in folders
- Right click the three dots to open a menu of other actions (including move & delete)

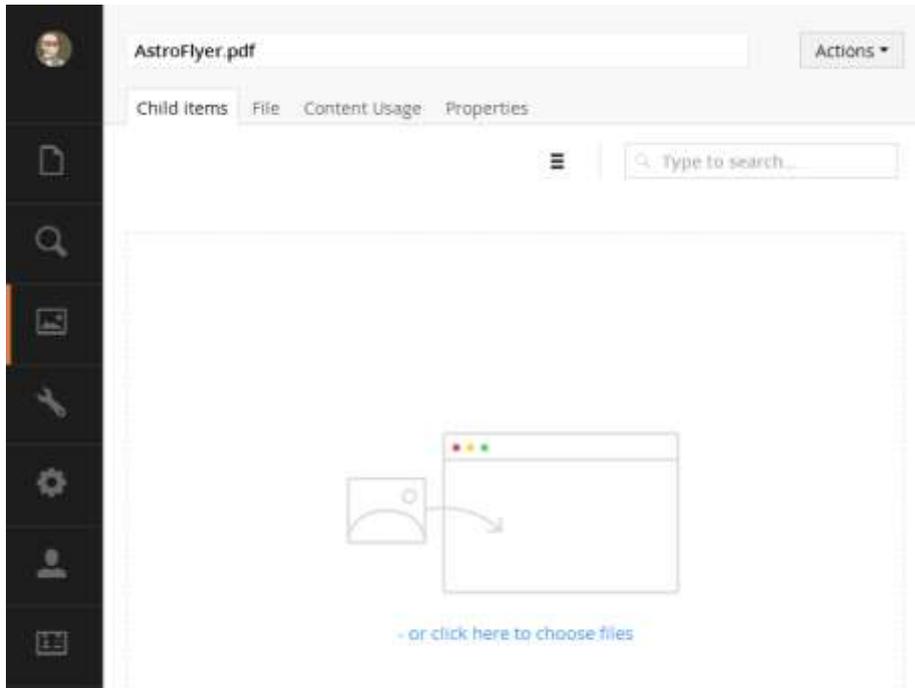
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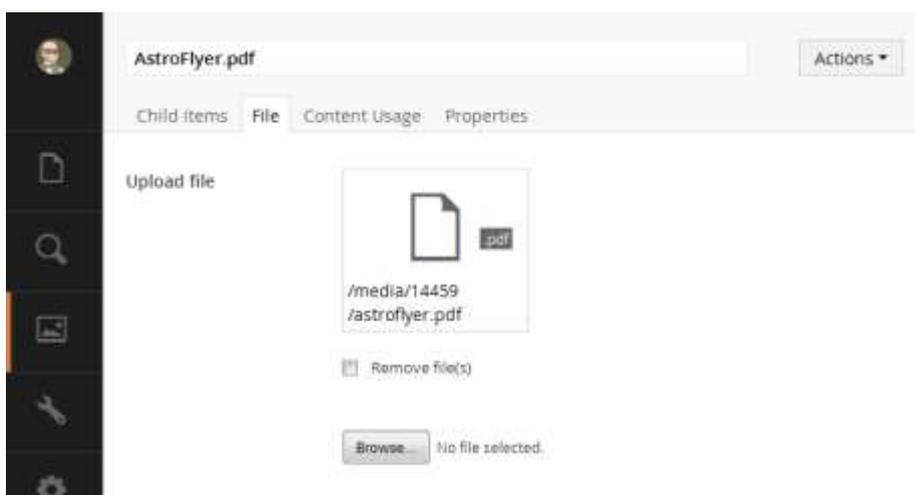
## **Pitfall: files can have children**

Umbraco allows you to add files as children of other files and the layout of file editor is confusing.

The screen grab below shows a file opened on the default tab with a huge drop zone & the standard “choose files” link – use this and you get ‘child files’.



File manipulation happens on the “File” tab.

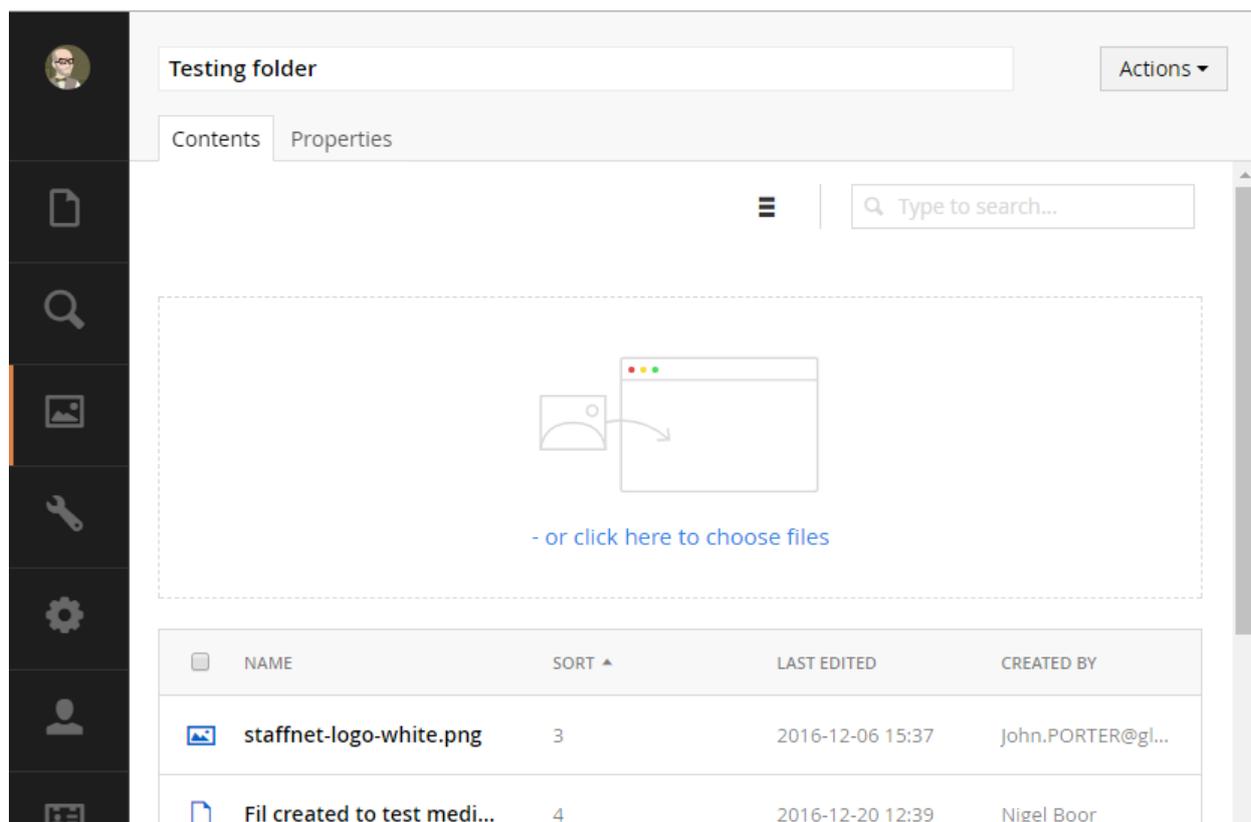


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## Uploading multiple files at once

One of Umbraco's real time savers is the bulk upload option. Files can be dragged and dropped or selected in browse mode using Windows' multi pick ([Ctrl]+[click]).

With a folder open Umbraco offers a 'drop zone' onto which you can drag any number of files you have selected in Windows Explorer (or any other drag & drop friendly app). If you don't like drag and drop you can use the "- or click here to choose files" link and select them in the files pop-up.



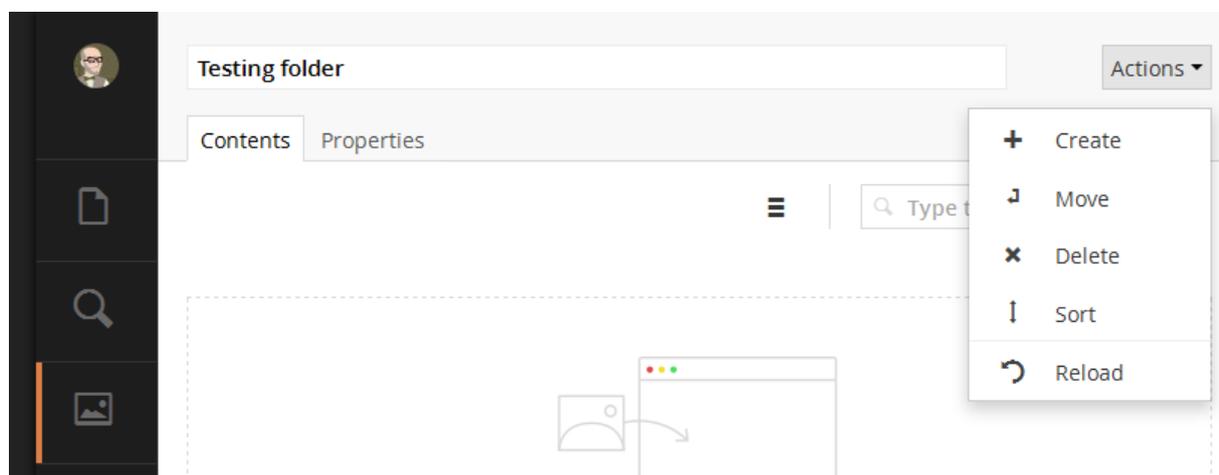
Files dragged in use the file name (including extension) as their Umbraco name so it's a good idea to give any file you expect to use in Umbraco a sensible and meaningful name. If the file name is cryptic or meaningless it is worth updating the Umbraco name after the upload.

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## Uploading / creating single files

If you prefer, you can create your files singly and control the title; simply open a folder and use “Create” on the “Actions” menu and select “File” or “Image” (you can use this menu to create folders too).



Both types allow you to set the title and offer an upload method:

- File types only allow you to use a browse button
- Image types have a drop zone and an “upload” link

However you get your files in you then hit “Save” & your file or image is ready to use.

“Files” are now ready to use but “Images” may need a little more tweaking as outlined in the Images section below.

## Non-image files

Umbraco will handle most file types (PDF, MSWord, etc.). There are a few types it will refuse to upload (like .htm and .svg) which will trigger an error message “Validation: The specified file type has been disallowed by the administrator”.

The system should handle files up to 50MB but our experience has shown that the Gloucestershire County Council network can cause problems with uploads over 25-30MB. If you have any very large files, we can upload them to [ww5.gloucestershire.gov.uk](http://ww5.gloucestershire.gov.uk).

## Video and audio

Umbraco does not handle video/audio very well. If you upload a video/audio file any link will just download the file to the visitor’s computer and they will then need to have local software capable of playing it.

The preferred method is to upload the video to YouTube or audio to SoundCloud. You can then and use Umbraco’s embed option which puts a playable YouTube video on the web page – SoundCloud embedding should be available soon<sup>1</sup>. [Contact the digital team](#) if you need help with this.

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<sup>1</sup> As of September 2017

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## Images

Umbraco will allow you to upload almost any size<sup>2</sup> and shape of image in the three common types: GIF<sup>3</sup>, JPEG<sup>4</sup> and PNG<sup>5</sup>. A full technical discussion of image manipulation<sup>6</sup> is beyond the scope of this cheat-sheet but there are some guidelines you should follow:

- Images should be more “square” than long & thin – ideally no more than 4 units wide for every 3 units high (4:3 aspect ratio) or 3:4 if portrait<sup>7</sup>
- The most useful size for an image is 400 pixels wide – resized images will be much smaller & your pages will load much faster than if an image is shrunk on-the-fly from 1600 pixels to 400 pixels for use on a news item or web page.
- Special purpose images should be prepared by an expert (our design team or the digital team)
- For JPEG images you can try adjusting the “Quality” when you export – reducing it from 100% to 95% or 90% can reduce file size dramatically with little visible loss of on-screen quality (Don’t change your original as JPEG compression is “lossy” so your output file loses detail you can’t put back.)
- PNG files offer levels of compression – this is lossless so there’s no loss in quality –the higher compression files are smaller therefore quicker to download but take slightly longer to decompress & display in the browser<sup>8</sup>.
- For the technical, all files can be further compressed if you experiment with reducing the number of colours used (colour depth) – if the image looks as good with 64 thousand colours as it does with 16 million, you will save on size

Try to get all your images below 100kB and within quality constraints, as small as possible.

Note: all the manipulation should be done in a good image editor like Photoshop or The GIMP otherwise you will see rapid loss in quality.

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<sup>2</sup> The system limit is 50MB

<sup>3</sup> GIF: Graphics Interchange Format – good for images with large blocks of a single colour like cartoons or clip-art GIFs can have a transparent background

<sup>4</sup> JPEG: Joint Photographic Experts Group – good for complex images i.e. photographs or images with gradients JPEGs cannot have a transparent background

<sup>5</sup> PNG: Portable Network Graphics – a more modern format good for both types PNGs can have a transparent background

<sup>6</sup> If you have an image heavy site it is worth learning about image manipulation and compression so your pages are not too large and slow to load

<sup>7</sup> There are exceptions for images intended for special locations like the footer logo but leave these to the experts.

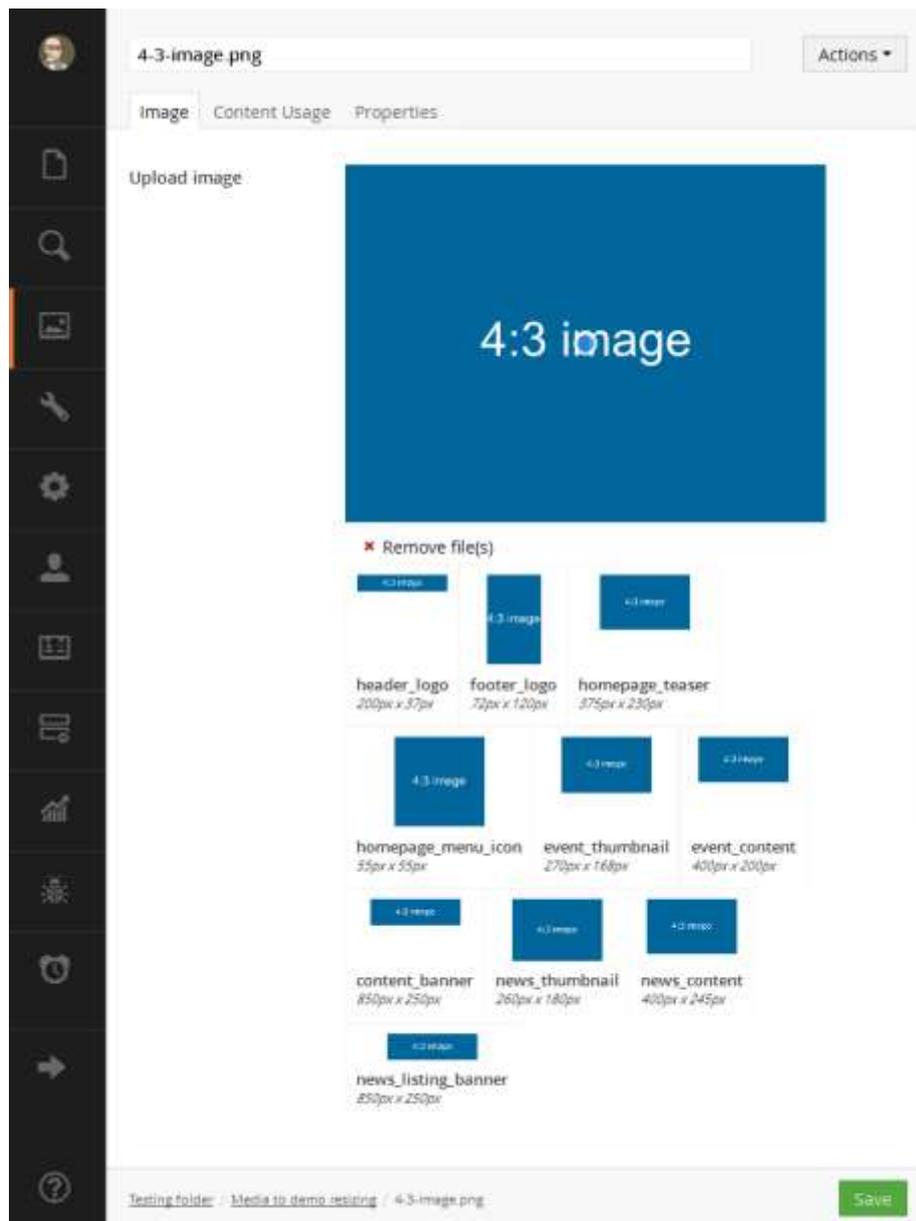
<sup>8</sup> On a modern browser this delay is minimal so always choose the maximum compression.

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## Umbraco image “editor”

(More of a “tweaker”)

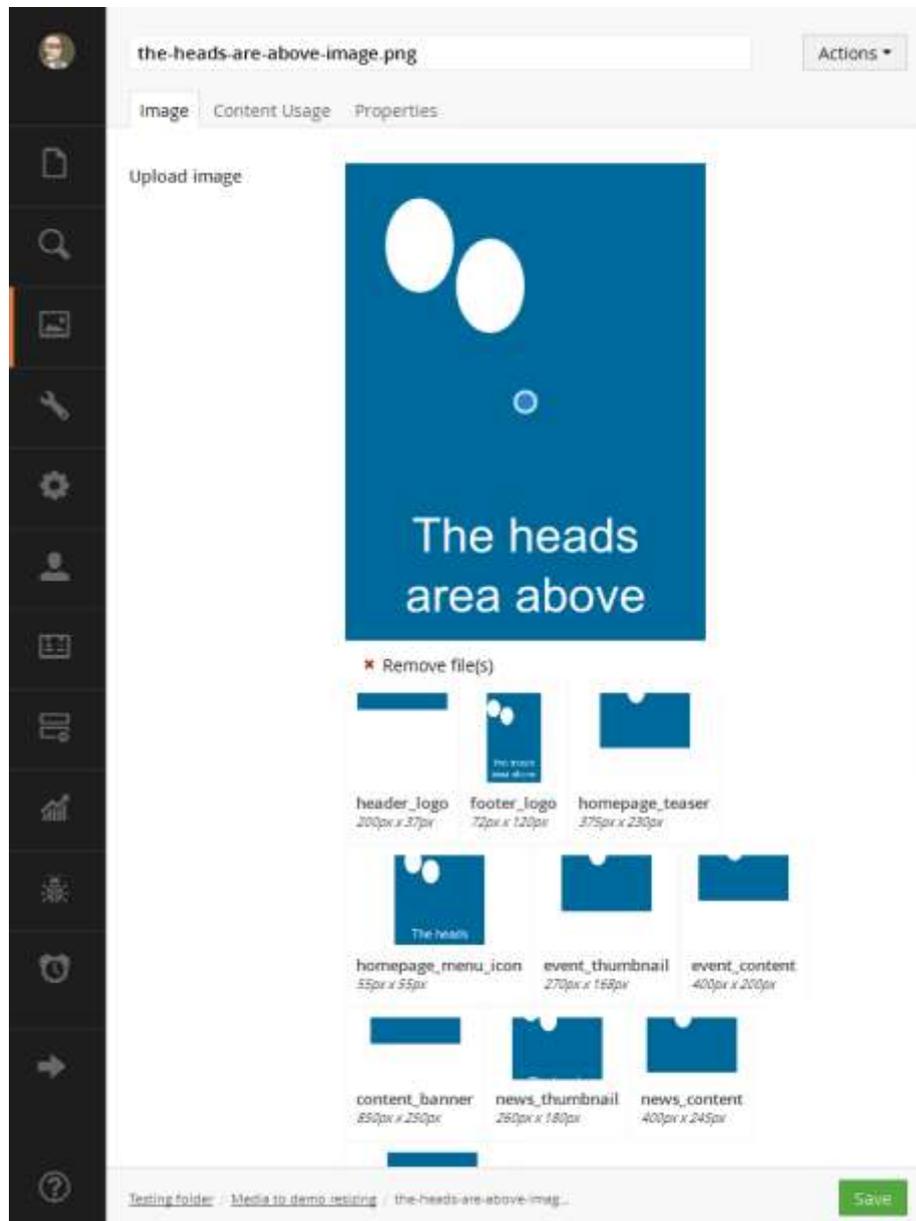
Once you have uploaded your images there are a couple of tweaks you might need to make to ensure they work in most circumstances. As shown in the screen grab below, Umbraco crops the image to various sizes for use in the standard image slots on our templates (shown below the main image).



The 4:3 image shown works quite well as the subject (the words) is fairly central & the 4:3 image aspect ratio is tolerant of the cropping – only the footer logo suffers ‘damage’.

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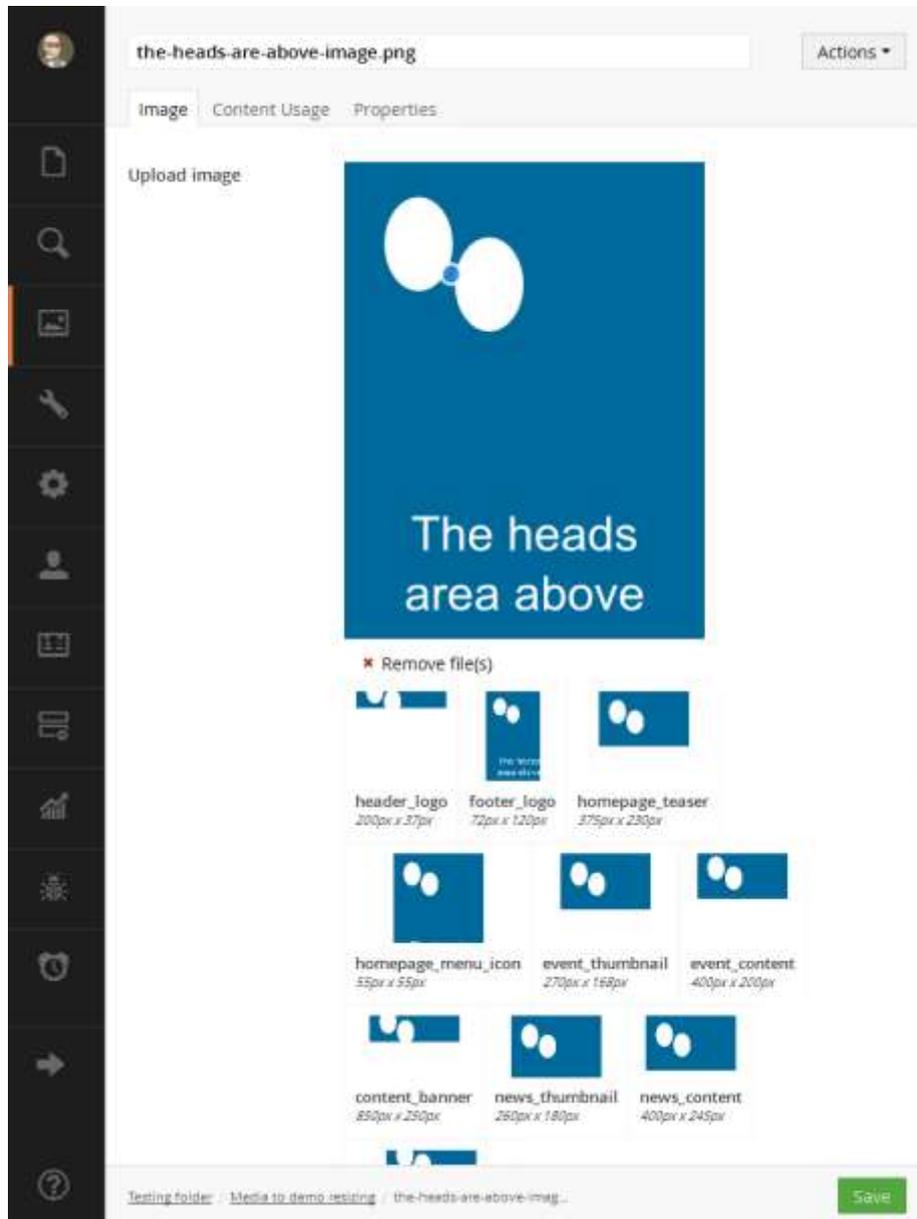
However, if we take a typical 'portrait' with the heads in the top left. The automated clipping is not so useful.



The subjects of the image – the faces of the people – are cropped out in the sub-images which are wide like the banners and event.

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The solution is to use the blue focus dot to re-crop the images centred as far as possible on the dot. As seen below.



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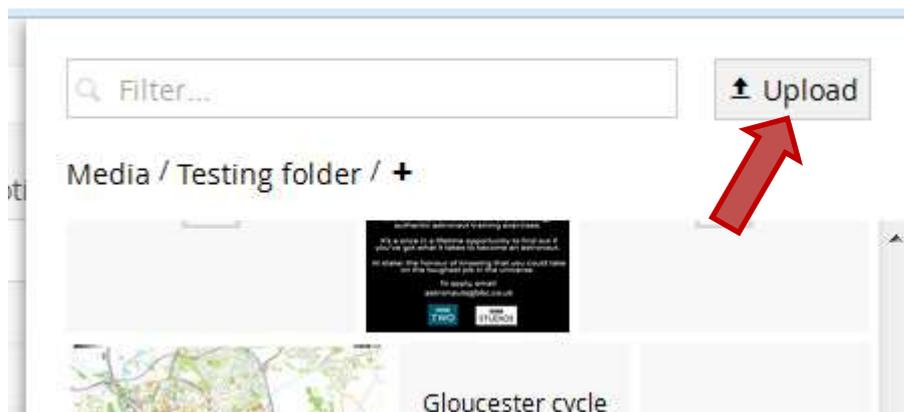
You can also select and 'edit' the sub-images, although it is often difficult to improve on the default blue dot crop. In the detail below you can see the Footer Logo selected for further tweaking & a combination of zooming (using the slider) & panning (click & drag) gives a better result.



**Remember to save after all the tweaking!**

## Uploading media while editing a page

The procedures described above work well for multiple files and but if you just want to make a quick upload to attach a new file to some link text in your page you can use the "Upload" button in the "link to file" panel popped up by the link creator.



You won't be able to edit the file title but for quick uploads this is fine.



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## Updating Media “Files” avoiding gotchas, pitfalls and outright tank-traps!

This section only covers “Files” – updating “Images” is not recommended (or possible, reliably).

Other than the “file child” warning covered in “Pitfall: files can have children” above, there are several more traps you can fall into when updating media. This section covers “the right way” and highlights where you can go wrong.

The designed behaviour is quite simple but each step has a problem or pitfall:

- **Page has media file which needs updating**  
(first you have to find it – see “Pitfall No 1: how do I know which media to update?”)
- **Ignore page**  
(for now – see “Pitfall No 3: a media update will not update link text on the page”)
- **Open media and replace file with new version using the browse button**  
(you could upload this to the wrong place – see “Pitfall: files can have children”)
- **Save media & system updates all references to that image or file with new version**  
(you may have problems checking this – see “Pitfall No 2: Umbraco does not fully update internally when media is updated”)

### Pitfall No 1: how do I know which media to update?

Umbraco drops files into folders on the server & uses these to create the links on the web page so for example on a test page I have linked to the AstroFlyer which is:

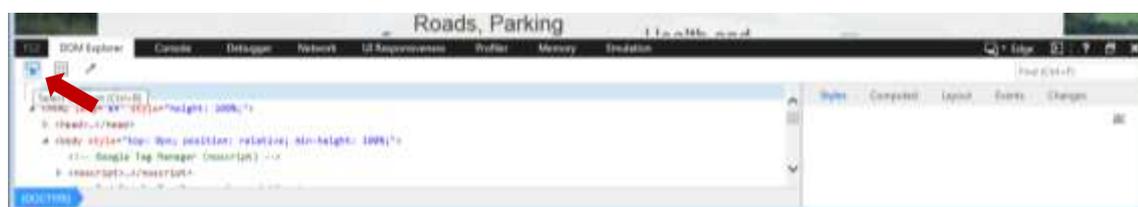
<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/14459/astroflyer.pdf>

How do we know where to find this?

It is possible for Umbraco administrators to find media using the /media/14459 part of the link but if you can see the page containing the link there is a far smarter and simpler way. See “Helpful hint: the “Content Usage” tab shows where the file is being used” to find out how to see where the file is used.

Most browsers have developer tools you can open using [F12]. This pops up a slightly scary panel containing some code and a small toolbar. One of the tools is the element picker which is normally at the left of the top toolbar – arrowed in red in the examples below

Figure 1: Internet Explorer



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Figure 2: Chrome

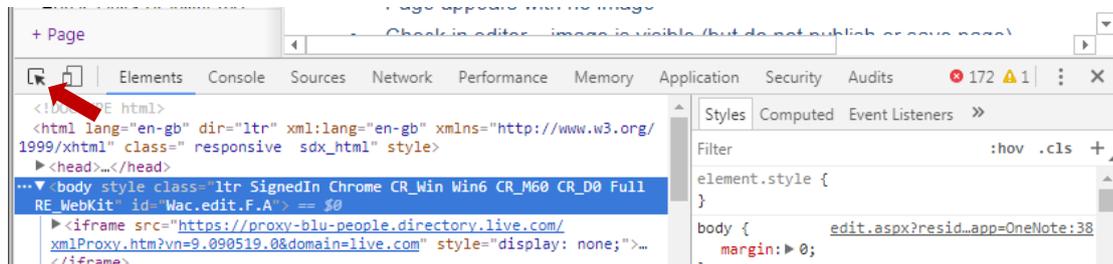
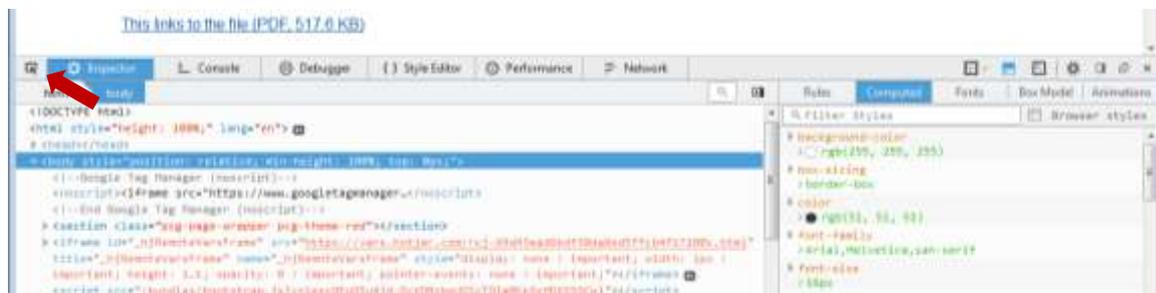
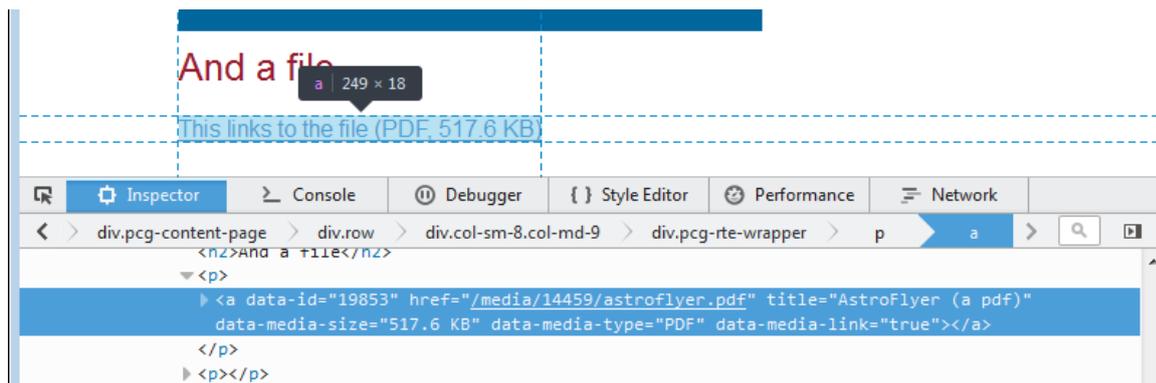


Figure 3: Firefox



If you click the picker & move the cursor over the link to the file you need to edit and click, your browser will highlight the code for the link as shown below (using Firefox).



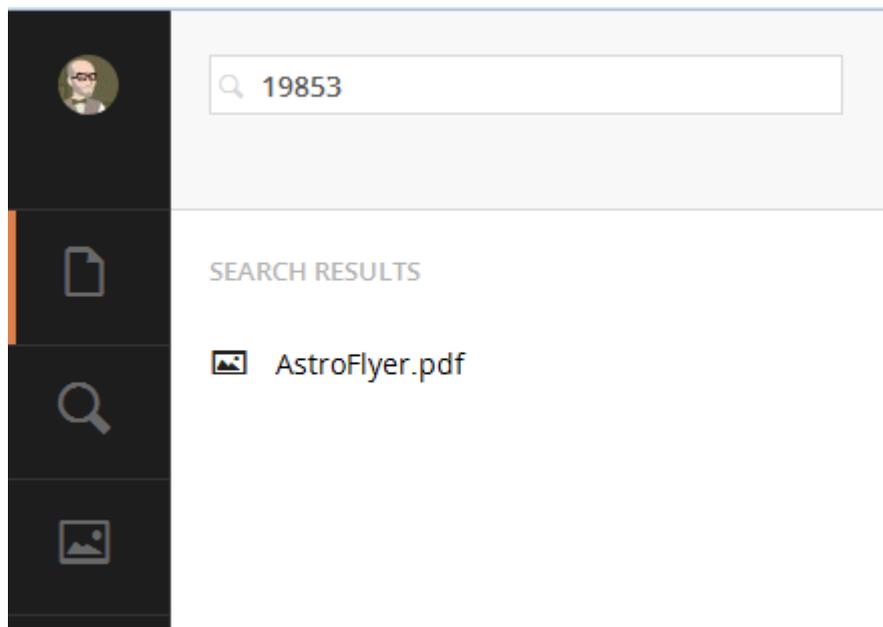
The code highlighted contains a "data-id=" attribute followed by a number; this is the Umbraco Media ID.

```
<a data-id="19853" href="/media/14459/astroflyer.pdf" title="AstroFlyer (a pdf)" data-media-size="517.6 KB" data-media-type="PDF" data-media-link="true">This links to the file</a>
```

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In this case the Media ID is 19853 – notice this has no relation to the “/media/14459” from the link. Once you know this number finding the media item is simple. In the media or content tree, use the search box to search for the media Id:



## **Pitfall No 2: Umbraco does not fully update internally when media is updated**

Assuming you have navigated the first pitfall, found your correct media item and remembered to use the “Browse” button on the “Files” tab, you will want to confirm that the update has occurred.

If you go back to the content editor and inspect the link on the page, you will often see the old link.

Similarly, if you open the page in the browser, the link seems to point at the old file.

Umbraco seems to have a problem propagating the changes to any browser tab on the browser you used to make the media update.

To check whether your file has been updated you need to open a different browser so if you are editing in Chrome, switch to Firefox or Internet Explorer & browse the page. If you only have Internet Explorer you can open an “[InPrivate](#)” browsing window – hold [Ctrl]+[Shift] and hit [P].

## **Pitfall No 3: a media update will not update link text on the page**

If you have used link text on the page that, for example, specifies an update date – eg: “Foobar handling procedure – updated June 2010” – then the media update will not affect this. Should you upload the Foobar procedure for September 2016, you will need to visit all the pages from which you link to this media item and manually update the text.

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Helpful hint: the “Content Usage” tab shows where the file is being used

Actions ▾

Child items File Content Usage Properties

Content Usage

- Recycle Bin > Generic new page (trashed)
- Site > Put your testing stuff here > Page and Media handling tests > Default media