

# MIKE KNAPP

Lead Designer & Developer  
Cumbria, UK  
07951 074 237  
mike@knapptype.com  
portfolio.knapptype.com

Designer and design systems specialist with around ten years of experience. My background is unusual – I write code, run experiments, work alongside research, and lead creative teams, often within the same week. I think systems before screens and care about outcomes over output, but I'd rather show my working than tell you about it. The full breakdown of the Skipton design system lives at [portfolio.knapptype.com](https://portfolio.knapptype.com).

## CORE SKILLS

- **Design System Leadership:** Owning direction, governance, adoption, documentation, and the bridge from brand identity into scalable, buildable, token-based components
- **UI Craft:** Typography, colour, layout, hierarchy, interaction detail – across email, web, app, and customer portal surfaces
- **End-to-End Product Thinking:** Taking ambiguous problems from framing and exploration through prototyping to live delivery, recently across the CRM-to-web journey integration and customer portal migration projects
- **Accessibility & Inclusive Design:** Built into system foundations, not bolted on – including dark mode, contrast compliance, and inclusive component patterns
- **Code-Comfortable:** HTML, CSS, and Liquid – able to implement and iterate UI directly, interrogate technical constraints, and work fluently in AI-native workflows
- **Research & Experimentation:** Built and ran A/B testing programmes, scaling from 5 to 40+ tests per year within 12 months; worked alongside the research team on direct consumer sessions, applying findings to ground design decisions in real user evidence.
- **Cross-functional Leadership:** Embedded partnership with engineering, product, brand, and marketing; creative direction, mentorship, and team enablement
- **Tools:** Figma (advanced – variables, tokens, components, prototyping), Adobe Creative Suite, HTML, CSS, Liquid, Google Analytics

## EDUCATION

BA (Hons) Graphic Art & Design

# PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

## Lead Designer & Developer – Design Systems & CRM

Skipton Building Society - *September 2021 - Present*

- **Architected and owned a production design system** used across 60+ weekly campaigns and 4 brands – shaping direction, defining tokens, components, and governance, and driving adoption across designers and engineers rather than just contributing patterns. The system is documented end-to-end in my online portfolio.
- **Acted as the bridge between brand creative direction and scalable product implementation** throughout a full organisation-wide visual identity transformation, translating brand evolution into systematic, implementable patterns across app, web, customer portal, and CRM simultaneously.
- **Built accessibility into the system foundations** – dark mode logic, colour contrast compliance, and inclusive design patterns designed in from the start rather than added later. Presented “Accessibility Is Just a Swear Word” at the Advanced Email Summit and featured on Validity’s Email After Hours podcast on the subject.
- **Worked across product squads and cross-functional teams** – partnering with engineering, product, brand, and marketing as a strategic peer rather than a downstream resource; reduced development time by 30% through shared system adoption.
- **Designed and delivered multi-channel customer journeys end-to-end** – from problem framing through to high-fidelity UI and live delivery; sat in on consumer research sessions run by the research team and applied findings throughout the design process.
- **Built and governed an experimentation framework** that scaled structured A/B testing from 5 to 40+ tests per year within 12 months – introducing test plan documentation, learning summaries, and clear decision-making criteria now used across the business.
- **Provided creative direction, quality gatekeeping, and informal leadership** – running critiques, setting standards, training and onboarding team members, and managing agency and freelancer output to consistent system standards.
- **Shortlisted in the final five for Employee of the Year**, from over 2,000 nominations, recognising impact across design systems, brand, and cross-functional delivery.

## PREVIOUS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Digital Design Developer** – Skipton Building Society – *June 2018 – September 2021*

**Creative Designer** – Leeds Trinity University – *December 2016 – June 2018*

**Digital Designer** – Skipton Building Society – *December 2015 – December 2016*

**Studio Manager** – Printworks North – *August 2013 – November 2015*

Further employment history is available on request