

## **Introduction**

Spatial data underpins the majority of the work Hampshire County Council(HCC) provides to its customers; the services the authority deliver all happen somewhere, impacting on someone, be they part of the public, business or visitor community. In recent years the Council has recognised the benefit that open data, and particularly open spatial data, can play in improving the services it delivers, but how can HCC get people to make more use of it?

## **Problem**

What the Council hopes to achieve through attending the workshop is how to engage and encourage those who may want to use the Council's data. So far the publication of open and linked data sets has had mixed success in this area. Interest on public Rights of Way proved popular, however data about Hampshire's Land Supply Phasing (in linked format), though useful as a tool for viewing the information, had no (known) uptake on the linked data aspect.

Are the Council choosing the wrong data to publish? What data do people want? Is it still a licensing issue that puts people off (OSM community have raised questions over licensing and using HCC's Rights of Way)?

## **Background**

Hampshire County Council is committed to open data, transparency and accountability, demonstrated by its [Open Data Policy](#). So far the Council has published data as recommended by Central Government, around spend and salaries (democratic data) as well as identifying other datasets considered to be of interest.

In addition it has begun to publish spatial data as open following recognition that the services it delivers have it at their centre. By making data open a new means by which the Council interacts with its customers could be introduced with service delivery being enhanced and/or improved.

Hampshire County Council has excellent data management and governance in place overseeing its corporate spatial data, held in an ESRI solution. Each dataset is catalogued and has an owner and custodian that are ultimately responsible for the data's accuracy, currency and availability. Utilising the catalogue allowed the Council to more easily identify datasets that may be suitable for publishing as open.

## **Work to date**

Two main projects have been delivered by Hampshire County Council that relate to the workshop, the first was completed in 2011 and saw the conversion and subsequent publication of [Land Supply House Phasing](#) data as linked and open, the second was the publication of Hampshire's [Public Rights of Way](#) as open.

The land supply data was a pilot project investigating the possibilities that linked data may offer the Council in the future. Due to limited resource and technical skills, in what was then a relatively new area of work, the Council employed a company, Swirrl, to complete the work. The outcomes of the project were twofold: to take a dataset that had previously been hosted on the Council's website in a static form and make it more accessible through new visualisations, the second was to make the

data available for others to access and link to. The first part of the project has proved successful: a new map tool allowing users to navigate through the data both in a spatial and temporal manner. The latter part has proved less successful as the Council is currently unaware of anyone having used the data, a disappointment following the work put in by both parties.

Hampshire was the first Council in England to release its Public Rights of Way as open data, under the Ordnance Survey Open Data licence. Having gained exemption from OS (via their Exemption Process) the Council's data managers and Countryside Access team went about developing process and procedure for its regular publication. During this process HCC engaged with a local Open Street Map contributor who had previously requested the data. The Council worked with him to identify the best methods for its publication and to help him develop an [application](#) that allowed users to report issues with the rights of way network while in the field.

## **The Future**

Hampshire County Council is currently developing a Local Information System alongside 20 other public sector bodies, including Districts, Unitaries, National Parks, Fire, Police and the Army, called the [Hampshire Hub](#). The Hub will act as a data store for public information and where applicable be open by default publishing the data under the Open Government Licence. It looks to pull data and information used to make decisions by the partners into one place, delivering a single evidence base for decision making in Hampshire.

Included in the data will be the publication of spatial data and the provision for inclusion of datasets required under the INSPIRE regulations. By providing a solution for spatial data publication and distribution the Hub project looks to help alleviate some of the pressures on resources throughout the partners' organisations.

Not only is the Hub looking to provide improved services for the partners it is also looking to promote and increase engagement opportunities with the public and business communities. It is this element that would form part of HCC's interest in the workshop; 'How do we better engage?', 'How do we publish in formats that will be wider used?' and 'How can we provide geospatial data to those who want it?'

The Council has recently been awarded funding from the Open Data Strategy Board to develop an Open / Linked Planning Register. This will look to collate the planning registers from all the planning authorities in Hampshire and deliver the information through intuitive tools and visualisations, as well as make the data available in a linked open data format. The outputs from the project will include both an open source method for converting data to linked format, a schema for matching planning register outputs to the standards developed for this project, by working the Local eGovernment Standards Body and the means by which the data can be interrogated and visualised.

## **Conclusion**

Hampshire County Council is already publishing data in a variety of formats, both textual and spatial and open and linked. Its Hub project is looking to increase the publication of data to help improve decision making but also to help further engage with the communities that HCC serves as a public body. A place on the workshop would allow HCC to be part of the discussions about the future of data sharing and the integration between spatial data it holds/owns and other datasets that are

available to users. Having already been involved with data publication, Ordnance Survey exemption, linked data projects and the involvement of outside parties, the presence of Hampshire at the workshop should prove beneficial to all.