

Local Government Open Data Breakthrough Projects 2014/15 Evaluation Report

Project title: Hot Harrow

Lead organisation: Harrow Council

Date report is submitted: 16th April 2015

Type of project: Releasing of building level thermal heat loss data via interactive online platform to support local engagement

Total grant: £56,000 plus internal contributions for additional staffing costs

Summary of the project

Hot Harrow was based around the creation and open sharing of building level thermal data for the Harrow area. The data collection and preparations would use complex geospatial technologies but the output was required to be simple, easy to use and easy to access by a plethora of user types. As well as the open data sharing, an outward communication plan was delivered to navigate potential users towards the data, this included local residents, academia and local businesses.

Image

Below are two of the user friendly online tools built for the project output



Challenge/opportunity:

The challenge was to release data that is used or created by the local authority and goes on to be stored internally to little benefit when in fact it's open use would greatly benefit others. The related opportunities to this included aiding service delivery, environmental projects, open data and detection of unsafe dwellings. Overall assisting to deliver the Council's 'cleaner, safer, fairer' priority to benefit Harrow residents and businesses.

The project has a plethora of benefits to the council, its partners, businesses, local economy and residents. These include sharing the output data openly to allow local business to effectively target loft insulation schemes; allow green energy companies to target industrial sites; engaging the public and optimising council services in the right areas. Also included in the aerial data collection is LiDAR which has also been used in a number of beneficial ways internally and externally.

Data published and uses:

address [Harrow Council, Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow, HA1 2XY](#)

tel 020 8736 6088 email gisteam@harrow.gov.uk web www.harrow.gov.uk

- Parties consulted
 - Following the creation of the data outward communication was sent to over 100 parties covering local academia and businesses. In addition promotion will go out via the public website to all Harrow residents.
- Datasets published
 - Raw thermal survey data for expert interpretation
 - LiDAR derived building polygons for license free use in building analysis
 - Processed and averaged heat loss data by OS building data (the OS part is not open but is publically accessible)
 - Processed and averaged heat loss data by LiDAR building polygons – fully open
- Volume of data downloads within period
 - Due to the online tool nature of the open data individual downloads are not the only appropriate measure, therefore other stats have been included
 - Data downloads = 20+
 - Landing page which include simple address check hits = 460 views
 - Address check tool along = 1180 hits in the last month
 - Advanced data analysis webpage hits = 206 views in 2 months
- Datasets downloaded most often
 - As you can see from the above stats the simple address check tool has proven to be popular, with an average page view time of 2.5minutes (much higher than most pages) it shows people are stopping to look at the data
- User types
 - Obviously from web transactions this is hard to determine but from some sampling research we have determined the majority of users have been local residents and local academia, take up by local businesses has been lower than expected

Approach to publishing data

The overall approach Harrow took was to take something with large internal benefit and share it via user friendly tools benefit a wider user base. The approach has been to collect data, enrich it using analysis resources and other relevant council datasets. This process also included the creation of license free alternatives to ensure elements of the data were totally open.

Following the actual data creation the approach was to be as user friendly as possible and create tools that help users access and interpret the data instead of assuming they all have the skills and tools to do this.

To share news of the available dataset a communication strategy was drawn up which covered both internal and external audiences.

- It has been published and promoted on the councils website and intranet
- The data was published on the national data webstie data.gov.uk
- An outward communication run was done via email and letter to an address list of local businesses and academia
- In turn some external websites and publications have picked up on the publishing and further disseminated it
- In addition Harrow are presenting on the topic at a number of conference events in 2015

Based on the web use statistics Harrow are confident that the dataset and interactive tools have been well received and widely utilised.

To aid in people's use of the data, help guides were created which explain each of the tools, in addition richer metadata is being collated to accompany the raw files. Shortly Harrow will release

the data in more open formats such as GML and load associated metadata into the data.gov.uk website.

Looking forward to future data refreshes, it is unlikely we will collect the raw thermal data again due to costs; however the portal and interactive tools can be re-used for other areas. Current discussions include using other elements of the platform as an open data gallery where users can easily search for the data they want. With regards to the thermal data we are looking to include this in our INSPIRE compliant datasets.

Benefits and impact

What is the impact of publishing the data or providing a service to your organisation and to the data users?

As an authority the internal benefits created by the project were wide spread. Some benefits were immediate one offs where as others form part of on-going analysis and decision making.

Some examples include:

- In partnership with the police 6 illegal cannabis factories were located and shut down
- Data was used as evidence in successful bids to green initiative funds
- The housing department adjusted their solar panel project to allow for properties identified as needing insulation work as well
- Around 300 potential illegally used back garden dwellings were identified and investigated by the Planning Enforcement team
- Following analysis a better understanding of the boroughs building quality was known

More detailed case studies to be developed but in summary:

- Local businesses effectively targeting environmental schemes
- Local academia having access to case study datasets they previously wouldn't have been able to due to cost of collection
- Public engagement and education in open data and also green living
- Internal benefits of showing the benefit and simplicity of open data

Further information:

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Homepage to project <http://www.harrow.gov.uk/thermalharrow>

