

Future Cities Workshop #2

What happened?

The morning consisted of speakers giving presentations on future cities challenges as seen by local authorities, and representatives of government agencies. The afternoon turned to four parallel breakout sessions, with outcomes described next.

Outcomes

Group 1:

Problem: Data liberation - how do we release more of the data locked up in Council machines?

One barrier is that "the data isn't good enough to be released". In fact, any single reason is enough to red light release (we don't have it, it's too hard to prepare it; it's too sensitive).

Data available: Master Data Management System, integrating all customer data sources

(Mapped data, Library systems, Planning Portal, Database audit.)

Dark data - there's lots of uncatalogued databases on shared disk drives, which *could* be liberated

Data needed: Planning and roadwork mapping and related data.

A city data store that is clean, free, secure and supported.

Other resources needed: A way to overcome restrictions on Ordnance Survey data
Better open maps. A campaign to persuade data custodians that "sharing is fun".
Tools for discovering data on disk that might be worth sharing. Structured, tagged archives.

Research question addressed:

What needs to be done to liberate a city's data for citizen benefit?

Can we create a culture of city data stores and city data maps (showing where the data itself lies).

We need to catalogue the data that could be free before we can select the data to be liberated.

Group 2:

Problem: Carbon emissions from transport, and associated air quality. The problem is fundamentally about behaviour change, at three levels: individual, institutional, and infrastructural. The goal is a reduction in overall traffic flow and density. One means is a shift from private to public transport modes.

Data available: Traffic flow (local authority), manufacturer data, public transport data, parking, smartphone usage, air quality, people's destinations (mapamental). Software is also available (for optimisation).

Data needed: Destination data, motivation data (for mode choice), environmental impact, magnetisation data, social patterns, social movement. Better (deeper analytical) software is needed.

Other resources needed: Quality public transport modes (convenient, seamless, safe)

Research question addressed: Can public transport be "organic" - as responsive and personalised as private transport? Can we make carbon impact meaningful? This is actually a question about communication and psychology, and relevant drivers of behaviour (envy vs conscience, aspiration and emulation).

Group 3:

Problem: How do we foster a data market, in which people trade their data?

Data available: The technology is there: people have NFC [and BTLE] phones, and we have the smartcards

Data needed: Innovation in the space to let people trade their phone data.

Other resources needed: Incentives, modelling, behavioural study.

Research question addressed: How do we plug all the pieces together?

Group 4:

Problem: Organisation of events: retrieving data for infrastructure
e.g. Commonwealth Games

Data available: Some open data sets, but a lot is not easily accessible or machine understandable. Recording the data is not enough!

Data needed: Geo data - transport, planning, etc. In addition, better connectivity is required between the data sets that do already exist.

Other resources needed: Licences to use the data in mobile applications or in public. Programs and interfaces to access the data

Research question addressed: How do you incentivise people to record the data that is missing?

How do you make data publicly available? In other words, how do we (a) remove sensitive information, and (b) convince people to share?

Suggestions for final workshop

Focus on: Value, data markets, and citizens as data rights owners; Open street maps.

Speakers and talks

Confirmed speakers:

- Chris Dibben (Director, ESRC Administrative Data Research Centre)
- Andy Kerr (Director, Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation)
- Sally Kerr (Digital Services Manager, City of Edinburgh)
- Andrew Unsworth (Smart Cities & Communities Programme Manager, Scottish Government)
- Paul Carroll (Performance & Improvement Manager, Dundee City Council)
- Richard Bellingham (Director, Institute for Future Cities)

Agenda:

10.15 Chris Dibben (Director, ESRC Administrative Data Research Centre)

10.35 Andrew Unsworth (Smart Cities & Communities Programme Manager, Scottish Government)

10.55 Paul Carroll (Dundee City Council) 11.15 discussion - cities and data

11.35 tea/coffee

11.50 Andy Kerr (Director, Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation)

12.10 Richard Bellingham (Director, Institute for Future Cities)

12.30 Sally Kerr (Digital Services Manager, City of Edinburgh)

12.50 discussion - cities and mobility

13.10 lunch

13.40 Breakout discussion groups

15.00 tea/coffee

15.20 Reports from breakout groups

15.50 Next steps: identifying best resources; planning workshop 3

16.00 End

Number and geographical spread of delegates

There were 50 attendees; of these, 25 were from the city of Edinburgh and 17 from Glasgow; of the remaining 8, most were from Tayside and Fife.