BATH: HACKED

Annual Report 2015-2016

Summary

Bath: Hacked has successfully completed its first year operating as a formal organisation. We have continued to deliver on our core aims of enabling the publishing and use of open data in the local community. For a small organisation, run with volunteer labour, we've managed to continue to publish more open data, deepen our relationships with local organisations and the wider community, and continue to raise the profile of open data in the local community.

Looking ahead we have more work to do to transition from a model of running hack days and meetups to a programme of ongoing projects that will increase our impact in the local area.

Company Activities and Impact

Our ongoing activities can be divided into three broad categories:

1. **publishing and curating open data**, from the council and other local and national organisations for use by the local community and businesses
2. **hosting and running events to engage with the local community** and encourage the creation of useful tools, applications and visualisations
3. **ongoing project work** to explore and develop ideas in more detail

The following sections have more detail on our specific activities in each area during 2015-16.

Publishing and curating open data

The provision of the Bath: Hacked data store is a key part of our mission. It's ongoing availability supports the publication, collection and use of data by the local community and within a number of applications.

In 2015-16 we have:

- continued to publish new data into the store, including new datasets such as the B&NES public art catalogue, council building energy usage data, population projects, and the location of river rescue cabinets. **We now have [around 123 datasets in the primary store](#)**, many of which are regularly updating.

- greatly expanded the number of geographic datasets available by publishing **an additional [collection of 110 geographic datasets](#)** which provide an excellent picture of our local area, including green spaces, infrastructure, etc.

We have used these datasets in our events and there are signs that the local community is beginning to use these resources. For example our archive of car park occupancy has been used by both sides of the local debate surrounding the proposed park and ride. We have also collaborated with the Bristol Is Open project to ensure that the live car park occupancy data is available in their recently launched local transport API.

To highlight the variety of ways in which this data is being used, we have put together [a directory of maps and applications](#) that have been created by our community.

Hosting and running events

In 2015-16 we have continued to host a series of semi-regular evening events to encourage further publishing and use of data. We have also run two "hack day" events:

- **Summers of Data** (July, 2015) - a general hack day targeted at the tech community, judged by our local MP
- **Heart The Environment** (February 2016) - an [environment themed hack day](#) targeted at both the tech and local environmental communities

For the second hack day we explored an alternative approach for engaging with the local community. The hack day was preceded by 4 weekly evening events which were used to invite the local environmental community to tell us about their ideas, data and needs. This was very successful and resulted in some great ideas and a different audience for the hack day, many of whom had not been to a previous event of that type.

The hack day also generated some strong ideas, one of which is being taken forward in partnership with a local environmental group (Transition Bath).

Ongoing project work

Outside of our events and ongoing data publication work we have also contributed to several ongoing projects which are exploring how to bring the benefits of open data to the local community and visitors to the area.

- **Strava Metro Data** - on behalf of the local cycling group Cycle Bath, we have undertaken [a project to analyse data from the Strava platform](#) to help bring insight into how local cyclists use our roads and cycling networks. We have published and shared a variety of maps, visualisations and videos which are being explored by the community.

- **School energy usage data** - in collaboration with Transition Bath, Resource Futures and members of our technical community, we are working to develop an application to allow local schools to monitor their energy usage in order to identify cost-savings. Having built an early prototype and completed [some analysis using data from council buildings](#) we are now looking for funding to support further development.
- **Local public art catalogue** - we have supported the council in openly publishing their catalogue of public art, this is also being displayed on a new website which is powered by the Bath: Hacked data store. We are also looking for other innovative ways to explore using the data.

Consultations with Stakeholders

We work to engage with the local community, technical community and businesses in a variety of ways. We use this as opportunity to:

- share the results of our events and raise the profile of how data might be locally useful
- engage with local organisations with whom we can partner on larger projects
- identify needs and ideas that could be turned into useful applications

In 2015-16 our activities in this area have included:

- regular **outreach via our blog and through social media**. We have experimented with using Facebook sponsored posts to reach a wider section of the local community. Our promotion of [a list of useful apps for residents](#) reached 2,976 people.
- we have answered a number of **ad hoc requests for data or advice from the local community and businesses**, e.g. helping a local water company find data to be used in an analys
- running **regular free evening and weekend events** to engage with our technical community. In 2015-16 [we ran 19 events](#)
- **developing relationships with a variety of teams at the council**, this has lead to new projects including a public dashboard for the Environmental Protection team, and a fully open source and open data powered site for the public art catalogue
- **running lunchtime talks for local businesses and council officers** including IPL, EduServ and the Arts & Heritage team to promote what we do, the applications built by the community, and seek additional sponsorship
- **engaging with local teachers and coding clubs** to highlight the resources we have available, we are now seeing open data being used in some lessons
- **helping the Bath Chronicle explore ways to integrate open data into their reporting** on local issues, they have already used several datasets and visualisations
- **developing relationships with similar projects in other local areas**, e.g. exploring options for collaborative projects with Bristol Is Open

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Finances

As set out in our company articles, the directors of Bath: Hacked draw no salary or remittance from the organisation. All co-ordination and project work is done on a voluntary basis.

Our sources of financial income this year have been an initial grant from Bath & North East Somerset. We have received additional sponsorship from Curo and a number of other local organisations as part of our public "hack days". Collectively this money has been used to pay for:

- running costs for the hosting of the public data store, keeping it free at the point of use for all publishers and developers
- room hire, catering and prizes for public hack days
- miscellaneous running costs, e.g. hosting, domain renewal, Meetup subscriptions, accountancy fees

We have also received additional in-kind support from a number of local organisations, including free membership and use of facilities at the Guild Co-working Space, donated prizes from IPL and others, and also an infrastructure grant from CartoDB which will support the creation of some additional online mapping tools.

At the end of 2015-16 we will have a small surplus. However we have not yet secured funding to ensure running of the data store past June 2016. This will be our immediate focus for additional fund-raising activity.

Plans for 2016-17

Looking ahead to 2016-17 our broad plans are to:

- Rethink and improve our approach to engaging with local technical and wider community. Our evening events and hack days need to evolve as the organisation matures and as the mix of local events changes. One focus will be on regular evening events to encourage learning and making using open data
- Develop our regular revenue streams, either through paid projects or sponsorship offers. We need to find independent sources of financial income to remain viable
- Move towards a programme of ongoing project work, in conjunction with the local community and other groups to create more impact