The Second Department for Communities and Local Government Open Data Strategy

Refreshed as part of the UK Open Government Partnership (OGP) Action Plan, October 2013

Contents

Background

This is the second Department for Communities and Local Government Open Data Strategy. It is being produced as part of the UK Open Government Partnership Action Plan, to be published in October 2013.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), along with all other Whitehall departments, published its first Open Data Strategy in June 2012. It set 33 challenging commitments for the department to meet by April 2014. It has either met them, or is well on the way to doing so.

For example, DCLG has built on the success of its earlier 'proof of concept' open data store, to deliver the exemplary Open Data Communities programme. This provides an increasing volume of departmental datasets in fully open, accessible and re-useable forms. Over time, Open Data Communities will be the platform for all DCLG data to be open by default. DCLG also strategically reviewed the data it holds and published an Information Asset Register earlier this year which helped identify those datasets held by DCLG that were not published through data.gov.uk[1].

This second document lays out a refreshed Open Data Strategy for the department. It follows the principles of the Open Data White Paper and builds upon the *G8 Open Data Charter*[2]; the UK Government's response to the *Shakespeare Review of Public Sector Information*[3]; and the National Information Infrastructure[4]. It provides a set of principles that will be applied by DCLG and its arms length bodies to embed transparency principles and the publishing of open data as part of our day-to-day business.

This strategy aims to cover the openness of DCLG data in a broad sense. Data and data sets are defined in the Open Data White Paper[5] and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012[6]. At a minimum we define data sets to

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[1] data.gov.uk brings government datasets together in one searchable website, making it easier for people to make decisions and suggestions about government policies based on detailed information

[2] The G8 Open Data Charter was signed on 18 June 2013. It sets out five strategic principles that all G8 members will act on. It establishes an expectation that all government data will be published openly by default while recognizing that there are legitimate reasons why some data cannot be released. The Charter and Technical Annex can be seen at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-data-charter/g8-open-data-charter-and-technical-annex

[3] An independent review that explores new ways to use information held by the public sector - see: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shakespeare-review-of-public-sector-information. Stephen Shakespeare who led the review is Chair of the Data Strategy Board and CEO of YouGov.

[4] This is an inventory of the data held by Government – its 'dataset of datasets'. Further information from: http://data.gov.uk/library/guidance-to-departments-on-developing-the-uk-national-information-infrastructure-nii

[5] Open Data White Paper June 2012 definitions: http://data.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Open_data_White_Paper.pdf#page=9

[6] Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 – Part 6: Freedom of information and data protection: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/9/part/6

mean information comprising a collection of information held in electronic form where all or most of the information in the collection:

(a) has been obtained or recorded for the purpose of providing a public authority with information in connection with the provision of a service by the authority or the carrying out of any other function of the authority,
(b) is factual information which—
    (i)is not the product of analysis or interpretation other than calculation, and
    (ii)is not an official statistic (within the meaning given by section 6(1) of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007), and
(c) remains presented in a way that (except for the purpose of forming part of the collection) has not been organised, adapted or otherwise materially altered since it was obtained or recorded."

This document builds upon and supercedes the June 2012 DCLG Open Data Strategy[7].

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[7] To see this go to: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dclg-open-data-strategy-april-2012-to-april-2014

Introduction

The coalition government wants to create a new era of accountability and openness.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has embraced this ambition. It is already at the forefront of work in government to routinely release data in more open and useful forms. We believe that transparency and open data is the fuel to shape and power our entire policy and programme portfolio:

- **Social growth and greater public participation in public services** – DCLG policies such as Neighbourhood Planning give more power to communities, allowing them to shape their area and its future. It is essential they have access to quality data regarding their local area.
- **Economic growth** – for example, open data will provide richer and more accessible intelligence on how/where the housing market is delivering more homes to buy and to rent at prices people can afford. It will also underpin work to put local councils and businesses in charge of economic growth and bring new business and jobs to their areas
- **More efficient, cost-effective public services** - sharing open data and information is key to designing services and achieving better outcomes for vulnerable people through, for example, DCLG's Troubled Families programme.

DCLG is the definitive/authoritative source for many important datasets on housing, planning, local government finance, and fire and rescue. Our data holdings are also diverse, ranging from official statistics, geographic information, management information (e.g. investment programmes), and data on operational areas (energy performance certificates, planning casework and appeals).

The long-term goal is to routinely publish all DCLG outputs in fully open and accessible forms, so that our data is actively used alongside related third-party sources in many different tools, by audiences ranging from individual citizens, local communities, and businesses, by local authorities and their partners, and by the department itself. We need to make sure that data is not the preserve of the expert and we will continually seek to ensure that our data is genuinely accessible to real people.

In order to reach this goal, our open data programme will be: responsive to and prioritised in line with user demand and financial/resource constraints; focussed on real, tangible benefits for users and the department; and sustainable and scale-able. It will comprise three core elements:

i)   Leadership and challenge (for example through the Local Public Data Panel (see Annex I);

ii)   Partnerships and collaboration – working with users and key influencers and decision makers in the sphere of open data and standards such as the Local Government Association; the Local e-

Government Standards Body [8]; Cabinet Office and its data.gov.uk facility; and

iii)   Robust, trusted technology and standards for creating and publishing sustainable, and fully accessible and re-usable data outputs, namely our Open Data Communities programme (referenced regularly in this document – an introduction to it is provided at Annex II).

Through this Open Data Strategy, DCLG is building an approach that meets the G8 Open Data Charter principles:

Principle 1: Open Data by Default
Principle 2: Quality and Quantity
Principle 3: Usable by all
Principle 4: Released Data for Improved Governance
Principle 5: Releasing Data for Innovation

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[8] The Local e-Government Standards Body (LeGSB) has a mission to promote eStandards that support efficiency, transformation, and transparency of local public services in the UK

Principle 1: Open Data by Default

In delivering this strategy, we will make clear to the public what information is held by the department and whether it is available. Where there is not a viable reason to the contrary, we will make all of our data and information available as open data. In those few rare cases where the information is not being placed in the public domain, we will justify why this is the case – perhaps the dataset contains personal information; or commercially sensitive data. This justification does of course remain subject to scrutiny and challenge from interested parties and DCLG will explore options to release as much data as possible – perhaps extracting personal information from a dataset that is robust enough to remain rich without it.

The first step is identification and assessment of data held by DCLG. This follows the work we have been doing to contribute to the recent Cabinet-Office led exercise to list an inventory of published and unpublished datasets on data.gov.uk.

DCLG has many of its datasets already open to the public on data.gov.uk[9]. Indeed, it is the second highest contributor to the site. On top of this, and in response to recommendations in the *Shakespeare Review of Public Sector Information*, the government asked all departments to "make explicit" the data they hold in the form of an inventory. Departments have had to identify data which they or their arms length bodies hold or own, and make specifically available a list of those datasets not currently published through data.gov.uk.

Everyone has the opportunity to assess both the 'unpublished' and published datasets listed on data.gov.uk. It is Cabinet Office's expectation that datasets which are rated as having the greatest potential impact will be released as open data on data.gov.uk[10]. Indeed, those datasets for which there is no, or minimal obstacle, to prevent publication should be made public through data.gov.uk as well – our data should after all be open by default.

Commitment 1: DCLG will develop and publish processes which ensure that, by default: there is a continual review of the DCLG data listings on data.gov.uk, and; that the department routinely updates its unpublished holdings on the data.gov.uk 'inventory'. DCLG will also ensure that:
- mechanisms are provided for external challenge of the completeness and accuracy of the inventory. We understand that trawls for unpublished datasets may have missed information and will welcome and respond to direct feedback and suggestions.
- DCLG will look to improve over time what is listed including the readability of descriptions and data currently listed on data.gov.uk.

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[9] data.gov.uk brings government datasets together in one searchable website, making it easier for people to make decisions and suggestions about government policies based on detailed information

[10] Currently unpublished datasets held by DCLG and its ALBs can be seen at: http://data.gov.uk/data/search?parent_publishers=department-for-communities-and-local-government&q=&unpublished=true

This will be implemented by an annual review of the DCLG Information Asset Register and as descriptions improve either on the Register or the Inventory, they will be used to update each other.

Principle 2: Quality and Quantity

DCLG holds a lot of information that is of interest to citizens. It already has over 800 records on data.gov.uk, second only to the Office for National Statistics. The department's English Indices of Deprivation 2010 was the most viewed dataset on data.gov.uk in the month of June 2013 (2,376 views).

A key driver is maximising the availability of our data, so that it is widely and actively used to support and inform economic and social growth, and more efficient/effective public services.

In order to achieve this, DCLG recognises that it must maintain and improve the volume and quality of data it provides in fully open, accessible forms.

We believe that data volume and quality will evolve over time, through close collaboration with users. We expect to collaborate directly with end-users, and indirectly via software developers and intermediaries, who would incorporate our data into their products, potentially alongside related third-party sources, packaged and presented to specific targeted audiences.

We will listen and respond to user priorities for release or improvement, balancing this demand against Department resource constraints.

Commitment 2: DCLG will build a principle of continually improving its open data outputs and services.   We will:

- Prioritise data that needs improvement (quality or access) – identified by users and/or key partners such as the Local Public Data Panel.
- Establish pro-active feedback loops with our data users such as local authority officials and interested community groups to ensure that we are producing high quality, useful open data outputs.
- Work with other departments and other parts of the public sector, notably local authorities, to share approaches and platforms.
- Ensure that datasets are fully described, so that consumers have sufficient information to understand their strengths, weaknesses, analytical limitations, and security requirements, as well as how to process the data
- Adopt and promote open standards to maximise opportunities for re-use. This will include INSPIRE standards[11] for spatial data

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[11] INSPIRE establishes an infrastructure for spatial information in the European Union and it was transposed into UK law in December 2009. The aim of INSPIRE is to facilitate better environmental policy across the EU. This will be achieved by: improving the joining up of and access to existing spatial data across the European Union at a local, regional, national and international level; facilitating improvements in the sharing of spatial data between public authorities; and improving public access to spatial data.

Principle 3: Usable by all

In developing its Open Data Communities programme (outlined at Annex II), DCLG has the foundations for a platform to release fully accessible, high-quality open data in close collaboration with users. DCLG will continue to extend the range and volume of fully accessible, 5-star data published via this service. It will also maintain a showcase of visualizations and interactive dashboards to demonstrate how developers, data analysts and local communities can use the open datasets to better understand the interplay of economic and social factors across and within different localities. Whenever a local group wants to achieve something for the community, at some stage they will benefit from, or need access to, data to help achieve its aims. This is particularly important for the Community Rights agenda. Standards and best practice developed under the Open Data Communities programme will also be promoted across the public sector, particularly amongst local authorities.

> Commitment 3: Through 2013/14, the Open Data Communities programme will continue to free up the Department for Communities and Local Government's evidence-base from literally thousands of disconnected spreadsheets, so that it can be quickly and easily discovered, combined and re-used over the web alongside related third party sources.

The vision is that, by 2015, Open Data Communities will be DCLG's single platform (and linked to data.gov.uk) for:

- Routinely releasing all DCLG data sources in fully open, accessible and re-usable forms, whilst preserving data quality and integrity;
- Stimulating third parties to use DCLG data alongside related external sources, to deliver innovative new tools and insights.
- Supporting DCLG to use its own and related third party sources in a more efficient, cost-effective manner, when designing and implementing policies and programmes.
- Building and spreading best practice for sharing and re-using data based on common standards, with a particular focus on partnerships with local authorities and other local public sector agents to unlock and publish their local sources in a consistent, comparable form.

This will facilitate social growth as open data drawn from multiple sources will be the fuel to power greater public participation in and understanding of DCLG's policies and programmes at the local level. This is particularly important for policies under the Localism and Community Rights agendas including Neighbourhood Planning and Neighbourhood Budgeting.

> Commitment 4: By end 2015, Open Data Communities will provide a robust, reliable and trusted source of DCLG data in fully open, accessible forms – with data content delivered according to user demand and priorities established under the National Information Infrastructure and supporting strategies.

Public bodies are becoming more transparent but it often remains challenging for a citizen to find the information they need to take part in local decisions about the public realm and to assess the value and performance of the services that directly affect them.

Commitment 5: By 2015, good practice is to have been disseminated widely by DCLG, assisted by the Local Public Data Panel, and for transparency and re-usable, open data processes to have been mainstreamed both within the local government sector and DCLG itself.

Principle 4: Released Data for Improved Governance

DCLG recognises the release of open data encourages better policy-making to meets the needs of our citizens. At this current time, government sees no greater need than to increase economic growth, and to make cost effective improvements to public services.

Unpublished datasets listed on data.gov.uk can be assessed against whether, if they were made available openly, the data would benefit these two priority areas but there are other initiatives that the department can take forward.

<u>Growth</u>

Economic growth is one of the highest priorities of government. And freeing up DCLG data and information can enable economic growth. It has been estimated that the direct economic benefit of re-using public sector information equates to £1.8 billion per annum[12].

In his review of public data, Stephen Shakespeare produced a profound maxim for all public authorities to follow:
"… all public sector information is derived from and paid for by the citizen and should therefore be considered being owned by the citizen…It is the duty of the government to make public sector information as open as possible to create maximum value to the nation."

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills also published an *Information Economic Strategy* in June 2013. It includes a programme of actions including "driving growth through data" and commits government to release data that is accessible and understandable to business.

DCLG has therefore considered how its work on transparency and open data can assist the economic growth agenda.

Firstly, by making its data open and accessible through the department's Open Data Communities programme, DCLG will enable growth of new services in the information economy, plus deliver more efficient/cost-effective data sharing within current "data rich" business networks. As an example it will streamline the sharing of data amongst businesses engaged in land-use planning and house-building.

Secondly, and as part of the National Information Infrastructure process, it is reviewing whether the public sector information it holds is being used to the maximum effect.

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[12] See Department for Buisness, Innovation and Skills report, written by Deloitte (2013): https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/198905/bis-13-743-market-assessment-of-public-sector-information.pdf

Commitment 6: DCLG officials will build on this and explore with colleagues how we can open up further data sets from, for example, our Planning Directorate to make them more accessible and useful to the growth agenda.

Thirdly, the Open Data User Group was set up in July 2012 by Cabinet Office and is an independent body of open data experts drawn from the worlds of business (both large national companies and small to medium sized enterprises), civil society, academia and local government. The group was set up to review, prioritise and petition the government to release public sector datasets that are not currently available on behalf of businesses that could use the data.

As an illustration of the Open Data User Group working process, it has specifically suggested that the full Energy Performance Certificate data is released into the public domain by DCLG. In England and Wales, the data used to produce every Energy Performance Certificate, Display Energy Certificate and Air-Conditioning Inspection Report must be lodged on the Domestic and Non-Domestic Data Registers. These Registers now contain over 10,000,000 records. Individual records are available to anyone, free of charge, on-line, direct from the Registers, provided that the owner of the relevant property has not opted-out of having the details made public. The Registers are maintained on DCLG's behalf. However, since April 2012 when the data was first made more widely available, anyone wishing to access the underpinning data that is used to produce these certificates and reports, or be given access to multiple records must:

(a) pay a relevant fee specified in regulations;
(b) be an authorised recipient, as defined in regulations; and
(c) use the data only for the purposes specified in regulations.

DCLG is aware of concerns among users and potential users of the data that the existing system may be unduly restrictive. Entrepreneurs are keen to access the data and maximise business opportunities. DCLG also recognises that this data may be an essential tool in the quest to improve the energy efficiency of the building stock of England and Wales, and is aware of the constraints placed upon access to and the use of this data by the current legislative framework. Given this, we are working towards better understanding how, by what means and at what cost this data could be made more widely available.

Commitment 7: DCLG officials to complete its review of Energy Performance Certificate, Display Energy Certificate and Air-Conditioning Inspection Report datasets with an intention to make necessary changes to the legislative framework to facilitate more suitable access to this data from April 2014.

Commitment 8: DCLG officials to continue to respond quickly to Open Data User Group requests for publication of datasets.

There are potential links here to DCLG's work with the Local Government Association; the Local e-Government Standards Body. For example, DCLG

has been working with the Local Government Association on implementing *the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency[13]*. The encouragement for local authorities to publish data on land and assets presents an opportunity to develop economic growth in a local area.

> Commitment 9: DCLG to continue to work with the Local Government Association to support greater use of data.gov.uk by local authorities, in part to better publicise datasets that can underpin growth in local economies.

Fourthly, the Open Data Institute[14] has developed an on line open data certificate which ultimately certifies that the data people have published is easy to find, use and share. The checklist involved with the certificate helps people publish good open data and gives them clear aspirations for which to aim. When a certificate is issued it demonstrates that the information being published has been done in a useable way. In DCLG's case this will help ensure that, where relevant, the public sector information it holds and publishes can be used to the maximum effect for economic growth purposes.

> Commitment 10: DCLG's Strategic Statistics data collection team will take on responsibility for certifying the department's datasets. This will as a matter of course involve certifying all datasets released as part of the Open Data Communities programme. Ultimately this means that all DCLG datasets under open government license should eventually be certified. The team is already testing out the certification process on some of the more popular DCLG datasets such as the English Indices of Deprivation and this will have been completed by November 2013. DCLG was the first department to embrace the concept of the certificates and where appropriate will spearhead efforts to get them used by other public authorities.

Data Sharing

DCLG has a keen interest in the use of data. Whole Place Community Budgets and the Troubled Families programme have shown that information sharing is key to designing and delivering services and achieving better outcomes for vulnerable people. Information sharing is also important for the evaluation of service interventions. DCLG's Open Data Communities programme is endeavouring to build and spread best practice for sharing and

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[13] The *Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency* (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-data-transparency-code) lists key data which local authorities should provide as recommended practice. The Code recommends that councils make public information around public land and building assets as well as committee minutes, decision-making processes and records of decisions. The Government recognises there is potential to go further. DCLG is currently revising the Transparency Code and aims to use it as a vehicle for continuing to encourage local authorities to follow the three principles for the release of public data in a reusable way: demand-led, open and timely

[14] The Open Data Institute is catalysing the evolution of open data culture to create economic, environmental, and social value. It helps unlock supply, generates demand, creates and disseminates knowledge to address local and global issues. See: http://www.theodi.org/

re-using data based on common standards, with a particular focus on partnerships with local authorities and other local public sector partners.

Commitment 11: DCLG is leading the development and implementation of a centre of excellence for information sharing that was announced in the recent Spending Round. The centre will help tackle the cultural and organisational barriers to information sharing and work closely with local areas and their citizens. The centre of excellence (subject to agreement from a steering group) will be up and running April 2014

Commitment 12: The department recognises that the current data sharing regime can be confused. DCLG officials will work closely with the Cabinet Office on developing legislative proposals to make data sharing easier and more effective. We know that better information sharing is vital to transforming local public services.

Principle 5: Releasing Data for Innovation

Recognising the importance of diversity in stimulating creativity and innovation, DCLG agrees that the more people and organisations that use our data, the greater the economic and social benefits that will be generated. This is true for both commercial and non-commercial uses in the public, civic society and private sectors.

Commitment 13: As part of delivering more extensive, accessible open data outputs, DCLG will work to increase open data literacy. This will involve:

- working with: i) software developers and innovators (in particular via intermediaries such as the Open Data Institute/Nesta's Open Data Challenge Series[15] to stimulate new applications which utilise our data in more engaging and intuitive ways; and ii) users to understand and identify options for improving quality and presentation of our open data outputs. For example some users have reported problems using standard spreadsheet outputs and have requested the data in alternative, more accessible formats.

Commitment 14: DCLG will empower a future generation of data innovators by providing data in machine-readable formats. Where practical, data will be provided in full 5-star LinkedData formats via open, standards-based Application Programming Interfaces, with OpenDataCommunities acting as the Department's preferred publishing and dissemination platform.

Based on experiences to date with Open Data Communities, we anticipate that routinely providing data in standardised, open and accessible forms can and will deliver significant benefits to users and the department itself.

Benefits are likely to arise in areas including:
- **Cost savings, and cost avoidance:** Open, standardised data can reduce the cost and overheads of sharing often incompatible sources amongst a broad and diverse partner network.
- **More open, accountable public services:** When coupled with development of new digital tools and services, open, standarised data can enable citizens, local communities, and businesses to better understand and engage with their public services and providers.
- **Better and more collaborative decision making**, particularly in a local partnership context: In addition to reducing costs of data sharing, open, standardised data can also ensure that partners are working with a more consistent, and reliable underlying evidence-base – and thereby improve the timeliness and quality of shared decisions.

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[15] The Open Data Institute and its partner Nesta is running an Open Data Challenge Series which will consist of seven programmes run until the end of March 2015, convening a range of data owners and data users. This will help SMEs and start-ups to work with data providers, industry experts and business leaders to develop new ways to better understand how to reuse available data sets in ways which create business opportunities. The series of events will focus on specific sectors and challenges formulated by industry experts.

Commitment 15: Through to end 2015, and to be achieved through pro-active, targeted promotion and communications, and working closely with users to capture and disseminate evidence of benefits achieved, DCLG will be able to catalogue active, sustained and significant use of sources in Open Data Communities by local authorities, public sector agencies, voluntary and charity organisations, and the private sector. DCLG will look to capture and quantify evidence of benefits achieved, using the draft benefits map at Annex V.

Commitment 16: DCLG will look to align Open Data Communities more closely with data.gov.uk, and new data visualisation and collaboration tools emerging on the single Government domain thereby maximising opportunities for DCLG content to be combined with and re-used alongside related public sector sources. It will also be developed as the authoritative source for core reference data – supporting linking and joining of related datasets.

It is also worth highlighting that DCLG, in common with other departments, is working towards the development of a cross-government approach to digital inclusion issues which will inform the future development of our Open Data Strategy.

Annex I: Local Public Data Panel

Professor Sir Nigel Shadbolt[16] chairs the independent Local Public Data Panel which has, since January 2010, advised Government on issues relating to the release and use of local public data and will continue to drive forward work until 2015. The Panel comprises open data developers and activists, central government and local authority representatives, and is attended by the DCLG Minister responsible for transparency: Baroness Stowell of Beeston MBE.

The Panel:
- identifies local datasets held by local authorities and other public sector bodies
- advise on how datasets might be published and used to empower citizens or improve local service delivery
- advise on the content and format of published data so as to secure the maximum benefits from greater transparency - this includes understanding the costs and benefits of making types of data available.

The Panel will also challenge the Department for Communities and Local Government to make sure its data is open to the public in re-usable formats and will furthermore:
- make sure this Open Data Strategy is stretching
- oversee publication of the department's contribution to the quarterly Written Ministerial Statement on Transparency
- provide advice to the department as required on its public data and place-based information programmes.

The Panel has played a key role in a variety of open data initiatives:
- advice on the publication of local authority spend data
- worked with the Local Government Association on its guidance for local authorities on publishing spend data
- advised on the form of the Open Government Licence so that it could apply to all public bodies
- provided input on the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency
- commented on a number of Government consultations.

For more information contact the DCLG's Transparency Team at: TransparencyCode@communities.gsi.gov.uk

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[16]Professor Sir Nigel Shadbolt also sits on the Cabinet Office Transparency Board and is Co-Founder of the Open Data Institute, an independent organisation focusing on finding the value in open data.

Annex II: Open Data Communities programme.

Through 33 demanding actions, DCLG's first Open Data Strategy set out how the department will drive reform and service improvement through transparency and greater citizen participation. At the heart of many of these commitments was its flagship Open Data Communities programme.

A proof-of-concept data cabinet was tested and developed and now the programme has its own Project Board with representatives from local government and Cabinet Office. It is also regularly showcased to the department's Local Public Data Panel in its challenge and support function.

To date, Open Data Communities has delivered:
- Tools for DCLG to publish its datasets in fully open, accessible and re-usable forms, and in a cost-effective and sustainable manner;
- Innovative applications, built by DCLG and its partners for various audiences, which blend and present multiple datasets using intuitive mapping and charting tools.

Open Data Communities has demonstrated and articulated the role and value of open data as an enabler of smarter, more efficient decision-making and partnership working. DCLG has worked with various partners and users, combining data to capture real-world evidence of benefits for users. Examples include: our work with the London Borough of Lambeth on Lambeth-in-Numbers, developed to engage residents in co-producing the Borough food strategy. This blends DCLG and local sources and presents results in maps and charts; and our work with Devon County Council on their Devon Communities site, which blends Open Data Communities and local sources to provide local (town) demographic and economic data for residents.

Alongside working with specific users, the Open Data Communities project has collaborated with key partners such as homelessness charities to build and spread best practice in sustainable open data publishing and innovative re-use.

Open Data Communities is already recognised within DCLG as the strategic platform for disseminating and encouraging re-use of the department's own open data outputs. DCLG is also undertaking further work to ensure that transparency and open data are considered "by default" across its entire policy and programme portfolio – and therefore that Open Data Communities is actively developed as the standard dissemination platform.

Alongside this, we are further strengthening relationships with Cabinet Office, the Local Government Association, the Local e-Government Standards Body, and other national and local strategic partners. The objective here is to ensure that Open Data Communities remains aligned with Government strategy and emerging solutions for open data, and also that DCLG's solution is widely promoted and recognised as a best practice example.

Professor Sir Nigel Shadbolt, Chair of the Local Public Data Panel said that Open Data Communities is "an outstanding example of how open data can be published, reused and exploited to benefit a wide range of stakeholders. It supports extremely efficient data reuse and integration, and is a gold standard to which others should aspire."

Annex III: DCLG Inventory of Unpublished Datasets[17]

Dataset Title	Description	Progress on publication (October 2013)
Datasets already published and will be added to data.gov.uk		
1. Affordable Homes Guarantees Programme	Allocations for the Affordable Homes Guarantee Programme 2013-16 delivery	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
2. Annual local government settlement data	Data collected from local authorities and other sources in order to calculate the relative need and resource used to distribute the annual settlement to local authorities	This will be added to data.gov, but after the Autumn Statement
3. Architects Registration Board Organogram	Organisation chart for the Architects Registration Board	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
4. Architects Registration Board Spend over £500	Itemised transactions of over £500 from the Architects Registration Board	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
5. 'COSMO" nationally significant infrastructure	Holds records relating to the Planning Inspectorate's processing of nationally significant infrastructure projects	Some data already published and will be added to data.gov.uk
6. Decent Homes Management Information	Data from Homes and Communities Agency and Greater London Authority comprising outcomes per authority, forecast future outcomes and estimates of backlog at end of spending review period (plus data derived from that)	Already published and will be added to data.gov.uk
7. Empty Homes Allocations	Bringing empty homes back into use is a priority for the Coalition Government. £70m of this funding has been assigned to the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver a programme to bring empty properties back in to use as affordable housing. The dataset lists allocations which could deliver up to 5,600 new affordable homes (2012-2015 delivery)	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
8. Fire and Rescue Incident Reporting System	Details of fire and rescue incidents attended by Fire and Rescue Services and of casualties	Where possible a number of statistical outputs

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[17] Currently unpublished datasets held by DCLG and its ALBs can be seen at:
http://data.gov.uk/data/search?parent_publishers=department-for-communities-and-local-government&q=&unpublished=true

		are published and will be added to data.gov.uk Some personal information will not be published.
9. Fire safety statutory compliance information	Data on fire compliance practice across the DCLG estate	Published annually in departments' annual report.
10. Homes and Communities Agency land assets which is being marketed	Details of all land owned by Homes and Communities Agency including those currently being marketed	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
11. Greening Government data for DCLG and Arms' Length Bodies [also DfE]	Data includes gas, electricity and water usage, waste tonnage produced, paper procured, and data on business travel costs and carbon usage.	Published annually
12. Homes and Communities Agency land assets which not yet being marketed	Details of Homes and Communities Agency land not yet being marketed. Homes and Communities Agency cannot make all its land available for sale immediately as it has to ensure that development can take place.	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
13. Housing Ombudsman Casework Management Database	Casework management database for Housing Ombudsman	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
14. Housing Ombudsman Contacts/Membership Database	Contacts and Membership database for the Housing Ombudsman	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
15. Housing Ombudsman Spend over £250	Itemised transactions of over £250 from the Housing Ombudsman	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
16. Local authority plan making data	Data collected up to December 2010, used to track the progress of local authority plan preparation.	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
17. Neighbourhood Planning support organisation information	Data relating to the grant agreement with an external body to administer support to neighbourhood planning areas	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk

18. Planning casework database	Data related to the processing of planning applications and appeals that have been called-in and recovered for decision by the Secretary of State. The data is extracted from Planning Inspectorate forms and Inspector's Reports.	Some data already published and this will be added to data.gov.uk
19. Pooling of Housing Receipts	Information on (a) local authorities' housing receipts (particularly Right to Buy receipts), (b) calculation of what parts are poolable, and (c) the amounts each local authority has actually paid	Some data already published and this will be added to data.gov.uk
20. QEII Conference Centre Organogram	Organisation chart for the QEII Conference Centre	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
21. QEII Conference Centre Senior salary information	Senior salary information from staff in QEII Conference centre	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
22. Register of Architects	The Architects Registration Board is the body set up by Parliament as the independent UK regulator of architects. Anyone who describes them self as an architect must be on the Register of Architects	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
23. Results of competitive bidding rounds	These are regularly published results of competitive bidding rounds for specific programmes such as Affordable Homes Guarantee Programmes and Empty Homes Allocations	Already published to be added to data.gov.uk
Datasets previously unpublished but can now be published on data.gov.uk		
24. Asbestos Registers	Data on risks from asbestos across the DCLG estate	To be published on data.gov.uk
25. Minerals and waste plan timelines	Timelines in updating minerals and waste plans – information provided by local authorities	To be published on data.gov.uk
26. Workstation Assessment Records	Data on individual workstation needs and use, in order to meet legal requirements for reasonable adjustments	To be published on data.gov.uk

Datasets intended to be published on data.gov.uk in future. Consideration needs to be made on extracting personal data and changing some regulations		
27. Appeals database	Records of appeals against property tax and valuation matters	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
28. Designated Green Belt Boundary for England	This dataset is comprised of a shape file showing the aggregated area of Green Belt in local authorities in England. It is updated on an annual basis and is used to produce the annual "Local authority green belt statistics for England" statistical publication	To be published in the future – officials to consider best way forward
29. Domestic Energy Performance Certificate Register	Electronic register containing all data in relation to Energy Performance Certificates that have been prepared for both new build and existing dwellings in England and Wales	Individual records are already available. DCLG officials to review dataset with an intention to make necessary changes to the legislative framework to facilitate more suitable access to this data.
30. European Regional Development Fund 2007-2013 'MCIS' system	Dataset on projects funded using European Regional Development Fund 2007-13 money	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
31. European Regional Development Fund 2000-2006 'TESA' System	'TESA' electronic file system - dataset on projects funded using European Regional Development Fund 2000-06 money	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
32. Evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme	Set of files containing individual level data on outcomes associated with the Troubled Families Programme (2012 to 2015). The data is part of a national evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme and will be used to inform the Troubled Families Team of the impact of the policy	Data will be published at the end of 2014
33. FirstBuy management information	Data compiled by the Homes and Communities Agency, used for the monitoring of delivery of and production of official statistics on FirstBuy.	Not yet published
34. Health and Safety Statutory Compliance information	Data on health and safety practice and significant affecting factors	Not yet published

35. Homes and Communities Agency Legal agreements	Data on building agreements, leases and other similar legal papers relating to land owned by Homes and Communities Agency	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
36. Historic disposals	Data on the sale of land previously owned by Homes and Communities Agency	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
37. 'IMPReS/MINCOM'	This database records the workflow of all correspondence addressed to Ministers received in the Department	To be published in the future – officials to consider best way forward. Statistics are published annually
38. Leasehold Advisory Service Customer Database	Customer database for Leasehold Advisory Service	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
39. LOGASnet	Multiple Claim/Grant Payments to: Local Authorities in England, Voluntary Organisations, Private Sector organisations, Fire and Rescue Services, Police Authorities, Transport Authorities, National Parks, and Housing Associations. Dataset of SCORE Lettings by Scottish Registered Social Landlords.	To be published in the future – officials to consider best way forward.
40. Losses and special payments	A master register is maintained recording details of special payments made and losses (including losses due to theft) incurred by the Department throughout the financial year and personal injury claims	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
41. Neighbourhood Planning Implementation grant agreements up to March 2013	Data relating to the grant agreements with four bodies to administer support to neighbourhood planning areas	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
42. New Homes Bonus internal monitoring survey data	Annual survey of local authorities' attitudes to growth as part of monitoring impact of New Homes Bonus.	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
43. Non-Domestic Energy Performance Certificate Register	Electronic Register containing all data in relation to Energy Performance Certificates that have been prepared for both new build and existing non-domestic buildings,	Individual records are already available. DCLG officials to review dataset with an intention to make

		necessary changes to the legislative framework to facilitate more suitable access to this data.
44. PFI management information	Data from Homes and Communities Agency on current status of programmes provided to finance, ad-hoc data requests from Homes and Communities Agency + PFI grant calculators.	To be published in the future – officials to consider best way forward
45. PLANET' Planning casework database	Data on the progress and status of planning casework, including the personal data of applicants	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
46. Planning casework database	Data related to the processing of planning applications and appeals that have been called-in and recovered for decision by the Secretary of State. The data is extracted from Planning Inspectorate forms and Inspector's Reports.	To be published in the future – officials to consider best way forward
47. Planning casework service	Contains information about individual planning appeals	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
48. Planning portal	Website and transaction service for submitting planning applications; portal to a planning database. The system is supplied by commercial suppliers IBM	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
49. Planning Portal Customer Relationship Management database (Sugar)	Web-based Customer Relationship Management database, used by Planning portal team	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
50. Property asset contract management data	Range of data including performance reports, key performance indicators, finance data and property information, used for monitoring and managing property assets	To be published in the future – officials to consider best way forward.
51. Register of Large Houses in Multiple Occupation	A register of large multiple occupancy dwellings which require registering	Not to be published at present as contains personal data
52. Tenancy Deposit Scheme	Registers instances where short hold tenancy deposits have been paid to holding organisation	Not to be published at present as contains personal data

53. Vacant dwellings	Electronic Survey of Empty Homes - data returns from local authority council tax databases	To be published in the future – officials to consider best way forward
Datasets not to be published		
54. Accident information	Record of details of all accidents on DCLG premises	Not to be published due to un-extractable personal data
55. Bursaries programme [Planning]	Data submitted in application for the bursaries programme, which has now ended	Not to be published due to un-extractable personal data and programme completed
56. Building Regulations Research Programme Programme Management System	on-line project management tool / database that manages documents, contracts and outline financial information on Building Regulations research contracts	Not to be published – commercial in confidence and dataset will be obsolete 2013/14
57. European Regional Development Fund 2000-2006 Closure Database	This database is an electronic file containing details of potential and confirmed liabilities arising from irregularities in the European Regional Development Fund in England for the period 2000-2006	Data not to be published for legal reasons on advice of DCLG officials.
58. Find my consultee	Bespoke application which allows us to identify those who may need to have been consulted on national significant infrastructure projects	Not to be published due to un-extractable personal data
59. 'FITS'	Access database containing records of all Freedom of Information and Environmental Information requests received	Not to be published by DCLG - aggregated statistics are reported to Ministry of Justice and routinely published.
60. 'Koha'	DCLG Library catalogue	Most data is bibliographic, and therefore already available through public catalogues.
61. Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme Employer Pension Data [various authorities]	Data from civil service pension scheme administrator and employers used by XDIAS (Cross Departmental Internal Audit Service) for audit testing purposes.	Not to be published due to un-extractable personal data
62. Site Specific Information database relating to fire	Data relating to fire safety inspections of Crown premises and to fire incidents	Not to be published - sensitive data

safety inspections of Crown premises and to fire incidents		
63. Tree surveys	Details of surveys of trees on Homes and Communities Agency property	Not to be published – commercially sensitive data

Annex IV: List of Commitments set out in this DCLG Open Data Strategy

1. DCLG will develop and publish processes which ensure that, by default: there is a continual review of the DCLG data listings on data.gov.uk, and; that the department routinely updates its unpublished holdings on the data.gov.uk 'NII inventory'

2. DCLG will build a principle of continually improving its open data outputs and services.   We will:

- Prioritise data that needs improvement (quality or access) – identified by users and/or key partners such as the Local Public Data Panel.
- Establish pro-active feedback loops with our data users such as local authority officials and interested community groups to ensure that we are producing high quality, useful open data outputs.
- Work with other departments and other parts of the public sector, notably local authorities, to share approaches and platforms.
- Ensure that datasets are fully described, so that consumers have sufficient information to understand their strengths, weaknesses, analytical limitations, and security requirements, as well as how to process the data
- Adopt and promote open standards to maximise opportunities for re-use. This will include INSPIRE standards for spatial data

3. Through 2013/14, the Open Data Communities programme will continue to free up the Department for Communities and Local Government's evidence-base from literally thousands of disconnected spreadsheets, so that it can be quickly and easily discovered, combined and re-used over the web alongside related third party sources.

4. By end 2015, Open Data Communities will provide a robust, reliable and trusted source of DCLG data in fully open, accessible forms – with data content delivered according to user demand and priorities established under the National Information Infrastructure and supporting strategies

5. By 2015, good practice is to have been disseminated widely by DCLG, assisted by the Local Public Data Panel, and for transparency and re-usable, open data processes to have been mainstreamed both within the local government sector and DCLG itself

6. DCLG officials will build on this and explore with colleagues how we can open up further data sets from, for example, our Planning Directorate to make them more accessible and useful to the growth agenda

7. DCLG officials to complete its review of Energy Performance Certificate, Display Energy Certificate and Air-Conditioning Inspection Report datasets with an intention to make necessary changes to the legislative framework to facilitate more suitable access to this data from April 2014

8. DCLG officials to continue to respond quickly to Open Data User Group requests for publication of datasets

9. DCLG to continue to work with the Local Government Association to support greater use of data.gov.uk by local authorities, in part to better publicise datasets that can underpin growth in local economies.

10. DCLG's Strategic Statistics data collection team will take on responsibility for certifying the department's datasets. This will as a matter of course involve certifying all datasets released as part of the Open Data Communities programme. Ultimately this means that all DCLG datasets under open government license should eventually be certified. The team is already testing out the certification process on some of the more popular DCLG datasets such as the English Indices of Deprivation and this will have been completed by November 2013. DCLG was the first department to embrace the concept of the certificates and where appropriate will spearhead efforts to get them used by other public authorities.

11. DCLG is leading the development and implementation of a centre of excellence for information sharing that was announced in the recent Spending Round. The centre will help tackle the cultural and organisational barriers to information sharing and work closely with local areas and their citizens. The centre of excellence (subject to agreement from a steering group) will be up and running April 2014.

12. The department recognises that the current data sharing regime can be confused. DCLG officials will work closely with the Cabinet Office on developing legislative proposals to make data sharing easier and more effective. We know that better information sharing is vital to transforming local public services.

13. As part of delivering more extensive, accessible open data outputs, DCLG will work to increase open data literacy. This will involve:

- working with: i) software developers and innovators (in particular via intermediaries such as the Open Data Institute/Nesta's Open Data Challenge Series which is running until March 2015) to stimulate new applications which utilise our data in more engaging and intuitive ways; and ii) users to understand and identify options for improving quality and presentation of our open data outputs. For example some users have reported problems using standard spreadsheet outputs and have requested the data in alternative, more accessible formats.

14. DCLG will empower a future generation of data innovators by providing data in machine-readable formats. Where practical, data will be provided in full 5-star LinkedData formats via open, standards-based Application Programming Interfaces, with OpenDataCommunities acting as the Department's preferred publishing and dissemination platform.

15. Through to end 2015, and to be achieved through pro-active, targeted promotion and communications, and working closely with users to capture and disseminate evidence of benefits achieved, DCLG will be able to catalogue active, sustained and significant use of sources in Open Data Communities by local authorities, public sector agencies, voluntary and charity organisations, and the private sector.

16. DCLG will look to align Open Data Communities more closely with data.gov.uk, and new data visualisation and collaboration tools emerging on the single Government domain thereby maximising opportunities for DCLG content to be combined with and re-used alongside related public sector sources. It will also be developed as the authoritative source for core reference data – supporting linking and joining of related datasets.

Annex V: Open Data: Draft benefits map

Open Data benefits map
Draft for discussion and development in collaboration with data users

Steve Peters, DCLG
November 2013