

Local government open data incentive scheme

Overview

What is the scheme?

The scheme is designed to encourage councils to publish open data in a consistent format on popular themes.

Themes from June 2014 to March 2015 are:

- planning applications
- premises licences, and
- public toilets.

Councils are paid £2,000 per theme for publishing data in the correct format. A further £1,000 is paid if a council publishes data for all three themes.

What data formats are used?

Open data published under the scheme must be made freely available in tabular comma separated variables (CSV) format complying with a schema which defines the content of each data column (also known as a field).

Schemas are designed according to the following criteria.

- Provide useful data
- Make it simple for councils to publish open data
- Enable data users to accurately interpret data and aggregate it across councils
- Make the data human readable if that does not compromise the above criteria

How do I see the schemas, submissions and data published?

Scheme requirements, submissions under the scheme and links to open data published are all open for viewing. Only personal details of people applying are withheld. The data itself is published at councils' own websites.

How does my council participate?

1. [Sign in](#) and apply for one or more themes from the [submissions page](#).
2. Wait for LGA acceptance, which is subject to there being sufficient funds available to pay incentives to all accepted councils.
3. Following acceptance, publish your data in a tabular format compliant with the schema published for your selected theme(s). This part may involve a bit of work changing from local conventions to codes and values that are recognised nationally.
4. Self-certify your dataset(s) with the Open Data Institute at the most basic level as a minimum.
5. Register the dataset(s) with [data.gov.uk](#).
6. Make a commitment to go on publishing the data.

You can ask the [ESD support team](#) for help at any point. When you have made a submission, we shall check your data and advise if any fixes are needed. After your data has passed our check for compliance, the LGA will process payment of the incentive to your council.

How do I make use of the data published by councils?

Take a look at the incentive scheme [submissions page](#) – no sign-in is required. There you'll see all council submissions and their respective status. At stage 3 (Submission) each council records a link to its open data. Stage 4, when complete, will indicate if we consider the data to comply with the standard schema.

Note that you can also view links to all local open datasets registered with ESD, whether compliant with a schema or not, through the [datasets page](#).

You can manually review the data from each council's link to its dataset. If you wish to combine data from councils, you may need to do some conversion of local codes to standard national ones via the [URI mapping web method](#) provided.

Note that there may be conditions attached to the re-use of northing and easting data or any Unique Property Reference Numbers. If conditions exist, these will be described at a link given in the GeoPointLicensingURL cell of each relevant row of data.

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Technical guidance

The following detailed guides define the schema and how to comply with it for each theme.

- [Planning applications schema guidance](#)
- [Premises licences schema guidance](#)
- [Public toilets schema guidance](#)

Getting more help

Our [help page](#) gives answers to common questions. The Knowledge Hub's [Local Open Data Community](#) includes a forum where the scheme is discussed. You need to register separately to participate in discussion. If your email address does not belong to a public sector organisation, email knowledgehub@capacitygrid.com to request access.

If the above don't address your query, email us at support@esd.org.uk.

22 August 2014
Ref 07329