Parks for London

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Lunch & Learn WEBINAR



Getting the most of your parks mapping exercise

David Brown (formerly of Occam's Razor Consulting Ltd)



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SPOT

- Single point of truth
- Abandon maps and spreadsheets
- Use a geographically enabled database
- DRY and WET

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Schema (1)

- Everything that you want to know and retrieve e.g., Asset type, owner, condition etc.
- Constraints on data e.g., height of lighting column between 2 m and 8 m
- Pick lists e.g., Bench material - timber, metal, concrete, metal and timber, concrete and timber, (other)
- Not every field needs to be completed in the field, e.g., risk assessment, manufacturer, costs, installation date
- History file, e.g., repeated inspections all recorded
- Worth having an AKA field for the site name

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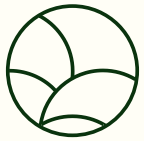
Schema (2)

- Database designers and data collectors hate modifying schemas
- If you really need to do it, ask how complicated it will be to implement and ask whether it will affect data already collected
- It is worth taking the time to get the schema right first time
- If you can’t, apologise for the inconvenience
- Adding extra features has been responsible for many public sector IT failures e.g., Horizon and NHS

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Practical considerations

- Eagerness to complete the project as soon as possible is understandable
- If the entire project would cost £150,000, it might be better to phase it over 5 years at £5,000 p.a.
- Condition values are more useful if recorded as a number, e.g., 1 to 6 rather than “New”, “Unserviceable” and “Minor deterioration”
- Numerical values make it easier to prioritise and to moderate



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Abstraction

- A map is often a convenient way to present or analyze information
- It’s not the only way
- Don’t think of the database as a map with other stuff attached

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Thank you!

If you have any queries for David, email: shottopieces@btinternet.com



www.parksforlondon.org.uk
info@parksforlondon.org.uk
@ParksforLondon