

Nottingham City Council's Open Data Initiative Supported by FME & 1Spatial

1Spatial's Certified FME consultants supported Nottingham City Council's use of FME technology to reduce the response time of Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) requests. Production of validated and redacted FOI responses for council spend data now takes just one hour per month, with significantly reduced manual input. The council is now meeting government response targets despite a steady increase in FOI requests. Certified FME training and technical support from 1Spatial assisted in making this possible.

The technical expertise of 1Spatial, the spatial big data company, enabled the Council to create scheduled, rules-based automation using FME. The Council automated time-consuming processes, such as the redaction and checking of every one of the 15,000 council spend records, by creating user-defined data rules. Now the team checks just 50-100 exceptions as flagged by FME. The information is then automatically posted on the Open Data Nottingham site.

As a result, the council has radically reduced its workload and improved performance against government targets for the publication of open data, response to FOI requests and building authoritative local geospatial data.

Kamrul Kashem, GIS Data Analyst in the Information Management Services team at Nottingham City Council said, "The general expertise of 1Spatial has always been top-notch," explains Kamrul. "Whenever we've had a problem, they've been really responsive. They're very dynamic and they feel like part of the team, rather than 'just another supplier'. There's a really good bond between the council and 1Spatial."

Nottingham now has over 90 different datasets on the city's open data site. Popular sets include: food hygiene, planning applications and information on CCTV cameras. Having so much information available has driven local innovation too, like the gallery of applications created by citizens and organisations, which makes use of open data.

David Eagle, Managing Consultant from 1Spatial explains, "Nottingham City Council has used FME for some time, but a little assistance from our excellent team along the way, has supported their skilled staff to explore its capabilities to the full and get more from their investment in the product. They now have the ability to automate the generation, updating and publication of a wide variety of datasets, both geospatial and tabular (non-spatial), as well as dramatically increasing the range of information available as open data. This has turned Information Management Services into a critical resource and source of value for the council."

1Spatial is hosting a series of free events in the UK and Australia, to help users to automate their processes, innovate and connect with FME users. Companies can register here www.1spatial.com/FMEWT to join the team in Southampton (12th April), Cardiff (14th), Manchester (20th) or Edinburgh (22nd).