

Astun News

Welcome

In the last couple of months we've been busy hosting the Astun User Group Conference, helping to organise and run the FOSS4G UK event in Southampton and delivering a number of new and

interesting projects. There is news too of new starters, Moira Livesey who joined Astun in May and Marco Finnberg who started in July. williamallbrook@astuntechnology.com

Gallions Housing – iShare GIS in the Cloud

Gallions Housing, part of the Peabody Group, is our third Housing Association customer. It has recently adopted iShare GIS initially for use by its Environmental Services section focused on the maintenance of the public realm land in Thamesmead.

Thamesmead incorporates 170 hectares of green and open space, 5 lakes and 7km of waterways and two nature reserves around its social housing. "Maintaining this large area is no small task," said Nathan Carr, from Gallions Housing. "iShareGIS with OS base mapping supplied via ADS is already being used to help clarify to our teams of maintenance workers the land that we maintain and the public highway land maintained by

Greenwich and Bexley councils."

"Peabody are investing heavily in Thamesmead and iShare GIS will be used by the development and regeneration teams to share data about new housing zones and the requirements for new paths, cycle ways and play parks throughout the area and generally to inform the property improvement programme.

We already have most of the 8000 properties in our housing management system (QL) address matched with AddressBase to allow us to display these properties as a layer symbolised by their attributes, to assist in coordinating property improvements, neighbourhood consultations, etc."

Astun Increases Support for OSGeo



Astun has continued its sponsorship of OSGeo and is now a 'Silver' sponsor. The Open Source Geospatial Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation, which aims to foster global adoption of open source geospatial technology. OSGeo serves as an outreach and advocacy organisation providing financial, organisational and legal support for the open source geospatial community.

Host one of our courses and get one place free!

We are happy to run our QGIS, PostGIS and GeoServer training courses where you work and would be very interested to speak to customers around the country who want to host their own or public courses with the added bonus of a free place.

So if you know enough people in your organisation or region that would benefit, please get in touch.



Conference Full!

We held the Astun User Group Conference at Aston University Business School in Birmingham on the 10th May. The morning was filled by presentations including a keynote from Mike Saunt who covered the Astun vision and roadmap, a presentation by Ian Bennett from the Ordnance Survey on 'pgRouting' and three customer presentations, from Peter Silvester from East Hants, Mark Wilcox from Exactrak and James Rutter from Surrey Heath.

The afternoon consisted of training sessions, two QGIS and one iShare. We had 70 attendees from 40 organisations, a record turnout for an Astun User Group event and evidence of the growing Astun family.

We had a 'thumbs up' for the venue and the food, a qualified thumbs up for the convenience of the location and a thumbs up for the presentations in the



Mike Saunt delivering the conference keynote

morning. Most people found the afternoon training sessions useful and informative.

You can download the presentations and see some photos of the event here: <https://astuntechnology.com/astun-user-group/>

New Starters

Marco Finnberg: our first International developer



Marco joined Astun in July in a System Administrator / Dev Ops role. An experienced systems engineer and fan of Open Source he prefers to have control of the tech rather than the other way around.

Marco says he gets a strange pleasure from working on the boring bits, which nobody else likes, such as monitoring and automation.

He's always on the lookout for ways to improve the status quo and come up with his own workarounds and solutions... except when it comes to encryption! Marco is from Finland and lives in Bilbao.

Moira Livesey: Local Government Ambassador



Moira joined Astun in May as Local Government Ambassador.

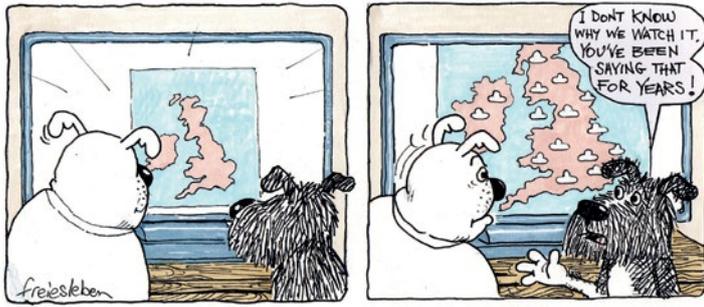
She is responsible for maintaining

contact with Astun customers, conducting reviews and generally ensuring that everyone is happy. Moira worked in Local Government for over 30 years with roles in land charges, gazetteer management and GIS.

Latterly she was Spatial Data Manager for Bolton Council responsible for GIS, the LLPG and the Local Land Charge Service.

During this time she was also on secondment as a Local Authority Advocate to the Land Registry on a project to centralise the Local Land Charges Register.

Weather Forecast... Cloudy



When Mike Saunt delivered his keynote at the Astun User Group Conference in May you could be forgiven for thinking that he was presenting the weather forecast. Seriously though the direction of travel that he was endeavouring to communicate was our projected move to Cloud based software and solution deployment. There is lots of innovative development required to get to where we want to be but we are already delivering Cloud based solutions today and you can move in that direction too.

Why you may ask? Number one is cost. Shrinking budgets and fewer staff can actually mean that less is more with a Cloud based solution. It delivers GIS but also removes quite a lot of the risk and overhead associated with an on site solution. No servers, redundancy, disaster recovery, storage, performance, security or software upgrades to worry about...all that heavy lifting is taken care of by us with a little

help from Amazon Web Services.

There are other benefits too, such as the ability to access the service wherever you are which opens up mobility and collaboration opportunities. It is also easier for organisations to share services by using the same underlying Cloud based infrastructure with obvious cost benefits.

Just in the last year we have delivered Cloud based solutions for Essex County Council, Defra, the Environment Agency, East Hampshire and Havant, Gallions Housing, Exactrak and Savills to name a few. More recently we have won a project for Central Bedfordshire to deliver a large Enterprise Cloud GIS solution. Trafford Council is another Local Authority that has plumped for iShare in the Cloud whilst Rochford, a customer for a number of years, is migrating its iShare on site solution to iShare in the Cloud.

Astun Proud to have Supported Defra Open Data Publishing



Defra recently announced that it had easily met its original target for publishing over 8,000 of its datasets as open data, that's data that anyone can access, use and share. Defra and its 'arms length bodies' have published 11,007 open data sets, representing more than a third of the Government's open data. Defra data is extremely wide ranging in its scope from

flood levels and water quality to food consumption and LiDAR.

Here at Astun we are proud to say that we have played a significant role in this data revolution by hosting and providing the metadata catalogue service for many of the datasets that Defra has released. Defra will be publishing some use case studies on its own #OpenDefra DataMarket blog in the coming weeks.

<https://defradigital.blog.gov.uk/2016/06/28/opendefra-datamarket-a-semi-live-blog-post/>

T&Cs

We are often asked how expenses are calculated for on-site consultancy days. These are set out in the 'Consultancy Support Days for Call Off' section of the 'Terms and Conditions' on our website and apply to both standard consultancy days and those purchased as part of an Open Enterprise Agreement (OEA).

<https://astuntechnology.com/ishare-support-conditions>

Cloud based sharing in East Hants and Havant



Havant
BOROUGH COUNCIL

East Hampshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Both sites served from iShare in the Cloud

In 2009 East Hampshire District Council and Havant Borough Council joined together in a ground-breaking partnership. The councils share a number of back office services, including finance, human resources, procurement, payroll and IT. In terms of GIS there were two corporate applications SIA datamap and Cadcorp. The two authorities needed to share one application with single site management of the GIS provision.

Peter Silvester, Data and Intelligence Manager, at East Hants led the project using the Government's G-Cloud procurement tools right down to evaluation of software and service delivery. The 'must haves' for the procurement included:

- Managed PSMA Data
- Ability to consume all disparate data sets
- Low reliance on IT provision from providers
- Low maintenance overheads
- Cost savings
- Good support
- Compliance (ITL, INSPIRE, Open Source, Open data)
- Self-development of solutions
- Web integration (WFS WMS)
- Speed

This solution is based on iShare in the Cloud with fully managed and hosted PSMA data via ADS, a PostGIS spatial database and iShare GIS in a virtual private cloud. The deployment also includes iShare Maps, which is used for both Council websites with all the data pushed either directly from internal systems or via the spatial database. For staff needing a professional grade desktop GIS client, QGIS has become the preferred option.

FOSS4G UK 2016

Our solutions are built on Open Source and quite rightly we have been supporting the Open Source community for many years. In June we sponsored, largely organised and took part in FOSS4G UK 2016, which took place at the Ordnance Survey's Business Centre in Southampton. Jo Cook, one of our consultants, was Conference Chair and was ably supported throughout the three days by a number of other Astun staff, notably Steven Feldman, Aileen Heal, Ant Scott and Ian Turton, who all either gave presentations or ran workshops too. Matt Walker and Andrew Bailey also attended and Simon Chapman ran the disco at the event party! We even designed the event logo!



workshops, an 'unconference', a hack, a codesprint and a party. There was an international flavour to the event too with many of the 170 delegates coming from outside the UK. As for Astun, we were delighted to help out and would like say a big thank you to all the Astun staff who gave up much of their own time to make it such a successful event.

You can view and download the many and varied presentations from the event here: <http://uk.osgeo.org/foss4guk2016/talks.html>

FOSS4G UK included 35 talks, 13