

Handout 5: Creating Hotspots

Creating Hotspots

The COMAPP Generator offers the opportunity to create content for your map using links to multimedia files. These files can include factual information, creative writing and audio files.

Who is going to access my map and look at the hotspots?

To begin you will need to decide upon your hotspots. Once you have done this you can create content.

Consider your audience and their needs – adults, young people, children, families or the elderly? Photographs and audio files add interest to each hotspot.

Remember that your map should be accessible to as many people as possible.

These considerations will enable you to develop hotspot content that is relevant to their needs.

What do I want to include within my hotspots?

You can include photographs | archive images | narration | interviews | oral histories | music | poetry | descriptive text | creative writing

Text

Content for the on-screen description should be 150 characters and should capture the reader's attention.

A longer description as a word file should be quite short – around 150 words.

Audio

Again you need to consider your audience. How long will someone listen to your recording? Do you want to use a local accent? Do you want to add sound effects? Should you include music?

If you are writing the text for someone to record as an audio file then consider that around 250 words = 1 minute.

Remember you can extend information by making additional links to folders with images, audio links and Internet sites.

Where can I get factual information about my hotspots?

Internet sites | books | site visits | local people | interview experts | oral histories

Where can I get photographs about my hotspots?

You can take photographs on-site but remember if your photographs involve identifiable images of individuals then you will need to gain permission. If possible make sure you have permission in writing allowing the use of the photograph on the Internet. Try not to use photographs of children.

Be careful using images from the Internet as they are usually copyrighted to someone. Instead, make a link to the website where the image(s) are held. **IMPORTANT:** Check the content of the whole website for its suitability.

Creating imaginative content

The Openstreetmap Generator offers the opportunity to include creative content as well as factual information within your map. An example might be where you would like your group to make an imaginative response to a selected ‘hotspot’ – perhaps recalling images and sounds from times gone by.

Most people will not see themselves as ‘creative writers’ and may be nervous or self-conscious about writing creative prose or poetry. However there is a simple technique using a list of questions that works with a wide range of ages and abilities.

Participants can use this technique and record their thoughts and responses to ‘questions’ in writing or by using a sound recorder on their Smart phone or I-pad.

The questions are designed to prompt thought and help the participant to engage with what they can see, hear or imagine. You can write your own questions.

Developing a Hotspot poem or a piece of creative writing

Where are you standing?

What is the weather like?

What can you hear?

What can you see in front of you?

Look at one detail and describe it.

NOW imagine the past –

What can you imagine you can hear?

Close your eyes – what can you see?

Look at one detail that you can see in your minds eye and describe it.

Look for another detail and describe it.

Can you hear anyone talking? What are they saying?

Reflect for a moment – what do you feel?

Responses made ‘on the spot’ can be added to, re-ordered and redrafted later – perhaps adding more thoughts or removing words that are not needed to capture the moment.

Here is an example by a COMAPP workshop participant.

Example: Flight by Caroline Mitchell

This poem is Caroline’s response to Craig Knowles sculpture in Sunderland’s marina. The sculpture is a sequence of steel girders that gradually morph into a cormorant, reflecting the River Wear past and present.

Sunderland Marina February 2013

Is the sky blue or steel grey today?
 Taking flight, one, two, three, four,
 Girders release the cormorant, phoenix-like,
 Hot metal sparks and transforms,
 One, two, three, four,
 Port out to sea.
 Starboard towards the river
 To scoop the whiteys and flatties from the Wear
 Water transformed from industrial sludge
 ...to sparkling fishing ground.

