

Introduction To Local News Engine

Local News Engine is software to help journalists discover and explore leads in public data that the time pressures of the modern newsroom may mean that they would otherwise not be able to, and to assist with the mechanical tasks associated with working with large public data sets. It has been designed with the assistance of journalists and is a tool to help use their professional skills to be more effective.

Local News Engine is supplied as two HTML files in a .zip file. If the version you've been supplied with contains data derived from the court list, then it will also be encrypted with PGP to ensure that the data is only available to the intended recipient. Courts data contains sensitive personal information and must be handled carefully.

Local News Engine contains personal data, and may contain sensitive personal data if you have been supplied with a version that includes court lists. You should take care to ensure that your use of it does not constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act. In particular, you should not pass it to anyone whom the Data Controller (Will Perrin of Talk About Local) has not explicitly authorized, and you should not retain it beyond the end of the prototype on the 4th February 2017. On or before this date, you should delete all copies of it from your email storage, hard drive, and any backups that you may have taken.

leads.html

leads.html is a tool to help journalists find leads in public data. It looks at public data sources, including planning, licensing and courts data, and looks for appearances of names of notable people.

Getting Started

Open up leads.html in a web browser. It'll look like this:

These results indicate a name in your search terms appears in the lists searched. You must verify it is the person you are searching for. An appearance on a court list DOES NOT mean the person actually appeared in court on the date indicated, or on the charges listed, or entered the plea indicated - that must be checked by you before publication

Name list

Select one or more

☐ Camden Councillors

☐ Camden New Journal

☐ Islington Councillors

☐ Islington Tribune

☐ Will

Sources

Select one or more

☐ Camden License

☐ Camden Planning

☐ Islington License

☐ Islington Planning

Filter Names

Search for Name

×

Text Search

Search for Text

×

Wards

NOTHING SELECTED

▼

RESET

Please choose at least one name list and at least one source on the left.

To start using leads.html, select at least one list of names and at least one source; you'll then see all occasions where a name on the selected list appears in the selected source. To add to the list of names being searched, select an additional names list. Likewise, to look for appearances across additional sources, select the sources.

The lists are:

Camden Councillors	The names of all the members of Camden Council
Camden New Journal	Names of people who have previously appeared in the CNJ. To obtain this list, we scraped the CNJ website and extracted all the names that we could find automatically
Islington Councillors	The names of all the members of Islington Council
Islington Tribune	As per the CNJ, but for the Islington Tribune
Will	A short list of names of locally notable people supplied by Will Perrin.

The sources are:

Camden License	The licensing application database from Camden Council
Camden Planning	The planning application database from Camden Council
Islington License	The licensing application database from Islington Council
Islington Planning	The planning application database from Islington Council
Courts (if included)	The published list of cases before Highbury Corner Magistrate's Court

Because there can sometimes be lots of results, there are three filters which allow you to narrow the results:

Filter Names allows you to filter the list of matches, if you have a particular name in mind. Note that this does not add to the list of names being searched for, because the search for matches is performed before the file is sent out. Any additional names that you wish to search for should be submitted to Rob Redpath at Open Data Services (rob.redpath@opendataservices.coop) for inclusion in the next release.

Text Search examines all fields of the results for any occurrence of the supplied term. It will only search through results that have already been matched by the initial search criteria - so won't match an occurrence of the search term that doesn't involve an existing notable name.

Wards specifies a particular ward to narrow the results to.

Results

Each result will look like this:

MATCHED NAMES: METROPOLITAN POLICE, METROPOLITAN POLICE AGENCY, METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE

Total Appearances 91

Camden License 78

Islington Planning 6

Camden Planning 1

Islington Tribune 2

Camden New Journal 4

Latest Appearance: Camden License - 22 Dec 2016

Key fields

Applicant	Metropolitan Police
Correspondant	Metropolitan Police
Expiry date	No information available
Granted/Refused date	No information available
Interested Parties	Councillor J Yarde
Premises address	269 WEST END LANE LONDON NW6 1QS
Premises name	SA_IT
Status	Under Consultation
Ward	West Hampstead

[Full record](#)

Because the same name can appear in different forms, we have employed fuzzy matching to attempt to group information by names that are similar into single results. All of the matched names are listed at the top of each result.

Each of the green numbers in the upper section of each result is the number of occurrences one of the matched names has in the respective source. These are clickable to see all of the matches.

The lower section of the result contains the most recent occurrence in the selected source. For brevity, only key fields are shown - if you want to see the all the fields, click 'Full Record'.

explore.html is a tool to help journalists explore the complete data set for a small geographical area - one or more wards. It has not been processed to provide matches for names, but provides basic tools for exploring the data set.

Getting Started

Open up explore.html in a web browser. It'll look like this:

Wards

NOTHING SELECTED

Sources

☐ Camden License

☐ Camden Planning

☐ Islington License

☐ Islington Planning

Text Search

Search for Text

Matches 107104

CAMDEN LICENSE - 22 DEC 2016

Key fields

Applicant

Correspondant

Expiry date

Granted/Refused date

Interested Parties

Premises address

Premises name

Status

Ward

Metropolitan Police

Metropolitan Police

No information available

No information available

Councillor J Yarde

269 WEST END LANE LONDON NW6 1QS

SA_IT

Under Consultation

West Hampstead

Full record

CAMDEN LICENSE - 22 DEC 2016

Key fields

Applicant

Correspondant

Expiry date

Granted/Refused date

Interested Parties

Premises address

Premises name

Status

Ward

Hawthorn & Hill Ltd

Berwin Leighton Paisner

No information available

No information available

Sue S Vincent

2 THEOBALD'S ROAD LONDON WC1X 8PN

Yorkshire Grey Brewery

Under Consultation

Holborn & Covent Garden

Full record

To start using explore.html, select one or more wards that are of interests to you, or type a search term into the Text Search box. By default, all sources are shown - if you want to narrow down the sources in use, then select one or more of the checkboxes under 'Sources'.