**Module 4 – Ellen Broad – Simplifying open data licences**

**Simplifying open data licences  
Why does open data need to be licenced?**

My name’s Ellen and I’m the Policy lead at the Open Data institute.

Without a licence your data isn’t truly open. As well as making your data machine readable, and published, you need a licence that tells other people that they can access, use, and share your data. Without a licence that says these things, your data isn’t truly open.

**How does licensing help unlock the value of open data?**

So without a licence, you’re not giving businesses, organisations, start-ups, permission to innovate. By permitting anyone to use, access, and share your data, for a range of purposes, commercial and non-commercial, you’re unlocking an enormous amount of innovation. You are providing them with certainty, and permission to take risks, and this is really important to guarantee the benefits of open data.

**What type of licence best suits open data?**

For an open licence, the simpler the licence the better. Quite often we’re talking about data that will be remixed, integrated, with other datasets. So the simpler the licence for your open data, the easier it will be for the re-user to mix it with other datasets and create new products and services. The Creative Commons standard licences are a really useful, simple standard for licencing your open data. The Creative Commons Attribution licence is the one we recommend for publishers and individuals publishing open data. If you’re a government - or another organisation - who can’t use a standard licence like the creative commons licence, it’s still useful to think about making it as simple and understandable as possible for the re-user.

**How can open data licensing be provided for in tenders, procurement and contracting?**

If you’re a company or an organisation or a department with a commitment to publishing open data, sometimes you might have contractors providing services on your behalf. To ensure that the data that’s being collected and used as part of those contracted services is also published as open data, you can include clauses to that effect in any contracts you have with them. This is a nice way of seeing through the Open data cycle, and ensure that all of the data that’s involved in the delivery of important services is published as open data where possible.