



City of Edinburgh Council improves planning efficiency with mobile GIS

Development planners at [City of Edinburgh Council](#) have significantly improved the efficiency of statutory planning processes. Their use of [Esri's Collector App for ArcGIS](#) saves hours of effort in data collection, giving them deeper insight into city planning issues.

Planners from City of Edinburgh Council can now, for the first time, use tablet computers to collect and update survey information whilst out 'in the field', in the streets and public spaces of Edinburgh. Instead of writing notes and typing them up later in the office, planners enter survey data directly into their mobile GIS app and the up-to-date information is sent back to the council's central GIS system. This new data collection process saves a significant amount of time, enabling planners to focus on more strategic data analysis and development activity.

The mobile GIS app is being used with particular success as part of a review of nine designated 'town centres' within the city.

The versatility of the mobile solution enables planners to not only record the different types of shops located in these areas, but also take pictures and record notes on related factors such as bus stop locations, pavement conditions and the placement of pedestrian crossings.

Planners can therefore collect a much wider range of data while in the field, allowing them to quickly build an accurate picture of the health of Edinburgh's high streets. Ultimately, the council can use this information to inform its development plans and help transform its town centres into more vibrant, attractive places that will appeal to more visitors.

The City of Edinburgh Council is one of the first organisations in the UK to benefit from the use of Esri's Collector App for ArcGIS, with its employees using the app on a range of Apple iPads and Samsung Galaxy tablets.

Following the success of mobile GIS in a number of pilot programmes, the council expects to broaden its use of the solution into other departments, to significantly improve efficiency and resource management across the whole organisation. For example, the planners intend to use it for their second audit of open space in 2014.

“Esri's Collector App gives us a far speedier way to collect survey information and enables planners to make huge time savings.”

Tony Moore,
Geographic Information Analyst,
Edinburgh City Council