



Tales from the Terminal Room September 2013, Issue No. 115

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Tales from the Terminal Room (TFTR) is an electronic newsletter that includes reviews and comparisons of information sources; useful tools for managing information; technical and access problems on the Net; and news of RBA's training courses and publications. Many of the items and articles will have already appeared on Karen Blakeman's Blog at <http://www.rba.co.uk/wordpress/>

Tales from the Terminal Room can be delivered via email as plain text or as a PDF with active links. You can join the distribution list by going to <http://www.rba.co.uk/tftr/index.shtml> and filling in the form. You will be sent an email asking you to confirm that you want to be added to the list. TFTR is also available as an RSS feed. The URL for the feed is <http://www.rba.co.uk/rss/tftr.xml>

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Recent Presentations

Highlights from a business information workshop, 19th September 2013, organised by TFPL and held in London <http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/karenblakeman-1940192-highlights-business-information-workshop-19th-september-2013/>

Search is more than Google. A presentation given to the Norwegian Online User Group (NOLUG) is Oslo, 26th September 2013. Includes advanced Google commands, Google alternatives, social media, open access. <http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/karenblakeman-1947102-search-thangoogle/>

Search Tools

Google announces Hummingbird...hmmm

Google announced a major new search algorithm to celebrate its 15th anniversary called Hummingbird, because it is “precise and fast”. Interestingly, the change was implemented about a month before the announcement was made and most of us did not notice any difference! That is probably because Google is continually making minor changes to the way it presents results, and then there are the live experiments that we are all subjected to (Just Testing: Google Users May See Up To A Dozen Experiments <http://searchengineland.com/just-testing-google-searchers-may-see-up-to-a-dozen-experiments-141570>). So, even if we do suspect that our results have changed, it's difficult to know whether it's the usual combination of personalisation and experiments or the new algorithm.

Phil Bradley has written a neat summary of what Hummingbird is (http://philbradley.typepad.com/phil_bradleys_weblog/2013/09/what-is-google-hummingbird.html) and Danny Sullivan has compiled an FAQ at <http://searchengineland.com/google-hummingbird-172816>. There is also a short video on the BBC website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24292897> in which Amit Singhal, VP, Google Search talks about the launch and the future direction of Google search.

I have not noticed any significant differences in either desktop or mobile search but that is probably a good thing. We tend to spot changes only when Google completely messes up. I suspect that we'll see little difference when using advanced commands such as filetype or site; Hummingbird seems to be geared more towards handling natural language queries. It is far too early to say how this is going to affect in depth research, but if you suddenly find strange things happening to your search it could be Hummingbird and not you.

If you are keen to find out more about how Google works and how to get better results I am presenting a workshop later this month in London that has been organised by UKeiG. Further details are on the UKeiG website at <http://www.ukeig.org.uk/>. Alternatively, if you have had enough of Google and want to explore alternatives there is the Anything but Google workshop, again organised by UKeiG.

Top tips from the latest business information workshop

Delegates at the September business information workshop organised by TFPL (<http://www.tfpl.com/>) in London came up with an interesting combination of websites and search commands for their end of day top tips.

1. **OFFSTATS – Official Statistics on the Web** <http://www.offstats.auckland.ac.nz>
Excellent starting point for official statistical sources by country, region subject or a combination of categories. All of the content in the database is in the public domain and available through the Internet.
2. **GMacker** <http://gmacker.com/web/content/gDateRange/gdr.htm>
Google's Verbatim in the search options menu on the results page is great. Google's date option from the same menu is great. But you cannot use both together. You **can** use the daterange: command, though, with Verbatim but it's complicated. GMacker is a much easier way to do it. Type in your search on the GMacker page, select your dates from the calendars and click on 'Google Search'. When the results appear on Google simply apply Verbatim in the usual way.
3. **Domain Tools** <http://www.domaintools.com/>
A useful tool for identifying who owns the domain name of a website.

4. **7 side** <http://www.7side.co.uk/> was recommended for its International company information services.
5. **Zanran** <http://zanran.com/>
This is a search tool for searching information contained in charts, graphs and tables of data and within formatted documents such as PDFs, Excel spreadsheets and images. Enter your search terms and optionally limit your search by date and/or format type.
6. **News alerts, news curation services and automated newsletter generation.**
Use Google alerts, RSS feeds and newsletter generation sites such as Paper.li (<http://paper.li/>) and Scoop.it (<http://www.scoop.it/>) to keep up to date and share news with colleagues.
7. **site: command**
Use the site: command to focus your search on particular types of site, for example site:ac.uk, or to search inside a large rambling site. You can also use -site: to exclude sites from your search.
8. **Numeric range**
This command is unique to Google. Use it for anything to do with numbers – years, temperatures, weights, distances, prices etc. Simply type in your two numbers separated by two full stops as part of your search. A good way of limiting your search to pages or news covering a company's activities over two or three years in the past.
9. **OpenCorporates** "The Open Database Of The Corporate World"
<http://opencorporates.com/>
Provides access to open corporate data on 55 million companies in 75 jurisdictions. You can search all jurisdictions at the same time or select just one. Results can be filtered by type of data held, current status, company type, SIC. A link to the original registry page for a company is always included with the displayed information.
10. **DataMarket** <http://datamarket.com/>
A portal to thousands of free and priced datasets. Free to search, and create charts and visualisations of the free data.

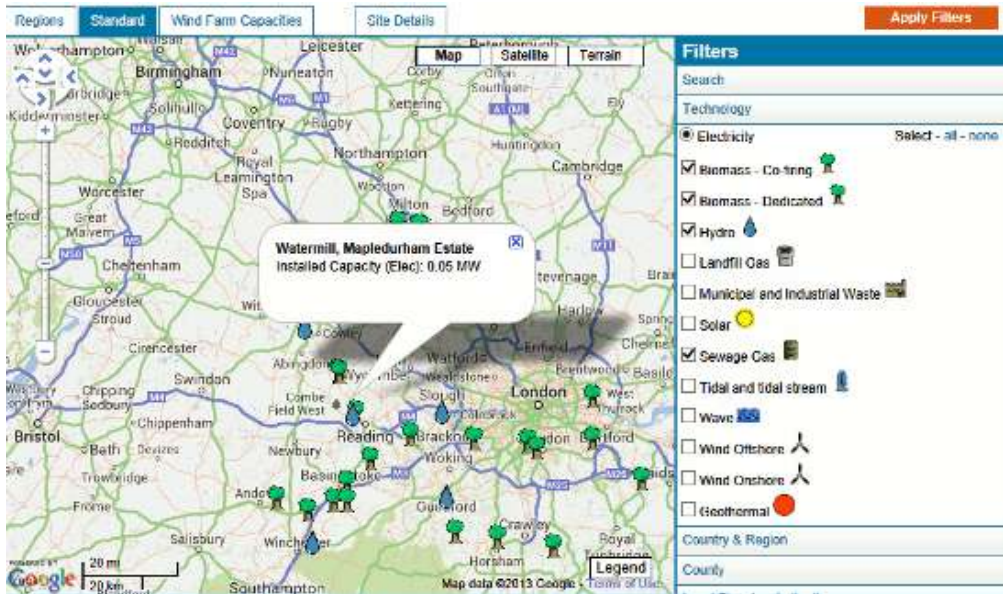
Interactive maps of UK renewable energy generation

I recently mentioned Gridwatch (How the UK's electricity is generated <http://www.rba.co.uk/wordpress/2013/08/21/how-the-uks-electricity-is-generated/>) as a way of tracking how much energy is passing through the National Grid and the technology used to generate that electricity. Although Gridwatch is a great way of observing the total amount of electricity that is generated by each technology – gas, coal, wind etc – it does not go into any detail with respect to individual installations. The Digest of UK energy statistics (DUKES) produced by the UK Department of Energy & Climate Change (<http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change/series/digest-of-uk-energy-statistics-dukes>) includes a spreadsheet listing all of the operational power stations, fuel that they use, installed capacity, location, and the year that generation began. The direct link to the spreadsheet is http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/226895/dukes5_11.xls. This is historical data and the current list refers to plants in operation at the end of May 2013.

UK Energy Watch has a map (<http://www.ukenergywatch.org/Electricity/PowerStations>) showing the location of UK power stations of 400 MW or larger, so it is by no means comprehensive. It does allow you, though, to click on a plant and display current generation except for CCGT stations (Combined Cycle Gas Turbine).

There are more options available when it comes to what are called renewables (for example wind, solar, biomass, hydro). The DECC's RESTATS interactive map at

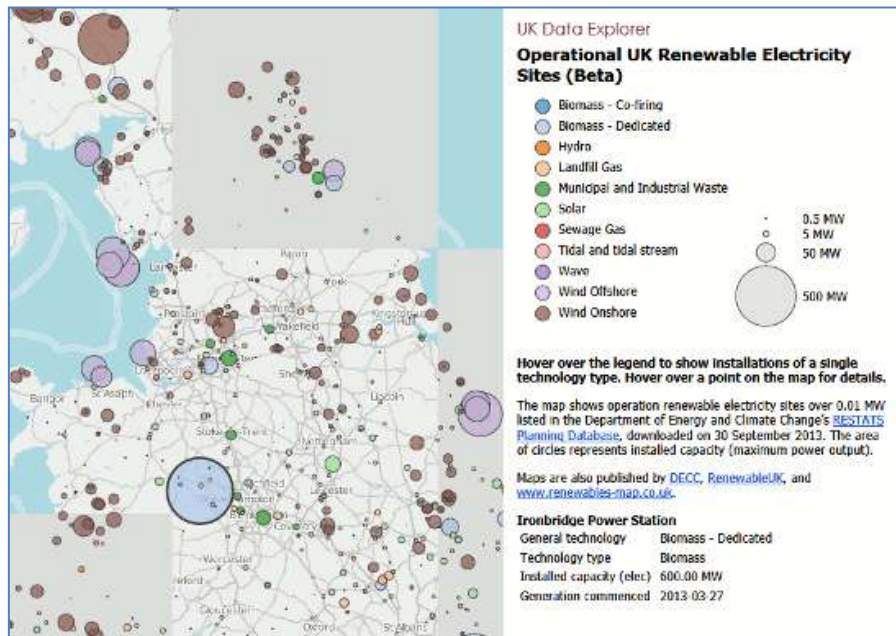
<http://restats.decc.gov.uk/app/pub/map/map> enables you to search by technology, region, county, planning authority and application status. It also has a separate map for wind farm capacities.



The site information includes installed capacity, details of the planning application but not how much energy is actually being produced. RESTATS says that *“Information is held on the performance of operational projects but owing to the need to maintain the commercially sensitive nature of these data, specific site details and performance figures are not disclosed”*.

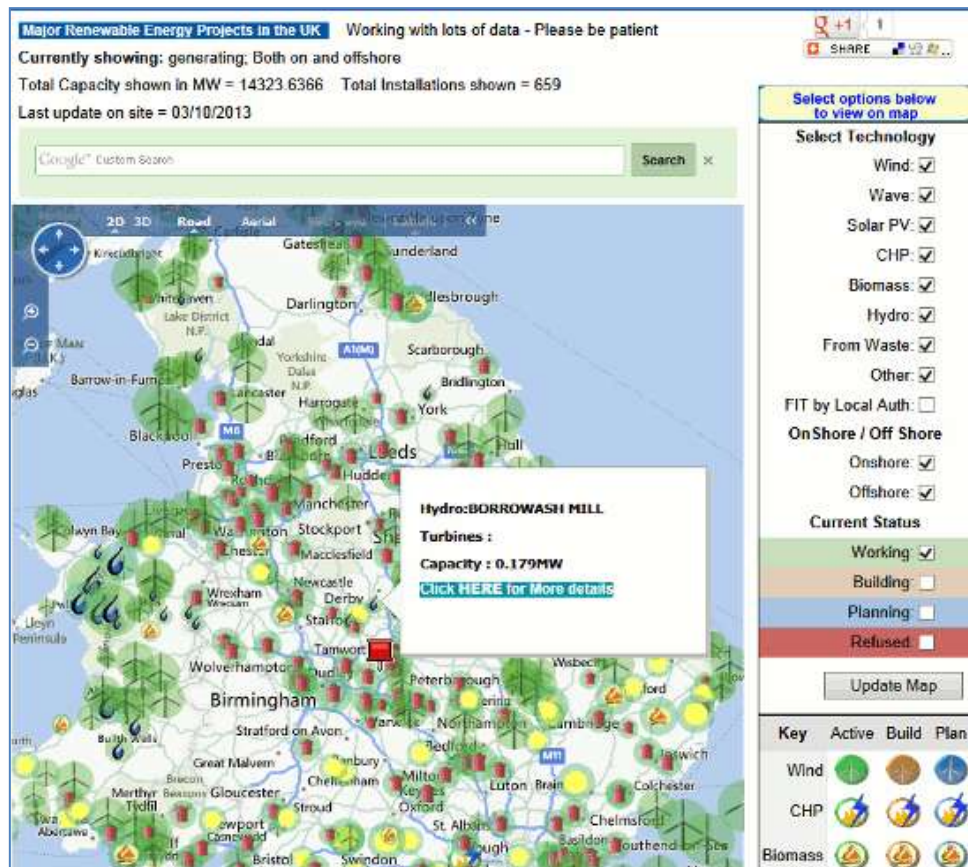
Regions	Standard	Wind Farm Capacities	Site Details
Watermill, Mapledurham Estate			Return to map
Technology :	Hydro		
Status :	Application Approved - Operational		
Installed Capacity (Elec):	0.05 MW		
Project Summary			
Pre Consent :	Application Approved		
Application Submitted :	19 August 2009		
Application Number :	P09/E0903/LB		
Determining Authority :	South Oxfordshire District		
Recommendation :	Unknown		
Application Determined :	14 October 2009		
Planning Appeal Status :	N/A		
Appeal Determined :			
Appeal Ref Number :			
Post Consent :	Operational		
Location Details			
Site Address :	Mapledurham RG4 7TR		
Determined Authority :	South Oxfordshire District		
Region :	South East		
County :	Oxfordshire		
Country :	England		
OS Grid Reference :	466945, 176711		

The UK Data explorer has produced a renewables map at <http://ukdataexplorer.com/renewables/> that uses the RESTATS data and shows operational renewable electricity sites over 0.01 MW. The different colours represent the type of plant and the area of the circles indicate installed capacity (maximum power output).



To see details of a specific installation you should be able to hover over a point on the map. This did not work for me with some of the smaller plants and when I tried to zoom in on an area I often lost the background map.

The Interactive Map of Renewable and Alternative Energy Projects in the UK at <http://www.renewables-map.co.uk> is another interactive map and can be filtered by technology type and planning status.



According to the website the information is gathered from “a wide range of web resources, in all cases these will be referenced, usually by a link to that information. Locations are either taken from existing data, usually from planning applications, or by painstakingly identifying the location on the ground using online maps.” I am not sure how up to date the map is and I noticed that the smaller hydro installations along the Thames are missing. Another problem that I have experienced with

this site is that when I click on "More details" for an installation I get far too many internal sever errors. However, when the information does appear it includes useful comments on the technology, links to relevant websites and the latest news.

Eccleshall (Biomass , Operating)

General information.

Location in the UK : **England, Raleigh Hall, Stafford, ST21 6JL**
Latitude /Longitude: **52.8 / -2.3(rounded)**
Type of installation: **Biomass** on/offshore: **on**
Turbines :**1** Capacity : **2.6 MW** Technology : **turbine**
Installer:**RTB**
Owner : **RTB**
Operator : **RTB**
Approx Date of 1st power generation: **October 2007**

Comment

Eccleshall Biomass Limited: At the centre of this groundbreaking project is a 2.6 megawatt generator, fuelled by the energy crop "miscanthus", other energy crops and clean wood chip. The plant saves 1 tonne per hour of CO2 which would be emitted generating electricity from fossil fuel. Miscanthus is a non-invasive, sterile, perennial grass. It will be grown and harvested on local farms within a 25 mile radius of the Eccleshall Biomass Plant.

Residues from the plant will be in the form of ash at approx 1,100 tonnes per year (5% of fuel input) This will be used as fertiliser and spread on local farms.

RTB: Raleigh Hall / Talbotts Biomass Energy / BiEcc Ltd

Useful links

The final one in my list is from the energy generating company RWE Innogy (<http://www.rwe.com/web/cms/en/194914/rwe-innogy/sites/production-data-live/>). Its interactive map provides information on most of its European plants and includes wind farms, hydro power plants and biomass CHP (Combined Heat and Power). The production data is updated every minute. To see information on an installation, click on its icon on the map. The information includes live production, location, type of installation and when production started.



These are by no means the only websites offering interactive maps and information on UK energy production, and none of them give the full picture. They are good starting points, though, if you are interested in researching individual technologies or individual power stations.

Twitter Notes

The following are some of my recent tweets and retweets. They are selected because they contain links to resources or announcements that may be of general interest. I have un-shortened the shortened URLs.

3rd September

@karenblakeman

Lanyrd acquired by Eventbrite <http://lanyrd.com/blog/2013/eventbrite/>

6th September

@davebriggs

Google's strategy to take over computing continues: Chrome apps "For your desktop"

<http://http://gigaom.com/2013/09/05/googles-strategy-to-take-over-computing-continues-chrome-apps-for-your-desktop/>

10th September

@PaulJump

BIS Committee condemns RCUK's preference for gold open access over green, and highlights flaws in Finch evidence <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/gold-open-access-preference-is-mistaken-say-mps/2007172.article>

@ostephens

Just published a case study on the Medical Officers of Health reports digitisation by Wellcome Library - v good stuff <http://http://guidance.discovery.ac.uk/archives/casestudies/moh-reports>

13th September

@RussellGroup

In case you missed it earlier this week, here's our response to the latest report on #openaccess research in the UK <http://http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/russell-group-latest-news/154-2013/5529-bis-select-committee-report-on-open-access/>

16th September

Richard Van Noorden @Richvn

Possible future for arXiv: support from publishers, research-funders + a final paper repository as well? <http://blogs.nature.com/news/2013/09/european-research-council-funds-arxiv-a-taste-of-changes-to-come.html>

Forthcoming workshops and events

Workshop: How to Make Google behave: techniques for better results

Date: Wednesday, 30th October 2013

Venue: London

Organiser: UKeig

Presenter: Karen Blakeman

Outline. Having problems with Google? Fed up with it ignoring your search terms and giving you something completely different? Personalisation, localisation, social networks and semantic search are all being used by Google in an attempt to improve relevance but it can all go horribly wrong. Austria suddenly becomes Australia and your search for goat's cheese turns into identifying different species of buttercups! There are many tricks we can use to make Google return better results and this workshop will look in detail at the options that are currently available to us.

URL: <http://www.ukeig.org.uk/trainingevent/karen-blakeman-make-google-behave-techniques-better-results-0>

Workshop: Free resources and search techniques for EU and UK legislation

Date: Wednesday, 13th November 2013

Venue: London

Organiser: TFPL

Presenter: Karen Blakeman

Outline: This one day workshop will look at free resources and search techniques for locating news and information on EU and UK legislation. Such information could be on blogs, websites, in news articles, journals and government reports. The original source of the information may not be in English and assessing authority and timeliness is crucial.

URL: <http://www.tfpl.com/services/coursedesc.cfm?id=TR3838&pageid=-9&cs1=&cs2=f>

Workshop: Anything but Google

Date: Tuesday, 19th November 2013

Venue: London

Organiser: UKeig

Presenter: Karen Blakeman

Outline. You can say "No" to Google, and there are times when Google is the worst possible tool for researching a project. There really **are** other search tools that can give you better results. This workshop will look at non-Google options for searching the web, different types of information and media. .

URL: <http://www.ukeig.org.uk/trainingevent/anything-google-karen-blakeman-0>

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