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Mapchester: Making an open-source map for Manchester

Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th May, 2006

<http://wiki.openstreetmap.org/index.php/Mapchester>

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"When bands like the Happy Mondays stalked the Hacienda, Manchester was dubbed 'Madchester'; now, a new generation of phreaks are in town, renaming the city 'Mapchester', showing that it isn't just music that puts the city on the map."

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We are organising a weekend mapping workshop - 'Mapchester' - to generate a new kind map of Manchester produced by collective, community effort that will be completely copyright-free. We are seeking volunteer citizen cartographers to participate in mapping the city for free.

Our goal is to bring together as wide an array of different people who are interested in mapping and get them to walk / cycle / drive / bus / train / skate / etc / along city streets recording GPS tracks and noting down road names. These tracks will then be put online in the OpenStreetMap database and edited into map features. We hope that collectively people will work to completely map whole quarters of the city over the weekend.

Getting involved:

* How: Just come along and choose an area of central Manchester to map. Head out with a GPS and notepad to record street names and other notable features. You can map for the whole day or just for a few hours. No prior mapping experience needed - intro briefings and equipment training will be provided.

* When: Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th May, 2006. Welcome briefings will be held at 10am and 2pm on both days.

* Where: Mapchester HQ, Lower Ground Floor, 117-119 Portland Street, Manchester M1 6ED, see <http://manchesterdda.com/article/12/>. (The space has been generously provided by the Manchester Digital Development Agency and they are also helping in signing people up to take part.)

* Registering: if you are interested in participating please send an email: mapchester@manchesterdda.com or call Jo Blackwell on tel: 0161 255 8111. (Please indicate on what days you want to participate and whether you have your own GPS / laptop.)

* Refreshments: Drinks and a sandwich lunch will be provided for participants.

* What to bring: If you have it please bring your own mapping equipment (GPS, laptop, camera, notepad + pencil, etc). If you don't have a GPS receiver, don't worry, there will be a number of extra units available on each day. If you have never used a GPS receiver, don't worry either, hands on training will be provided.

* Further questions: please contact Martin Dodge (m.dodge@manchester.ac.uk).

Some background:

Mapchester is an experiment in 'citizen cartography' that we hope will make a significant contribution to wider efforts in so-called open-source mapping. This an emerging and rapidly growing cartographic activity, driven in part by technology (cheap GPS equipment and online collaboration tools, like OpenStreetMap.org), but also by a very different ethos to knowledge production. Under open-source models the right of authorship is de-centred and the ownership of knowledge is seen as a common resource that can be freely distributed and re-used without restriction or license. As such, opening up mapmaking has real potential to empower people to create their own local knowledges and encourage the re-use of cartographic resources in novel, creative ways.

The map data produced for central Manchester will contribute to OpenStreetMap.org, one of the leading projects in the open-source mapping field. Currently, OpenStreetMap has mapped 25,000 kilometres of roads in the UK, including all motorways. However, thus far the majority of this data is for London and Birmingham and many other major cities are hardly mapped at all. It is hoped that an intensive effort to build a map of the whole of a city in a weekend will inspire others and be important to build momentum across the country.

All the map data generated for Mapchester will be free to view, edit and use via the OpenStreetMap platform. An editable map will also be created and used as a test-case festival guide for the Futuresonic International Festival, held in Manchester in July 2006.

Mapchester mapping weekend is supported by:

- * University of Manchester, School of Environment and Development (<http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/geography/>)
- * Manchester Geographical Society (<http://www.mangeogsoc.org.uk/>)
- * Manchester Digital Development Agency (<http://www.manchesterdda.com/>)
- * Future Everything / Futuresonic International Festival (<http://www.futureeverything.org/>)

Mapchester organising committee:

Steve Coast (OpenStreetMap.org); Drew Hemment (Futuresonic); Mick Lockwood (Salford University); Martin Dodge & Chris Perkins (Geography, University of Manchester).

Please spread the word about Mapchester and forward this invitation to come and map Manchester to other people who might be interested.