

# INTRODUCTION TO RADIO HERITAGE UK

Stuart Dixon FRSA, G4IYK

Radio Heritage UK:

Hi,

I am Stuart Dixon, G4IYK and acting CEO of Radio Heritage UK. My friend here is Mac MacDonald 2E0ATZ

Introductions

Thank you for inviting us here today. We won't keep you long. For the first part of the meeting I would like to say how we came about as an organisation and what our purpose is.

Please feel free to stop me at any time if you have questions.

Both Mac and me come from the same background as Wireless Operators and Trainers in the Royal Engineers. I practised as an electronic warfare instructor there.

I got my licence after organizing technology clubs in the forces.

After service life, I took up leading roles in service design and delivery and Business Analysis. Just starting my retirement.

In my work I have used structured systems analysis and design methods, and standards like ITIL. Most recently I spent several years using LEAN to transform service delivery – wowing the customer by delivering technology cheaper and faster. For me, all services start with a customer stating a requirement.

When I retired recently, I became a Fellow of the RSA. That's the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. I have put a link to the RSA in the notes of this presentation which I will send out later  
<https://www.thersa.org/about-us>

RadioHeritage UK is affiliated now to the RSA Heritage Network. This network has links with housing, communities and local government, where it feeds ideas into policy. I followed its links with various community wellbeing projects.

The heritage network highlights the role heritage plays in improving wellbeing in communities. Something you'll appreciate if you are a member of VMARS.

We chose to join the RSA because many of the issues we have come across, are actually linked directly to government policy.

Some things we have done: We are contributing evidence to the house of commons enquiry into reality TV after Jeremy Kyle. Also we input to the 2018 Consultation on National Planning Policy Framework, where we suggested change and tracked relevant changes in the output.

- ▶ Developing Radio Heritage - Organisational Background
- ▶ Initial Achievement
- ▶ Ongoing work
- ▶ Membership

## HISTORY

2

Radio Heritage UK began when 43000 people signed our petition, highlighting a 78 Year old RA being ill treated by nightmare neighbours – and broadcast on TV.

What we saw on TV was an elderly person, motivated by us, the RSGB and Amateur Radio, to keep mind fit and active, and having his goals blocked.

This was causing a detriment to his health. We saw lots of bystanders looking on, but unwilling or unable to help.

We had heard about nightmare neighbour attacks before seeing this. Mac and me had discussed the situation on many occasions. To us seeing this behaviour toward RA's demonstrated on TV seemed like an opportunity to benefit amateur radio - by eliminating a highly demotivating factor from it.

I therefore designed a campaign to develop enough power to improve MOPAM's situation. This enabled democratic dialog with the various heads of council departments, responsible for supporting MOPAM but who instead, were prompted into acting against him.

Very soon after we stood up for Armando, he was re-housed and his hobby re-instated after being severely disrupted. This saved him from further serious harm. But what about others?

There is nothing more nauseating or stressful than having your goals attacked and destroyed by nightmare neighbours. Even watching this is an unpleasant experience.

So during the social media campaign we also collected useful information about other Nightmare Neighbour Attacks - where RA's were the victim.

We wrote these up in the form of case studies.

In 2018 we resolved case two by bringing his abuser to court. Case 2 was a man with 20 plus years experience of visits from the council, encounters with the police and threats from a nearby neighbour.

Naturally our aim is for Armando to be one of the Last RA's attacked this way by nightmare neighbours.

Our small band of members and contributors are like-minded people who supported us with information and support during the campaign.

- ▶ Misuse of Service and Policy
- ▶ Feedback
- ▶ Service Requirements
- ▶ Scope for Service

## DATA ANALYSIS LEADS TO PILOT SERVICE

We wanted to know what it was about councils and LPA's, that people felt they could use them, to abuse their neighbours. We studied the policies that seemed to support the abuse.

Happily we found only Supportive Policy and ill-informed people.

From data we gathered In Kent, Bexley and Canterbury seemed to be operating a very hard line planning policy.

In November 18 the Local Government Ombudsman confirmed that austerity had led to council workers coming under severe pressure with 50% cuts in staff. We also see and report on the impact of these cuts in the community.

**The stark fact is** If Armando didn't challenge the way policy was being applied to him, he would have been unable to raise an antenna bigger than a TV aerial. This was persistent so we took the opportunity to work with the council to eliminate the issues.

During this time, people we engaged with asked us why didn't the RSGB do anything? We took the view we are members of the RA Community. To us, this question implies a service is required but unavailable or limited.

We advertised our services and gathered more data in a pilot service. During this we helped another RA to win a planning appeal against Canterbury City Council. For this we used a different process to that currently operated by the RSGB.

We now have an opportunity to feedback to the Agencies involved offering the chance to improve their services.

- ▶ Out of Scope of RSGB Services
- ▶ A threat to Amateur Radio
- ▶ An Inequality

## OUR CURRENT PLANNING CONCERNS

There is a list of issues we want to talk to the LPA about in the notes of this presentation.

For brevity I will skip this, but just to say, at all times we have kept the RSGB planning team informed by including them in correspondence.

Our work concludes the required planning process set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and Kent Planning Guide has been shortcut by the LPA. This has led to a fast track to refusal for two legitimate planning applications made to Canterbury's LPA.

This has been exacerbated by the property needs of RA's being left out of local plans - due to lack of consultation. Its no coincidence in Kent there are no Local Plan champions.

To get this information we mapped the process as advertised and how it was actually delivered. Our latest work highlights the use of cut and paste and a report template that is highly biased against our community and its activities. **(STOP HERE)** We highlight:

- Unfair, unjustifiable and improperly investigated complaints being upheld by council landlords and LPA enforcement officers.
- Lack of understanding by council workers (landlords) and the LPA of our property needs and our heritage.
- Negative template reports used to dismiss planning applications.
- Applications being processed outside of the required and published process.
- Decisions being fobbed off by planning officers to planning committees, and to the inspectorate rather than follow due process.
- Poorly documented and limited site surveys being used to negatively influence committees.
- Reports without evidence to back them, being used to negatively influence committees.
- Lack of effective guidelines (PPG8) which if used would inform committees.
- Poor knowledge of RA's about fundamental planning law.
- Inconsistencies - people refused planning within a mile of others who haven't been.
- Inequality
- A level of ignorance encountered during legitimate correspondence. (Staff not obliged to act in the interest of the public).
- Lack of RA Input to Local Plans and lack of consultation about us and our planning needs
- etc

We believe this list to be out of scope of any service provided by the RSGB but nonetheless a threat to amateur radio. We are continuing to take this up with the city council and the member of parliament concerned.

## ► Communications and Language

### KEY LESSONS

By tackling gaps in support we now have some valuable lessons to share.

Planning policy is about communities, wellbeing and heritage – so is amateur radio. This is the language we have adopted. Because hardly anyone we spoke to had time to understand technicalities.

It's also about honest and accurate reports. Council staff and LPA's don't have time to investigate or learn and are result driven. We know time spent in reconnaissance is never wasted and the value of objective evidence.

Success for us was achieved by taking the conversation to a different level. By focusing on "planning matters" how big, wide tall, noisy, ugly or indeed technical issues, like filters it makes it way more difficult to get our message across to the right people.

We needed to be talking to CEO's. We needed to voice the same concerns about our communities, about wellbeing and heritage. This is language they understand.

CEO's are people who you rarely meet, but who like short simple messages.

Move with the times: Current Trends helped us to communicate and obtain more data.

Communities are alive with people dealing with abuse in all forms and simply saying No More.

There is a strong movement taking off called the Extinction Rebellion – Industries that exploit the environment for profit at the expense of others are a lot less popular.

Any questions at this point? Shall we take a break?

BREAK

We Share Concerns about  
Threats

PART 2 INTRODUCTION - WE ARE  
HERE BECAUSE

Moving on: We share our concerns about threats to amateur radio.

During our 1<sup>st</sup> Campaign, which involved planning, a national petition popped up Calling for Government to take Amateur radio antennae out of scope of planning law.

We were able to share our experience with the petitioner who then withdrew it.

We are here because **(Next Slide)**



Our heritage is based on HF Voice and CW. People continue to be motivated to self train on these modes because it is a basic skill and fun to develop.

We all know that from experience, but one wellbeing program has produced the fact that - learning a skill improves wellbeing and have backed that with evidence.

HF and CW has been a unique selling point for AR since the turn of the last century. It needs no subscription to operate – just a license.

After interviewing a major stakeholder, UKQRM, it became clear we all share the issues around language and communications.

The language used so far is highly technical and multi faceted. The problem is worsening according to them – beyond control.

With growth in the numbers and types of devices being rolled out consequential losses of HF voice and CW are beginning to show up. Amateur Radio our heritage, is being re-shaped by this.

People who use NVIS for the purpose of Reliable and Predictable propagation - to run short range HF nets like RSARS will tell you they can always put the power up, but must now use Web SDR to hear everyone, through the QRM for example. Our receivers have been rendered useless. (but we still run the nets). The feeling is of watching AR as we know in urban areas, being consigned to history.

At this rate, the current advice and self-help service, we think, may be unable to cope with the growth in sources of QRM. We think to achieve a quiet radio environment now requires the tracking and replacement of many different sources. Once this is done another source could pop up. A different approach may be needed.

- ▶ Threats:  
Nightmare  
Neighbour Attacks  
QRM
- ▶ Communication in  
a changing world.
- ▶ Service Aspects



CHANGE

9

We believe the situation is changing for industry and government. There is a now a climate crisis, and sense of emergency.

In this climate people are no longer tolerant of industries that roll out polluting products like plastic or which create waste for other countries to clean up.

After reading the huge effort the RSGB EMC Team has put into its excellent reports we think the time is right to bring some key messages to industry. But this must come at the executive level.

If these messages are easily understood by everyone, (not just RA) then power can be increased.

In any event a different interference service could also emerge.

## ▶ Stakeholder Engagement

### DISCUSSION - QRM SUPPORT, SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

To Help thinking, I decided to Interview stakeholders and users who are experts by experience. From the dialogue so far, I designed a hypothetical interference service, to help validate requirements and facilitate discussion.

The discussion today starts with a number of assumptions:

- QRM radiates from a number of easily located and well-known sources.
- Sources of noise are faulty or badly designed devices, and as such, some are unlawfully supplied and operated.
- Attitude change is required as amateurs are seen as a minority or second-class users
- Wellbeing and the environment are being sacrificed for profits
- The polluter pays
- The issues found in planning are the same in administering the airwaves.
- Suppliers have already demonstrated a capacity for avoiding being brought to book.
- Its time for something different.

I'd like to start the discussion with a story that sets the scene:



## SHORT STORY

Case Study one said "I had a BT Openreach Engineer knock on my door a few years ago.

DF Receiver in hand, She said that she had traced some noise, interfering with a wifi router she was installing, coming from a device in our home.

I let her scan the house and she pointed to a PC in the office and asked me not to use it until I had it repaired.

Being curious I said, "not that I am going to refuse, but what would you do if I just kept using it?"

She replied "I would come back with a court order".

Needless to say I switched out the PSU the same day and that was that."

► Ideal Engagement



## DISCUSSION OF SHORT STORY

That's quite a lot of power there:

The engineer was able to detect and manage the incident within less than an hour and fully resolve it within a day - with the tools at hand.

Question for the floor: How many incidents per year have been managed by the current service and what was the average time taken to resolve each one? What portion were self resolved?

Discussion;

Conclusion: In our hypothetical service, our short story appears to be the model engagement for an interference service.

It also tells us, if you know what you are doing and have the right tools and backing, its not difficult to locate and deal with any source.

One snag for us is: Not all neighbours are as friendly or cooperative as Case Study One here, who repaired his own PC same day.

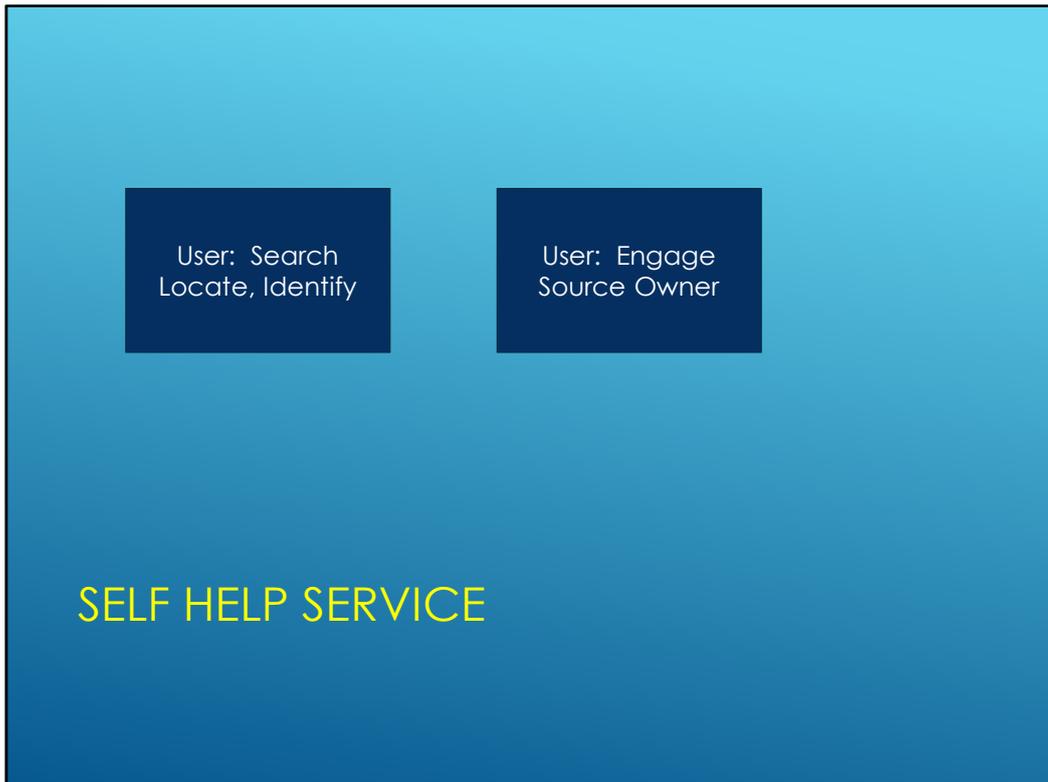
Even if the source owner was belligerent there would be no way out if a judge decides he or she is in breach of the law.

Question: Is the same law applicable to interference to amateurs as it is to BT Open Reach...? If not can we change that or blag it?

Even if a nightmare neighbour is jamming you deliberately he or she would have to comply.

The question is, in a self help service can the same service or conversation be had by all the service users?

In a nation where only 54% of neighbours are likely to be cooperative and some may have belligerent mindsets, something else would be required. We base this assumption on the fact that council landlords issue guidelines for approaching neighbours. We therefore insert a requirement for a confidential service once a source address has been reported.

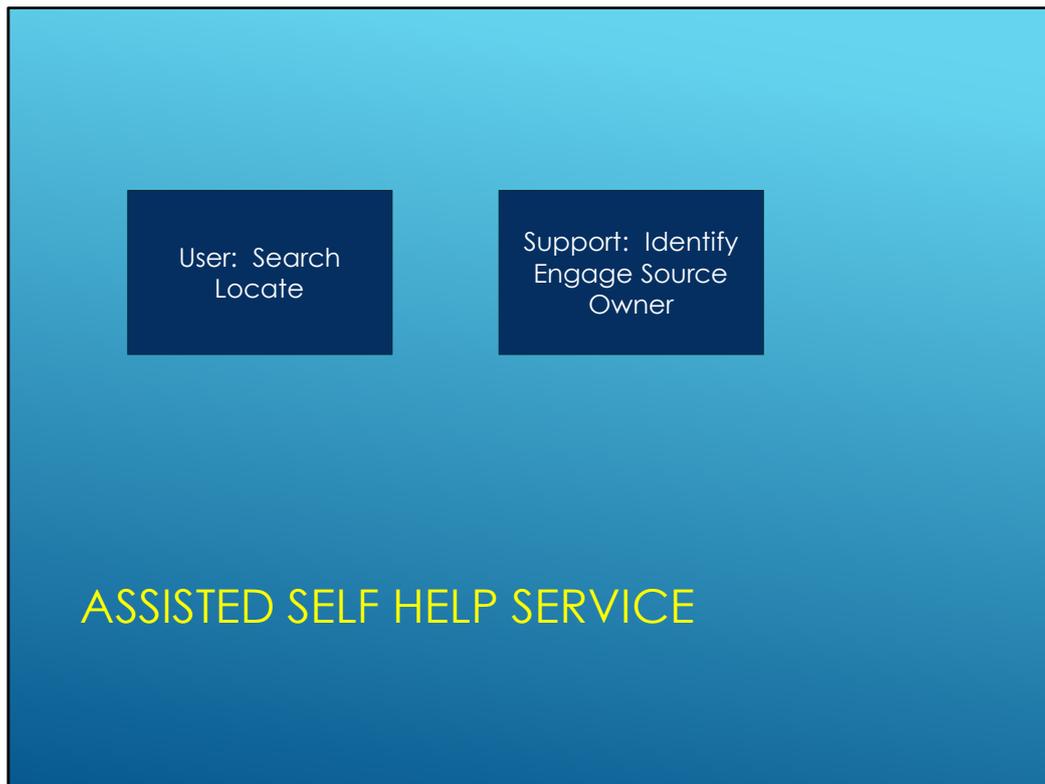


This is a simplified model of the self help service. In this service, the service user may, or may not be capable of locating or identifying the source and/or engaging its owner. No help is needed.

In the event the user is unable to complete the engagement he or she will require support.

Not everyone has neighbours who respond kindly.

Some users may not want to hassle the neighbours for fear of reprisals. (!)



Here is a further development in an assisted self help model:

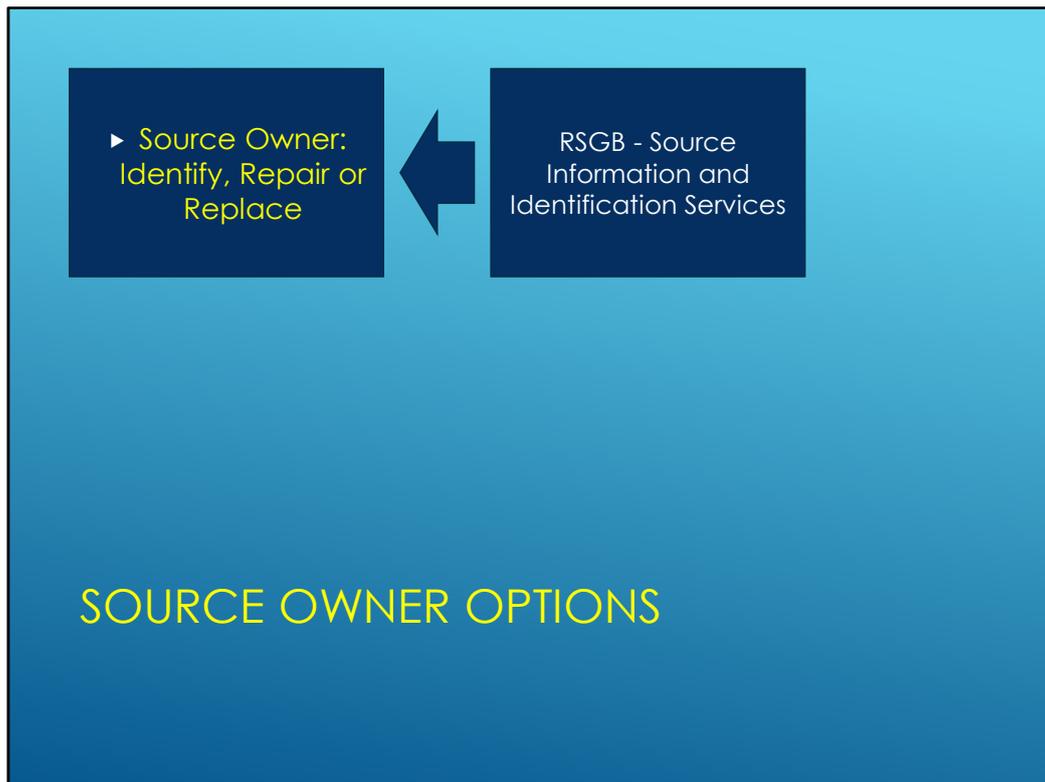
Service User Locates Source Address

Third Party Initiates Source Owner Engagement

Engagement is Optionally Via Face to Face Visit from a third party and/or via a Web Portal and/or postal service.

The onus is on the Source Owner to locate internally and deal with the source.

An advice service is made available.



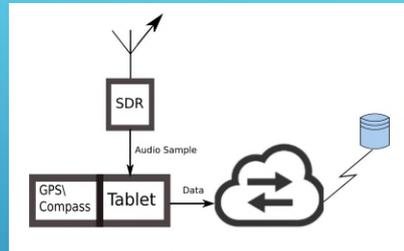
Question: This simple model works for a SMPSU but does it work for a PLT Device or VDSL Router?

We think it does. The owner is responsible for the offending device. For any faulty device, he or she is responsible for repair or replacement. (Most neighbours would be horrified at the thought they were causing pollution).

Using another current public service business model there are opportunities for charging with such funds as collected going to the service provider.

The question now is how will the re-seller/Manufacturer respond?

- ▶ Multi Tier Service
  - ▶ Advantages and Disadvantages
- ▶ Supported by Tools – Generates Standard Letters
- ▶ Managed – Single owner Multi Agency
- ▶ Single Data Source (APP)
- ▶ Annual Reports
- ▶ Paid for by the Polluter



## REQUIREMENTS

So far we have described an alternative multi tier service which empowers the user. It uses a tool to locate sources and supports users in engaging source owners. You might like to think about the advantages and disadvantages of a self help service. One advantage is **you** don't have to do anything. One disadvantage is no data.

Stakeholders have also said:

- The service should be available (for a fee) to all RA's SWL and CB'ers
- Service Users must remain anonymous in a process that deals with a bona fide organisation.
- The system should provide enough free support to identify the source(s) on the source owners property and how to get it repaired. Optional clean products and services could be sold or signposted via a portal\website.
- The system should generate official letters, notices and information.
- QRM should have a training module associated with it for service users.
- Wherever possible the polluter should pay a fine that supports the service – payments unspecified but probably linked to days elapsed since the source was reported by the service user.
- A single accountable lead (organisation) should produce annual and monthly activity reports.
- The process should be supported by a phone app.
- Optionally the app should provide an aid to locate source address, (capture data unspecified as yet) and take samples for analysis.
- The proposed service could be used to capture the types of interference and source data, but the purpose of that would be for statistics and ongoing investigatory work i.e.
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- ▶ New Approach needed to modernise both services due to gaps, complexity of the problem and time wasted by industry and politicians.
- ▶ Current support policy does not recognise difficult neighbours or provide a service for users who need privacy.
- ▶ Simpler Alternative approach – designed by amateurs
- ▶ Next Steps? Outline a service and enter into stakeholder engagement.

## CONCLUSIONS

That's it from us. We'd be more than happy to hear from you as to how you will proceed. Our aim is to support you with fresh thinking. We are interested in how the spectrum defence fund will be used in developing this service and how industry can contribute to restoring the bands for future generations.

What are your thoughts?