Every election is unique(ly identified)

Just do it already

Tim Green - Citizen Beta 2nd December 2015

Standard codes for UK elections

This is something that's been bumping around my head for a bit, and has come up quite a bit in chats around [Democracy Club](#) and [civic tech](#) generally. It's a very simple but, I'd say, necessary bit of infrastructure for UK elections online: *standardised codes for elections*.

Why?

It's hard building websites like [YourNextMP](#) (crowdsourcing candidate info), or [MP CV](#) (gathering CVs of candidates) to last for multiple elections. If you only target general elections in the UK you'll be waiting for five years to test your improvements! However, recently there's been more momentum to do so, as we've realised the benefits of being

Election of a Member of Parliament

The following is a statement of the persons nominated for election as a Member of Parliament for

Lancaster and Fleetwood Constituency

Notices
Nominations
Numbers

Name of Candidate	Home Address	Description (if any)	Name of Assentors Proposer(+), Seconder(++)		Reason why no longer nominated*
ATKINS Matthew Jeremy	The Stables, Over Kellet, Carnforth, LA6 1BH	UK Independence Party (UKIP)	Gourley Robyn + Robinson Geoffrey Whittaker John Henderson Harry Squire Timothy	Thornton Sally P ++ Woodcock Adam Radcliffe Frank Gerrard Gerard D Squire Thelma	
COATES Chris	7 Brantbeck Villas, Halton, Lancaster, LA2 6FD	Green Party	Dowding Gina + Hankin Barry G Hayes Elizabeth A Brookes David O Tansley Patrick	Riches Samantha J ++ Harrison Dominic P Bertram Colin M Heath Emily Brennand Andrew	
ELLETSON Harold Daniel Hope	Bank House, Stoney Lane, Galgate, Lancaster	Elletson Geoffrey R + Johnson Tracy E Baines John L Heald Alan G Smith-Garrett Yasmin M	Junk Johnny ++ Cummings David Baines Anne Garrett Sandra M Mottram Debra K	
LONG Robin	76 Scotforth Road, Lancaster, LA1 4SF	Liberal Democrats	Gilbert John + Howson George C Neal Andrew C Dunster Philip G Cunliffe Moreen	Gilbert Pamela R ++ Hopwood Hilary P Nicholson Michael J Cunliffe David Stone Carolyn M	
OLLERENSHAW Eric	79 Spruce Avenue, Lancaster, LA1 5LB	The Conservative Party Candidate	Smith Sadie + Moon Paul Mutch Jean Salisbury Susan Cartwright Maureen	Parkinson Jane ++ McCann Ian G McCann Carol Y Pammenter Joan K Bond Margaret	

ge2015
pcc2012
eu2014

By-elections?

Multiple elections in one year?

What is an election?

What is a candidacy?

- ➢ Date of polls opening
- ➢ Assembly
- ➢ Area covered by post
- ➢ Party
- ➢ Candidate name

Just use a UUID (or similar)

- Requires central authority
- No single body with mandate for all elections?
- Stability going forward and backwards?
- Possibly best option

Is there a sensible unique mapping?

Election → Identifier

{country}-{assembly}[-location]-{ISO date}

gb-parl-1974-02-28

gb-parl-1974-10-10

gb-mayor-bristol-2016-05-05

gb-gla-2016-05-05

gb-parl-oldham-west-and-royton-2015-12-03

gb-plymouth-city-council-2016-05-05

Conclusions

- IDs are starting point for good election data architecture

- Could just use UUIDs and a central authority

- … but maybe possible to derive independently?

Discuss over drinks!
@tfgg2

CHRISTMAS HOMEWORK!

- Think of a civic tech hypothesis

- Think of a cheap experiment that supports / disproves

- Do the experiment (optional)