

James Darling

Ruby Technical Lead & Digital Consultant

Rivington Technology LTD
34 Thornhill Road
London, E10 5LL
Company: 08370852
VAT: 195858247
£1m Professional Indemnity

📞 07811407085
✉ james@abscond.org
🌐 abscond.org
🐦 [abscond](https://twitter.com/abscond)
🎧 [james](https://soundcloud.com/james)
📺 [abscond](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv33333333333333333333)

Technical Overview

I have 15 years of professional Ruby and Ruby on Rails experience. I am equally comfortable creating rapid throwaway prototypes as I am working on business-critical production software with large teams.

Technology checklist

Ruby on Rails, Sinatra, rspec, Cucumber, git, PostgreSQL, Heroku, AWS, GOV.UK frontend toolkit

Example Public Code

London Decompression Membership

<https://github.com/james/london-decom-membership>

A personal project where 100% of technical work has been done by me. London Decompression is a non-profit organisation that runs events that only members can buy tickets for. This application manages the organisation's members and acts as a gatekeeper to ticket purchasing via the Eventbrite API. Currently handles 2,831 members and managed the sale of 1,800 tickets within 48 hours.

Affordable Housing Monitoring

<https://github.com/dxw/affordable-housing-monitoring>

An alpha for Southwark council, where I was Tech Lead and main code contributor. Whilst rapidly iterating on the product through the alpha process, I maintained production-ready code quality.

Crown Commercial Service: Report Management Information

<https://github.com/Crown-Commercial-Service/DataSubmissionServiceAPI/commits?author=james>

A larger project, with a larger team. I was interim Tech Lead on this project, but also contributed code on an individual basis, which I have highlighted here.

Non-technical Overview

Writing good code is only half the battle. A good Technical Lead helps the whole multi-disciplinary team decide what code needs to be written, which is often more important. I enjoy and value close collaborative working relationships with product owners, delivery managers, designers, user researchers and all stakeholders.

Building teams is just as important as building a product, and I always hope to leave teams in better health than when I arrived. I aim to improve the work culture and trust for everyone in the organisation and foster. I support more junior technical team members, including pair programming and constructive pull request reviews.

Example Writings

Where are our affordable houses and how do councils keep track of them?

<https://www.dxw.com/2020/01/where-are-our-affordable-houses-and-how-do-councils-keep-track-of-them/>

As part of my work with Southwark, just building the product wasn't enough. We needed to explain the technical problem to stakeholders. This was my contribution to that aim.

Putting strings into databases and then taking them back out again

<https://medium.com/@abscond/putting-strings-into-databases-and-then-taking-them-back-out-again-ce95c2ad2183>

This blogpost outlines a large part of my software development philosophy: that the technology isn't the hardest bit.

Miscellaneous

I am a founding trustee of the digital community organising charity [Local Welcome](#). I co-founded [Rewired State](#), [National Hack The Government Day](#) and [Music Hack Day](#).

Work History

Over the last 15 years, I have worked on dozens of projects with many clients, including **GOV.UK**, **Ministry of Justice**, **The Labour Party**, **Hackney Council**, **BERG**, **Geckoboard**, **Google**, **Channel 5** and more. There are too many to list here, so I have included details on 3 recent contracts. I can provide more details on many more if requested.

Citizens Advice / Digital Transformation Consultant

April – September 2020, Fully remote due to Covid

I worked with Citizens Advice on re-shaping their in-house technology team, combining a traditional IT organisation with software development embedded in service delivery teams. This included strategy work, organisational design and recruitment. I left with the technology team successfully transitioned to a new directorship, increased trust among teams and a more stable strategic future.

Southwark Council (with dxw) / Technical Lead & Product Strategy

Aug - December 2019, Southwark & remote

Working closely with subject matter experts and council staff, we developed a process and software that spans the affordable housing process from 'agreed' to 'built' and beyond.

[Alpha outcomes](#)

Crown Commercial Service (with dxw) / Technical Lead

October 2018 – June 2019, Westminster & remote

I helped bring the 'Report management information' service into production. This business-critical service made it easy for thousands of suppliers to report on what work they had done through CCS' frameworks, and therefore enable CCS to automatically and accurately invoice them with their accountancy software.

[Case Study](#)

Working with me

To help me manage my mental health, I work 3 or 4 days per week. If 4 days per week, ideally I take Wednesdays off but can be flexible for project needs. If hitting deadlines, then I often work 5 days/week for a short while at my discretion. I am happy to discuss this to balance the needs of the project and team while protecting me from taking unexpected time off work unwell.

Less critically: If non-pandemic working arrangements return, then 50% working from home, 50% coming into your office works best for me. I like to be in the office to help decisions be made and do the agile ceremonies, and be at home to focus on getting work done. However, I am very flexible, and this entirely depends on my client's needs.