How does the app work

So when the app’s triggered, when it starts up the first thing the user will be presented with is a series of... basically chunks of sort of... series of UI elements, each one which represents something someone might care about when they’re looking for somewhere to live. So let’s say crime rate, or number of schools, or how many events happen per week in that area, house prices etc.

So you’re presented with, at the moment, five of these different options on that screen. And for each one of those five you can do two things. One, you can toggle on and off and say... basically this is something I care about. Or, you... well... If you do say you care about it then you can play with a slider wheel activate below it that can almost say are there any hard cut off points for this value.

So I guess it makes more sense with an actual example: let’s say house prices. So you can have one of these options that’s presented on this dashboard on the app could be okay, yeah... house prices, this is something that Watson’s going to weigh, calculated some stuff about projected house prices for this borough in the near future. Do you care about that? So if you tick the little toggle box that’s saying ‘yeah I care about that’ and then the slider will open up saying... giving you some hard figures you can have as your thresholds. And you could be like ‘okay, I care about house prices but I don’t want them to be above... you know, let’s say £700K and don’t want them below £300K’.

Then you can figure all those different input stuff you care about, click continue and at that point the app sends something off up to Bluemix. It basically sends off ‘this is what the user cares about, these are their own personal preferences and some of the things they’re looking for when they’re going to pick where to live in London’. That goes up, that gets mixed in with some data that gets pulled from the Cloudant database which holds some of the actual... the actual dataset itself. The app doesn’t have all the data within it, just a couple of configuration bits of data. They get sent up to the Cloud combined with the actual dataset held in Cloudant and then sent over to the Tradeoff Analytics API.
That does its thing and then sends back another chunk of data which says ‘okay here are the top options really for the user, this is the places where they are wanting to most likely... you know, want to live in London’. That data then gets sent down to the app and this all happens in the transition between two screens. So the first screen the user sees says that ‘here’s what I care about’, the second screen is what did Watson tell me is the best place to go to. So in that transition, up to the cloud, calculate it, get the answer, comes back down. Then that’s shown to the user on the second screen, the results screen if you like. So on this you’ve got the slider on the top which basically lets you navigate between your... you know, your top four, top five, top six results that you got returned. And for each one of those, when you slide across to it, it will give you a sort of radar chart. You know, it’s a fairly neat way of showing how well an object, in this case a borough does against other boroughs for certain sets of numerical values.