

Welcome to Storyplaces

<https://www.storyplaces.soton.ac.uk/index.php>



The Leverhulme Trust

This document will be your aid for authoring a location-aware story with Storyplaces.

To start working with the Storyplaces live authoring tool follow this link:

<https://app.storyplaces.soton.ac.uk/authoring/>

You will be prompted to sign in with a Google account in order to be able to use the tool. Without a Google account you cannot use Storyplaces.

Once you successfully sign in you will be taken to the main page where all the stories you create will be listed.

Overview

StoryPlaces is a web-based tool to write, publish, and read locative stories. These are stories where the content becomes available on your smartphone as you move around based on your location.

Pages and the Shape of Locative Stories

StoryPlaces stories are based on **pages**. A page is a piece of text (optionally with an image or sound file attached) that has a title and a short description. Readers see a list of available pages in the reader, with the short description, and can select one to access the content.

Pages have **constraints** that determine whether they are visible in the reader's list. The most common constraint is a location – expressed as a point on a map and a radius. To read the page the reader must be within this area. If they are not, then the page still appears on their list, but is shown in red. They also appear on a map – encouraging them to move to that location to unlock the page.

But pages can also have other constraints. For example, requiring the reader to have previously read another page. When these types of constraints are not met, the pages are not visible in the list or map at all. Pages and constraints are very powerful, for example, three common types of stories are:

- **Linear** stories, where each page unlocks the next, creating a story journey through a space
- **Open** stories, where there are only location constraints, and all the pages are shown as possible destinations – allowing the reader to wander freely between them
- **Interactive** stories, where readers are presented with choices between alternative pages, and choosing one will lock the others, enabling them to influence the story.

You can also mix these together and create whatever structures you need!

Chapters

As stories get bigger it can be difficult to manage all those pages. So StoryPlaces allows you to group them together into **chapters** to manage them together. For a page to appear in the reader's list all of its constraints must be met *and* the chapter it is in must be unlocked.

Pages not in a chapter are considered 'Loose Pages' and their visibility depends only on their own constraints. The first page in a story will always be a loose page with no constraints.

For example, a simple structure would be to have:

- A Loose Page called start, with no constraints, that welcomed the reader and unlocked the first chapter.
- A first chapter called 'Act 1' that contained a set of pages that set the scene, and one page that when read closes the first chapter and unlocks the second.
- A second chapter called 'Act 2' that contained another set of pages related to the middle of the story, and one page that when read closes the second chapter and unlocks the third.
- A third chapter called 'Act 3' that contained a final set of pages that conclude the story, and one page that when read ends the experience.

Chapters are entirely optional, but offer a nice way to scope your stories, or easily change the way that they work mid story (for example, Acts 1 and 3 in the example above might be linear, but Act 2 could be an open set of pages).

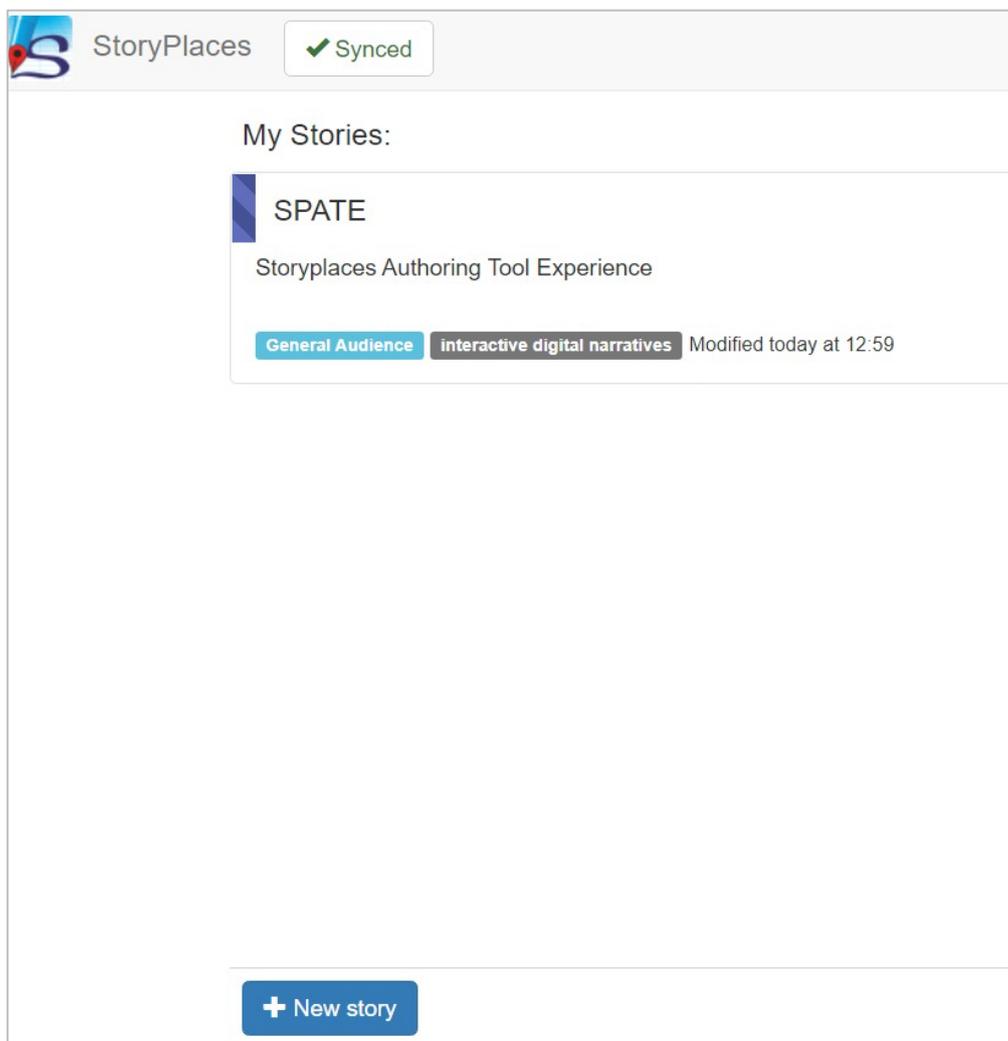
Have fun exploring the tool, and happy storytelling!

- The StoryPlaces Team

Create your story

Storyplaces has two main screens and two main taskbars: the stories screen and the main taskbar and the editor screen which includes the authoring taskbar.

The stories screen shows a list of stories that you created, and which you can edit. From here you can also create a new story.



To create a new story click on the **New Story** button on the bottom left corner of the page. Fill out the details of your story in the window that appears and click **Save** at the bottom left side of the page. Don't worry, you can change these details later if you need to.

StoryPlaces ✓ Synced My Stories Settings About Help Privacy

Create new story

Story Details

Story title:

Story description:
 Description is required.

Audience rating:

General Audience
 Family Friendly
 Advisory Content

Story tags:

A start page will automatically be created for you. You may start writing on this page or you can delete it and create new pages.

StoryPlaces ✓ Synced My Stories Settings About Help Privacy Sofia Kitromilli

Pages Chapters Details Advanced

Story Details

Story title:

Story description:

Audience rating:

General Audience
 Family Friendly
 Advisory Content

Story tags:

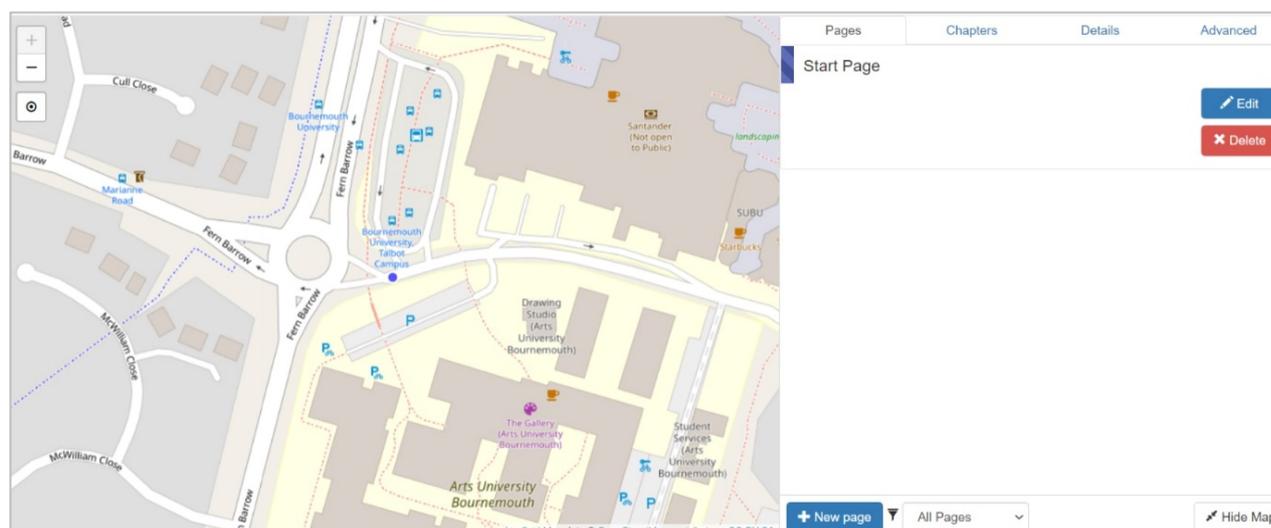
Advanced

You will notice that on each page a map is attached on the left hand side. As this is a locative tool, you have the option of linking a page or a whole chapter of your story to a particular location so that the content is accessible only when a reader visits that location. Not all pages need to be linked to a location and you can defer from using locations in general if you prefer.

You can hide the map anytime by selecting **Hide Map** on the bottom right corner of the screen.

Edit your story – Pages

To create a new page make sure you are on the **Pages** tab of the editor and click on the **New page** button on the bottom left side of the pages list.



The new page window will ask you to fill out some details about the page, the content you wish to add and the behaviour of the content during a reading.

Page Features

Page name

The name of the page

Page Content

The story content of the page

Hint text

A brief hint shown to the readers prior to selecting a page.

Page image

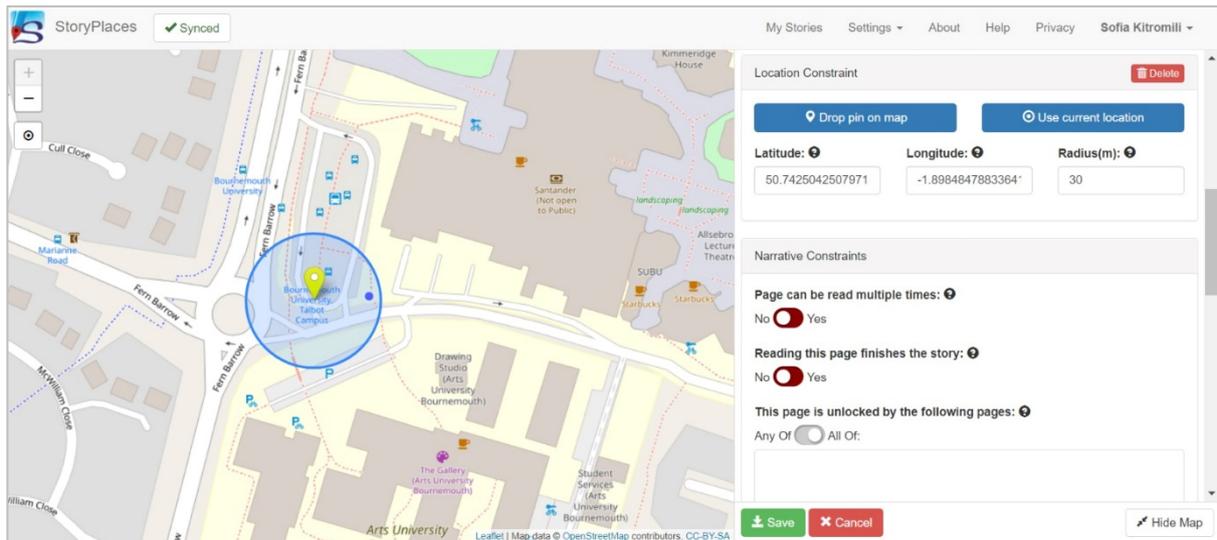
An image to attach to a page. This will be shown at the top of the page.

Page audio clip

An audio clip to attach to a page and which readers will be able to invoke and listen whilst reading a page.

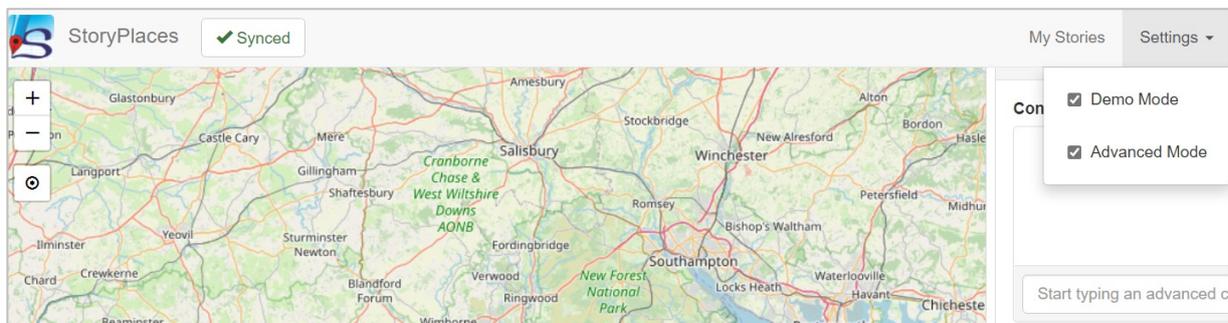
Location constraint

You can attach a location to your page and create the constraint that the page will only be accessed if the reader is physically present in your chosen location.



To attach a location to your page, you can either do this by evoking your current location, adding the coordinates of a location manually, or pinning a location manually on a map. If pinning a location manually on a map, you must first modify the authoring mode of your editor to be set to **Demo Mode**. This will allow you to access locations remotely for attaching to your pages and also to test the story remotely where location constraints are set and you cannot physically visit those story locations.

To enter **Demo Mode** go to **Settings** from the main toolbar and tick the **Demo Mode checkbox**. That will allow you to navigate anywhere on the map and select locations manually.



Narrative constraints

Narrative constraints are default functions that have been created and which you can attach to your pages to control the story behaviour. Here you can decide the following constraints:

1. if you want a page to be accessible for reading multiple times or if it will become unavailable after reading
2. if you want a page to end the story
3. if you want a page to become available once one or a set of other stories have been read
4. if you want a page to be part of a chapter

Advanced options

In advanced options you can select to add additional constraints to your pages which must all be true before a page is unlocked. Examples are unlocking a page after a particular page has been read or after a particular chapter has been unlocked or if a reader is at a particular location.

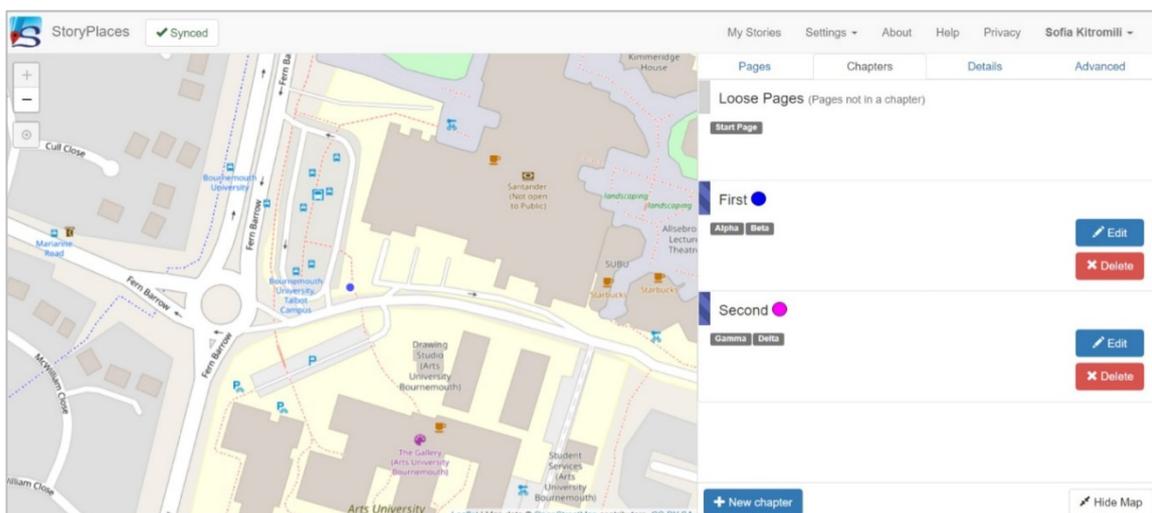
You can also select to attach advanced functions on a page which you can create manually on the **Advanced** tab in the editor.

Edit your story – Chapters

You have the option of grouping your pages into chapters and you can use chapter based constraints to change the behaviour of your story. Readers always have the potential to see ‘Loose Pages’ (pages that are not in a chapter) if the constraints for that page are met. However, to see pages in a chapter they must meet the constraints for that page (if any), *and* the chapter must be unlocked.

To create a chapter, go to the **Chapters** tab in your editor and press **New Chapter** on the bottom left corner.

The new chapter window will ask you to fill out some details about the chapter, the pages you wish to add in the chapter, and additional constraints to control the behaviour of the content in the chapter during a reading.



You will see once you assign a page to a chapter that it shows a coloured dot next to the page in the **Pages** tab so you can easily recognise in which chapter the pages belong to

Chapter features

Chapter name

The title of your chapter

Chapter colour

A colour to distinguish this chapter from other chapters

Narrative constraints

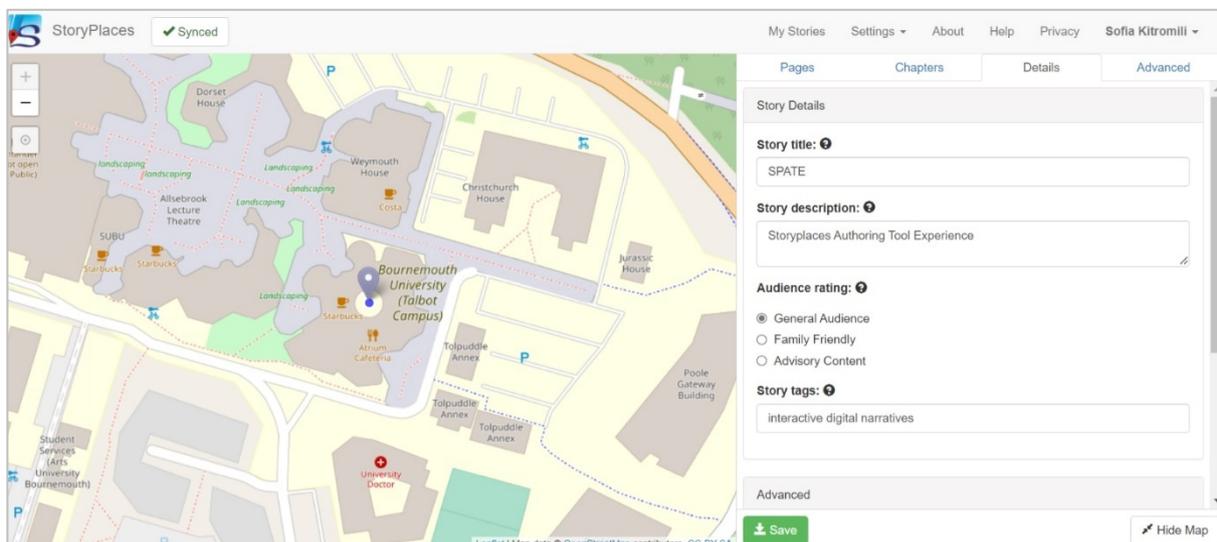
Similar to the narrative constraints of a page here you can also add constraints on a chapter to control an entire chapter or a group of pages that belong to a chapter. For example here you can choose to make a chapter accessible (unlock it) after another chapter or after a set of other pages have been read.

You can also choose to lock all other chapters in the story so that a user cannot navigate away from a chapter unless it is completed.

Chapters are therefore a useful way to control progress through your story.

Edit your story – Details

You can amend your original story details (which you entered when you created the story) anytime by going onto the **Details** tab from the editor. You can amend the story details, test your story (creates a link to a reading version), or request for it to be published (story goes to tool developers).



Details features

Story title

The title of your story

Story description

A short description of what your story is about or a pitch line about the story to capture the readers.

Audience rating

The audience which the story is intended for

Story tags

Comma separated keywords that are related to the story

Advance

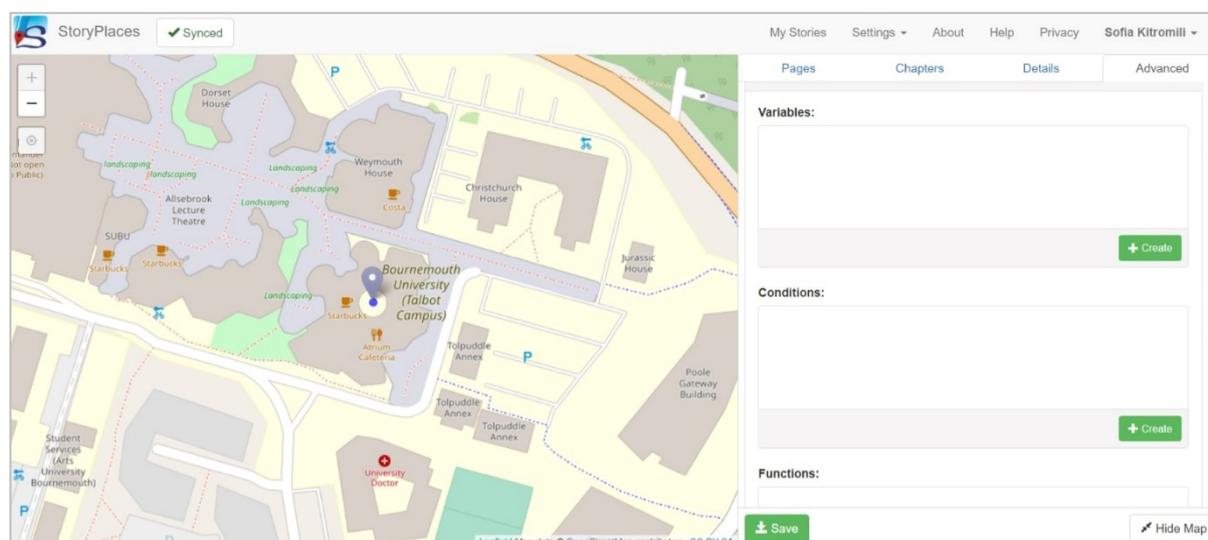
An option to download a readable version of your story in text-based a text based format.

Publish Story

The option to create a temporary file of the story only accessible to you for doing a test read and to request for a publication of your story from the tool creators.

Edit your story – Advanced

In the **Advanced** tab you can create additional variables, condition, functions or locations to enrich the story behaviour beyond what the tool offers by default. There are some default functions in the tool that you can use but if you want to do more, this is where you do it.

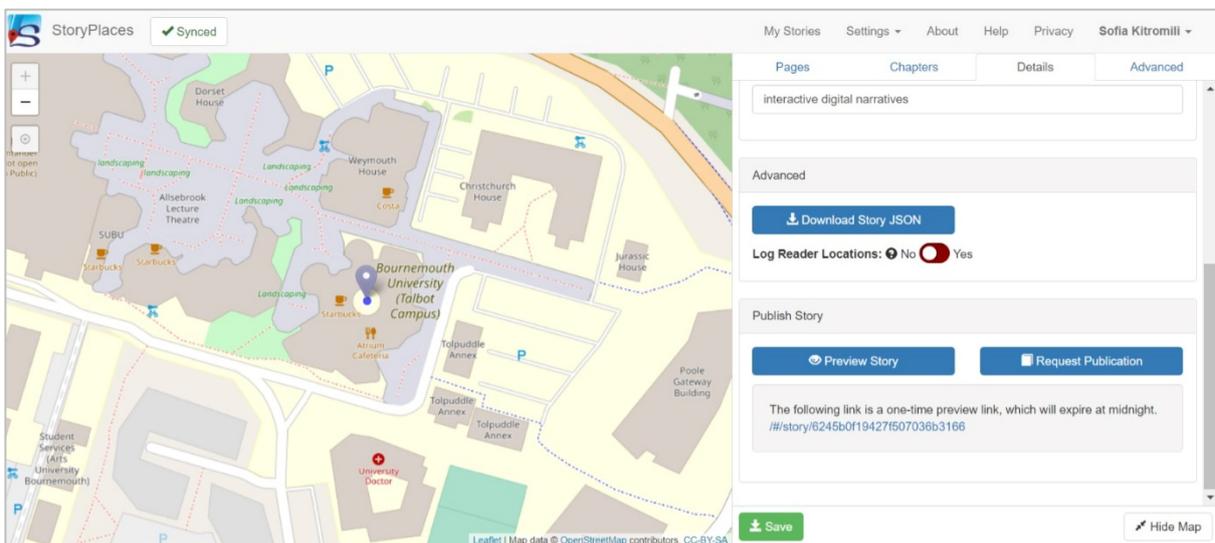


Some conditions are default in the tool and will appear as you type. Examples are **Auto: 'New Chapter' unlocked** or **Auto: Page 'New Page' read** which will add a constraint to your page to only become visible to a reader if the chapter which the page belongs to is unlocked or if another page in the story has already been read. Functions are dependent on those created by you in the **Advanced** tab of the editor.

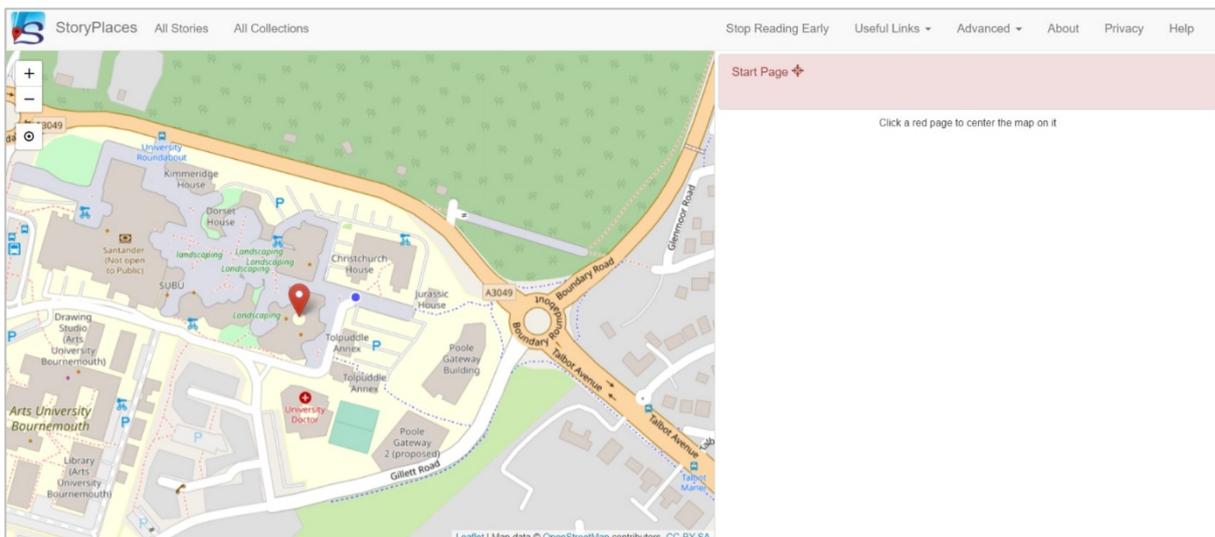
Testing your story

If you would like to test your story for how it reads and behaves you can select to create a Preview link of the story by going to **Details** the story editor tab and clicking on **Preview Story** on the bottom left corner. This will then create a temporary link that you can access for a formal reading of the story as your readers would view it.

Testing can be done by either being located in the environment your story is set or remotely by entering into **Demo Mode**. **Demo Mode** will allow you to read the story by moving around the pin on the map with your device’s cursor or by clicking on the story pages which will navigate you to their attached location and unlock.

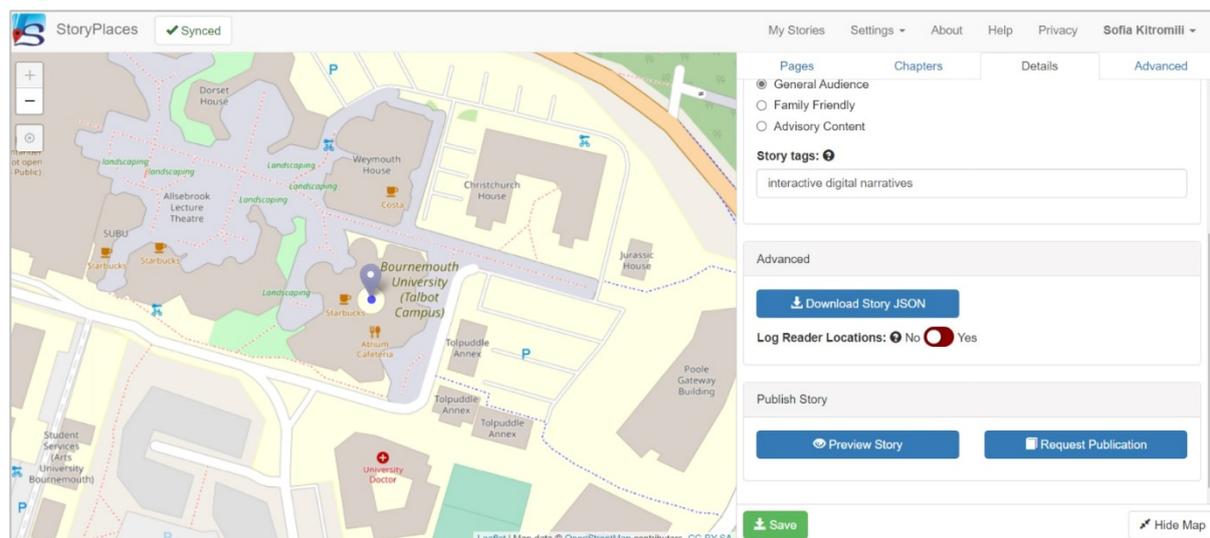


To enter **Demo Mode** go to the tool’s main toolbar, click on **Advanced** and tick **Demo Mode**.



Publishing your story

If you would like to publish your story in the Storyplaces library and make it available to readers navigate to the editor's **Details** tab and find the section **Publish** Story. There click on the **Request Publication** button to notify the tool's creators that you would like to publish your story. They will review the story and respond to you.



We hope you enjoy working with the tool. Any inquiries or suggestions please contact Dr David Millard on dem@soton.ac.uk or Dr Charlie Hargood on chargood@bournemouth.ac.uk.

Thank you for choosing Storyplaces for your storytelling journey.

