

MasterMap announcement

Key parts of Ordnance Survey's (OS) highly detailed OS MasterMap are being made completely open under the Open Government Licence (OGL), with the remaining data being made freely available up to a threshold of transactions. This work will release £130m pa of economic value.

This data release is in response to the 2017 Autumn Budget commitment to "establish how to open up freely the OS MasterMap data to UK-based small businesses in particular, under an Open Government Licence or through an alternative mechanism, while maintaining the OS's strategic strengths". OS will also invest in making the data easier for developers to access and use, including developing a suite of application programming interfaces (APIs) and making interoperability improvements.

This is a step on a journey towards more open geospatial data infrastructure for the UK.

The datasets available under the OGL are:

- Property extents created from OS MasterMap Topography Layer; and
- OSMM Topography Layer TOIDs (TOPographic IDentifiers) will be incorporated into the features in OS OpenMap-Local.

Furthermore, over the next 12 months the Geospatial Commission will work with GeoPlace, the LGA, the Improvement Service (on behalf of Scottish Local Government), and OS to investigate opening up the key identifiers UPRN and USRN, together with their respective geometries, for the whole of Great Britain under OGL terms. This work must protect the integrity and authority of these identifiers, so as to provide both businesses and public sector organisations with the confidence to continue to rely on these within their own products and services, without restricting their ability to use and benefit from them.

Opening these datasets under the OGL will not only provide additional valuable data into the ecosystem, but also remove barriers so that other organisations can publish more of their own data created from elements of the newly opened data (derived datasets, for example information about property) under the OGL.

New guidance will be released on using derived data from OS MasterMap, including supporting local authorities to understand how to publish more derived data as open data. The current range of licence options will also be simplified to make it easier for users to understand how they are able to use the data. This builds on OS's work since 2010 in releasing several datasets openly, and supporting initiatives such as its Geovation hubs.

The datasets that will be made available for free up to a threshold of transactions through the APIs are:

- OS MasterMap Topography Layer, including building heights and functional sites;
- OS MasterMap Greenspace Layer;
- OS MasterMap Highways Network;
- OS MasterMap Water Network Layer; and
- OS Detailed Path Network.

OS MasterMap is the definitive and authoritative source of highly detailed geographic data of Great Britain. One of the reasons for opening OS MasterMap is to provide better access to the world leading, high quality data and maps that OS produces. The government will work with OS to ensure its sustainability and the continuing quality of its data.

Making OS MasterMap available in this way is based on addressing the barriers identified through user research with start-ups and small businesses in particular. This research with both current and potential users of OS MasterMap identified four major barriers to its use:

- Price (complexity and cost);
- Licensing (complexity and restrictiveness);
- Ease of use (discoverability, interoperability and mechanism of delivery);
and
- Derived data (complexity and restrictiveness).

By addressing these barriers to use, these changes will enable businesses of all sizes to access not only OS's high quality data, but to also geospatial data more widely to unlock economic value. In particular:

- Significantly more geospatial data will be fully open for businesses and developers to use, free and without restriction;
- Start-ups will be able to deliver new products and services with the data using the free threshold;
- Some businesses will not need to pay at all for their use of OS data because of the use of the free threshold;
- New innovations will be possible in the housing market — for example, this data will make it easier for property developers to identify potential development sites that aren't currently registered;
- New users will be able to understand the pricing structure for the data more easily following the OS changes removing uncertainty around cost of use; and
- An improved errors and omissions tool and reporting process, and publication of data in additional formats will further improve the quality of the data and its ease of use.

OS MasterMap data already supports emerging technologies such as drones and autonomous vehicles, increasingly important drivers of economic growth. As a priority the Geospatial Commission will look at how geospatial data, platforms and technologies can best be developed to further support these emerging technologies. This will include market analysis of the emerging geospatial and mapping markets, and provide new evidence on which to base any future decisions about how this data is maintained, shared and used.

Budget commitment

The UK has some of the best geospatial data in the world, and much of it is held by public bodies. The potential economic value of this data is huge. To maximise the growth of the digital economy and consolidate the UK's position as the best place to start and grow a digital business, the government will establish a new Geospatial Commission to provide strategic oversight to the various public bodies who hold this data. To further boost the digital economy, the government will work with the Ordnance Survey (OS) and the new Commission, by May 2018, to establish how to open up freely the OS MasterMap data to UK-based small businesses in particular, under an Open Government Licence or through an alternative mechanism, while

maintaining the OS's strategic strengths. The Budget provides £40 million a year over the next two years to support this work.