

Press release

Unlocking a better and less stressful property market

HM Land Registry and Ordnance Survey will work together to support government policy and economic growth.

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A new collaboration between HM Land Registry and Ordnance Survey (OS) will help transform the property market by enhancing data accessibility and innovation in the housing and geospatial sectors. This will reduce friction for citizens and businesses, boost confidence in property rights and

the housing sector, and support government policy and economic growth.

HM Land Registry has been at the heart of property market transactions in England and Wales for over 160 years, keeping the trusted, official record of who owns land. As the market evolves, HM Land Registry wants to make its data easier to access and use, and connect with other property market data. It aims to transition from simply being a custodian of data to actively using that data to enable a better-functioning property market, supporting growth, innovation and confidence in the UK economy.

OS is integral to the land registration process, tracking new housing developments and surveying building footprints, providing the most up to date data when new homes are being registered. Its data is used by over 4,500 case workers every day to maintain the Title (Land) Register and is used to visualise general boundaries on all Land Registry Title Plans.

Now the two long-standing organisations, who have a common ambition to unlock the value of land and location data, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This will help shape a more connected, digitally enabled property market over the next three years, driving improvements for citizens, businesses, and government services.

As part of its ongoing digital transformation journey, HM Land Registry launched Strategy 2025+ last year, committing to making property services “better, faster and less stressful”. The new initiative with OS is the next step in that transformation. OS is well-placed to support, having been through its own digital transformation in recent years, delivering more data into the hands of more organisations to support better decision-making.

The OS and HM Land Registry collaboration includes:

- ensuring strategic alignment, in relation to the OS National Geographic Database and OS Product roadmap and HM Land Registry’s geospatial roadmap and transformation

- sharing insights and concepts: what the market needs and how OS and HM Land Registry can best fulfil their public tasks to drive economic growth
- leveraging opportunities for data distribution including making best use of OS's DataHub to provide HM Land Registry data to market
- exchanging knowledge, skills and best practice in areas of shared interest such as licensing, geospatial, compliance; helping to create a consistent public sector standard for commercial models and reuse of data

Tina Kennedy, Chief Customer Officer at OS, welcomed the collaboration:

“A more efficient property market is vital to the UK economy. It helps people move home more easily, supports development and investment, and underpins one of the most significant assets many people own. This is an invaluable opportunity to work closely with HM Land Registry to deliver value to government, homebuyers and developers. Our trusted data has always been integral to the land registration process, so we are delighted to be collaborating with HMLR to further improve data accessibility across government and strengthen connectivity between departments across the housing market.”

Lynne Nicholson, Deputy Director for Data and Head of Data Group at HM Land Registry, said:

“We have exciting plans to transition from traditional record keeping to actively fuelling economic growth and unlocking new opportunities across the housing sector. I am looking forward to working closely with Ordnance Survey colleagues to share insights and ideas, and build a shared vision for trusted data that will make a real difference for all of our customers.”

The collaboration supports the 2024-2026 government's strategic plan to enable the delivery of 1.5 million new homes across England in the current parliament, alongside continued work to

support the regeneration of communities. It also supports a strong property market, which plays an important part in the nation's economy and prosperity. In England and Wales, properties are valued at nearly £9 trillion, making up over half of the nation's wealth, with around £1.66 trillion of lending secured against it. The UK has one of the world's largest property markets with annual sales surpassing £360 billion.

Other benefits to a more efficient land registration process include more efficient environmental planning, minimising fraud in duplicating property titles and using HM Land Registry and OS data to identify property insurance risk based on the geographical spread and ownership of portfolios.

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