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# Right up Scotland's street!

AGI Scotland's recent Annual Event in Edinburgh once again highlighted the breadth of expertise and interest in the geospatial community in Scotland



SCOTLAND

Chaired by the author of this month's column, the event held in March addressed opportunities and challenges across a range of topics including remote sensing, UAVs, mobile mapping, crowdsourcing, Big Data and Open Data.

Colin Mair, Chief Executive of the Improvement Service, set the context for the day by referring to the widening gap between the demand on public services and available funding. It called, he said for a new approach – a transformation in which the skills and expertise of the audience would be central.

This was reiterated by Diana Murray, Senior Executive at Historic Environment Scotland, who emphasised partnership working and the need for a clear vision that would shape the future use of geographic information in Scotland.

## Showcase

Such events showcase how new technologies are being exploited to deliver savings and open up new opportunities and this was no exception. Jonathan Marshall of the Canal and River Trust demonstrated an innovative Future Opportunity Matrix to assess the benefits of new technologies while Tom Riddleston and Deglan Gibbons from Network Rail outlined new opportunities within the rail sector. The use of, and drivers for Open Data were discussed by Kate Royle of the British Geological Survey, who highlighted that it's often a crisis (such as Foot and Mouth) that can influence behaviours.

Developments in remote sensing and GNSS were featured in a parallel session, with TomTom's Douglas Gilmour bringing the audience up-to-date on our growing reliance on sensors and with

SterlingGeo's Sam Campbell exploring the opportunities for cloud-based applications as part of the Space for Smarter Government Programme (SSGP). Ian Woodhouse from the School of Geosciences at University of Edinburgh concluded the session with a fascinating resume of recent innovations in airborne Lidar.

A post-lunch series of Lightning talks saw a change of pace, as speakers covered a range of topics from UAVs, aerial surveys, crowdsourcing and how to get involved with the AGI Early Career Network.

## Inspirational

The final sessions of the day took an inspirational look at the possibilities for connecting location information with other emerging innovations. Craig Clarke, founder of Glasgow-based Clyde Space - one of the most successful suppliers of small satellites in the world - introduced the audience to CubeSat systems and the possibilities they offer as part of a "data-driven economy".

Ed Parsons, Geospatial Evangelist for Google, rounded-off the day with a demonstration of the embedded location technology that is shaping and supporting everyday experiences for the mass market, not least the use of the smartphone as the new map in our pocket and as a valuable source of data.

In sum: a day packed day with content, an impressive turnout, great levels of sponsorship, and a key opportunity to engage and consider the strategic opportunities for the AGI in Scotland. More information about the event can be found on the AGI website at [www.agi.org.uk](http://www.agi.org.uk)

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