

Peter Fitzgibbon, Editor

## Turning words into action



“For the first time, ministers are genuinely interested in what’s being done in geospatial.” So said Jamie Clark, Head of Public Sector Geospatial Policy for the Geospatial Commission at September’s UK Mapping Festival in London – and he had plenty of anecdotal evidence to support his claim.

That interest is certainly being converted into action, with news that the Commission is to plough £5 million of next year’s £40 million budget into four exploratory projects as part of the Government’s #SmarterGov campaign. These will tackle issues of

data discoverability, Linked Identifiers, licensing, and the use of third party data to improve data quality and make data collection more efficient.

In further developments, and as went to press, the Commission closed its call for evidence into how geospatial data can support economic growth and productivity across the UK. It also closed its competition for the appointment of five independent Commissioners. Successful applicants will join an independent chair and two individuals nominated by the Commission’s partner bodies to formulate an ambitious national strategy

for the use of geospatial data. Due to be announced next year, the strategy will focus on how to unlock the value of geospatial data, estimated to be worth up to £11 billion per year, and exploit its potential to revolutionise the economy.

Let’s not forget that the UK already has some of the best geospatial data in the world; is ranked second out of 50 countries in terms of its geospatial preparedness, and has a world-leading geo-industrial base. With the political momentum to harness this now assured, 2019 looks likely to be a landmark year for more than just Brexit.

NEWS EXTRA

### Geovation helps establish GeoTech and PropTech

Three years ago, following the success of its Geovation Challenges, **Ordnance Survey (OS)** opened the **Geovation Hub** in London. The move was made to further energise innovation in the UK geospatial industry by attracting new players, new visions, new thinking and new markets, and offering these start-ups the best possible support through the Geovation Programme. Twelve months ago, to widen scope of the Programme to include PropTech start-ups. Geovation and OS partnered with HM Land Registry to help the UK become a global leader in the land and property market. In the three years since the Hub opened, businesses that have entered its Programme have so far raised £19.5m in investment funding and created 189 new jobs. [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk)



### Successful launch of NovaSAR-1 and SSTL S1-4 satellites

**Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL)** has confirmed the successful launch of two satellites, **NovaSAR-1**, a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) satellite, and **SSTL S1-4**, a high resolution optical Earth Observation satellite. The two satellites were launched into a 580km sun-synchronous orbit on board the PSLV launch vehicle from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, India on 16 September at UTC 16:38 by Antrix Corporation Limited, the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organisation. **Sir Martin Sweeting, Executive Chairman of SSTL**, said “I would like to thank the **Indian Space Research Organisation and Antrix** for a successful launch which achieves our long-held ambition to deliver low cost SAR remote sensing capabilities and services to our global customers and enhances our Earth observation capabilities with a sub one metre optical mission.” [www.sstl.co.uk](http://www.sstl.co.uk)



### thinkWhere Announces GIS and data management training

**thinkWhere** has just launched a new programme of GIS and data management training courses to celebrate the start of the UK academic year. Scotland’s specialist in open source and cloud-based GIS solutions, has updated its training portfolio with brand new QGIS 3 courses and a two day introduction to drone aerial imaging for mapping, surveying and photogrammetry. Standard scheduled courses will be delivered at locations in Manchester and Edinburgh as well as the company’s headquarters in Stirling. “We are really excited to be adding new and improved content to our already popular training programme” commented **Alan Moore, Chief Executive, thinkWhere**. “We are also pleased to be expanding into new geographic territories with a view to making our course locations more convenient to our customers.” [www.thinkwhere.com](http://www.thinkwhere.com)

### Marine Data Management and GIS Workshop

**OceanWise** are running their popular **Marine Data Management and GIS Workshop** on **27th November 2018**. This free event is back and is bigger and better than ever covering ‘What is data and why should we care?’ ‘Why should data be seen as infrastructure?’ ‘Smart Ports – a myth or reality?’ Join industry experts, share your experiences and learn how GIS technologies can successfully deliver savings in time, effort and money. Take part in the debate on open data and network with contacts from a range of industries and sectors. This event is free to attend but is limited to 70 delegates so please register now to avoid disappointment. Please note that student places will be limited and will be issued on a first come first serve basis. [www.oceanwise.eu](http://www.oceanwise.eu)