

# Bouncing back

Peter Fitzgibbon, Editor



We ring in 2021 by wishing our readers a happy, prosperous and, above all, safe year ahead, and begin with some encouraging news.

In a publication summarising a commissioned market study<sup>1</sup>, the Geospatial Commission finds that the past decade has seen a strong pattern of growth in Britain's location data ecosystem. With a 40% annual growth rate in the value of equity investment into geospatial companies, a 45% annual growth rate in employment, and an estimated £6 billion in revenues, it says the study offers strong evidence for further investment in the geospatial ecosystem. Based on its findings, the Commission sets out three key actions it is taking to enhance the UK's location data market: improve access to location data, maintain public trust in how location data is used, and drive the adoption of location data

Also looking to the future is trade association UKSpace, whose latest report<sup>2</sup> claims Britain is perfectly positioned to become a bigger space power. With decisive Government action, it says the nation could double its share of the global space market to £30 billion by 2030 and level up the UK's regional economies by creating a further 30,000 jobs over the next decade. The report concedes that Britain's reliance on the USA for military space imaging services is not ideal and calls for a sovereign space capability in key areas including Earth Observation and GNSS. Yet time is of the essence: "If important decisions on national space capability are not made and programmes implemented now, the sector will see a continued decline while other nations in the global space race move further ahead of us," warns Nick Shave. Chair of UKSpace.

Finally, our congratulations to those recognised in the 2021 New Year's Honours list: an OBE and MBE respectively to Liz Hughes and Alan Mills of MapAction (for services to international development and humanitarian crisis operations); an OBE to Dr Alison Monaghan of the British Geological Survey (for services to geology); an OBE to Margaret Roberts, past president of the Geographical Association (for services to education), and an OBE to Derek Howland, lately of Ordnance Survey (for services to national mapping).

1. Enhancing the UK's Geospatial Ecosystem. Geospatial Commission. Nov 2020. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/enhancing-the-uk-geospatial-ecosystem>)

2. Securing our future in space. UKSpace and WPI Strategy. Dec 2020. [https://www.ukspace.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Securing-Our-Future-in-Space\\_Dec2020.pdf](https://www.ukspace.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Securing-Our-Future-in-Space_Dec2020.pdf)

NEWS EXTRA



## Esri Ireland partners with Bluesky to enhance its digital mapping offering in Ireland

Esri Ireland is partnering with aerial mapping company Bluesky International to provide organisations across the island of Ireland with highly detailed geospatial data. The partnership will enable existing and prospective Esri Ireland customers to avail of **Bluesky's premium data resources**, including nationwide coverage of high-resolution aerial imagery, terrain data and 3D city models. Bluesky is the only company to have acquired full aerial coverage of the Republic of Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. Bluesky's map accurate aerial photography, together with its **nationwide 3D terrain mapping**, underpins its established contracts with both government and commercial organisations. The company also offers on-demand aerial mapping products to meet organisations' bespoke requirements for geographic information. [www.bluesky-world.com](http://www.bluesky-world.com)

## 1Spatial partners with Environment Agency and Defra

1Spatial, a global provider of Location Master Data Management software, solutions and business applications have been awarded the **Environment Agency and Defra Datastore, Rules and Visualisation (DRV) contract** following a competitive process. The Environment Agency need to improve the way in which they manage information around assets, such as embankments, weirs and fish passes. This strategic capability is being delivered in phases by the Creating Asset Management Capability programme, and more specifically the **Digital Asset Data and Information (DADI)** workstream. 1Spatial are collaborating with the Environment Agency and Defra to automatically verify and validate the supplied **geoCOBie sheets** against business and data rules (including geospatial checks) stored in a **Data Rules Library**. The validation reports will be sent back to the data suppliers and only when verified and validated, will the asset information be loaded into a central single-source-of truth repository. [www.1spatial.com](http://www.1spatial.com)



## As demands on land use increase, thinkWhere Launches Latest Version of location portal groundMapper

thinkWhere has released the latest version of its Geographic Information System (GIS) groundMapper to respond to the growing challenges facing land and property clients related to data quality, accuracy and speed to access the same data across projects. groundMapper is a **Software-as-a-Service (SaaS)** offering and the new **Advance portal** provides enhanced project management for location enabled projects with powerful capabilities for creating and managing workflows. groundMapper Advance includes easily customised templates allowing users to create **tailor-made maps and land-based reports** which can be updated and shared with colleagues, contractors and other stakeholders alleviating the current challenges for 'casual users' who use location data but perceive GIS as too technical. [www.thinkwhere.com](http://www.thinkwhere.com)

## MGISS Helps Northumbrian Water Mitigate Risk from Trees

Northumbrian Water using satellite positioning and mobile mapping technology to manage safety risks posed by trees on its sites. Using the latest surveying technology from **Mobile GIS Services (MGISS)**, Northumbrian Water has reduced the time taken to plan tree inspections, improved data sharing and reduced the production of paper plans and reports. The MGISS solution combines a **high accuracy positioning system** with mobile data collection apps and Geographical Information System (GIS) software in a **field-to-office workflow**. Prior to the project with MGISS, Northumbrian Water undertook a study to identify trees on sites located within an area stretching from Berwick-upon-Tweed to the North Yorkshire Moors and Carlisle. Trees are regularly inspected with the results informing resurvey intervals. Since the start of this project around 2,500 tree inspections have been carried out across 569 individual sites. [www.mgiss.co.uk](http://www.mgiss.co.uk)



## Introducing Airwards: a unifying global accreditation scheme championing ground-breaking drone work

Airwards is a unifying global accreditation scheme recognising best practice drone work. Launching in association with ARPAS-UK, this digital awards scheme and not-for-profit will champion a wide-range of UAV work which is positively advancing human capabilities. Covering more than 20 different disciplines, Airwards will recognise the **very best UAV projects, companies and individuals** leading the way in innovation, responsibility and real-world solutions. The brainchild of digital entrepreneur Richard Nichols, Airwards has been established to **bring together the drone community and raise awareness** of positive drone uses with the wider general public. The independent awards platform will champion UAV projects that are pushing boundaries, creating innovative solutions and transforming industries. [www.airwards.online](http://www.airwards.online)



## UK Firm Invests in Revolutionary 3D Ground Probing Radar System

Award-winning sub-surface radar experts Macleod Simmonds are excited to announce that they continue to invest in their **High-Density Array Ground Probing Radar (HDAGPR)** fleet, with the addition of the new generation 2.1m 3D Radar system. This is the largest array of its type in the UK currently, covering a wider footprint with each pass which enables a higher coverage per shift and a greater general efficiency when on site. Mixed with the company's GPR expertise, this new system opens up new markets whilst providing existing markets with more information, than was previously possible in a single application. [www.macleodsimmonds.com](http://www.macleodsimmonds.com)

## Hera use Geospatial AI to prioritise its network to improve leakage detection and maintenance

Italian multi-utility, Hera Group, can increase productivity and reduce leakage thanks to the stellar combination of ISOIL Industria services and Rezatec's Pipeline Risk product. Productivity is a key metric these days as water utilities are trying to do more with less at a time when climate change, Covid-19 and urbanisation are squeezing the margins of most water utilities. Using **Rezatec's Pipeline Risk product**, Hera's engineering team can potentially **identify twice as many leaks** compared to previous methods, increasing productivity. In Italy, regulation to reduce water leakage and provide a secure water supply is a fundamental part of resolution 917/2017. This means leakage is a key indicator for Hera, which is why they engaged ISOIL Industria SPA and Rezatec. Based on the observed results Hera expects the Pipeline Risk solution to increase the leaks detected in terms of breaks/km, potentially doubling the previous rate. [www.rezatec.com](http://www.rezatec.com)