

# Director General and Chief Executive's overview

Now, more than ever before, place really does matter and customers' use of geographic information has never been greater – from use within government planning and policy, to use within the new mobile technologies. Here in Great Britain, many of these applications, and in turn their users, continue to rely on Ordnance Survey data.

The past year has been important for both Ordnance Survey and the industry as a whole. With geographic information now underpinning daily decision-making for millions of people worldwide, we welcome the publication of *Place Matters: The Location Strategy for the United Kingdom*. Implementation of this will maximise the value of geographic data for the public and private sector. We were very pleased to contribute to its development and look forward to playing our part in delivering its goals.

Geographic information supports a diverse range of government applications, including monitoring agricultural payments, planning the digital television switch over, estate management and habitat mapping. We are delighted to have been chosen, alongside our business partners Landmark® and Dotted Eyes®, to supply central government with a wide range of geographic data for the next four years. We believe this reflects the enduring quality and consistency of our mapping and the level of service that we offer.

The widespread use of location data means that interpreting geographic information – on a paper map or on the computer screen – will help children throughout their lives. This year we were very pleased to give away the five millionth map in our Free maps for 11-year-olds scheme to help support these vital skills.

We also marked the start of building work on our new head office. Situated



on the outskirts of Southampton, our home for over 160 years, this is a sound investment which recognises future needs and patterns of work. I am thrilled that our vision of providing efficient, attractive working conditions for our staff is becoming a reality. We expect to move to our new head office at the end of 2010.

During the year we also have continued to work with the Government's Trading Funds Assessment team. This resulted in our new business strategy, which will improve ease of access to our geographic data and services for both commercial and non-commercial use. The launch of our enhanced web-mapping portal, OS OpenSpace®, marked the first milestone in its implementation.

The strategy represents the opening of the next exciting chapter in our long history. I am delighted we have achieved

the modernisation of our governance structure and I and the Executive team have enjoyed working with Sir Rob since he joined us in August 2008. With his outstanding record of business leadership and organisational development, I know that his knowledge, skills and expertise will be invaluable as we move forward.

We have an exciting year ahead and remain committed to both maintaining the highest quality geographic data, which will continue to underpin our daily lives, as well as increasing opportunities for innovative new consumer and business ideas.

**Vanessa V Lawrence CB**  
Director General and Chief Executive