

OS OpenData

Frequently asked questions

1 What is OS OpenData?

OS OpenData is the opening up of Ordnance Survey data as part of the drive to increase innovation, and support the government's 'Making Public Data Public' initiative. The wider use of geographic information (GI) will support greater transparency and accountability within government and lead to better services for citizens. It will also enable businesses, communities and individuals to make greater use of GI, which will in turn benefit the UK economy.

2 What mapping is included?

The full list of the data included in OS OpenData is:

- OS Street View®
- 1:50 000 Scale Gazetteer®
- 1:250 000 Scale Colour Raster
- Boundary-Line™
- Meridian™ 2
- Strategi®
- MiniScale®
- Land-Form PANORAMA®
- OS Locator™
- Code-Point® Open
- OS VectorMap™ District – Alpha version

3 How can I use the service?

OS OpenData has been designed to be as easy to use as possible. There are three ways to use the service:

- **View:** scroll and search through Ordnance Survey mapping in scales ranging from the whole of Great Britain down to street level showing individual buildings.
- **Develop:** use Ordnance Survey's mapping API (Application Programming Interface) OS OpenSpace to create interactive web maps.
- **Supply:** get hold of the whole range of OS OpenData mapping either by directly downloading it or by ordering your required data on a DVD. Use this part of OS OpenData if you want to manipulate data in a geographical information system (GIS). You can download free GIS software from a range of sources online.

OS OpenData products available are subject to the [OS OpenData Licence](#). This licence corresponds to the terms used for data available from www.data.gov.uk. Use of the OS OpenSpace API is subject to the [OS OpenSpace developer licence](#).

4 How often will the data be updated?

The data will be updated based on each products revision cycle. More information on this can be found on the Ordnance Survey product pages. The products available through the OS OpenData viewer and the OS OpenSpace API are automatically updated, but if you choose to download data or to receive it on a DVD, you will need to do so again when any updates are released.

5 How were the datasets selected?

On 23 December the government launched a public consultation around access to mapping from Ordnance Survey, which included a list of potential free datasets. There has been strong support for making some data free, but as a result of the consultation feedback the government decided to make some revisions to the products released in order to better meet the requirements of users.

6 Why is 1:25 000 Scale Colour Raster data and 1:50 000 Scale Colour Raster data not available?

It has been decided to replace the 1:25 000 and 1:50 000 Scale Colour Raster products with OS VectorMap District. This dataset is a new product within the OS VectorMap family, and is available in both raster and vector formats. It is designed to be a flexible and customisable product specifically designed for use on the web. It will enable developers to select, customise and modify maps to their specific requirements.

This change addresses two concerns expressed by respondents about both the inclusion of 1:25 000 and 1:50 000 raster products. The concerns were about the potential damage to the national coverage of Ordnance Survey OS Landranger and OS Explorer paper maps, and the absence of a mid-scale vector product to enable further innovation by developers.

The changes should therefore increase the economic benefit of OS OpenData.

7 What licence applies to the OS OpenData products?

There is an OS OpenData licence which has been created for the use of OS OpenData products. This licence corresponds to the terms used for data available from www.data.gov.uk. The licence allows the full reuse of the data for commercial and non-commercial use without restriction.

Users should use the following acknowledgement when making use of mapping and data from OS OpenData: Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database rights 2010.

To read the full licence terms visit www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/opendata/licence.

8 Is there a place to discuss ideas or projects?

The forums on the www.data.gov.uk site offer a great place to discuss how to make use of OS OpenData, as well as all the public data made available through the 'Making Public Data Public' initiative. If your idea is specifically around the use of geography, you can use the GeoVation forums to discuss and develop it with other like-minded people.

9 Will more data become available?

After May, there are no immediate plans to release any further datasets, although all the existing OS OpenData products will be maintained and updated in line with their revision cycles.

10 What is OS VectorMap District?

OS VectorMap District is a new mid-scale product within the OS VectorMap family. It is designed to be a flexible and customisable product specifically designed for use on the web. It will enable developers to select, customise and modify maps to their specific requirements.

11 Am I able to reuse 'derived data' created from the OS OpenData products?

Yes. The licence allows the reuse of the derived data created from any OS OpenData products for commercial and non-commercial use.

For more information on terms and conditions, read the OS OpenData Licence at www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/opendata/licence.

12 How will the free package of data be funded?

Government is committed to ensuring a sustainable business model for Ordnance Survey to maintain their high quality data that is recognised worldwide. Central government has negotiated a commercial agreement with Ordnance Survey for the licence for OS OpenData and for its ongoing maintenance.

13 If I need help with OS OpenData, can I contact Ordnance Survey?

If you have any questions about OS OpenData, please contact Ordnance Survey by email at opendata@ordnancesurvey.co.uk or you can phone 0845 408 1895

Ordnance Survey the OS Symbol, OS Street View, 1:50 000 Scale Gazetteer, Strategi, MiniScale, Land-Form PANORAMA and Code-Point are registered trademarks and Boundary-Line, Meridian, OS Locator and OS VectorMap are trademarks of Ordnance Survey, the national mapping agency of Great Britain.

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