SLA event 21/2/12 - Winchester

Peter Sleight, SLA chair
Introduction

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- **Open Data – a very valuable initiative !**

- Useful both nationally and locally
- Useful for:
    - Private/ Personal / Community apps
    - Planning local services
    - Business & Commerce

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- Recent developments have improved things enormously for the first two categories of user;

  – And, to some extent, for the third, business.

- But there is still some way to go for business: NAG is a good example.

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- For a decade, there have been 3 sources of address lists:
  – Royal Mail, with PAF
  – Local Govt./ IDeA
  – OS address level II

- This <u>cannot</u> make sense !
- Debacle of NSAI …

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- More recently, ONS was forced to spend £10mn.
  on reconciling the 3 sources
  (address file for the 2011 Census)

This came to the attention of government, which
expressed extreme displeasure, and insisted that
  work should start on a National Address
  Gazetteer (or NAG to its friends)

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- In Dec. 2010 the government announced
  proposals to create a definitive NAG for England
  & Wales;
- A joint venture was set up between OS and the
  Local Government Group (called GeoPlace)
- However, the good news was tempered in that
  two-tier access was proposed:
  – NAG would be free to the public sector via PSMA
  – All other users would be charged, on similar terms to
    OS' other addressing products, e.g. Addresspoint

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- The problem with this, from the private sector point of view, is that NAG would be charged at a rate varying from £24K p.a. to a single user, up to £189K p.a.to a user with 100 seats.
- This is unaffordable to all but the largest organisations.

- MRS CGG lobbied govt., pointing to the fact that a single definitive address file, available to all, ideally as Open Data, but failing that, on 'reasonable' terms, would encourage innovation, allow small start-ups to flourish, and boost the economy.

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- In the middle of 2011, the government's Transparency Board minutes for 8/6/11 said:

'The Board set out their view that a single national address file, created by the merging of the GeoPlace data and the Postcode Address File, needed to be available as a public good and as core data infrastructure'

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- Imagine our dismay, therefore, when NAG subsequently emerged as a single line on OS' sales list, branded as Address Base.

- We await the government decisions following the consultations on Open Data, and the Public Data Corporation; sincerely hoping that among the recommendations, will be a decision to free up NAG to all users

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- Thank you – rant over.
- Now can I introduce our speaker for this evening
  - Prof. Nigel Shadbolt.

  Nigel is Professor of Artificial Intelligence and Head of the Web & Internet Science Group at the University of Southampton's School of Electronics and Computer Science.

2009 - appointed as Information adviser to gov't.

2010 - asked to join Public Sector Transparency Board

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