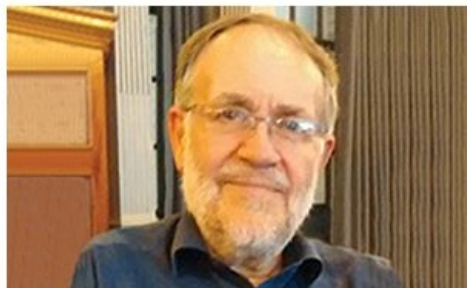


Opportunity Knocks



Well, I am back in the editor's chair, for a while at least. Drop me a line if you'd like to apply for the position. It's not full-time employment, carries no pension and has only a meagre expenses budget and a small honorarium. In return, we offer a great opportunity to get closely involved in geo issues across the board, network and learn what's happening at lots of geo events, meet and question the opinion formers, thought leaders and other shakers and disrupters. The position might suit someone who is already working, perhaps in consultancy, but is not allied to any large supplier or user organisation. Drop me a line to steve@pvpubs.com. Meanwhile, Robin Waters is reverting to his previous role as Features Editor and I thank him for what he has done over the last three years in raising the pace and topicality at GiSPro.

Talking to Vanessa Lawrence a little while ago she was firmly of the view that the government really has got the message about geodata. Most branches of government, national and local, now understand that everything happens somewhere and recording its location is worthwhile. But does government understand that addressing is not just a database of house numbers with postcodes? I suspect not, as Ian Coady of the Office for National Statistics points out in his column "An insider's view on... open" (page 27) As our politicians have struggled to grasp and resolve the anomaly of having three different government address datasets, we now have the creation and funding of a fourth, to be free and open to all and relying on voluntary data contributions. As Ian argues, what we really need is a government strategy for consolidating the datasets that haven't been sold off and making them open.

As we reported in the last issue (GIS Pro February 2015), Ordnance Survey is changing its trading entity to that of a government-owned company. I am delighted to publish a detailed analysis and discussion of what this may mean for the mapping agency and its customers. Ellen Broad of the Open Data Institute sets out the key questions to be answered and provides some of the answers (page 12 Is OS GovCo good or bad for open data?). Let's hope that Carol Tullo's assertive comment is fulfilled: "... ensuring that the data remains Crown-owned is the public commitment that will be delivered."

With predictions that spending on UAVs will double in the next ten years, two articles highlight firstly that it's the data where the focus needs to be (page 22 It's the data not the drone), while James Eddy of Bluesky compares the licensing, training and legislative regimes, together with the applications, for both fixed-wing piloted aircraft and UAVs. He also wonders whether a more realistic competitor to both technologies may eventually be satellite imagery, if it can one day match temporal frequency, control and spatial resolution.

Christine Easterfield of Cambashie sounds a cautionary note for those too deep in the GIS woods to see the trees (page 28 Geospatial and buildings: can we bring it all together?). Can we really bring GIS and BIM together? She reminds us that the GIS companies are dwarfed by the likes of Autodesk, Bentley and Dassault Syst me. The latter perhaps not showing on your radar but massive in manufacturing CAD. The key game changers and drivers could be the coming so-called smart technologies like energy generation and occupancy and travel patterns.

A new feature in this issue is a double-page map (pages 18 & 19). The first (and probably not the last) comes from BrilliantMaps.com. If you know of other maps that add real insight to the world and demonstrate the power of GIS and cartography which impart information, drop me a note at steve@pvpubs.com.

Finally, this publication is largely an election-free zone. But we do just allude to it in our new GeoBalls column (page 8). The author is a seasoned, if somewhat, jaundiced viewer of the geo scene, who can even remember the first AGI conference in Brighton in 1989.

This article was published in GIS Professional April 2015