

Aerial Photography Helps to Transform Policing in North Yorkshire



The latest aerial photography is helping the police in North Yorkshire, the UK's largest county, to save time and resources and transform policing. Supplied by Bluesky International and Getmapping under the Aerial Photography for Great Britain (APGB) contract with the Geospatial Commission, the high-resolution imagery is widely used across the force.

Accessed via desktop GIS and mapping software, the up-to-date photography is benefiting operations and day-to-day services with applications including missing person searches, surveillance planning, anti-social behaviour management and crime investigations.

Complementing existing mapping resources, including Ordnance Survey MasterMap data and the recently introduced [what3words](#) geocoding system, the APGB imagery provides additional detail and real world context. "The APGB imagery gives Control Room and frontline staff choices they did not have before," commented Rupert Carey, GIS applications support engineer, North Yorkshire Police. "They can now choose to have the detail, familiarity and usability of the photography as well as the intelligence of the mapping."

"Before this contract, if priorities demanded it and budgets allowed, we purchased imagery for a specific location or event. Now, with complete coverage of the county, available at the click of a button, we can save time and resources and help to transform policing in North Yorkshire."

Additional map layer

The APGB imagery is available at a resolution of 25 centimetres for the whole of North Yorkshire with urban centres, such as the city of York, at the ultra-high 12.5 centimetre resolution. Available as an additional map layer within the force's Northgate GIS software, users of the photography include the Force Control Room for the identification of locations for resource deployment, Police Search Advisors (POLSA) to define and manage search areas, Analysts to advise strategic and operational activities as well as Investigators, Emergency and Tactical Planners and Business Advisors.

Applications of the imagery by operational officers and staff also include use by the Rural Crime Teams for detecting, recording and investigating crimes such as hare coursing, egg thefts and badger baiting, Surveillance Teams for planning and carrying out undercover operations, Firearms Licensing checks and use by Neighbourhood Policing teams.

North Yorkshire Police also has access to detailed height measurements under the APGB contract. The Digital Terrain or 'bare earth' Models (DTMs) and Digital Surface Models (DSMs), which include ground features such as built structures or trees, are initially being used by missing person search teams and in business planning for the siting of radio masts.