

Using Unlicensed Mapping Data Risks Reputations

Ordnance Survey, Great Britain's national mapping agency, is reminding land and property professionals to ensure that they are not risking their professional reputations by using unlicensed mapping data.

Over the last 10 years, the use of digital location-based information has changed significantly, from being used by only a small number of organisations to becoming an essential business decision-making tool. This increased reliance on, and recognition of, digital mapping data has also resulted in customers demanding the most up-to-date information available.

Ordnance Survey makes up to 10,000 changes to the master map database of Great Britain every day, reflecting the rapid developments in the nation's environment. However, it is not only important for organisations to have the most up-to-date data, but also vital that they have the appropriate licence to use it effectively. The use of older, unlicensed data not only has legal and cost implications, but also risks damaging professional reputations, which may have taken many years to build.

Dan Hughes, sector manager of Land&Property at Ordnance Survey, stated that it is incredible how quickly the face of Britain changes, with even small adjustments to buildings and boundaries able to have far-reaching consequences. "Never has it been more important to ensure that you are using the very latest licensed data, allowing you to rely on the fact that it will be accurate and consistent, but more importantly that your company's reputation is secure," he added.

The use of properly-licensed data can also represent significant time and cost savings. Thames Valley Housing estimates that investing in the very latest data is enabling the housing provider to save GBP200,000 in grounds maintenance costs each year, without impacting on its quality of service - a total saving of GBP2 million over a typical 10-year maintenance contract.

Commenting on the campaign, James Kavanagh of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), said it is vitally important for all associate and chartered members of RICS to work within the bounds of RICS regulation and to provide the highest levels of service and professionalism to clients. "This requires the use of the best and most up-to-date information available, which in the context of Ordnance Survey mapping and information can only be achieved by making sure that you are correctly licensed and using the latest mapping data," Kavanagh continued.

Jan Boothroyd, chief executive at Land Data, emphasises the importance of using the most up-to-date mapping information, saying: "Maps change, and if you're using an out-of-date map, it may be that the boundaries you use when you submit your search cover the wrong piece of land. It may mean you get information back that is incomplete, and that could damage the client's transaction, so from a reputational point of view we would always advise that people use fully licensed up-to-date Ordnance Survey mapping."