

Your response

Question	Your response
Do you have any comments on our proposals?	<p>The mission of Open Knowledge Foundation is to create a more open world – a world where all non-personal information is open, free for everyone to use, build on and share; and creators and innovators are fairly recognised and rewarded.</p> <p>This response relates to Ofcom's consultation on its plan of work for 2021-22.</p> <p>We urge Ofcom to review its approach to proprietary address data and to change its approach to the governance of UK address data by publishing it as open data for anyone to freely access, use, modify, and share for any purpose.</p> <p>Proprietary address data can make it hard to openly license other datasets at address level or limits the ways in which they can be used. A good example of this is the HM Land Registry Price Paid dataset. Some datasets simply will not be published due to legal constraints or ambiguity.</p> <p>Proprietary address data limits innovation. If you need to pay license fees for address data before you can start building a prototype, you're much less likely to build that prototype.</p> <p>Proprietary address data leads to duplicated effort across the economy as many businesses deal with the same problems of cleaning user-entered address data or assembling their own incomplete datasets.</p> <p>Proprietary address data means that address-level datasets are frequently not</p>

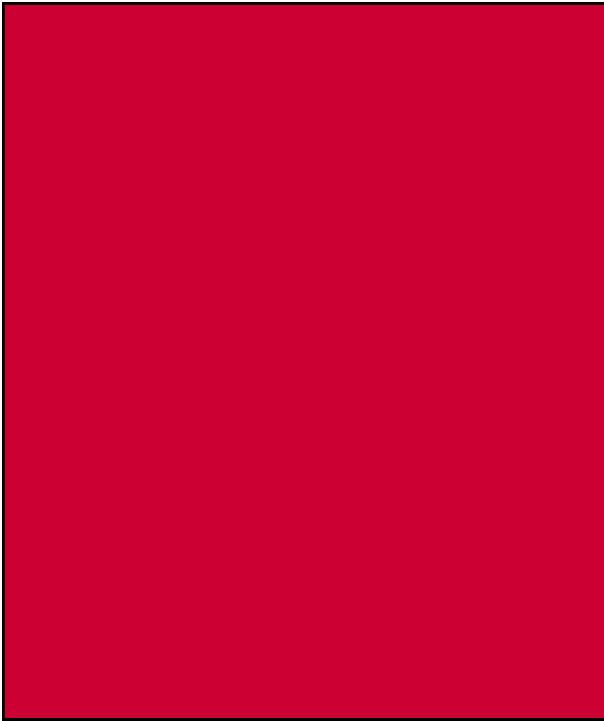
interoperable or hard to reconcile because not everyone consuming/publishing them has access to UPRNs/UDPRNs.

Governance: Maintaining a dataset with tens of millions of data points with a 0% error rate is impossible, but there is room for improvement. At the moment, there isn't really a clearly defined process for users of address data to feed back issues. This is also complicated by the complex shared governance model for address data (involving local councils, Royal Mail and Ordnance Survey) as it can be unclear where responsibility lies. It is possible to feed back issues, but there is scope to leverage the userbase of address data and improve the quality of address data by allowing users of it a more structured way to feed back possible errors into the maintenance process.

The poster child for Open Address Data enthusiasts is Denmark. There are lots of countries with open address data, but Denmark is the only one where there is a really rigorous [evaluation of the overall costs/benefits to the economy of doing so](#)

In 2016, Matt Hancock - then minister for the Cabinet Office - [acknowledged the importance of address data and the value proposition of open address data](#). In the 2016 budget, £5 million was allocated to "develop options for an authoritative address register that is open and freely available". But little progress seems to have been made.

Post-Brexit, the UK has the opportunity to open up its valuable address data to everyone who wants to use it in order to drive innovation, create new business opportunities and generate jobs at speed while proving the value of the government's efforts to create a centrally-maintained reliable database of national information.

	<p>This new approach would be in line with the National Data Strategy, an “ambitious, pro-growth strategy” which “aims to drive the UK in building a world-leading data economy while ensuring public trust in data use”.</p>

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