



Central Government mandates the use of the UPRN and USRN to reference addresses and streets

A guide for local government

The Government has announced that the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) and Unique Street Reference Number (USRN) have been released under Open Government Licence. Additionally, the Open Standards Board, via Government Digital Service (GDS) **mandated** that from 1st July, the UPRN and USRN are the public sector standard for referencing and sharing property and street information.

This means that all new public sector systems and projects that include address and/or street data should include the identifiers.



This announcement reflects the Government's recognition that UPRNs and USRN provide lynchpins for the public sector's use of location data. When they are attached to data from different sources, they ensure that each organisation can provide the same identifier to any information on an addressable location or street, providing consistency and confidence in how they are labelled.

It removes any ambiguity in identifying a street or address, and the duplication of effort in attaching identifiers.

In turn, this makes it easier to match and analyse disparate datasets, helping organisations to unify data and spot relationships and patterns, and gain insights for planning their operations and making policy. This can help to create internal efficiencies, reduce costs and improve services for citizens.

Publish reference data for use across government

Additionally, on 11th March 2021, the Government Digital Service provided best practice guidance for creating a strategy to manage and support reference data for publishing. The guidance is aimed at government employees who need to publish reference data so others can use it across government.

The guidance specifically highlights the use of UPRNs. [Follow this external link to view the new guidance on the Central Digital and Data Office website.](#)

Joined up data in government: the future of data linking methods

Data linkage provides insight, informs policy change and helps answer society's most important questions through increasing the utility of data. See this review published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 16th July 2021 on improving work in data linkage across government.

[Follow this external link to view the ONS review.](#)

LLPG & LSG Integrations

Joining data using the UPRN & USRN



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UPRN: a guide for councils

The Local Government Association (LGA) has published a guide to UPRNs stating that “they are key to almost everything that’s delivered or achieved by councils”.

The LGA states that:

UPRNs should be fundamental to all data matching and therefore to all data analysis - this ensures disparate data sets and innovative applications of data can be blended to provide insight and understanding about residents and businesses, which is needed to deliver area-based services effectively on the ground. Every authority has common focal points, such as housing, education, welfare and highways. When the UPRN is added to each siloed department’s data, the whole organisation benefits. It becomes a much simpler exercise to link inter-departmental information.

[Find out more on the LGA website.](#)

Getting value from the identifiers

[A cost benefit analysis for local authorities and emergency services in England and Wales,](#) commissioned by GeoPlace, projected net benefits of up to £200 million by 2020 from better use of the address and street data that councils create and maintain on a statutory basis. Based on the current rates of adoption, this represents a return on investment after discounting of 4:1. The research demonstrated that the RoI could be significantly higher if barriers to adoption, particularly around access to funds, staff retention and improved national collaboration are addressed. The mandate goes a long way towards making this happen.

Find my identifiers

Working closely with local authorities, who have a statutory responsibility to create the address and street data, GeoPlace manages the large data infrastructure that supports address and street information users across the public and private sectors.

The GDS mandate states that applications that use datasets containing properties and streets must use the correct UPRN and USRN which must be verified via a trusted source.

The definitive set of IDs are obtained from the products created and maintained by GeoPlace from data collected by local authorities and licenced to the public sector by Ordnance Survey under the Public Sector Geospatial Agreement.

On behalf of local authorities, GeoPlace has created [FindMyAddress.co.uk](https://www.findmyaddress.co.uk) and [FindMyStreet.co.uk](https://www.findmystreet.co.uk) to provide a central point for queries on open UPRNs and USRN and enable people to find out what their UPRN or USRN is.

FindMyAddress makes it possible to find official addresses, UPRNs and locations for every property in England, Scotland and Wales.



FindMyStreet, which has been funded by the Local Government Association, enables users to search for USRNs, street names and locations in England and Wales and find out the maintenance responsibility of the street.



How do I get hold of UPRNs and USRNs?

Talk to your local Address and Street data Custodians who will be able to supply these to you.

If you are not sure who your local Custodian is, use the [Find my custodian service](https://www.findmycustodian.co.uk) from the LGA.

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GeoPlace is a public sector limited liability partnership between
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