Roundtable 1: The Best Kept Secret – Promoting the strategic value of street and address to leadership

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At the GeoPlace 2025 conference the Best Kept Secret guide for senior officers (v3) was shared with delegates for their thoughts and feedback. Discussion points were had on the guide itself as well as more broadly about engaging with seniors.

Overall, there was strong support for the programme and it was recognised that there is a need to target this audience. Many of the attendees took the draft guide for further thoughts and reflections which may add further feedback over the coming weeks.

Q1: Key barriers needing to be unblocked

- **Awareness & Understanding**

  - Senior management lacks understanding of what UPRNs are.

  - UPRNs fall on deaf ears; they're seen as just an acronym.

  - UPRNs are not perceived as "sexy" or engaging.

  - Hard to translate UPRNs into real-world relevance.

  - UPRNs are awkward numbers and not intuitive.

  - Confusion over what the "real" UPRN is due to multiple property reference numbers.

  - Custodians have not widely been approached by senior management from hearing comms on UPRNs (even where we have directed people to 'Find My Custodian').

- **Organisational challenges**

  - No clear ownership of integrating geographical data at the corporate level; decisions are siloed within services.

  - Disconnect between leadership and operational reliability.

  - Hard to connect the dots across departments.

  - Lack of central government onboarding of UPRNs and support.

  - VOA does not use UPRNs.

  - Central government data is often not aligned with UPRNs.

- **Financial constraints**

    - Lack of investment available to adopt UPRNs across systems despite potential for revenue recovery.

    - Financial limitations persist even when cost-saving opportunities exist due to the up front cost. This needs to be a softer blow to councils.

    - Systems pay for address data and recharge councils; inefficient model.

- **Citizen-Centric focus**

    - Citizens must be the priority; solutions should relate to them.

    - Smart city development should reflect public benefit.

    - Need to demonstrate how UPRNs improve services for residents.

Q2: Thoughts on proposed structure & key strengthening lines

- **Demonstrating value**

    - Highlight risks of not using UPRNs.

    - Emphasise ROI and cost savings.

    - Use real-world examples (e.g. conveyancing, green bin collection, business rates).

    - Show time savings and efficiency gains.

    - Demonstrate benefits to cross-departmental working.

- **Communication & engagement**

    - Develop a robust communications plan.

    - Use bulletins to strengthen messaging.

    - Include UPRNs in all official letters.

    - Create a recognisable logo and marketing campaign.

    - "Don't know what you don't know" – educate stakeholders.

- **Practical integration**

    - CRM linking (e.g. waste collection routes) should be part of an all-in approach.

    - Waste teams often add more than LLPG data; leverage this.

- Avoid double charges through better data integration.

- Make addresses non-freeform and force LLPG lookups.

- **Strategic recommendations**

  - Look at mayors and their networks across combined authorities. Find examples where working within a CA has benefits particularly thinking devolution.

  - Explore international examples for inspiration.

  - NHS numbers are just as clunky yet widely accepted and understood.

  - Push for UPRNs to become an open standard like postcodes.

  - Compare Royal Mail vs LLPG for address data handling.

- **Procurement & transition**

  - Provide procurement guides.

  - Acknowledge complexity in moving between systems.

  - Support smoother transitions to new systems with clear guidance.