

# Sharing the knowledge

Huntingdonshire District Council

NLPG Exemplar Award: Highly Commended – 'Most Creative Use'



**When the Mapping Services Agreement (MSA) came into being in 2005, Fire Services and Police Forces were included and as a result gained access to the NLPG. In 2007 it was announced that the NLPG would be one of the key datasets for the 'FiReControl' project, a major DCLG initiative that is working to move from the existing 46 Fire and Rescue control room infrastructure to 9 new amalgamated Regional Control Centres (RCC).**

In one of the first projects of its type and ahead of any government directive, Huntingdonshire District Council and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire & Rescue Service (CFRS) have been working together to enhance their property information. The result is better, more comprehensive and up to date operational address data for the Fire Service, the local authority and any users of the NLPG, plus some significant efficiency gains.

The process was started off by matching Huntingdonshire's LLPG against data held by the Fire Service. Interestingly while Huntingdonshire's gazetteer was not missing any major buildings, it gained considerably from additional information acquired from CFRS and vice versa. Huntingdonshire had already added many Objects without a Property Address (OWPA), such as playgrounds, churches, open spaces, electricity sub-stations and water pumping stations. CFRS data included accurate XY coordinates, organisation names and appropriate property notes, such as the number of storeys, vital for choosing equipment prior to attending a fire. In addition the data included building codes used for fire risk assessment.

Working together has proved to be good audit exercise for Huntingdonshire's own gazetteer and many secondary properties from sites with multiple buildings, such as schools, universities, hospitals, military bases have now been included in the Huntingdonshire LLPG, all with precise coordinates. As CFRS move towards using the NLPG for its address information it will be able to make use of 'my NLPG' to submit any updates that arise through operational intelligence, which will then be validated by the council prior to inclusion in the gazetteer.

## Outcomes

Having a single source of address information means considerable time saving for CFRS. Firstly there is no longer a need to synchronise secondary property data with AddressPoint every time it is updated. The benefit here is twofold, firstly the removal of a process and secondly improved data currency as the NLPG is updated daily. Additionally CFRS will no longer need to receive street naming and numbering notifications, as these will automatically appear in the NLPG.

NLPG conventions will also help the Fire Service in other ways. Being able to refer to open spaces using a Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) aids cross-organisational working, during the risk assessment of temporary events such as fêtes and festivals. The capture of non-occupational premises such as monuments and similar structures, adds detail to the collection of incident location, enabling the Fire, Police and council to have one unique reference for all correspondence.

The range of properties now held in Huntingdonshire's gazetteer is more diverse than datasets previously used by CFRS, which were largely based on mailing addresses. The matching process and the inclusion of secondary properties without postal addresses on sites with large numbers of buildings, means that the gazetteer is now better suited to serving both CFRS and the council.

The close collaboration between Huntingdonshire and CFRS meets the aspirations of Transformational Government through improvement of the gazetteer, which underpins so much of Huntingdonshire's service delivery and now the Fire Service. The efficiencies delivered through data sharing are in line with Gershon's requirements for rationalisation of systems and processes, and the avoidance of duplication of effort, at least 15 hours per week in terms of manual data input and validation.

## Key benefits

- Working in joint partnership with the Fire Service has achieved the principles and recommendations by Gershon and Varney.
- An up to date gazetteer which has benefited from additional data supplied by both parties.
- No duplication of effort in gazetteer maintenance moving forward.
- Significant efficiencies and better operational processes.
- Established a wider understanding of Fire Service requirements .
- Benefits of this collaboration have been shared with other Cambridgeshire authorities which have initiated similar programs.
- Further raises the profile of the NLPG.