Government data ecosystem: Mapping session | 5 March 2018

Who is responsible for data in government? Who uses it, works with it, applies regulations on it, sets standards for it?
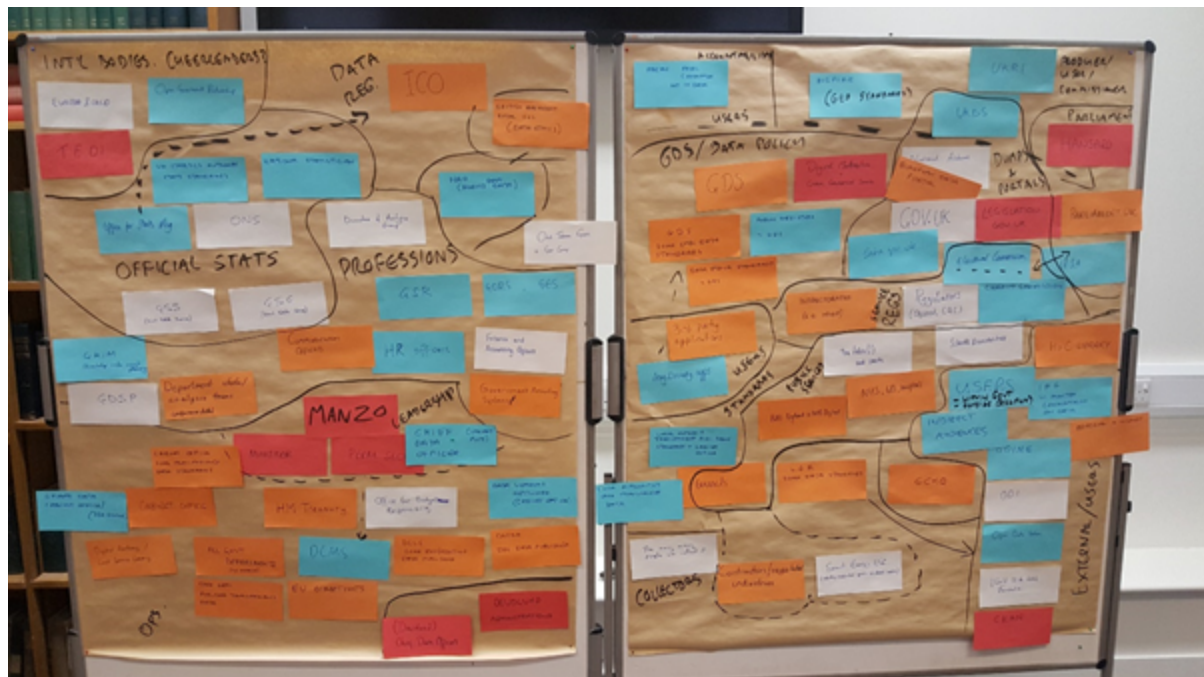
Members of the research team at the Institute for Government, the troop at Full Fact and Nick Halliday (Open Data User Group alumnus) took part in a pinpoint session on 5 March 2018 to start mapping the government data ecosystem. We hope this will form the basis of further work.

This is a very rough first attempt (and not yet as sophisticated as the excellent ODI work in this area) – things listed might make more sense under different headings, some might be on a different conceptual level (e.g. some specific standards), and there may be omissions. Please leave any comments or make any additions as you see fit. *Italics show some additions made after the session.*

The organisational(ish) analysis: pinpoint

We attempted to answer some variation of this broad question: which departments/public bodies/roles/professions are responsible for setting rules and regulations/producing/using data?

Everyone started by writing down answers on cards. The people split into pairs and discussed which they thought were the most important, but – unlike many pinpoint sessions – were also encouraged to write down any further ideas that came to mind. We then started to paste the cards up on a central board, and tried to group the cards together, as follows.

International bodies/Cheerleaders?

- Eurostat and OECD
- Open Government Partnership (OGP)
- Tenders Electronic Daily
- *D5?*
- *G7/20?*
- *United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)*
- *http://ggim.un.org/*
-

Data regulators

- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) / *Scottish ICO*

- Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR)
- [Competition and Markets Authority](#) *and similar?*

Official statistics

- National Statistician
- UK Statistics Authority (UKSA)
- Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR)
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- Government Statistical Service (GSS)
- Government Statistics Group (GSG)
- *ONS Data Science Campus?*
- *Government Statistical Service (GSS)* https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/

Professions

- Directors of Analysis Group
- Government Social Research (GSR)
- Government Operational Research Service (GORS)
- Government Economic Service (GES)
- Government Knowledge and Information Management (GKIM)
- Government Data Science Partnership (GDSP)
- Departmental stats/analysis teams
- Communications officers *(Government Communication Service)*
- HR officers
- Finance and accounting officers
- Government accounting systems
- [*Analysis function*](#)
- *Digital, Data and Technology (DDT)*
- *Government Science and Engineering profession – including head of geography*
- *Corporate Finance Profession*
- *Government Finance Profession*
- *Government Planning Profession (geospatial)?*
- *Intelligence Analysis*
- *Procurement Profession*
- *Other professions – e.g. Policy, Operational Delivery, Project Delivery*
- *Functions? Digital?*
- *Cross-government communities (eg GDSP, above)*
- *Data Publishers Network?*
- *Departmental transparency/Open Government Partnership (OGP) leads*
- *Data Science Accelerator*
- *Cross-government AI community*

Leadership

- Civil service chief executive
- *Cabinet secretary*
- Minister
- Permanent secretary
- Chief data officer (vacant)
- *National Technology Adviser*
- [*Data Advisory Board*](#)

Operational

- Cabinet Office (CO – including transparency data standards, grants data)
- Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT)
- Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR)
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)
- Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- Data Leaders Network (Cabinet Office)
- GDS Academy
- Civil Service Learning
- ALL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS
  - Including Food Standards Agency (h/t [Sian](#))
- EU directives
- *Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)*
- *Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)*
- *Public bodies – notably:*
  - *Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation*
  - *Geospatial: HM Land Registry, Ordnance Survey, UK Hydrographic Office, British Geological Survey, Valuation Office Agency, Coal Authority (and others, e.g. GeoPlace LLP)*
  - *Data-driven organisations: Met Office, Food Standards Agency, Companies House?*
  - *Registrars: Cabinet Office, Food Standards Agency, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Defra, DWP, MHCLG, MoJ, Ofqual, Her Majesty's Passport Office, ONS*
- *Alan Turing Institute (https://www.turing.ac.uk/)*

Devolveds

- Devolved administrations
- Devolved chief data officers
- (Etc)

Accountability

- PACAC and other parliamentary committees
- National Audit Office
- House of Commons Scrutiny Unit

GDS/Data policy

- *Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)*
- Government Digital Service (GDS)
- Some open data standards
- Data ethics standards
- Public registers
- Digital marketplace
- Crown Commercial Service
- Data Science Ethics
  (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-science-ethical-framework)

Producer/User/Commissioner

- Inspire (spatial standards)
- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

Parliament

- Hansard
- parliament.uk
- IPSA

Dumps and portals

- National Archives
- European Data Portal
- GOV.UK
- data.gov.uk
- legislation.gov.uk

Service regulators

- Inspectorates (e.g. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, HMIP)
- Regulators (Ofsted, Care Quality Commission – CQC)
- Electoral Commission
- Charity Commission

Users/external

- Third party applications
- mySociety
- House of Commons Library
- Institute for Government
- Users within government
- Users outside (scrutiny)
- Indirect audiences (ultimately, the public)
- Experian
- Open Data Incubator for Europe (ODINE)
- Open Data Institute (ODI)
- Open Knowledge – Open Data Index
- World Wide Web Foundation – Open Data Barometer
- Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network (CKAN)
- *Ada Lovelace Institute*
- *Royal Statistical Society*
- *[Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing](#)*

Public services

- The police and courts
- Schools and universities
- NHS, GPs, hospitals
- NHS England and NHS Digital
- Local councils

…

- Contractors/Regulated industries
- Smart Energy UK

National security

- GCHQ
- *Intelligence Analysis profession*

Standards

- [Local authority transparency publication](#)
- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-standards-principles/open-standards-principles
- https://data.gov.uk/education-standards/
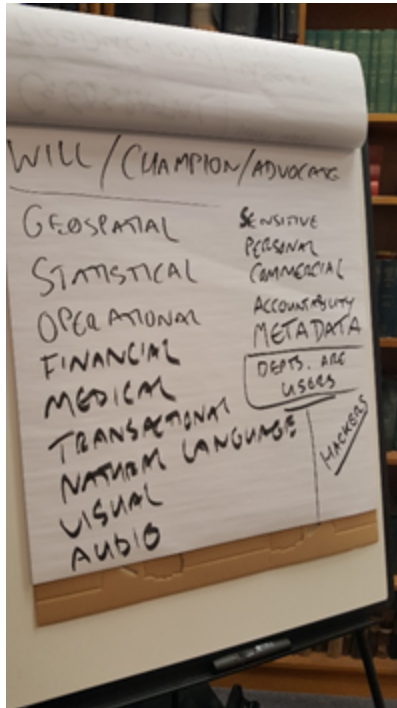
Collectors

- The many, many people who collect it (think clipboards etc)

[Floating cards]

- British Academy, Royal Society (especially work on data ethics)
- OneTeamGov
- UKGovCamp
- What Works Centres
- *Infrastructure and Projects Authority*
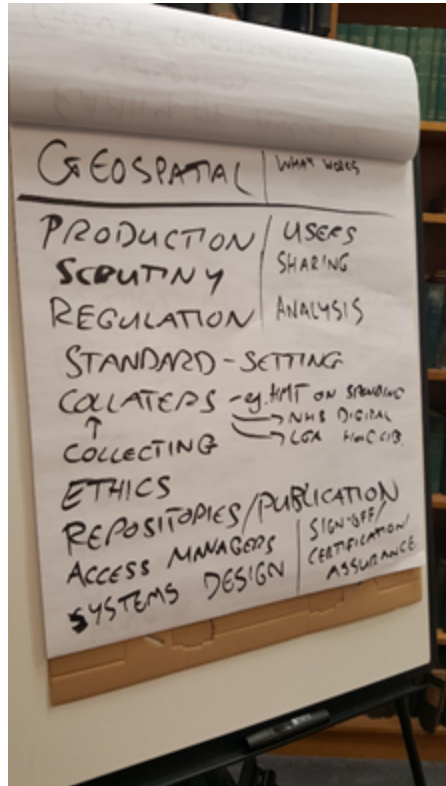- *Open Innovation Team*

The 'types of data' analysis

At the end of the card-sorting session, it was clear that there were other ways of approaching the exercise. One was thinking about the different types of data we might be talking about…

- Geospatial
- Statistical
- Operational
- Financial
- Medical
- Transactional
- Natural language
- Visual/Audio
- Sensitive
- Personal
- Commercial
- Accountability
- Metadata
- *Management information*
- *Open/Closed/Shared – the ODI spectrum*
- *Regulatory (h/t Sian)*
- *Compliance (h/t Sian)*
- *Digital data (generated using government digital services) (h/t Sian)*

The 'relationship with data' analysis

 …while another approach was to think about the relationship with the data, and what people might be doing with it/the responsibilities they had for it:
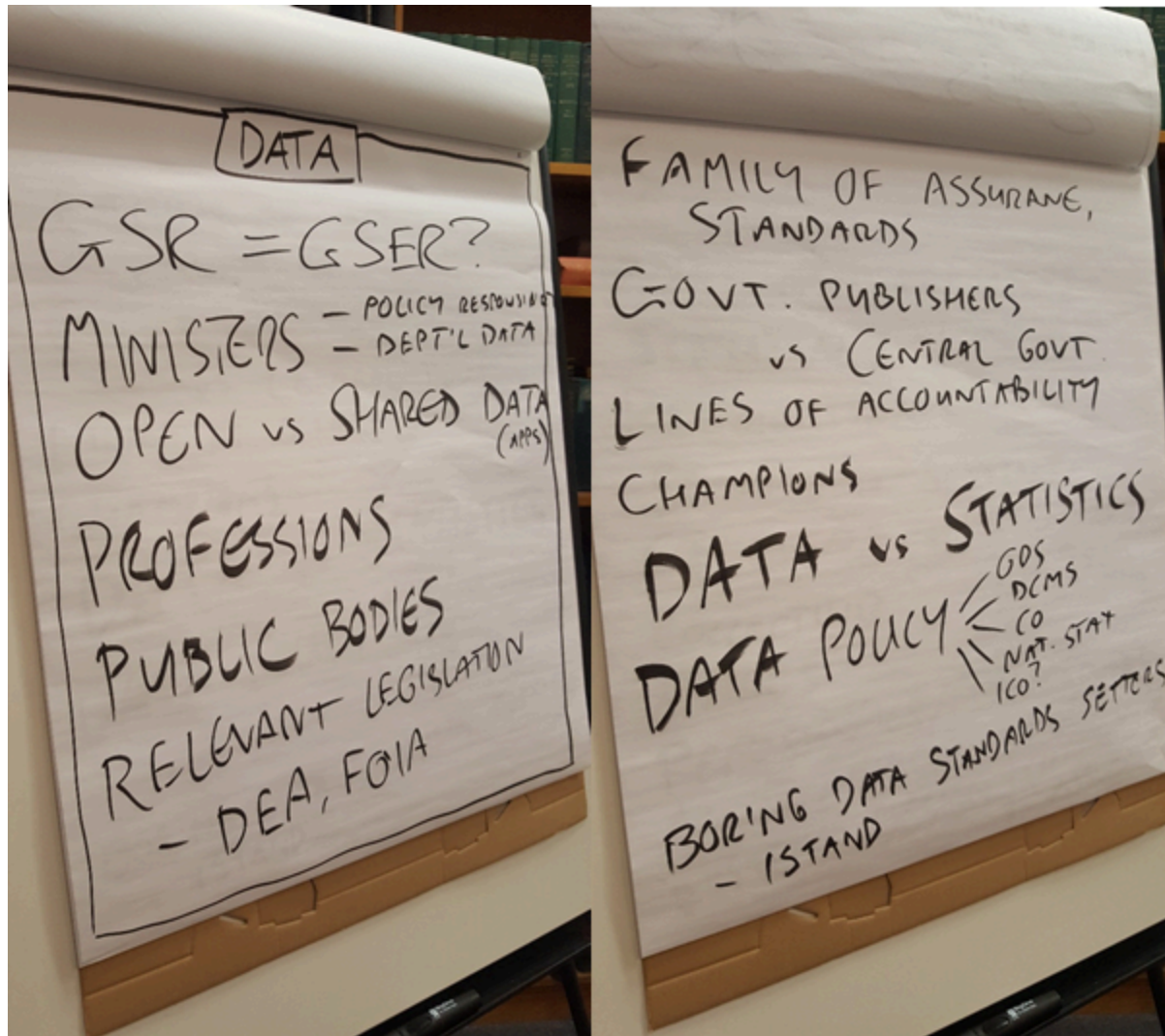

- Production
- Scrutiny
- Regulation
- Standard-setting
- Users
- Departments as users
- Sharing
- Analysing
- Collating (e.g. HMT on spending, NHS Digital, LGA, House of Commons Library)
- Collecting
- Ethics
- Repositories
- Publishing
- Access managers
- Sign-off/Certification/Assurance
- Systems design

- Championing/Advocating
- Hackers
- *Commissioning*

General

While doing the card-sorting exercise, we also wrote down other questions or things we thought were important:

- Is GSR the same as GSER?
- Ministers can be thought about as having a) policy responsibility b) an interest in departmental data
- Open vs shared data (apps)
- Which professions in the civil service are particularly concerned with data?
- Which public bodies are particularly concerned with data?
- What's the relevant legislation? Digital Economy Act, Freedom of Information Act…
- Family of assurance, standards
- Government publishers vs central government

- What are the lines of accountability?
- Who are the champions?
- DATA vs STATISTICS – what's the difference?
- Where does DATA POLICY sit? GDS/CO, DCMS (soon?), National Statistician/UKSA/ONS, ICO?
- Data standards setters, eg iStand

Other useful links

This post by Phil Rumens, A rough guide to central vs local government digital, includes this map of the bodies involved in digital.

This geospatial data resources page from Owen Boswarva includes much more on that field of government data.

This links to the Open Data Institute's work on mapping data ecosystems.

The single data list, all the data that local authorities are required to submit to central government departments in a given year:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/single-data-list

This visualisation by the Alliance for Useful Evidence about their network (thanks to Benoit for the link): https://www.alliance4usefulevidence.org/network/#root