



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

www.gov.uk/defra

Defra Open Data Strategy

**Refreshed as part of the UK Open Government
Partnership (OGP) Action Plan**

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Introduction

Defra published an Open Data Strategy in June 2012. It focused on coordinating Open Data activities across Defra, setting up a transparency panel, identifying some key initial commitments and putting in place initial mechanisms to embed open data principles within Defra and its Network. Using the strategy, Defra recognised that a refresh is required to be able to achieve the wider benefits and to fully support the government priorities around building a National Information Infrastructure (NII).

This document lays out a refreshed Open Data Strategy for Defra. It follows the principles of the Open Data White Paper¹ and builds upon the UK government response to the Shakespeare Review of Public Sector Information, the G8 Open Data Charter and building our National Information Infrastructure. It provides a set of principles that will be applied by Defra and its Arms Length Bodies (the Defra Network) to embed transparency principles and the publishing of open data as part of our day-to-day business. Specific commitments for open data release will be made available through data.gov.uk using the inventory of data held by government.

This strategy aims to cover the openness of Defra data in a broad sense. Data and data sets are defined in the Open Data White Paper and the Freedom of Information Act 2000². At a minimum we define data sets to mean information comprising a collection of information held in electronic form where all or most of the information in the collection:

- (a) has been obtained or recorded for the purpose of providing a public authority with information in connection with the provision of a service by the authority or the carrying out of any other function of the authority
- (b) is factual information which -
 - (i) is not the product of analysis or interpretation other than calculation, and
 - (ii) is not an official statistic (within the meaning given by section 6(1) of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007), and
- (c) remains presented in a way that (except for the purpose of forming part of the collection) has not been organised, adapted or otherwise materially altered since it was obtained or recorded.”

However, the principles of the strategy will be applied more widely and will extend where practical and sensible to published statistics and the raw data behind those statistics. This

¹ Open Data White Paper - June 2012 definitions:
http://data.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Open_data_White_Paper.pdf#page=9

² Freedom of Information Act 2000 - section 11(5): <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents>

would be achieved in a way that is compatible with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007³. For example the discoverability of those statistics alongside data will be an area of focus.

We are building an approach that meets the G8 Open Data Charter principles⁴:

- Principle 1: Open Data by Default
- Principle 2: Quality and Quantity
- Principle 3: Usable by All
- Principle 4: Releasing Data for Improved Governance
- Principle 5: Releasing Data for Innovation

This document builds upon and supersedes the previous Defra Open Data Strategy.

Defra and the Defra Network

We are the UK government department responsible for policy and regulations on environmental, food and rural issues. Our priorities are to grow the rural economy, improve the environment and safeguard animal and plant health.

Defra is a ministerial department, supported by 38 agencies and public bodies, collectively termed the Defra Network.

The full list of organisations in the Defra Network is listed in Annex IV.

This strategy covers the Department and the Defra Network. From here on references in the document to Defra will include the full Defra Network unless specifically stating otherwise.

³ The Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/18/contents>

⁴ The G8 Open Data charter and Technical Annex: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-data-charter/g8-open-data-charter-and-technical-annex>

Defra Open Data Strategy

Defra will follow this strategy to further embed the principles of transparency and open data throughout its activities.

Defra adopts in practice the definition of open data held in the Open Data white paper⁵. The Definition sets out principles that define “open” in relation to data and content. “Open Data” is data that is accessible, in digital (machine readable form) and free of restriction on use or redistribution in its licensing conditions.

In practice this means that data would be available under the Open Government License (OGLv2)⁶. Other data is considered non-open but even for non-open data, we would aim to make it as accessible, restriction free and as widely re-usable as is possible.

In following this strategy we will be:

- **Transparent**
 - We will clearly articulate the decisions we make and the reasoning behind them
 - The data and information we use to make our decisions will be available for others to scrutinise and challenge us
- **Open by Default**
 - We will make clear what is available, who to contact for more information and the process that we follow
 - Where there is not a viable reason to the contrary we will make all of our data and information available as open data
 - Where any data is published⁷ and not open, the generic criteria we use and the individual reasoning that was used to decide for a not open data publication should be published alongside the data or information and be subject to scrutiny and challenge
- **Responsive**
 - we will add urgency to our delivery of data and information
 - we will respond to requests for data, feedback and suggestions in an accurate and timely manner
 - we will use a variety of approaches to ensure that our data and information is available to those who wish to access it
- **Understanding**

⁵ Open Data Definition held within the Open Data White Paper: June 2012
http://data.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Open_data_White_Paper.pdf#page=9

⁶ Open Government License version 2: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/2/>

⁷ By Published we mean that the full dataset is available in electronic form. Publishing of metadata to data.gov.uk would normally link to the data itself or how it can be accessed.

- when developing what we do next we will prioritise with the community⁸
- we will work to actively encourage engagement in our open data processes and improve the way that we act on feedback

- **Respectful**

- we will ensure that we understand the data and information we hold
- we will understand what we own and where we have obligations to others, such as confidentiality and privacy
- we will respect the value of third parties intellectual property rights that is used to create our data and information
- we will give users notice if Defra intends to stop producing or substantially change a dataset that has been provided as a service
- We will treat all data users equally
 - for example: if data is released to one user under an open licence such as in response to a freedom of information (FOI) or environmental information regulations (EIR) request, the data holder will make sure that the dataset is listed on data.gov.uk under the same terms
 - we will refine our processes where appropriate and publish the detail of the approach that we take in treating all users equally

The Defra Networks use of the strategy will be championed by the *Defra Transparency Panel* and a structured *Open Data Pipeline process* will be developed and implemented.

The Defra Network is committed to transparency and will work on the basis that open data is the default position for all of Defra.

However, we recognise that not all data and information are appropriate to be open, in a small number of datasets there are specific cases where there are specific factors that have to be closely considered before a decision can be taken on data sharing. For example where:

- a dataset has been created from 3rd party intellectual property
- we have obligations to a 3rd party such as confidentiality or privacy
- there is a risk to the public of data being misused
- there is a risk to Defra Network members in delivering their public task from the data being misused

These 'barriers' would be considered on a case by case basis following a risk analysis. Even where they present a barrier it does not necessarily mean that they will prevent publication as open data.

Where appropriate we will work with partners across government to develop and use common approaches to Safe Havens⁹ such as continued collaboration with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to enable limited additional sharing of data in a controlled and safe manner for limited required purposes such as research.

⁸ By Community we mean data users, partner organisations and anyone interested in our data

⁹ Safe Havens are an approach where data can be used for research purposes in a restricted environment where it would normally not be possible to use (for data protection or security reasons).

Progress against the June 2012 Defra Open Data Strategy

Defra has established a Defra Network Transparency Panel responsible for driving up data quality and transparency across the Defra Network. The Panel is formed of senior representation at Chief Executive or Chief Operating Officer level and is chaired by a Director General. Mirroring the Transparency Panel a network of Open Data Practitioners has been established representing the needs of the Network at the day to day level. The Panel and the Practitioners will continue in their role to implement Defra's refreshed Open Data Strategy and to drive publication of data and information from the Defra network. Membership of both will be reconsidered to cater to the wider Defra Network defined in this document.

Progress on the commitments outlined in the strategy published in June 2012 is available as part of the Cabinet Office's quarterly Written Ministerial Statements¹⁰ on data.gov.uk.

¹⁰ <http://data.gov.uk/library/transparency-and-open-data-written-ministerial-statement-for-quarter-4-fy-201213>

Defra Transparency Panel

Defra's Transparency Panel was established in the June 2012 Defra Open Data Strategy, The panel is in place to provide strategic leadership, challenge and championing of the open data principles within Defra.

The panel supports the delivery of the transparency agenda in Defra and oversees the implementation of Defra's Open Data Strategy. It also acts to drive publication of data and information from the Defra Network in line with the government policy on increased transparency.

The Transparency Panel brings together different interests from the key organisations across the Defra Network with supporting external membership. It provides challenge, influence and advice in order to:

Ensure that data releases and published information from across the Defra Network support achievement of the six main benefits of transparency (below). The Transparency Panel is responsible for delivery against each of the listed benefits, the measure of which will be defined according to the individual Defra organisation.

- holding government and public services to account
- informing choice of public services
- increasing public service productivity
- improving public service outcomes
- supporting social growth
- supporting economic growth

The Terms of Reference for the Defra Transparency Panel and membership are published on data.gov.uk¹¹ and the overarching vision of the panel that this strategy works towards achieving is also published on data.gov.uk¹².

¹¹ Terms of Reference and Membership of the Defra Transparency Panel: <http://data.gov.uk/dataset/defra-transparency-panel>

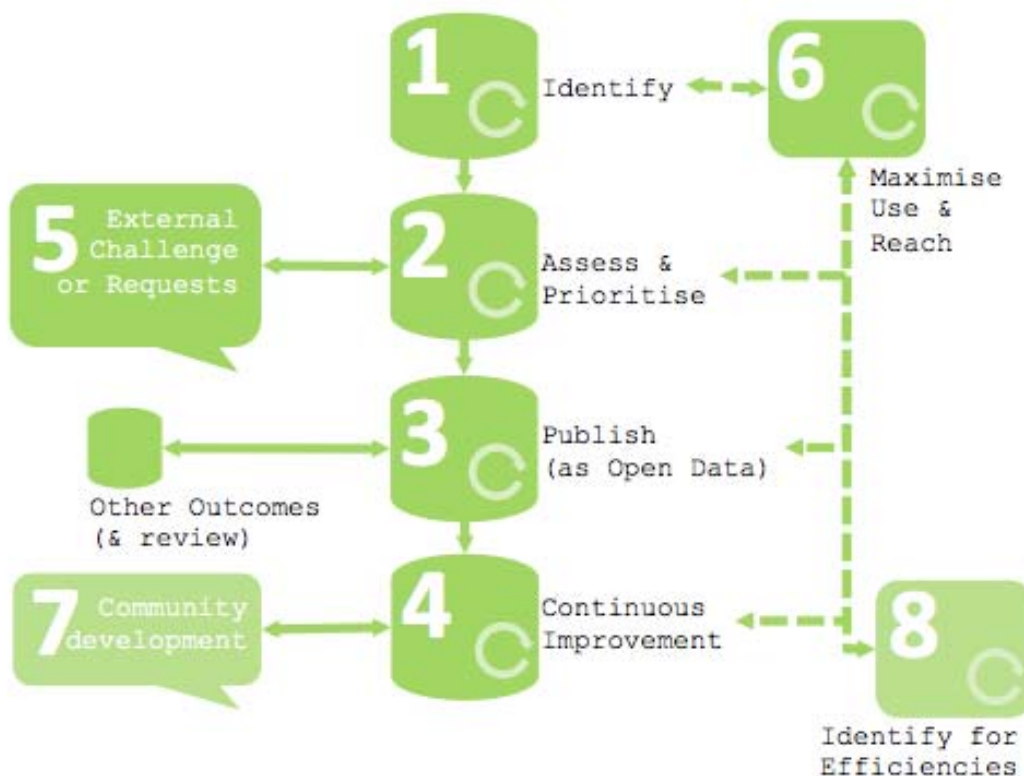
¹² Vision statement of the Defra Transparency Panel: <http://data.gov.uk/dataset/defra-transparency-panel>

The Defra Open Data Pipeline

As highlighted in the strategy Defra will embed open data and transparency into the way that we work. To do this we will build a process that embeds the principle of open data by default with a focus on transparency that will give a clear understanding of what data we have, what is available and what you are able to do with it. We will call this the Defra Open Data Pipeline.

The pipeline is focused on describing the way that Defra will systematically and routinely publish descriptions of the data that we hold; prioritise data for release as open data; and if data can't be released as open data, alternatives will be identified. In that case Defra will be transparent about the reasons for this. Defra will publish quickly and will continually improve data quality and the data services that it provides using a prioritisation process that will be developed. Defra will maximise the use and reach of its data within the context of improving the public services that it delivers while encouraging and supporting wider use of that same data to increase democratic accountability and to support economic and social growth.

Overview of the Defra Open Data Pipeline



Step 1: Identify

The first step is identification and assessment of data held by Defra. This follows the broader government National Information Infrastructure (NII) Guidance¹³

- Defra will develop and publish a business as usual process to put in place mechanisms to ensure that:
 - there is continual review of the data held
 - Defra publishes or updates the Data Inventory holdings on data.gov.uk
 - staff are trained and able to undertake these activities
- We will introduce mechanisms for external challenge of the completeness and accuracy of the inventory. We understand that we may have missed information and will welcome and will respond to direct feedback
- We will look to improve over time what is listed, including the readability of descriptions and the datasets currently listed on data.gov.uk
- Each organisation will put in place a formal due diligence process to make sure that we understand what data we can share and where we can share it at the identify stage
 - This will include systematic checks on personal privacy, third party Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and licence restrictions, legal confidentiality, commercial confidentiality and national security to provide assurance that decisions on what data can or cannot be made available are clear
- As we develop and learn from the experience we will build in the identification of previously hidden data such as the Connective Reference Data (see below for further explanation)
- Awareness will be raised across Defra to embed the identification steps into the design process of projects including the acquisition of data that does not impede future use
- Each organisation will regularly review its FOI and EIR requests against the data inventory to determine if new data should be listed
- Where projects need to use data which restricts further or onward use this will be clearly explained and communicated
- We will identify if the code of practice for official statistics applies to any data or the data feed into data where it applies

¹³ National Information Infrastructure (NII) Guidance to departments: <http://data.gov.uk/library/guidance-to-departments-on-developing-the-uk-national-information-infrastructure-nii>

Step 2: Assess and prioritise

The Assess and Prioritise phase is about identifying what should be published as open data in a systematic way that identifies priorities to help reduce the resource implications and provide some focus of what to publish first. It should identify both what is a priority to publish as open data and also what can be published in other ways.

Defra will assess data listed on our inventories for prioritisation and release as open data as follows:

- Defra will assess and prioritise data with both internal and external challenge (see step 5 for further detail). Such challenge will highlight where there is a case for a dataset to be made open to potentially support:
 - Legal obligations
 - Defra Ministerial priorities
 - Internal business priorities
 - Better environmental outcomes
 - Economic growth
 - Social growth
 - Effective public services including connective reference data
- Defra and Defra Network organisations will review these challenges alongside their own prioritisation and publish their challenge proposal responses. These will bear in mind internal aspects, resource impacts and the due diligence checks
- The published responses (such as “we will publish this data as open within 6 months” or “we are unable to publish the data”) will gather feedback that will be reviewed by the Defra Transparency Panel
- The Defra part of the NII Inventory will be updated regularly and commitments made to publish
- In some cases a business case will be developed to secure the acquisition of resources to enable publication
- The Transparency Panel will provide oversight
- The Transparency Panel will be provided with quarterly summaries of the requests and user comment on the datasets we publish or the inventory of data held
- The Transparency Panel will consider recommendations from Defra and provide assurance that the open data ambition is being maintained
- Each Defra organisation will regularly review its FOI and EIR requests against the data inventory to determine if regular requests for the same data can be prioritised for release (as open data)
- Information Asset Owners ¹⁴would be identified at this stage

The open data approach does not circumvent Defra’s approach to Freedom of Information (FOI) Act and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests.

¹⁴ The role of an Information Asset Owner: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/role-of-the-iao.pdf>

- We will undertake a review of our processes to assure that the FOI/EIR and open data approaches complement each other
 - Although it is possible to interpret the new FOIA dataset provisions as affecting the disclosure of environmental datasets, the EIRs already adequately cover the reactive and proactive publication of environmental datasets. Where re-use of environmental datasets is concerned, ROPSI and copyright legislation continue to apply as before
 - We will we will as a matter of good practice, release data in an open and re-usable form so far as reasonably practicable

In addition, Defra will prioritise datasets that fulfil the criteria to be included on the National Information Infrastructure (NII) with the default position for these being open data.

- Defra will take on board user feedback and work across government in making the final decision on any inclusion to the NII
- Defra will prioritise NII datasets for the Continuous Improvement Activities

Step 3: Publish

The Publish phase is about releasing open data quickly and identifying steps for improving that data in the future. When we cannot release data as open data for reasons such as security, personal data protection or other reasons Defra organisations will publish those reasons and, where appropriate, put in place measures to reduce or mitigate barriers in the future.

We will publish data as prioritised following a ‘publish and don’t forget’ principle as follows:

- We will publish data and as appropriate update and review the metadata records published
- We will publish data quickly as it is, using the minimum viable format approach¹⁵ and, where appropriate, follow up quickly with a prioritised plan to improve the quality of the data and/or the way that it is made available (for example the format)
- We will take feedback on board at all stages and respond setting out what we will do in response
- For data that cannot at this stage be published as open data we will look at alternative options
 - For example this could include: alternative licensing or the use of a safe haven approach
- We will publish our reasoning and publish a review cycle. We will state what would need to change for the data to be published as open data
- We will identify the barriers to publishing and, where practicable, put in place a process for their removal or reduction

¹⁵ Minimum Viable Format means that we would publish in whatever form we have the data as long as that is sensible or possible. The approach is aimed to get data out and used first and to then improve later.

Step 4: Continuous improvement

Continuous Improvement follows the 'publish and don't forget' principle. We recognise that to maximise the use of our data and to provide data that can underpin the information economy we need to maintain and improve that data. This may not be appropriate for all data and would be prioritised by users and available resources.

We will build a principle of continual improvement to provide data as a public service as follows:

- Establish a cycle of improving the quality of the data and access to the data following for example the ODI open data certificate publishing principles¹⁶
- We will pilot an approach of gaining Open Data Certification through a representative selection of Defra data
- We will agree these principles with the Defra Transparency Panel and publish them
- We will prioritise data that needs improvement (quality or access) and publish a roadmap
- Not all data will be enhanced but improvement will be prioritised
- Data with no planned further updates will be clearly identified as such
- We will take, act on and respond to feedback at all stages
- We will work with other departments and other parts of the public sector to share approaches and platforms
- We recognise in publishing that there are risks and we will look to reduce these by describing the context of the data, flagging known issues and being open about known inappropriate use
- We will undertake mapping of our data flows for prioritised data so that we understand how our data interacts and is used within Defra organisations, to better understand risks associated with publishing data and how it is used
- We will work with others to establish common practice and look to build our own public services upon the same data services that we provide to others
- We will work to provide data in common open standards
 - We will follow recommendations of the Standards Board¹⁷
 - We will champion and sponsor standards that makes sense for Defra to champion
 - We will support INSPIRE standards¹⁸ for spatial data alongside other open standards and provide guidance on these in the context of UK standards

¹⁶ The Open Data Institute (ODI) Open Data Certificate: <https://certificates.theodi.org/>

¹⁷ the Standards Hub: <http://standards.data.gov.uk/>

¹⁸ The EU INSPIRE Directive was incorporated into UK law in 2009 and sets a timetable for public authorities to publish spatial data held as part of their public task. <http://data.gov.uk/location/>

- We will support the INSPIRE approach to developing and applying standards to UK specific circumstances
- We will work to identify common good practice (see examples below)
- We will work to build data and data services that people need and can depend upon
- We will work towards a data service commitment for priority data and work with users to help identify those priorities
- We will make clear what data and documentation is available
- We will work to improve how we describe our data and improve its effectiveness through these descriptions
- We will work to reduce any duplication of published data and make clear versions of our data
- We will work with partners to develop common approaches to identifying and highlighting any know data quality issues or aspects where data has issues in certain aspects of use. We will do this through easy access routes working with data.gov.uk
- We will work including with others to build public digital services upon the same data services that we provide for wider use
- We will work towards a commitment to give users notice if Defra intends to stop producing (or make substantial changes to a dataset that has in the past been regularly updated)
 - In this we will consider establishing a customer charter that data would be published within

Examples of potential improvements to Defra’s data services:

<p>Broad data type: Spatial Example improvement of access: 1. Basic (shapefile, CSV with NGRs) 2. INSPIRE Services 3. Improved access to wider web community (add GeoJSON, KML) 4. Data Services with multiple data formats, api functionality and cross-referenced data</p>
<p>Broad data type: Code Lists & Connective Reference Data Example improvement of access: 1. Basic (xls, csv) 2. Through Registry Service/Data Dictionary concepts 3. Explicitly referenced from other data</p>
<p>Broad data type: Other Data Example improvement of access: 1. Basic (xls, csv) 2. Linked Data 3. Linked data through tools that enable delivery of multiple data formats and api functionality</p>
<p>Also to note: Data as One Off vs Data as a regularly updated Service Data as Static vs Data in Real Time</p>

Step 5: External challenge or request

We recognise that external challenge is an important aspect of the National Information Infrastructure and the broader open data policy. This aids the identification, prioritisation, improvement and use of data.

- We will take feedback on our data and use that to help us make decisions about the future direction
- We will for all data we publish provide contact information on who can be contacted for more details and work with our contact centres to improve the routing of requests
- We will highlight how we get public challenges in from data.gov.uk and through other channels
- We will publish how we will route those internally

We will be developing this section in collaboration and discussion with the Cabinet Office Transparency Team and the Open Data User Group (ODUG). We do, however, welcome comment and suggestion from the user community.

Step 6: Maximise use and reach

Maximising the availability of our data is a key driver. By maximising the availability, we in turn maximise the possible influence that it has, by more and more people making decisions and forming opinions using it, by extending the influence as far as we can we empower others to deliver our policy outcomes for us by making the right decisions.

This can be achieved both directly by us providing data and information to end users or indirectly by someone else for example incorporating our data into their environmental model, or product which is then provided to a targeted audience helping them or others take a decision.

We will work to extend the reach of our data/information/evidence by developing a programme of engagement with a wide range of users of Defra's data and develop an action plan.

We will build on the principle of maximising the use of our information.

Open Data forms a key part of this. To further this:

- We will support the BIS initiatives in building an information economy
- We will actively work with others to use our data
- We will actively demonstrate examples of use
- We will work through challenges and competitions to foster broader understanding of our data
- We recognise that skills and understanding of data, data management and data analytics are crucial. We will work with others to understand the skills needed and help develop them for the short and longer term
- We will work with the research community and data science challenge communities to nurture the use of Defra data and demonstrate innovative use
- We will encourage the development of the market for power users who can work with incomplete data and convert this into something more useful for general users
- We will continue to review our published data catalogue to identify opportunities for improving the usefulness of the data and the inclusion of additional context, attribution and services
- We will review our approaches as we implement aspects of the strategy and feedback where we have
- We will develop case studies and clear examples of the benefits of this strategy with the help of users
- We intend to identify a number of Defra Policy themes where we can highlight the work that we are doing and the under-pinning data. We will work across Defra to identify these themes and to build case studies of the broader aspects of both data access and use. In this we will also describe the other initiatives that are being undertaken where open data plays a role

Example of Defra Policy theme where a broader data approach is being taken:

Bringing farming data together with related information on areas including consumer preferences, trends and climate change has the potential to generate even greater business benefit. It can provide the evidence to define, understand intensification in a sustainable way in the right place. Defra already makes its research and statistical data available to researchers and analysts, including through the Demonstration Test Catchments (<http://www.lwec.org.uk/activities/demonstration-test-catchments>) and UK Greenhouse Gas Research Platform (<http://www.ghgplatform.org.uk>) using a co-ordinated data archiving centre in Cumbria and through the Genetic Improvement Networks.

We know that the availability of activity data will be further enhanced through the development of the Sustainable Intensification Research and Development platform. We are also working with the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board on a resource use efficiency programme, which will be collating productivity and environmental data and a calculator tool to assess farm level performance.

The Agri-tech Strategy will provide a significant further contribution to the development and exploitation of 'big data' by establishing a Centre for Agricultural Informatics and Metrics of Sustainability (with up to £10m of capital funding) to become a global centre of excellence in this area. Plans for the centre are still at an early stage, but its activities will likely include gene sequencing to identify favourable traits and the use of 'big data' from agricultural activity and throughout the supply chain to drive innovation in agricultural production.

There is huge potential in promoting sustainable agricultural systems through accessing and processing both public and privately held farm data to produce layered maps combining farm type, soil type, topography, air and water quality indicators as well as greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity indicators to optimise agricultural production and ecosystem service delivery at farm and landscape scales.

We will use initiatives like these to demonstrate open data benefits and deliver the maximum use of our data through achieving the policy outcomes.

Step 7: Community development

- Defra will work collectively to maximise the use and utility of its data within government, industry and academia. We will work in partnership with Research Councils and other government departments in support of strong data standards and evidence-based policy, while encouraging partnerships with industry and wider academia to widen the use of our open data for research, innovation and economic growth
- We will look to share and jointly develop datasets and standards using, for example, opportunities and benefits provided through web of data <http://www.w3.org/standards/semanticweb/> type approaches
- We will look to collaborate on codelists, definitions and other connective reference data to build a consolidated collection of core data within Defra and actionable relations with data held in other Government Departments, academia and industry in support of Defra's Evidence Strategy
- We will build on existing initiatives to further develop a shared approach to open data management and publication, and maximise efficiencies by the identification and rationalisation of duplicate data sources and the formalisation of cross-organisational expert groups working to improve both subject domain and data-centric aspects of data management
- We will work with the user community to identify benchmark datasets that can underpin innovative developments through data in key policy areas
- Teams within the Defra Network will be encouraged to maximise efficiencies and consistency between data owners and systems. This will be done with an emphasis on technical and subject expertise rather than organisational associations, so that internal teams can provide consolidated and standardised shared services to the network and beyond
- We will actively participate in special interest groups external to the Defra network, and encourage collaboration with industry and academia to improve and develop Defra's open data interests and expose core expertise and understanding from beyond the Defra network
 - For example we work with external groups that include the European Commission and European Environment Agency (EEA), NERC and programmes such as LWEC and more broadly with industry and industry groups. We also work with public sector groups such as the UK Transparency Board, Open Data User Group (ODUG), the INSPIRE Compliance Board and the UK Government Linked Data Working Group (UKGovLD)

We will maintain and seek to improve existing processes for data requests from the public and non-government organisations through data.gov.uk, FOI and EIRs.

Step 8: Identifying data for Defra efficiencies

- In prioritising open data, we will actively look to identify opportunities for efficiencies within Defra. This will be done through the rationalisation of data assets and collaboration around data management, publication and standards development
- We will work to identify common data themes and opportunities for system rationalisation. We will look to join up our data with the use of common definitions, terms and reference data to create a more integrated data infrastructure
- We will look to identify data assets that contain concepts that are commonly referenced by many other datasets and publish these artifacts openly as data in their own right
 - For example these could include: code lists, vocabularies, definitions of terms and identifiers for major entities generally with vital operational, scientific or policy importance
- A high priority of the National Information Infrastructure (NII) is that of Connective Reference Data.¹⁹ We will identify such data, and work to make these available through the use of persistent resolvable identifiers²⁰, and access through a demonstrator linked data code-list registry on environment.data.gov.uk both directly and through an API (Application Programming Interface). We will demonstrate this approach in a way that also provides access through other commonly used open formats and build upon the lessons that we learn for longer-term service delivery
- We will continue to contribute to initiatives using open source based tools that help the development and management of INSPIRE, open data, open linked data and connective reference data, while supporting the use of open data standards to maximise reuse and the potential for system and data migration (reduced lock-in)

¹⁹ Connective Reference Data is being defined by the UK Government Linked Data Working Group (<http://data.gov.uk>) but in summary is the data that best enables connections to other data. For example commonly used code lists and core geographies.

²⁰ Persistent Resolvable Identifiers: <http://standards.data.gov.uk/challenge/persistent-resolvable-identifiers>

Priority datasets to be published

The NII Inventory on data.gov.uk will hold the current commitments both to publish a dataset as open data and the date for its release that have been committed.

The list of specific commitments for release will be summarised in a spreadsheet (csv) alongside this document. Commitments beyond those highlighted in the Open Government Partnership Summit (31st October 2013) will be included. This list will be published shortly.

Annex I – Access to information

How do I find what is available

Our published and unpublished data can be found at:

http://data.gov.uk/data/search?parent_publishers=department-for-environment-food-and-rural-affairs

Linked data and Connective Reference Data published by Defra: Will also be available at <http://environment.data.gov.uk>

Who do I ask to release data

- We will work across Defra to describe how the data release process works for each organisation. We can route requests from the central contact point: transparency@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- These requests will be tracked to assure a speedy response
- We will work with data.gov.uk to improve the request process
- Similarly we will look to improve the descriptions of how we deal with FOI / EIR requests (and highlight any differences with any specific Defra organisations)

Annex II – The Defra Network

Department

- [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#)

Non-ministerial department

- [The Water Services Regulation Authority \(Ofwat\)](#)
- [Forestry Commission](#)

Executive agency

- [Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency](#)
- [Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science](#)
- [The Food and Environment Research Agency](#)
- [Rural Payments Agency](#)
- [Veterinary Medicines Directorate](#)

Executive non-departmental public body

- [Marine Management Organisation §](#)
- [Consumer Council for Water](#)
- [Environment Agency §](#)
- [Gangmasters Licensing Authority](#)
- [Joint Nature Conservation Committee §](#)
- [Natural England §](#)
- [Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board](#)
- [Sea Fish Industry Authority](#)
- [Agricultural Wages Committee](#)
- [National Forest Company](#)
- [Royal Botanic Gardens Kew §](#)

Advisory non-departmental public body

- [Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment](#)
- [Science Advisory Council](#)
- [Independent Agricultural Appeals Panel](#)
- [Advisory Committee on Pesticides](#)
- [Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committees \(x16\)](#)
- [Veterinary Products Committee](#)

Tribunal non-departmental public body

- [Plant Varieties and Seeds Tribunal](#)

Other

- [Covent Garden Market Authority](#)
- [Broads Authority](#)
- [Dartmoor National Park Authority](#)
- [Exmoor National Park Authority](#)
- [Lake District National Park Authority](#)
- [New Forest National Park Authority](#)
- [North York Moors National Park Authority](#)
- [Drinking Water Inspectorate](#)
- [Forest Research](#)
- [Northumberland National Park Authority](#)
- [Peak District National Park Authority](#)
- [South Downs National Park Authority](#)
- [Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority](#)

Key: Non Crown Body = §

Also

[The Canal and River Trust](#) still has some data published under the Defra banner on data.gov.uk. The Canal and River Trust is the new charity entrusted with the care of 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales formed primarily from British Waterways (a previous Defra non-departmental public body)

Annex III – Summary of commitments

This annex highlights specific highlighted commitments that will be implemented through the strategy.

Section in Strategy	Commitment description	Category	Notes on action
1 Step 5: External Challenge or Request	For all the data published by the Defra Network details of how to find more information about the datasets will be published on data.gov.uk alongside the description information for the data. The routing of requests through the Defra Network contact centres will be improved to ensure these are dealt with by the most appropriate department	Contacting Defra	In place by March 2014
2 Who do I ask to release data?	We will publish a description of how we deal with requests for datasets to be released, including how we deal with FOI / EIR requests (and we will highlight any differences with any specific Defra Organisations)	Contacting Defra	In place during Quarter 4 2013/14
3 Step 2: Assess & Prioritise	We will prioritise our data that needs to be put through a process of improvement (either in terms of access, service or quality). We will do this in collaboration with users and publish any roadmaps.	Prioritisation	Initial action during Quarter 4 2013/14, updated quarterly
4 Step 2: Assess & Prioritise	We will update the Defra specific section of the NII Inventory on a regular (at minimum quarterly) basis. Datasets identified for publication as open data will be highlighted along with the planned publication date.	What we have	In place by October 2013, updated quarterly
5 Step 3: Publish	If data cannot be (currently) made available as open data we will publish our reasoning and publish a review cycle. We will state what would need to change for the data to be published as open data.	Reasoning	In place by May 2014

6	Step 3: Publish	For data that cannot at this stage be published as Open Data we will look at alternative options. For example this could include: alternative licensing or the use of a safe haven approach.	Non open data sharing	We will undertake a review of this and publish recommendations by May 2014
7	Step 2: Assess & Prioritise	We will publish responses to requests to make data open (such as we will publish this data as open within 6 months or we are unable to publish the data) and we will gather feedback on these responses that will be reviewed by the Defra Transparency Panel for any final decision.	Reasoning & Transparency Panel	We will have the process for this in place by March 2014
8	Step 2: Assess & Prioritise	The Transparency Panel will be provided with quarterly summaries of the requests and user comment on the datasets we publish or the inventory of data held	Transparency Panel	In place by November 2013, updated quarterly
9	Step 4: Continuous Improvement	We will agree the data improvement principles with the Defra Transparency Panel and publish them.	Transparency Panel	In place by May 2014 after user workshops
10	Step 3: Publish	We will identify the barriers to publishing as open data and, where practicable, put in place a process for their removal or reduction	Reasoning	Ongoing but initial assessment place by March 2014
11	Step 5: External Challenge or Request	We will take feedback on our data and use that to help us make decisions about the future direction	User community	Mechanisms will be put in place during Quarter 4 2013/14
12	Step 7: Community Development	We will work with the user community to identify benchmark datasets that can underpin innovative developments through data in key policy areas	User community	We will do this continually but starting October 2013

13	Step 7: Community Development	We will actively participate in special interest groups external to the Defra network, and encourage collaboration with industry and academia to improve and develop Defra's open data interests and expose core expertise and understanding from beyond the Defra network. For example we work with external groups that include the European Commission and European Environment Agency (EEA), NERC and programmes such as LWEC and more broadly with industry and industry groups. We also work with public sector groups such as the UK Transparency Board, Open Data User Group (ODUG), the INSPIRE Compliance Board and the UK Government Linked Data Working Group (UKGovLD).	User community	We will do this continually but starting October 2013
14	Open Data User Event	We will hold a open data user centred workshop on Defra Data where we will highlight some of the data that we have, demonstrate some of the work that we are doing, take feedback and use that to inform our future priorities	User community	We will announce details during January 2014. We aim to hold the event in March/April 2014
15	Step 6: Maximise Use and Reach	We will encourage the development of the market for power users who can work with incomplete data and convert this into something more useful for general users	User community	We will undertake investigations on this and make proposals by May 2014
16	Step 6: Maximise Use and Reach	We will review our approaches as we implement aspects of the strategy and feedback where we have identified any improvements or required changes.	Feedback	Continually from October 2013
17	Step 6: Maximise Use and Reach	We will develop case studies and clear examples of the benefits of this strategy with the help of users.	User community	We will highlight these at the event March/April 2014
18	Implementation of project activities	We will publish quarterly updates on the project activities undertaken to achieve the Commitments made as part of the refreshed Open Data Strategy.	Project update	From Quarter 4 2013/14 and aligned with meetings of our Transparency Panel

19	Step 7: Community Development	We will look to collaborate on codelists, definitions and other connective reference data to build a consolidated collection of core data within Defra and actionable relations with data held in other Government Departments, academia and industry in support of Defra's Evidence Strategy.	Using data more effectively	We will pilot this approach during Quarter 4 2013/14
20	Step 8: Identifying data for Defra efficiencies	We will work to identify common data themes and opportunities for internal rationalisation. We will look to join up our data with the use of common definitions, terms and reference data to create a more integrated data infrastructure.	Using data more effectively	We will incorporate this principle into our high level data management practices during Quarter 4 2013/14 for implementation within future delivery projects
21	Step 8: Identifying data for Defra efficiencies	We will look to identify data assets that contain concepts that are commonly referenced by many other datasets and publish these artefacts openly as data in their own right. For example these could include: code lists, vocabularies, definitions of terms and identifiers for major entities generally with vital operational, scientific or policy importance. We will identify such data, and work to make these available through the use of persistent resolvable identifiers, and access through a demonstrator code-list data dictionary on environment.data.gov.uk	Using data more effectively	We will pilot this approach during Quarter 4 2013/14
22	Transparency Panel	We will review the membership of the Defra Transparency Panel and identify if any additional members are required to support implementation of this strategy. We will also review our Transparency Practitioners group (that aids and coordinates internal implementation of these activities) in light of this strategy and any changes to the Transparency panel	Transparency Panel and Open Data Strategy Implementation	We will review membership by February 2014