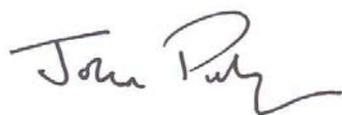


## **Royal Statistical Society response to the Independent Report on an Open National Address Gazetteer**

1. The Royal Statistical Society (RSS) is both a learned society for statistics and a professional body for statisticians. It was founded in 1834 as the Statistical Society of London and became the Royal Statistical Society by Royal Charter in 1887. Today, the Society has more than 6000 members around the world. The RSS is active in a wide range of areas both directly and indirectly relevant to the study and application of statistics.
2. A national address register is one of the key components in an effective national statistical infrastructure. Statistical units, whether it be people, businesses or housing stock, are essentially linked to their geographical location.
3. For a considerable time now the Society has expressed concern about the non-availability of a single, well maintained and publicly available national address register. Repeatedly we have made our views clear regarding the inefficiency of the substantial work which has been undertaken to make ad hoc versions of such a register available as an enabler to deliver critical outputs. The best example of such effort is the work by the Office for National Statistics, which had to create a national address register for the 2011 Census, at a substantial cost and effort. This work is complex in terms of organisational boundaries and in terms of commercial charging mechanisms by organisations such as the Ordnance Survey or Royal Mail.
4. We fully agree with the case, made by the Open Data User Group (ODUG), to produce and release a free national address database. Whilst we recognise substantial work would be involved to manage the open availability of such a database, it is clear the effort to make this data available would benefit a wide a number of agencies and deliver significant economic value.
5. Finally, we fully support the Conclusions and Proposed Actions set out in the Independent Report on an Open National Address Gazetteer, calling for a number of immediate and medium term actions. In particular, we are supportive of the recommendation to ensure an open address policy is created under a public sector Senior Responsible Owner, and extensive user consultation arrangements are in place to ensure the fitness for purpose of such a policy and the implementation of it.



John Pullinger  
President of the Royal Statistical Society

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