

Date

Wednesday 18 July 2007

Title of session

Workshop 3 - Archiving Geospatial Data for Long-term Preservation

Name of presenter/chair

Chair: Adrian Brown, Head of Digital Preservation, The National Archives, UK

Presenter: Humphrey Southall, Director, Great Britain Historical GIS Project, University of Portsmouth, UK.

Rapporteurs

Nicholas Hutchings, Defence Geographic Centre and Jenny Harding, Ordnance Survey

Presentation title: Putting the past in its place: Why we need historic geo-reference data, and how mapping agencies can help.

The paper dealt not with the mechanics or policies of archiving geospatial data, but rather with examples of why such data is of value to researchers.

Four non-UK examples were briefly mentioned; for the USA, Germany, Belgium and China. The author (Director, Great Britain Historical GIS) then went on to describe three studies with which he has been involved. The studies are supported by three distinct funding bodies.

The first study (supported by the UK Economic and Social Research Council) looked at changing health patterns from the 1930s onwards. The second study (supported by the Environment Agency) looked at environmental change and more specifically land use change. The third study is the 'Vision of Britain' supported by the National Lottery.

A recurring theme was the use of maps etc. which show old boundaries; in particular low-level boundaries such as parishes which changed considerably during the twentieth century. These are poorly attested in existing GIS datasets. They are adequately shown in 'out-of-date' maps from the early twentieth century; maps that are in a transitional copyright status and cannot be regarded as historic in the traditional sense.

Questions	Answers