

# UK Government releases data through new website

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According to the press release, “All of the data is non-personal and in a format that can be reused by any individual or business to create innovative new software tools, such as applications about house prices, local amenities and services, or access to local hospitals.”

Read the full [press release](#), including quotes from Stephen Timms MP, Sir Tim Berners Lee and Professor Nigel Shadbolt, who will be speaking at the Locus event this evening.

And of course the website is here: <http://www.data.gov.uk/>

Data sets include information on crime, health, education, property prices, travel, the environment, agriculture, etc. It’s time-consuming, but fascinating, to browse through the list to see types of data that are being collected, and are now available for use. The plan is for the site to continue to add data from government departments each month.

In conjunction with the launch of data.gov.uk, the UK’s Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI), part of the National Archives, has drafted a new set of terms and conditions for the site that are “interoperable with any Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Licence.” The new model will replace the existing Click-Use Licence; OPSI expects to launch the new terms in May 2010.

The Guardian has an interesting article on how data.gov.uk came to be; Professor Shadbolt and Sir Tim Berners-Lee’s manifesto for government data; and an interview with both on the announcement and thinking behind the release of the data. These can be found here:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2010/jan/21/how-official-data-freed>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/jan/21/timbernerslee-government-data>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/video/2010/jan/21/uk-national-data-website-launched>

And if you’ve never seen Tim Berners-Lee’s TED talk on the subject of public data provision, where he asks the audience to join him in calling, loudly, for “Raw Data Now!”, it can be found here:

[http://www.ted.com/talks/tim\\_berniers\\_lee\\_on\\_the\\_next\\_web.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/tim_berniers_lee_on_the_next_web.html)

Locus is very pleased by the announcement of the data.gov.uk website, and the release of so many government datasets. Of course, we, like many other parties, still believe that for this data to fulfill its potential, government must also find a way to make Ordnance Survey map data (raw data, in particular) and the postcode database available, without barriers. The data.gov.uk site is, however, a very good first step.