

New support to grow Scottish geospatial sector

The UK Government Geospatial Commission, working with Scottish Enterprise and the Scottish Government, is helping to establish the new Scottish Geospatial Network Integrator, with a £200,000 joint investment.

Geospatial data, which is data linked to location, underpins our public services such as emergency planning, building our homes, protecting our environment, supporting our transport and helping our security services to keep us safe.

The Scottish Geospatial Network Integrator will enhance the use of location-based data across Scotland, including:

- Helping to build a dedicated network of geospatial organisations across Scotland
- Boosting collaboration, knowledge sharing and the profile of the Scottish sector
- Developing the supply chain and signpost to potential growth opportunities

Scotland has a healthy geospatial sector but research by Scottish Enterprise has shown that more support is needed to encourage greater cooperation in the sector.

The new project will help to unlock part of the estimated £11 billion of value to the UK's economy each year from geospatial services. The new network is also a key commitment of the UK's Geospatial Strategy that was launched in June 2020.

The Scottish Geospatial Network Integrator (SGNI) will work to:

- Build a community of businesses and organisations working on location-based data
- Raise awareness of the Scottish geospatial sector to other economic sectors, including promoting how location-based data can benefit other sectors, such as tourism, food, drink and agriculture
- Signpost geospatial companies to support and economic growth opportunities
- Further develop the Scottish geospatial supply chain by identifying and bringing organisations together who can help develop geospatial technologies

The SGNI will be run by the business Optimat.

Thalia Baldwin, Geospatial Commission Director said:

Realising the UK's national geospatial strategy requires collective

effort, connecting policy, data, people and systems and today's announcement demonstrates how we can work on shared goals with both Scottish Enterprise and the Scottish Government to grow Scotland's geospatial and wider data community.

Ian Blewett, Head of Digital Economy at Scottish Enterprise added:

Location data is used across society: from governments taking infrastructure decisions; shipping companies planning logistics; to public health. The recent use of data around Covid 19 tracking is bringing the value of geospatial data into sharp focus too.

The Network Integrator project will bring together businesses, public sector and academia to create opportunities for innovation to benefit not only the economy but also society, with data as an intrinsic part of efficient and impactful decision making.

Scotland is well placed due to having many sectors that depend on geospatial data as well as a strong established ecosystem. Not only that, but the development taking place in the space sector around the creation and use of Earth observation data adds to the wealth of geospatial data that continues to drive forward innovation. This excellent partnership being delivered by Optimat on behalf of the UK Geospatial Commission, the Scottish Government and Scottish Enterprise will build on this and support future growth.

Albert King, Chief Data Officer at the Scottish Government:

The Scottish Geospatial Network Integrator project is an opportunity to promote the innovation and entrepreneurship that exists within the growing geospatial and space sectors in Scotland.

The use of accurate location data is proving invaluable in the Scottish Government's fight against Coronavirus (COVID-19), exemplifying how the use of location data can help save time, money and lives.

Scotland is already seen as a thriving and innovative place to conduct geospatial business. This initiative will help drive further investment in our world-leading tech industries, which are providing high value, skilled jobs and have an important role to play in Scotland's sustainable economic recovery.

Dr Ashley Stewart, Optimat added:

We are delighted to be working with Scottish Enterprise and the wider geospatial sector in Scotland in the role of Network Integrator. Having previously undertaken an industry research into this sector to determine the appetite for, and scale and nature of, a geospatial cluster, we are looking forward to working with the key partners and integrators to clearly identify and build a cluster of innovative Scottish businesses, academics and public bodies to identify emerging opportunities in this exciting and evolving sector.

The network integrator project forms an essential part of the Scottish Geospatial Action Plan.

Background

Geospatial Commission

The Geospatial Commission was established in 2018 as an independent, expert committee responsible for setting the UK's geospatial strategy and coordinating public sector geospatial activity. Its aim is to unlock the significant economic, social and environmental opportunities offered by location data and to boost the UK's global geospatial expertise. Find out more about the [UK Geospatial Strategy](#)

Contact us: geospatialcommission@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

About Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Enterprise is Scotland's national economic development agency. We're committed to growing the Scottish economy for the benefit of all, helping create more quality jobs and a brighter future for every region.

About Optimat

Optimat is an independent research and strategy consultancy specialising in helping clients to exploit market and technology developments. We work mainly at the interface of industries, markets and technologies and now have over 30 years' experience of studies and projects for clients as diverse as SMEs and the European Commission across the whole innovation life cycle including evaluation, science/innovation policy, R&D programmes, innovation infrastructure, technology commercialisation and exploitation and knowledge transfer. At the heart of this is our specialism in engaging with leading industry players to understand requirements and opportunities for new and advanced technologies.

PM call with Prime Minister of Australia: 27 October 2020

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke with Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia.



The Prime Minister spoke to Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison this morning.

Building on the long-standing friendship and partnership between the UK and Australia, the leaders welcomed progress on a Free Trade Agreement and resolved to work at pace to secure a mutually beneficial deal.

They agreed on the importance of like-minded states working together to tackle global issues, including building open societies, strengthening democratic values and boosting free and fair trade.

The Prime Minister also stressed that we need bold action to address climate change, noting that the UK's experience demonstrates that driving economic growth and reducing emissions can go hand-in-hand.

Looking ahead to the Climate Ambition Summit on 12 December and COP26 in Glasgow next year, he emphasised the importance of setting ambitious targets to cut emissions and reach Net Zero.

They agreed to intensify the partnership between the UK and Australia on developing and scaling up green technologies.

Published 27 October 2020

Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Finland: Theresa Bubbear

Press release

Mrs Theresa Bubbear has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Finland.



Mrs Theresa Bernice Bubbear has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Finland in succession to Mr Thomas Erik Dodd. Mrs Bubbear will take up her appointment during July 2021.

Curriculum vitae

Full name: Theresa Bernice Bubbear

Married to: Alan Keith Bubbear

Children: Three daughters

Dates	Role
2016 to present	Tallinn, Her Majesty's Ambassador
2016 to 2016	Language training (Estonian)
2015 to 2016	Budapest, Chargé d'Affaires
2012 to 2015	Budapest, Deputy Head of Mission
2011 to 2012	Language training (Hungarian)
2008 to 2010	FCO, Deputy Head, HR Operations
2007 to 2008	Pretoria, Migration Officer
2004 to 2007	FCO, Guidance Editor, Internal Communications Team
2002 to 2004	FCO, Head of Policy & Projects, Human Resources Directorate
2000 to 2002	FCO, Head of Crisis Management Team, Counter Terrorism Policy Department
1996 to 2000	Helsinki, Second Secretary
1995 to 1996	Language training (Finnish)
1993 to 1995	FCO, Background brief writer, Information Department

Dates	Role
1990 to 1993	Johannesburg, Vice Consul
1987 to 1989	Moscow, Third Secretary
1985 to 1987	FCO, Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development Desk Officer, Economic Relations Department

Newsdesk

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[Derailment of a passenger train at Bognor Regis](#)

News story

Derailment of a passenger train at Bognor Regis, West Sussex, 22 October 2020.



The train following the derailment

At about 05:11 hrs on 22 October 2020, the 05:05 hrs service from Bognor Regis to Littlehampton derailed on departing from Platform 4. The train was travelling slowly at the time. There were around 15 passengers on board, all of whom evacuated via the rear portion of the train, which was still in the platform. The derailment resulted in some damage to a set of points, and no injuries.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances

surrounding this incident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will be made available on our website in the next few weeks.

Published 27 October 2020

[Largest COVID-19 antibody testing programme publishes findings on antibody response over time](#)

- Over 365,000 participants across England have taken part in the largest antibody home surveillance study for COVID-19
- Antibody response over time varies depending on a person's age and symptoms

Findings published by Imperial College London and Ipsos MORI today suggest that [our antibody response to COVID-19 reduces over time following infection](#).

Over 365,000 randomly selected adults tested themselves at home using a finger-prick test between 20 June and 28 September to check if they had antibodies against COVID-19. Over this period, the proportion of people who tested positive for COVID-19 antibodies declined by 26.5%, suggesting antibodies reduce in the weeks or months after a person is infected.

The results of all 3 rounds of antibody testing indicate the first wave of the epidemic occurred over a relatively short period in March and April, and that there was a steep decline in the proportion of people who reported having COVID-19 symptoms and who tested positive for antibodies from early April, two weeks after national lockdown.

The results suggest that people who did not show symptoms of COVID-19 are likely to lose detectable antibodies sooner than those who did show symptoms. The findings also show the loss of antibodies was slower in 18 to 24 year-olds compared to those aged 75 and over.

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

This study led by Imperial and Ipsos MORI is a critical piece of research, helping us to understand the nature of COVID-19 antibodies over time, and improve our understanding about the virus itself. We rely on this kind of important research to inform our continued response to the disease, so we can continue to take the

right action at the right time.

It is also important that everyone knows what this means for them – this study will help in our fight against the virus, but testing positive for antibodies does not mean you are immune to COVID-19.

Regardless of the result of an antibody test, everyone must continue to comply with government guidelines including social distancing, self-isolating and getting a test if you have symptoms, and always remember: hands, face, space.

Top-level findings:

- the proportion of people with COVID-19 antibodies in England fell by 26.5% between 20 June and 28 September – from 6.0% of the population having antibodies to 4.4% of the population
- while the number of people testing positive for antibodies declined gradually in the population regardless of employment type, the number of healthcare workers testing positive for antibodies didn't change over time. This may reflect higher initial exposure or boosting from repeated exposure
- there was a decline in people across all age groups, with the smallest decline at ages 18 to 24 years (-14.9%) and the largest decline in the oldest age group (-39.0%) aged 75 years and over.
- there was a decline across all regions in England
- the decline in people testing positive for antibodies was largest in those who did not report having had COVID-19 (-64.0%) compared to those who reported that they had previously tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 (-22.3%)

It remains unclear whether antibodies provide any effective level of immunity or, if such immunity exists, for how long it might last. Everyone must continue to follow social distancing rules even if they have tested positive for antibodies.

Professor Paul Elliott, Director of the REACT programme at Imperial from the School of Public Health, said:

Our study shows that over time there is reduction in the proportion of people testing positive for antibodies against the virus that causes COVID-19. It remains unclear what level of immunity antibodies provide, or for how long this immunity lasts. If someone tests positive for antibodies, they still need to follow national guidelines including social distancing measures, getting a swab test if they have symptoms and wearing face coverings where required.

Helen Ward, one of the lead authors of the antibody waning report, said:

This very large study has shown that the proportion of people with detectable antibodies is falling over time. We don't yet know whether this will leave these people at risk of reinfection with the virus that causes COVID-19, but it is essential that everyone continues to follow guidance to reduce the risk to themselves and others.

Kelly Beaver, Managing Director of Public Affairs at Ipsos MORI, said:

Over 365,000 members of the public have volunteered to take part in this at-home antibody study which involves a small finger-prick test. I'd like to thank all of those that took the time to participate in the study which provides another piece of information to help the government manage the pandemic for us all.

The REACT programme, which has been commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care, is being carried out in partnership with Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust and Ipsos MORI. It falls under pillar 4 of the government's testing programme.

Read [the report published for pre-print](#).

See an [infographic on the report](#).

The first round of testing for antibodies took place between 20 June and 13 July.

The second round of testing for antibodies took place 31 July to 13 August.

The third round of testing for antibodies took place 15 September to 28 September.