



# Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

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Michael Birtwistle  
[Michael.Birtwistle@ncvo.org.uk](mailto:Michael.Birtwistle@ncvo.org.uk)

Our Ref: TO2018/12263

Dear Mr Birtwistle,

Thank you for your correspondence of 28 August to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), regarding the Department's involvement in the development of the HM Treasury (HMT) Economic Value of Data paper. I am replying as a member of the Ministerial Support Team.

The HMT's paper on the [economic value of data](#) was developed with input from across the government, including DCMS. It marks the beginning of a wider set of conversations that the government will be holding, including DCMS's work to develop the National Data Strategy.

The National Data Strategy, announced in June 2018, will aim to unlock the power of data in the UK economy and government, while building public confidence in its use. The UK has a strong record on data and this move will build on the UK Digital Strategy, Digital Charter, Industrial Strategy and Grand Challenges to break new ground on data. DCMS is currently developing our approach, and we want to hear from a diverse range of voices from business, civil society and data users.

The UK government's position on open data has not changed. The UK leads the world in open data, and is committed to building on this and being open by default – as laid out in the [UK Digital Strategy](#).

The government's [Transformation Strategy](#) sets out some of the steps the government is taking to make better use of data, including:

- building a national data infrastructure of registers (authoritative lists that are held once across government) and ensuring that they are secured appropriately
- opening up government data where appropriate
- continuing to open up government services internally and externally through the use of APIs where appropriate
- improving data discovery tools for users both within and beyond government.

The Prime Minister recently wrote an [open letter](#) to Cabinet colleagues outlining transparency data publication principles and requirements. She highlighted the importance of the quality, reliability and accessibility of Open Data published by the government, so that it is as useful as possible to citizens, businesses, the voluntary sector and the government itself.



The HMT paper describes some of the considerations taken into account when opening up government data, and the reasons why these decisions are taken on a case-by-case basis. This does not represent any change in the government's position that data should be open by default or our commitment to opening up government data where appropriate.

While the paper is not a consultation document, HMT are collecting responses at: [datapaper@hmtreasury.gov.uk](mailto:datapaper@hmtreasury.gov.uk). They would welcome input from you and the Open Government Network, and any responses will be shared with the National Data Strategy team at DCMS.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Calum Macbeth  
**Ministerial Support Team**