

# What do we want from RICS and what is the Legacy of the Pre-digital Age?



As the RICS approaches its 150th year, we should ask whether the organisation is providing the services and opportunities which geomatics professionals need.

There is a lot of change in our world at the moment which is a bit confusing, unsettling and even scary. So it's often when we sit back and reflect a bit more about things that we sometimes see things more clearly. Next year is the 150th anniversary of the RICS and so I'd like you to think for a few minutes and ask yourself the following questions: do I get sufficient professional and business support, technical and market insight and personal development opportunities through membership? Does it make a difference?

As one of the founding disciplines of the RICS, land surveying was, now Geomatics is, a core element for the location-based industries, with digital capture and spatial reality innovations coming at us every week. The built environment, whether offshore as part of energy projects, or onshore transportation developments, relies upon the appropriate quality of spatial measurement and quality control of spatial data that is being acquired, processed and delivered. We are not the biggest group within the RICS and so, just as in the wider community, we have to campaign and promote our views and efforts so as to ensure a sustainable future. The way of the world is such that we are all under increasing pressure to streamline, be more efficient and to reduce wastage. The Geomatics Board has considered this through working with NGO's, national organizations and Standards groups to develop collaborative ventures that aim to create some Standards and guidelines without us re-inventing the wheel in isolation.

The future was back in the news again this week with the school examination results. Here in the UK the boys have, for once, done well in comparison to the girls. However, the news was that overall less school leavers were looking to go to university. One alternative being promoted was to take up an apprenticeship and outside of London the take up is increasing which is encouraging as the efforts of the RICS in developing appropriate apprenticeship pathways has been long coming and with suitable promotion should secure a stream of talent for the future.

## Intergeo

As the summer moves into autumn we again have the opportunity to get acquainted with the new technologies and services that our industry has to offer. This year the international exhibition and conference, InterGEO, is in Berlin and is scheduled for the 26-28 September. This is a great event to see the survey and mapping systems of the future that the young survey professionals will get to work with, and offers a glimpse of possible legacy systems.

## Mapping Heritage

Earlier this month I was fortunate to visit the Lake District in the north west of England and whilst hiking visited a number of trig pillars and survey markers. They already seem to me to be a relic of our traditional and fast disappearing surveying heritage and past. The pillar was no longer a bright white beacon and the brass survey marker appeared to be fortunate that it was on a preserved building. It made me wonder how much of the hard work and effort of our surveying forefathers and mapping predecessors is being left to decay, removed or lost. What is to be our legacy? A series of physical monuments and colourful paper-based mapping series has given way to digital databases with rich features and many varied classes of data that feed the Internet of Things. Maps appear much more transient now, as they are often now an interactive location based service with augmented visuals and admittedly much-improved decision-making tools. These are certainly useful but so too were the trig pillars when hiking around the hills.

So it will be interesting to see which fragments and elements of our current work activities will last the 150 years and match how long the RICS has been around developing, supporting and promoting our profession.

