



the hub of efficient e-government

# Valuebill

5th edition – April 2006

The sustainability phase of Valuebill is now well underway with London Connects working together with Brenda Soars and me.



## We will be:

- Working closely with the VOA to encourage more local authorities to realise benefits from using Valuebill;
- Supporting existing Valuebill authorities in convincing others of the simplicity of implementing Valuebill and of its benefits;
- Encouraging the use of the schemas for importing VOA files without the need for a complete data cleansing and matching exercise.

The Valuebill lead at each LA will shortly be receiving a brief survey to verify which authorities are implementing Valuebill and also to identify support requirements.

Amongst the places we have visited to present on Valuebill are Builth Wells to meet the Welsh Authorities, and Edinburgh for the Interbank Rating Forum (IBRF). Last November, Oxford City Council hosted a very successful one day workshop for all of the Oxfordshire DCs as well as the County Council, facilitated by David Hughes of the VOA, Nick Griffiths of IA for the NLPG and me. If you would like to arrange a similar event – or could persuade your suppliers to host one – please contact me at [barry@tuckwood.co.uk](mailto:barry@tuckwood.co.uk)

Barry Tuckwood, Programme Manager



Supported by Office of the Deputy Prime Minister



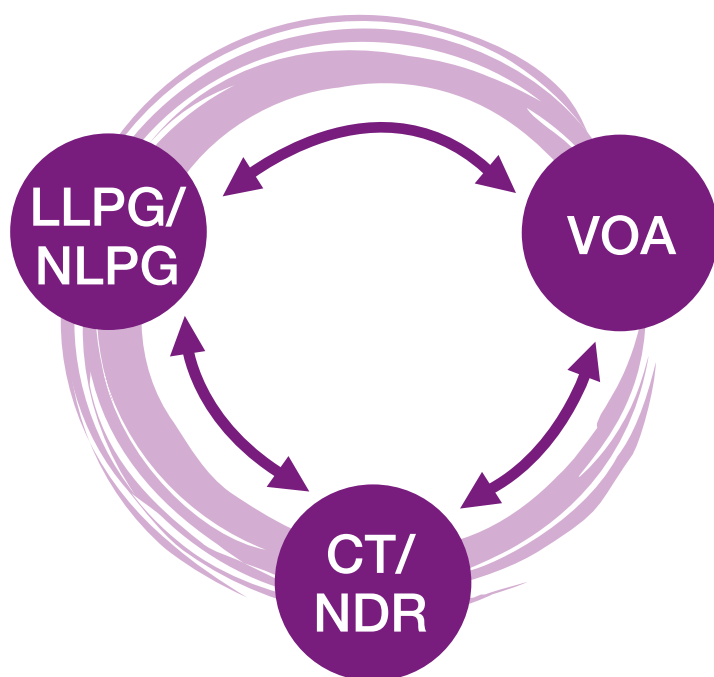
“ London Connects is pleased to have taken over sustainability of Valuebill, as we have always been advocates of the significant benefits it enables for Local Authorities. Our main roles will be in enabling maintenance of the schemas created under Valuebill and in marketing and promoting the Valuebill process. ”

Steve Pennant, Chief Executive of London Connects

# Latest News

- The VOA's new system for accepting Valuebill updates will be available from May 2006.
- Valuebill Schemas Maintenance Release – The Valuebill XML Schemas have been updated by a Maintenance Release (version 4.0). This is now available for public consultation with a view to their replacing the existing version (3.1) once approved. Full details can be found at <http://www.govtalk.gov.uk/>
- Future presentation at the Institute for Revenues Rating and Valuation Northern Region Association meeting on 28th April – The Stadium of Light, Sunderland.
- Valuebill presented at the London GI Forum meeting on 29th March

## What is Valuebill?



Valuebill establishes the electronic exchange of information between local authority billing agencies, the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), and the National Land and Property Gazetteer – improving valuation services for citizens and businesses and providing benefits to all aspects of customer-facing work for which accurate property information is crucial. It is also assisting the integration of billing authorities and VOA into the wider land-related initiatives in local and central government.

Key Valuebill products including the Starter Kit, schemata, address matching process and case studies can be downloaded from the website [www.newham.gov.uk/valuebill](http://www.newham.gov.uk/valuebill)

## reviews from

### Valuebill – a key catalyst at Oxford City Council

Phase 1 of the Valuebill project, data cleansing, took Oxford City Council (OCC) a year to complete. There were no explicit associated costs as it was incorporated into the ongoing NLPG project and the same resources were used for both.

Since April 2005, OCC has consolidated the work carried out for the Valuebill project. The Revenues database has been populated with the LLPG UPRNs with procedures established whereby the Revenues team request a UPRN every time they want to add a property to their database. The LLPG custodian receives weekly reports from the Revenues database of all addresses added, changed or deleted, from which she can quality control the data input and identify the relevant BA ref changes needed to maintain the integrity of the LLPG cross reference table.

Phase 2 will be the electronic link between the LLPG and the Revenues' systems. The issues associated with this centre on finding a mechanism by which the 'receiving' database only imports those addresses which are required, rather than all new addresses added to the LLPG. As yet, there are no criteria in the LLPG that could be used to filter out unnecessary records.

Revenues are a primary source of address change intelligence for the LLPG in OCC. For example Revenues are the first to know about 'splits and mergers' that either don't require any planning or building control approval, or that have taken place without complying with the relevant regulations.

There have been two important issues to consider:

The LLPG at OCC is embedded in the Caps Solutions Uniform system which has 150 users, who can select from the whole LLPG when registering 'cases' against an address. The presence of several 'alternative' addresses can lead to confusion and the need to consult the LLPG custodian. With some highly descriptive NDR addresses this could become an issue. Therefore OCC are considering changing to a 'master/slave' solution where each user group only sees

# around the country . . .

the addresses relevant to them.

Some consider that the NLPG should only hold addresses which appear on the official street naming and numbering register. However OCC takes the view that if a user needs an address for operational reasons, it will be included in the gazetteer using the appropriate status flags. This has also helped implement Valuebill, as it enables the Revenues department's requirements to be met.

## Benefits and Next steps:

OCC are now applying the lessons learned to similar processes to link other large address datasets to the LLPG. This ensures that every address and piece of land is incorporated into the gazetteer contributing to a growing picture of the status of all properties.

Two members of staff share responsibility for supplying UPRNs within 24 hours to any user for any purpose, eg: council tax collection, planning applications and local land charge searches. OCC now spend about one working day a week creating and providing UPRNs to the LLPG.

In every department of OCC each of the frontline staff recognises the need for accurate consistent addresses. This support of the LLPG custodian allows 'planning officers to plan' and 'revenues officers to collect'.

By engaging all staff

from the start of the process of linking to their datasets, there has been no resistance to the changes Revenues have had to make.

## Benefits for Lambeth's Benefits Transformation Project

"Using enhanced property data, having used the Valuebill process, has certainly helped the Benefits function," says Anna Wahlstrom, Project Manager, eGovernment and IT Services, London Borough of Lambeth:

"The integration of Lambeth LLPG data with our Benefits Service EDMS system (Anite) was part of our CRM/Anite integration and has now been successfully completed. It will contribute to Lambeth attaining a single record of all our customers, since it is part of the standardisation of addresses across the various back office systems and our CRM system. The CRM system is used in our Joint Service Centre (Lambeth Contact) and Lambeth Service Centre and will help us achieve excellence in the customer service provided to all customers throughout the Borough

## VO and LA Team initiative is a win-win

Following an earlier project where significant collection delays had been experienced due to lack of co-ordination at the initial stages, a local VO changed its strategy. At the development stage of a major UK City centre shopping complex, team work between the local Valuation Office and the LA led to much swifter valuation and also an enhanced information stream for the developer, to the benefit of everyone.

## NLPG and Valuebill

Data improvements are at the core of a number of the National Projects for which rollout nationally is dependent on local government commitment to the provision of high quality data to support its myriad service provision activities. Local government has contracted with its own community to supply and use definitive address data in the form of the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). Under the Mapping Services Agreement, 375 authorities in England and Wales have to be maintaining their Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPGs) with updates being copied to the NLPG hub at least monthly by October 2006. Around 250 LAs are now regularly maintaining their LLPGs and linking to the LLPG hub – 50% of which are doing this either on a weekly or a daily basis. The current status is:

|                                    |                              |                                     |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>NLPG (England &amp; Wales):</b> | 1. Linked and Updating – 242 | 2. Linked– 98                       |
|                                    | 3. Creating LLPG – 26        | 4 and 5. Planning/IEG Committed – 9 |

With the expected approval of the Valuebill Schemas to version 4, the VOA is preparing to go live with this implementation enabling reports to be received from authorities and valuations returned via the schema. The NLPG plans to progress this schema in April, when the revised version of BS7666 parts 1 and 2 are ratified.

We are pleased that considerable progress is underway towards a sustainable information infrastructure that will enable Valuebill to be implemented fully. Indeed, many other National Projects will benefit from this LLPG/NLPG work.

**Tony Black, Intelligent Addressing**

## CAPS Solutions – Using LLPG to improve revenue collection

Caps Solutions is pleased to announce the launch of the UNI-form Valuebill Connector as part of UNI-form 7.3.1d. It enables synchronization of property data between the LLPG and the Revenues department. The Connector ensures improved consistency of address information between the LLPG and Revenues department; speeds up bill creation/claim processing and enables revenues data to be displayed spatially via GIS.

For more information please visit CAPS Solutions on stand C7 at e-Gov EXPO or call 01635 565999

## ANITE: Valuebill facilitates efficiencies

Anite's Pericles Revenues and Benefits solution is used by over 40 LAs, a number of which are progressing towards or in the early stages of planning for the implementation of a fully automated and seamless exchange of information between themselves and the VOA.

Already a number of LAs are taking advantage of the Pericles address details and address XML schemas, by linking to the LLPG, using the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) and providing a more joined up service. Valuebill will increase the scope and allow for greater efficiencies in this area, whilst assisting Authorities in moving further towards the general targets within the IEG and priority outcome arenas.

In summary, Anite sees the project as facilitating opportunities for efficiencies and providing a vehicle for Authorities' to move to greater heights in their quest to reach their IEG targets and priority outcomes.

**Dave Shawley**, *Revenues Product Manager, Anite Public Sector*

## Why not host a Valuebill Event?

Tandridge DC are about to host a Valuebill event for Surrey LAs – details will be on the Valuebill website shortly, or contact Pat Porter, pporter@tandridge.gov.uk

You can host one too for LAs in your area by simply contacting Barry Tuckwood [barry@tuckwood.co.uk](mailto:barry@tuckwood.co.uk) or Brenda Soars [bjsoars@aol.com](mailto:bjsoars@aol.com)

## How to do Valuebill?

### You need:

- Software
- Facility for Updating
- LLPG
- Commitment

### THE STEPS TO VALUEBILL

#### Data matching

- Obtain data sets from NLPG including unmatched records
- Validate two lookup tables against LLPG, CT and NDR
- Review third lookup table and add appropriate unmatched
- Resolve with appropriate people inc VOA

#### Data QA and continuance

- Verify
- Enable regular updates of NLPG from LLPG
- Add UPRNs into local datasets

#### Business process change

- Create and agree business procedures for internal exchange and maintenance of property address data; and associated management controls;

#### Data transfer

- Enable internal electronic updates from LLPG to Revenues
- Enable electronic transfer between Revenues and VOA using XML

The Unique Property reference Number (UPRN) is the key as it provides a unique reference for each billable unit, whether it is an individual office in a multi-storey block, a flat or a bus shelter – all the people using this reference can be assured they're talking about the same property.

Encourage data transfer internally and externally using XML to minimise ambiguities and maximise efficiencies

contact details...

**Barry Tuckwood**  
*Programme Manager*  
[barry@tuckwood.co.uk](mailto:barry@tuckwood.co.uk)

**Brenda Soars**  
*Project Coordinator*  
[BJSoars@aol.com](mailto:BJSoars@aol.com)

[www.newham.gov.uk/valuebill](http://www.newham.gov.uk/valuebill)  
[www.londonconnects.gov.uk](http://www.londonconnects.gov.uk)  
[www.nlpg.org.uk](http://www.nlpg.org.uk)  
[www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)  
[www.localgovnp.org](http://www.localgovnp.org)