

D3 - A project to integrate open data, digital skills & democratic engagement in schools

1100: What's going on above and below us?

Vertical geographies are important to us all, without us always realising this.

This unit encourages us to look around us, and in particular to look up and down. Everyday we have technology and surveillance looking down from above: satellites / drones and remote sensing. There is also infrastructure beneath our feet, including the fibres which may carry the broadband we are using to access these resources and to complete the work that connects with our D3 resources.

Cables and ducting will also carry and provide power and other utilities. The maintenance of this network can also cause disruption to transport when work is required.

How are we monitored in daily lives?

You can find out by making a request for information.

E.g. in the UK, this is the site to use to request CCTV footage of you.

What is the method where you live?

<https://www.gov.uk/request-cctv-footage-of-yourself>



As you move around your local area, do you know whether you are on private or public land?

Who owns the land beneath your feet right now?

Who owns the land that you walk over between your school/college and home?

It may be that your parents rent the place where you live, for example.

Different legislation in different countries e.g. *allemannsretten* in Norway allows for wild camping in huge parts of the country.

<https://www.visitnorway.com/plan-your-trip/travel-tips-a-z/right-of-access/>

Activity 24

What maps can you locate to show what lies above your head?

E.g. FlightRadar24 will show you the identification of any plane or other vehicle flying over your head.

<https://www.flightradar24.com/>

What maps can you locate to show what lies beneath your feet?

E.g. Geology, Soil, Infrastructure, Underground railways etc.

One of the most famous maps of what lies beneath is Harry Beck's London Tube map, which has influenced the design of maps in other cities around the world.

Tools List

Tool to use	URL / location	How would you use it?
Who owns England	https://whoownsengland.org/ https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pO8yTeJ7316dst8Pac3gRkr9_mt5PKx1oIGOO2J5tf8/edit - Scheme of Work	This scheme of work explores land ownership and the issues surrounding the large amounts of land in private hands.
Eurostat - FRA	https://fra.europa.eu/en	European Union agency on fundamental rights
Soil Atlas of Europe	https://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/content/soil-atlas-europe	Soil Atlas

Articles

An excellent book for this topic is called 'Vertical' and is written by Stephen Graham: a geographer. It explores a range of stories which are of interest to a general reader.

We have seen in recent conflicts the 'value' of drones. They are also used for aerial surveys.

It is important that cities have public spaces and that these are protected.

<https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/thefutureofcities/space-and-the-city#the-chapter>

This includes a map of public green space per inhabitant.

<https://content.knightfrank.com/research/635/documents/en/european-cities-review-2018-5810.pdf>



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