

Northern Ireland: 1922 to date

The arrangements for Northern Ireland after 1921 followed those contemplated for the whole of Ireland by earlier Home Rule proposals: a large measure of independence whilst still within the UK, and OSNI followed this pattern in miniature, being completely independent of the parent body in finance, ministerial responsibility and organisation, whilst still relying on OSGB for much of its printing. The subsequent pattern of development had elements of both OSI and OSGB: as in the Free State, money was short and large-scale revision was fragmentary, but as in Britain there was a greater emphasis on small-scale mapping:. After a period of living on inherited map stocks, a revision of 1935-8 produced a one-inch 'Popular Edition', an attractive layer-coloured map, the publication of which was started in 1935 but only completed in 1950. It was replaced by a somewhat similar Third Series in 1960-64, which in turn was replaced by a 1:50,000 series on all-Ireland sheet lines in 1978-85, which in turn was replaced by an all-digital 'Discoverer' series in 1999-2002. Meanwhile, in 1952 the recasting of the mapping of Northern Ireland on Irish grid sheet lines (based on a standard sheet of 2400 × 1600 metres at 1:2500) began, with a 1:1250 survey of Belfast. As in Britain, remapping was a protracted business, but was completed by the 1980s, by which time digital production was being adopted. The standard scales follow a similar pattern to Britain: 1:1250 for larger urban areas, 1:2500 for cultivated rural areas, and 1:10,000 for mountain and moorland.

OSNI has been self-funding since 2006-7: in 2007-8 it had income of £11,468,000 and expenditure of £9,395,000. (This compares with running costs of over £6M and receipts of under £2M in 1993-4.) In March 2008 it became part of Land and Property Services, which also includes the Rate Collection Agency, Valuation and Lands Agency and Land Registers of Northern Ireland: thus its 'cadastral' origins continue to be reflected.