



Strategy 2026



About Us



The Council of Property Search Organisations (CoPSO) is the major trade association for the property search industry.

Members provide a broad range of property search reports including local, environmental, mining, chancel repair, drainage and water data, and undertake over 2,000,000 searches each year.

The Future

- Leading the way in data excellence and integrity for property professionals and consumers
- Championing data integrity, driving industry excellence



Foreward



I am delighted to be able to launch a new vision for CoPSO. The Executive Committee and I have worked together over the last twelve months since I joined the organisation considering how we want CoPSO to grow and support the property market and its members.

CoPSO is proud of its considerable achievements over the last 25 years from securing access to data in local authorities, lender recognition and its influence in the market. As a Trade Association it stands at a pivotal point in its influence with both HM Government and the wider industry.

CoPSO members have already invested in technology and developed processes which supports 80% of the property market. By setting industry standards and adopting the latest technologies used by its members, CoPSO doesn't just align with government priorities for transparency and efficiency – it propels the entire sector into a new era of digital transformation.

CoPSO aligns with government goals of transparency and efficiency and drives the sector towards a future-ready digital transformation. CoPSO and the Property Codes Compliance Board (PCCB) will bring significant experience to any changes in policy and are well placed to influence initiatives that are taken forward by HM Government.

This strategy sets out how we will grow as a Trade Organisation, how we will support the industry and how we will support our members in the future. It is an exciting time for CoPSO as we strengthen our community and use our experience for the benefit of consumers. I look forward to driving that forward and making it happen.

Allison Bradbury – Chair Council of Property Search Organisations



Leading the way in data excellence and integrity for property professionals and consumers



Our Focus

- Lead Trade Association
- Working with Government
- Access to Data
- Data Quality
- Innovation and Technology



Championing data
integrity, driving industry
excellence



Current Context

Founded in 2003 CoPSO was set up to provide a professional voice for property search companies producing property search reports and to elevate quality standards within the sector. Today our members produce 80% by volume of all searches produced in the market. CoPSO works on behalf of the sector to campaign for favourable operating environments and is recognised as the representative, professional voice of the sector within Government and stakeholder organisations.

CoPSO has achieved considerable success with the following achievements.

 **Market Influence:** CoPSO members produce 80% of all property searches

 **Data Access:** Secured robust access to local authority data via the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR)

 **Efficiency Gains:** Reduced search turnaround times from 16 weeks (2003) to 14 days (2025)

 **Lender Recognition:** Achieved lender approval for property searches

 **VAT Clarity:** Clarified liability for VAT on property searches

The Search Code

These achievements have been underpinned by the creation of the Search Code in 2006. The Code was developed by CoPSO to ensure quality and consistency across the property search industry.

It is overseen by the Property Codes Compliance Board (PCCB), which maintains a register of compliant firms and monitors adherence.

The Code provides the following benefits for consumers:

🛡️ Protection for buyers, sellers, estate agents, conveyancers, and lenders

🤝 Confidence in firms that follow the Code

📄 Access to redress via [The Property Ombudsman scheme \(TPOs\)](#) for unresolved complaints

In 2026 the Search Code and the PCCB celebrates twenty years of compliance within the industry. It is widely recognised as a trusted regulator by all stakeholders involved in the property transaction with data quality and consumer protection remaining at the heart of the organisation.





LEAD TRADE ORGANISATION

CoPSO provides the professional voice for companies producing property searches and drives forward quality standards within the sector. Today our members provide 80% by volume of all searches produced in the market. The current membership is 90 companies.

The CoPSO Strategy will present clear objectives and plans that will expand and deepen CoPSO's membership base.

CoPSO will maintain ongoing collaboration with industry stakeholders to ensure its members' needs and the sector's priorities are fully represented. They will lead discussions and debates on any new policy initiatives affecting the property search sector.

CoPSO holds active membership in:

- Digital Property Market Steering Group
- Home Buying and Selling Council
- Land Registry Advisory Council



STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

Strengthening ties with the Association of Independent Personal Search Agents (IPSA) and The Conveyancing Information Executive (CIE) ensures a unified sector voice and more impactful joint projects. CoPSO will lead coordinated advocacy with shared research and best-practice guidelines.

When future policies or initiatives have a significant impact on members, the Executive Committee will consult the wider membership to promote openness and trust through:

- Regular surveys and feedback sessions
- Transparent briefing documents and Q&A forums
- Encouragement of member participation in decision-making

Pooling the collective expertise of all members enhances the quality of any initiative and amplifies the sector's influence on decision makers by:

- Establishing expert working groups to tackle specific policy challenges
- Knowledge-sharing webinars and roundtables
- Joint position papers to influence market-wide changes

Actions:

1

Seek to increase total membership



2

Boost category upgrades (eg Affiliate - Associate)



3

Grow the CoPSO Partner network by onboarding new strategic stakeholders



4

Launch a member APP with content personalisation and critical data



5

Introduce a 'Member Spotlight' series to elevate success stories



6

Implement a member feedback loop via an annual survey and/or focus group



7

Launch targeted digital campaigns on LinkedIn and industry forums to raise awareness



8

Present CoPSO's value proposition at regional events and the Annual Conference



WORKING WITH HM GOVERNMENT

HM Government has released its consultation on improvements to home buying and selling.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/home-buying-and-selling-reform/home-buying-and-selling-reform#our-current-home-buying-and-selling-system-is-not-working>

CoPSO will represent its members and respond with constructive feedback, offering support where it is appropriate.

The consultation sets out a vision to overhaul the home buying and selling experience, aiming to reduce delays that currently stretch to nearly five months. The goal is to make transactions quicker, cheaper, and less prone to falling through. The Government intends to open up key property information which will ensure data can be shared between trusted professionals more easily. Currently fall throughs which impact one in three transactions cost people around £400m per year, on top of the four million working days lost by conveyancers and estate agents alone which is the equivalent to £1billion. By digitising the process and data, home buying and selling will become fit for the 21st century.

A key reason for inefficiencies in the system is that consumers and professionals alike do not have access to the right information at the right time. Significant problems which might affect a buyer's decision only emerge after their offer has been accepted. CoPSO members have invested and implemented a range of transparent digital tools to ensure consumers are provided with the relevant information for the property they are buying but this can be progressed further with changes to the entire house buying process.

Actions:

1

Advice will be provided to Government to ensure the right initiatives are being pursued which will provide meaningful impact on improving housing transactions



2

Guidance and expertise will be offered to Government so that investment decisions are realistic and affordable and being made in the right areas



3

CoPSO will support HM Land Registry with the continuing development of the LLC Register through feedback and user research. Members will support the Property Data Pilots so the benefits of new initiatives are fully explored and calculated



4

CoPSO will establish frameworks to implement delivery of Home Buying and Selling roadmap



ACCESS TO DATA

Property search organisations require timely access to data in local authorities in order to complete a CON 29 search result for customers.

Government guidance states that:

- All local authorities should respond to search requests within 10 working days and allow timely access for external search agents
- Data provision should match the production time of authorities' own searches of less than 10 days

CoPSO provides a service to its members to ensure any data access or charging problems are addressed by its Head of Local Authority Engagement and that the guidance is adhered to. This service is considered by members as the most valuable element of the CoPSO membership.

Where data access or charging for data becomes problematic, the Head of Local Authority Engagement uses a variety of methods to unlock any problems when raised by members from persuasive emails to meetings with local authorities, complaints process or local lobbying groups. Since January 2024, 47 files have been successfully closed with all issues resolved and there is now an average of 20 files open at any one time. This demonstrates the value of this service to CoPSO members.

DPMSG WORKING GROUP

However, access to data in order to complete the CON 29 is becoming more problematic with local authorities providing different levels of service and at varying costs – this is resulting in varying levels of customer experience and can cause delays to a property transaction.

The price levels and turnaround times for certain datasets is increasing. Data should be made available free of charge under EIR but it is recognised that is not sustainable for local authorities with budgetary pressures and reduced staffing levels.

A DPMSG project has been established in order to create consistency and fairness across the property search industry and local authorities so that a more efficient search service is provided to consumers. A working group of influential stakeholders has been created to collectively agree on a number of options available to ensure that property searches are delivered to customers within a reasonable timeframe and at a reasonable cost.

Any proposals and refreshed guidance may be subject to further consultation with local authorities and property search organisations. The final guidance would need to be agreed and issued to stakeholders by DPMSG as the representative body of the stakeholders involved.

Actions:

1

Continuation of role – Head of Local Authority Engagement supporting CoPSO members to provide an efficient service for the consumer



2

Provide data relating to turnaround times to Government to support initiatives for improving Home Buying and Selling



3

Success stories and case studies for members



4

Refreshed framework and guidance as a result of the DPMSG project



DATA QUALITY

The PCCB maintains a register of firms committed to operating in accordance with the Code and monitors their compliance with the Code and encourages non-subscribing search firms to sign up to the Code to promote increased consumer protection.

The benefits to consumers of choosing a firm registered with the PCCB is that the firm is committed to delivering an agreed standard of consumer service and has agreed to abide with The Property Ombudsman scheme (TPOs) that exists to provide consumers with appropriate redress in case of any unresolved complaint.

The benefits to firms of registering with the PCCB as a subscriber to the Code are that they demonstrate commitment to industry standards, best practice and consumer protection. Firms registered with the PCCB as subscribers to the Code are allowed to display the Code logo (below) to signify their commitment to the Code.

In order to reflect the constantly changing legal and business landscape the Code is regularly reviewed in consultation with stakeholders, consumer organisations and the Government.

The PCCB has been successfully serving the property search industry for 20 years in 2026.

CoPSO will explore with the PCCB where the organisation can provide additional value to the market through data quality standards and regulation. It will explore with Government where is appropriate for the PCCB to be further involved in home buying and selling.



Actions:

1

Profile of the PCCB – 20 year campaign



2

Position PCCB compliance as a hallmark of quality, trust and consumer protection



3

Additional awareness raising with lenders



4

Provide support to HMLR with LLC Live Service



INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

Delays within the housing market have broader consequences for the wider economy – inefficiencies within the process result in consumers not having access to the right information at the right time. These problems are compounded by the lack of digitalisation across the process, with many steps still reliant on manual paperwork and disconnected systems rather than efficient, transparent digital tools.

Through a number of initiatives, Government is committed to rebalancing the system allowing buyers to have comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date upfront information while harnessing technology to improve the system overall.

CoPSO is committed to supporting these initiatives and will be actively seeking member participation to test and learn from the innovation which will be rolled out across the market. CoPSO members have invested significantly in technology to enable the provision of critical data for home buyers – CoPSO will therefore share the learning with stakeholders from the tools developed by the property search sector so that wider adoption of technology can be realised.

Actions:

1

User research and benefits realisation
for Property Data Pilots



2

Support LLC Register with service
improvements



3

Future collaboration on HMLR Value
Propositions



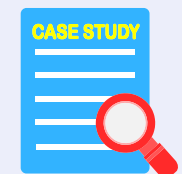
4

API Development with HMLR



5

Publish case studies to stakeholders to
share investment made by CoPSO
members



THE FUTURE

CoPSO has become an influential Trade Association with its many achievements well recognised by the industry.

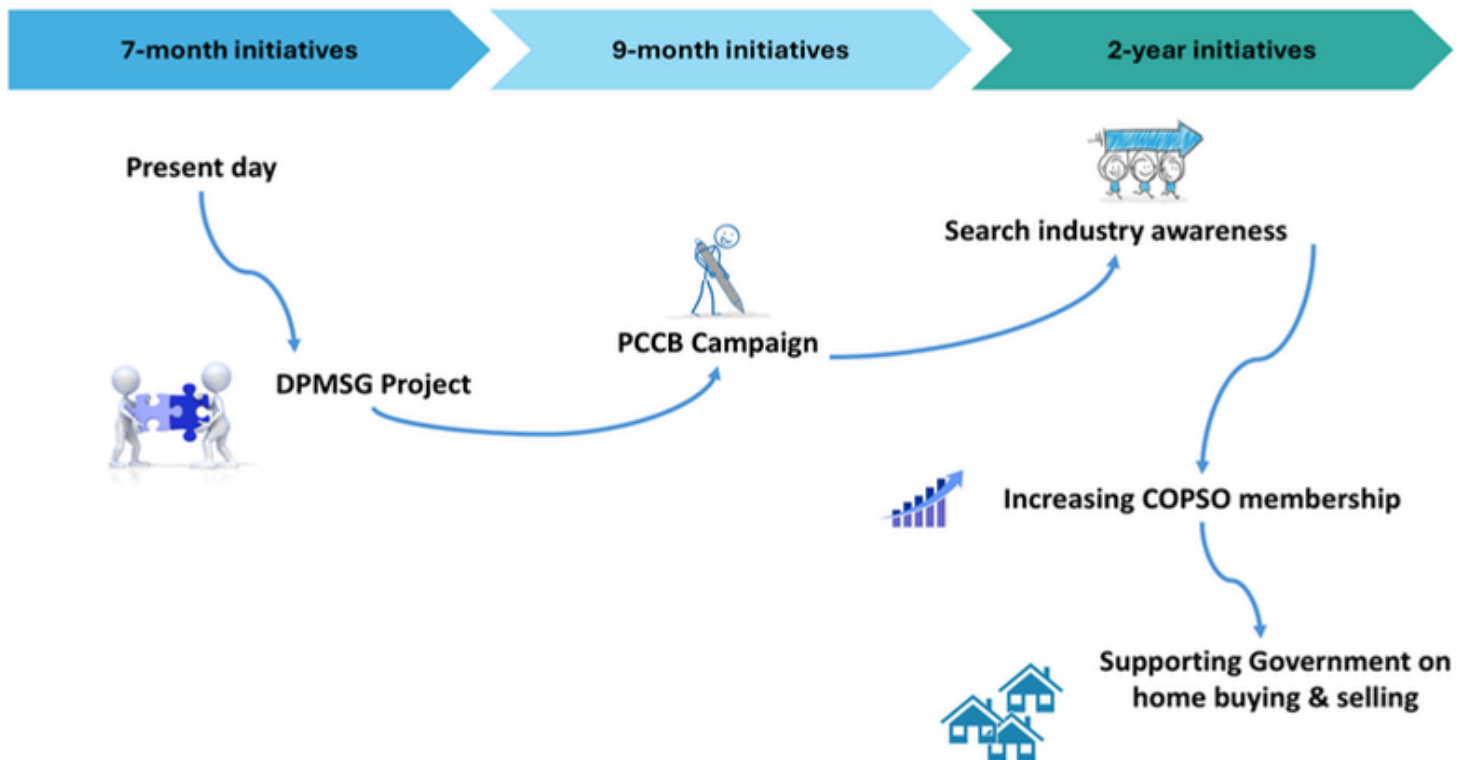
It stands at a pivotal moment where its proactive engagement and experience can significantly influence the future of property searches and conveyancing in the UK. By establishing formal dialogue channels with HM Government and offering expert consultation, CoPSO will ensure that policy reforms are informed by practical industry insights, fostering regulations that are both effective and implementable.

Championing industry standards and embracing cutting-edge technologies already adopted by its members, CoPSO not only aligns with government goals of transparency and efficiency but also drives the sector towards a future-ready digital transformation. This commitment safeguards member interests through continuous feedback mechanisms, ensuring adaptability amidst future transformation of the home buying and selling process.

CoPSO's dedication to strengthening public trust through awareness campaigns and collaboration with consumer groups underscores its role as a guardian of fair and transparent property transactions. Expanding strategic partnerships further future-proofs the organisation, positioning CoPSO as the lead Trade Association to both government and industry stakeholders.

This new strategic vision empowers CoPSO and its members to lead and collaborate with authority and experience —securing its influence and delivering lasting value to members and consumers.

ROADMAP





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