The ICO has published its Code of Practice on datasets following the entry into force (on 1st September 2013) of new open data rights.

The Code is to be read in conjunction with the Ministry of Justice Code of Practice on datasets published in July 2013 (see the previous edition of this journal).

Section 102 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 amends sections 11 and 19 of the Freedom of Information Act, giving users new rights to receive datasets in a form capable of re-use (e.g. CSV).

The datasets should be used under the terms of a specified licence — in most cases likely to be the Open Government Licence (‘OGL’).

The amendments also require public authorities to publish any requested datasets as part of their publication scheme, if appropriate.

The law changes do not provide users with new rights of access — they are concerned with format and the ability to re-use datasets, once the public authority has decided that no exemptions or other provisions (e.g. costs, vexatiousness) in the legislation apply.

The ICO’s new Code is examined in depth in the article on pages 6—9 of this edition.

According to the ICO’s ‘at-a-glance’ list of what public authorities can do to get ready for the changes, public authorities should:

- start to think about the definition of dataset: what information or categories of information that they have that fits the definition;
- promote the key principles of open data in

(Continued on page 16)