

## ISOC UK England Chair's Report for 2023

The last Chair's report that I presented was drafted in April 2021, but covered all Chapter activities for the year 2022. Thus this report will include activities for all of 2023.

After a difficult year 2022, this year has seen renewed chapter activity, particularly on the Policy front, as the UK Government has multiplied a number of consultations and moved forward to propose bills in Parliament and start the process for other potential legislation.

Whilst the Chapter was active in policy, with a core number of people frequently helping out with research and drafting, thanks for the call for comments we have sent to our Policy mailing list, we were unable to hold face to face meetings, partly due to unavailability of key Leadership Team members, but also the very busy calendar of both our workshop proposers and the panellists they wanted to invite. With many topics advancing at fast speed, the Chapter has taken part in ISOC HQ organised calls for the whole Internet Society community and we hope that our members have benefited from taking part in these calls as a whole. It is also worth noting that most of these calls are recorded and we are aware that many people are watching the calls later. To consult the huge library of Internet Society video Content, go to <https://isoc.live/>

For 2024 we look forward to having both more face to face and online topical meetings. From discussions about current legislation to special topics that some of our members are active in, there is no shortage of reasons for being more active in the UK Chapter of the Internet Society.

Email [contact@isoc-e.org](mailto:contact@isoc-e.org) if you'd like to volunteer to organise something online or even face to face. We are especially interested in finding out if anyone was ready to host an event in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

### Q1 2022

#### IPv6 Matrix

The IPv6 Matrix has been measuring the use of IPv6 in the world's 1 Million most popular Web Sites since 2010. The project has collected over 550Gb of data relating to the spread of IPv6 worldwide. Following the work done to re-write the crawler and port the Seb server to its two virtual servers (one crawler and one web server) have been running smoothly – and show a slow growth of IPv6 enabled information suppliers worldwide. <https://ipv6matrix.org/>

#### Joint ISOC & ISOC-E response to OFCOM UK Consultation on Net Neutrality

OFCOM launched a process in 2022, by which it would review the net neutrality framework.

On 21 October 2022, it launched a consultation as part of that Net Neutrality Review. The Consultation process asked that the responses be supplied on a Form that was supplied by OFCOM. Whilst this had the advantage of allowing for a focus of responses to be given directly to the questions OFCOM asked, it did have the potential to impede on the breadth of the process, should Net Neutrality be actually broader than the focused OFCOM framework.

The UK Chapter of the Internet Society asked its members to contribute to a response. In parallel, the Internet Society headquarters also addressed the consultation by proposing responses to some of the questions, based on its extensive experience it had gained in the dialogue initiated in the US.

As a result, a Joint Response to the OFCOM consultation was submitted on 12 January 2023 and can be found on <https://isoc-e.org/response-ofcom-consultation-on-net-neutrality/>

## Q2 2023

### Data Governance in the Internet's Operational Institutional Complex

This was a meeting that was meant to happen prior to the 2022 AGM on 15 May 2023. Dr. Jesse Sowell is a Lecturer in Internet Governance and Policy at UCL's Department of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Public Policy (STeAPP), focusing on the operational institutions that ensure the Internet stays glued together in a secure and stable way. His work focuses on how governance and authority is constructed within these communities and institutions, how that authority differs from authority in conventional state-based institutions, and how to develop institutional and policy interfaces that can help bridge the gaps between the two.

Unfortunately, the talk had to be re-scheduled at a later date and no open slot has been found so far for the rest of the year. We are still planning to hold this session soon.

The 2022 AGM took place at the agreed date.

## Q3 2023

### The Revised IPA 2016 Consultation Response

The UK government conducted [a consultation on the Revised Investigatory Powers Act 2016 notices regime](#), which ran from June 5 until 31 July 2023.

The Internet Society and the Internet Society UK England Chapter are concerned by the proposed revisions to the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, because of the intrusive nature of new powers they would establish, and their impact on the digital economy, online trust, and fundamental rights. We maintain that the Investigatory Powers Act cannot be effectively evaluated in isolation from the Online Safety Bill, given that the latter also creates new obligations relating to the design, governance, and security of communication services. Please find our joint submission and high-level recommendations to the proposed revision at: <https://isoc-e.org/the-revised-ipa-2016-consultation-response/>

### UK Internet Governance Forum - <https://ukigf.org.uk/events/events-uk-igf-2023/>

The UK Internet Governance Forum is the national internet governance forum for the United Kingdom and took place on 11 June 2023. Internet Governance Forums (IGFs) are an initiative led by the United Nations for the discussion of public policy issues relating to the internet. A key distinguishing feature of IGFs is that they are based on the multi-stakeholder model – all sectors of society meet as equals to exchange ideas and discuss best practices. The purpose of IGFs is to facilitate a common understanding of how to maximise the opportunities of the internet whilst mitigating the risks and challenges that the internet presents. The UK IGF has a steering committee and secretariat. The UK Chapter of the Internet Society is a member of the UK IGF Steering Committee.

The Chapter, as a co-organiser of the conference, had a say in organising each of the sessions. This year's IGF took place both online and in person and it was possible to invite panellists that were not necessarily located in London, and often were first timers in any Internet Governance Forum.

Videos of the event can be found on: <https://ukigf.org.uk/2023-highlights/>

A [UK IGF 2023 report](#) was also published after being reviewed by the organising committee.

The UK IGF Organising Committee has already met online to debrief and focus on improvements for next year's UK IGF. The UK Chapter will be fully involved in the development of next year's agenda, as it was this year, with at least three members of the Chapter's leadership in the UK IGF Organising Committee. <https://ukigf.org.uk/committee/>

[Response to Consultation on: Powers in relation to UK-related domain name registries](#)

The Chapter has submitted a response to a DSIT (Department for Science, Innovation and Technology) Consultation on: [Powers in relation to UK-related domain name registries](#).

It focused on several points:

1. This consultation is addressing the 12 year old Digital Economy Act 2010
2. The powers granted to the Secretary of State in case of a breach are far over-reaching.
3. DNS is not an appropriate point for intervention on content-related issues.
4. No sense of appreciation of consequences to give new powers to the Secretary of State
5. Domain Name Dispute Resolution (DRDP) already exists
6. Concern about unintended commercial and business impacts

## Q4 2023

### UK Network Operators Forum

Olivier Crépin-Leblond was invited to share his thoughts on a panel discussion the Online Safety Bill and Encryption, organised by the UK Network Operators Forum, one of the sessions of the 27-28 September UKNOF52 meeting. There was also a discussion about the future of UKNOF given its challenges in sourcing sponsors and being funded for its regular meetings. A restructuring process is under way at UKNOF and the Chapter will keep a close watch on developments, ready to collaborate with other stakeholders to make sure a technical forum continues to exist in the UK.

### Nominet Consultation of its members

The Chapter is not a member of Nominet as it is not a Registrar, but several members are also involved in Nominet. After past year restructuring, Nominet is aiming to improve its image and the ISOC UK Chapter will continue a watching brief about Nominet, promoting its long term view that Nominet needs to enhance its support of the wider UK Internet Community, as per its original mandates.

### Global encryption Coalition Statement

The Global Encryption Coalition has published a statement for Global Encryption day.

ISOC UK joins 200 organisations calling for policies and companies to protect and enhance encryption.

The Statement and its signatories can be found [here](#).

### Joint Statement of scientists and NGOs on the EU's proposed eIDAS reform

On 2 November 2023, the Internet Society UK Chapter has joined 500 cyber security experts, researchers and NGOs to sign an [open letter](#) sounding the alarm about the European Union's proposed eIDAS reform.

## Other Activities

The Chapter has continued its active involvement with:

**UK MAGIG (DCMS Multistakeholder Advisory Group on Internet Governance)** – this group has held regular hybrid (online and in person) meetings to discuss UK-wide involvement at IGF. A sub-group has

focussed on ICANN issues. Another sub-group has focussed on ITU Issues. Both groups have seen involvement from several representatives of the Chapter. The UK MAGIG has continued operating with the DCMS Internet Governance Group being transferred to the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). DSIT has indicated that they are planning to continue this multistakeholder engagement for international issues.

### Internet Society Global Campaigns

Like last year, one of this year's Strategic Engagements of the Internet Society is on **Encryption**. As seen above the Chapter is involved as well in this Global Campaign, adhering to the points expressed on the Internet Society's briefing page on Encryption:

<https://www.internetsociety.org/policybriefs/encryption/>

The Chapter has also been very active in the "The Internet Way of Networking" campaigns.

### VAT

The Chapter has benefited from being able to reclaim VAT on its purchases. The little amount of work needed to carry out the online/MTD quarterly returns has been helpful in keeping the Chapter's financial records well kept.

### Membership

As you know, Global Membership of the Internet Society and membership of the UK Chapter are open and free. From last year's total of 1824 members, the Chapter has now reached 1864 members, a 2% increase year on year which is very modest but not uncommon with similar organisations in the UK. Future common activities with other organisations should help this figure to rise again.

### Mailing Lists

It is also time to remind you of our discussion mailing lists which are open to all - as a prime channel for you to interact with the Chapter, but also with other members in the UK.

They can be accessed on: <http://lists.isoc-e.org/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo>

- **UK Policy Mailing list:** Internet Policy especially UK Internet Policy. This includes discussions on Government Inquiries, but also any Internet policy topic that is likely to affect UK Internet users and businesses. This mailing list has been the primary means of announcement of campaigns, petitions, open letters for the UK Chapter of the Internet Society to engage.

- **Open-Trust:** a discussion forum focussing on Internet Trust issues, from the Trust Issues covered globally by the Internet Society (See: <https://www.internetsociety.org/issues/trust/> ), to the work undertaken about Trusting Platforms and Algorithms, in a world dominated by increasing Surveillance, Tracking, and, at the other end of the spectrum, Fake news.

This mailing list and group probably requires a shepherd if it is to grow, as most announcements relating to policy issues that the chapter has engaged in were made on the UK Policy Mailing list.

- **ISOC-UK-Universities:** a forum focussing on University and student activities. Many UK Universities now offer courses about Internet Governance, sometimes as a standalone item, sometimes as part of a wider media course, but often as a research topic. This group, still looking for a person to lead it, is a channel for interaction on issues that young members might face. Plus – how do we reach students, researchers and academic experts so they actively engage in the Multistakeholder consultations and activities that are offered both on a national and international basis? This mailing list is acting pending a better way to engage – and during the 2022 AGM it was suggested that rather than using a mailing list to engage students, an instant messaging chat like **Discord** should be used.

As a reminder, your User Profile on the ISOC Portal also allows for you to subscribe to **Internet Society-wide mail discussion lists** and discussion groups on **CONNECT** as well as **Special Interest Groups (SIGs)** such as the ones on the Internet of Things, etc. With so many members in our chapter, it is surprising that so few members make use of this facility. The level of discussion on the mailing list is fairly high level, often with the people directly involved with policy making, sharing their thoughts.

## New AMS

The current ISOC Association Management System (AMS) is being replaced. The AMS will be taken off-line on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023 and all accounts ported over to the new system. The new system proposed by vendor Fonteva, is likely to provide much more flexibility for our members to engage and will be launched on 15 December 2023. Announcements will be made. We are of course looking forward to the new system to enhance our communication channels with you, but also to enhance communication channels between members, as a fair number of our activities revolve around open discussions.

## Focussing on 2024

Like previous years, 2023 has been a challenging year for everyone.

In 2024, with your help, the Chapter is planning the following activities:

### **Continued Engagement with other UK based associations**

- Engage with UK operators (through the UK Network Operators Forum - UKNOF) and sounding out their policy concerns relevant for ISOC to engage on further such as over Online Safety Bill. This was already done at the recent UKNOF meeting in September 2023, so will be a follow-up.
- Continued engagement with TechUK when the latter is ready to ramp up activity.
- Continued engagement with BCS when the latter is ready to ramp up activity (currently undergoing elections) with next steps on the Online Safety Bill in forthcoming months.
- Sustained coordination with Digital Policy Alliance.

### **UK IGF**

- Participate in preparation of 2024 UK IGF - in the same capacity as in previous years.

### **Engaging with DCMS / DSIT (UK Government)**

- ISOC UK England board members liaising in to return MAGIG UK as a chapter remit on:
  - ICANN matters
  - ITU/UN engagement

Both of which are part of the Chapter Agenda.

### **UK Policy Consultations**

- Follow up briefing on Chapter response to consultation on DEA proposals for Ministers to be given powers to directly interfere in DNS Registry operators governance and management without stakeholder engagement.

- Monitor developments from the OSB that undermine security of user devices and information and chill UK innovation. In particular to track impacts including escalation of pervasive monitoring and growth likely from the OSB of pre scanning content on devices.

### **Direct Engagement on Global Internet Governance**

- Organise event (in person or online) on the swathe of UN initiatives of relevance to Internet governance and the MSM from the GDC to the WSIS+20 (including the "multilateral effectiveness" initiative).

Questions could include: explore the relative importance and potential threat to the MSM model of these initiatives; where/how can stakeholders most effectively engage and on what issues, processes; potential outcomes - negative/positive to the MSM model of governance; how should the IGF evolve sufficiently to not necessitate a GDC Forum, etc.

This is an internal process that we will launch with our members.

- Liaise with ISOC chapters particularly in Europe over EU and other policy spheres impact on the Internet (nb NL Net / and ISOC CH are up to something we might want to know more about. ) and for UK.

- Continue the Chapter involvement in the Global Encryption Coalition including signing up to Open Letters and Campaigns and relaying these campaigns to our UK audience

### **Emerging Issues**

- Open a new activity that investigates and informs on impacts for Internet of AI - looking at the number of academics, pundits and commentators that have suddenly added AI to their "expertise" in the last few months

- potential for a regular newsletter/channel that might also be an opportunity to gain subscribers and an independent revenue flow

The more volunteers get involved, the more we can expand on Chapter activities. We would like to hear from you if you would be interested in becoming a Convenor on any topic that fall within the mission values of the Internet Society.

As a reminder, this year's key topics for the Internet Society are:

- Extending Encryption
- Securing Global Routing
- Sharing Cutting Edge Knowledge about the NDSS (Network and Distributed System Security) Symposium
- Protecting the Internet from Fragmentation
- Helping Shape Legal Precedent in Alignment with the ISOC Mission
- Connecting the Unconnected (including Community Networks)
- Fostering Sustainable Peering Infrastructure
- Enabling Sustainable Technical Communities
- Measuring the Internet

- Empowering Internet Champions to Defend the Internet
- Securing Resources for Growth and Greater Impact
- Recognizing Internet Champions

Finally, I would like to thank the ISOC UK Leadership Team, Christian de Larrinaga, Desiree Miloshevic, Louise Marie Hurel, Matthew Shears, Steve Karneinsky and Ruofei Wang.

There remains one empty seat which the Leadership Team will discuss in future meetings.

Stay involved and let us know what YOU want to focus on this year, as it is YOUR local chapter of the Internet Society.

Warmest regards,  
Olivier MJ Crépin-Leblond, PhD  
For the ISOC UK England Leadership Team, November 2023