

CHAVEREYS

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HM Revenue & Customs information access

As part of HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) ongoing efforts to reduce the amount of tax being underpaid it has invested £100 millions in Connect.

Connect is software that analyses the information HMRC receives from other organisations, in addition to the information it has received from the taxpayer, in order to find anomalies which may indicate a discrepancy in the tax paid.

To date, Connect has helped to recover over £3 billions in tax and is currently responsible for triggering over 90% of enquiries.

Connect analyses data from a wide variety of sources including:

- Tax Returns;
- Bank accounts;
- Pensions;
- Credit reference agencies;
- Credit and debit card accounts;
- Online payment providers eg PayPal;
- Foreign tax jurisdictions;
- Government agencies eg Companies House, Land Registry and the Border Agency;
- Online social networking;
- Property websites eg Zoopla and Rightmove;
- Amazon, eBay, Gumtree etc;
- Google Street View;
- Council tax records;
- DVLA records;
- DWP records;
- Electoral roll;
- Insurance companies;
- Charities Commission; and
- Flight sales and passenger information.



It has been claimed that Connect has access to data from other sources however HMRC is unwilling to disclose these additional sources.

Due to the range of sources being utilised there will be instances in which the information is inaccurate or misinterpreted. The House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee has called for a review of HMRC's powers in response to fears it is becoming too aggressive in its approach to investigations.

