NATIONAL STATISTICS GEOGRAPHY GLOSSARY

The glossary contains over 180 entries relating to:

• different types of geographic area;
• geographic products;
• geographic information systems (GIS) and mapping; and
• organisations and initiatives involved with geographic information.

This glossary is also available online at:
http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/beginner-s-guide/glossary/index.html
The online version also links to further information on the National Statistics WebPages and relevant external sites.

The glossary is continually updated to reflect any applicable UK geography changes that occur.

The glossary was last updated on 14th December 2011

A

Acacia

'Acacia' was a work programme involving a number of organisations holding extensive property data and address information: the Valuation Office Agency, Land Registry, Registers of Scotland, Ordnance Survey, Local Government Information House and Royal Mail. The programme considered how to join up these data sources to form one, accurate, up-to-date and readily accessible national infrastructure of addresses, along with related mapping and property information. The work was completed in June 2004.
Land Registry website: Acacia Programme - Final Reports.

ACORN Neighbourhood Classification

ACORN stands for 'A Classification of Residential Neighbourhood' and is a geodemographic classification using census and other data to classify postcodes into neighbourhood categories. The classification has been developed by the marketing-data firm CACI.
More information about ACORN Neighbourhood Classification

All Fields Postcode Directory (AFPD)

ONS Geography's All Fields Postcode Directory (AFPD) was replaced by the National Statistics Postcode Directory (NSPD) in March 2006. The NSPD lists all postcodes in the United Kingdom and assigns them to a range of administrative, health, electoral and other geographies. It is a key product for anyone needing to relate postcodes to statutory areas. The NSPD, has now been superceded by the NSPL (National Statistics Postcode Look-up) and the ONSPD (ONS Postcode Directory)
Full product information.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) have been established in the United Kingdom to conserve and enhance the landscape in areas that have distinctive character and natural beauty, but which have not been designated as national parks.
Association for AONBs website: Further information, including a map.

Area of Residence Classification Manual

ONS Geography's Area of Residence Classification Manual lists the names and codes of the electoral wards/divisions (by local authority) occurring in each health authority across the UK. This product has now been superseded by the Ward:Health Matrix.

Assisted Area

Assisted Areas are those areas of Great Britain where regional aid may be granted under European Community law. Assisted areas are categorised into 3 levels (Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3) depending on the form of aid that may be given.
GRA website: Further information on assisted areas.

Association for Geographic Information (AGI)

AGI is a non-commercial organisation representing users and vendors of Geographic Information (GI) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). It aims to encourage the use of GI and GIS in both public and private sectors, and does so by producing various publications and arranging meetings and seminars across the country, as well as its annual conference and trade exhibition. AGI plays a key role in developing and implementing GI standards and is involved in many important geographic initiatives in the UK.

AGI website: Further information.

B

Borough

The term 'borough' occurs in several contexts. Many English districts are described as 'boroughs'; there are also county boroughs in Wales, borough constituencies and the London boroughs. The unifying factor is that 'borough' always refers to an area that is substantially urbanised.

Boundary Commission for England (BCE)

The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is responsible for reviewing English parliamentary constituency boundaries.

BCE website: Further information.

Boundary Commission for Scotland

The Boundary Commission for Scotland is responsible for reviewing Scottish parliamentary constituency boundaries.

Boundary Commission for Scotland website: Further information.

Boundary Commission for Wales (BCW)

The Boundary Commission for Wales is responsible for reviewing Welsh parliamentary constituency boundaries.

BCW website: Further information.

Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland

The Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland is responsible for reviewing Northern Irish parliamentary constituency boundaries.

See Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland for further information.

Boundary-LineTM

Boundary-LineTM is an Ordnance Survey product containing digital boundaries for administrative and electoral areas.

Ordnance Survey website: Further information.

British Isles

The British Isles are the islands of North-Western Europe comprising all of the United Kingdom, the Irish Republic, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.

British National Grid

The British National Grid is a common referencing format for all geographic data in Great Britain. The result is that any location can be described in terms of its distance from the origin (0,0), which lies to the west of the Scilly Isles. Grid references are always presented in terms of eastings (distance east from the origin) and northings (distance north from the origin). Within a Geographic Information System (GIS), British National Grid references are usually stored at 1-metre resolution - eg 271384, 096572 indicates a point 271km, 384m east and 96km, 572m north of the origin.
Note: British National Grid references are not used in Northern Ireland, which, along with Eire (the Irish Republic), is covered by the Irish National Grid.

Buffering

Buffering is a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) term describing the creation of a zone of specified width around any feature - eg a zone of 1km radius around a doctor's surgery.

Business Link Area

Business Link is a business advice service for England, and operates via 45 local offices each covering an area based on local authority geography.

More information on Business Links Areas.

C

Care Trust

Care Trusts (CTs) are a form of statutory health body in England and were established to provide integrated services. For the purposes of this glossary we are only interested in those CTs which are based on the Primary Care Trust (PCT) model and which, like the PCTs, report to the Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs). As at April 2011 there were five such CTs, with the rest of the country being covered by PCTs. However, whereas PCTs have a health remit only, CTs also deliver the health services usually provided by local authorities.

Further health geography information, including maps and lists of area names and codes.

Census Area Statistics (CAS) Ward

Census Area Statistics (CAS) wards are used for 2001 Census outputs. Unlike actual electoral wards/divisions they are required to meet certain minimum size thresholds in order to prevent disclosure of Census data.

Further information on CAS wards.

Census Enumeration District (ED)

Census Enumeration Districts (EDs) are used across the UK for the purposes of census data collection. They were formerly also the base unit of census output, but Census Output Areas (OAs) were introduced for this purpose in 1991 (Scotland) and 2001 (rest of the UK).

Further information on the UK Census and census geography.

Choropleth Map

Choropleth maps compare the characteristics of different areas by means of shading; areas with similar characteristics are shaded the same colour.

City of London

The City of London is a local authority in central London but is unique in that it is administered by the Corporation of London rather than a standard local authority council. It is however considered as a London borough for many statistical purposes.

Further information on Greater London and the London boroughs, including a map and a list of borough names and codes.

Civil Parish

See parish.

Code History Database

The Code History Database (CHD) provides details of the new 9 character codes that were introduced as part of the GSS Coding and Naming Policy on the 1 January 2011. This includes Look-ups between the new nine character codes and the old style codes, as well as individual name and code listings, their hierarchical relationships and archived geographies. For further information, see the Code History Database.

Community

Community is a very general term referring to the people living in a locality or to the locality itself. In Wales and Scotland however, specific communities have been defined:

1. Welsh communities are subdivisions of unitary authorities and their councils are the most local level of government in Wales. They are the equivalent of (civil) parishes in England, but unlike English parishes, communities cover the whole of Wales.

2. Scottish communities are subdivisions of council areas but community councils have a limited role and are not generally regarded as a tier of local government. Communities cover the whole of Scotland.

Further information on parishes and communities, including names and codes lists (Note: we do not supply names and codes of Scottish communities).

Community Health Partnerships

Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) were introduced in 2006 as a second tier of health administration in Scotland. CHPs play a key role in improving health and reducing inequalities, working with local communities and other statutory and voluntary sector providers. They report to the Scottish Health Boards.

More information on Community Health Partnerships in Scotland.

Community Safety Partnerships

The Safe and Confident Neighbourhoods Strategy (March 2010) saw the renaming of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to Community Safety Partnerships (CSP), as indeed they'd always been known in Wales. CSPs bring agencies and communities together to tackle crime within our communities. Traditionally each local authority area had its own CSP, however due to economies of scale there have been several mergers in recent years.

More information on Community Safety Partnerships.

Constituency

Constituencies are used to elect members to legislatures. The different constituencies in the UK include:

London Assembly constituencies

Northern Ireland Assembly constituencies

Scottish parliamentary constituencies

Welsh Assembly constituencies

For further information, see the Devolved Parliaments information.

Westminster parliamentary constituencies (that is, constituencies for the UK Parliament at Westminster)'.

Council Area

32 council areas were established across the whole of Scotland in 1996. Their respective councils form the single tier of local government in Scotland.

Further information on Scottish administrative geography, including a map and lists of area names and codes.

Country

In the context of the UK, each of the four main subdivisions (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) is referred to as a country.

County

Counties were formerly administrative units across the whole UK. Due to various administrative restructurings however then the only administrative areas still referred to as counties are the non-metropolitan (shire) counties of England. The English metropolitan counties, although no longer administrative units, are also used for statistical purposes.

Non-metropolitan (shire) counties

Metropolitan counties

County Electoral Division

County electoral divisions are the areas used to elect members to county councils in England. They should not be confused with the unitary authority electoral divisions found in Wales, the Isle of Wight and six of the Unitary Authorities created as part of the LGR in 2009.

Further information on county electoral divisions.

D

Data Zones

Data zones are a new geography used for small area reporting in Scotland. They are built from 2001 Census Output Areas and are subdivisions of the 'intermediate geography'. Each data zone contains at least 500 residents. As with their Super Output Area (SOA) counterparts in the rest of the UK, data zones are intended to be a stable geography.

Further information on data zones

Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS)

The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) replaced the ELWas in April 2007. The Department aims to improve children's services, education and training provision to secure better outcomes for learners, business, and employers as set out in our strategic document, 'The Learning Country'. It helps empower children, young people and adults through education and training to enjoy a better quality of life.

Further information on DCELLS.

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) founded in May 2006 is the successor to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). The department sets policy on supporting local government; communities and neighbourhoods; regeneration; housing; planning, building and the environment; and fire. There are also corresponding departments in the Welsh Assembly Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive.

For further information on the DCLG

Digital Boundaries

Digital boundaries are electronic (as opposed to paper) records of geographic boundaries. Digital boundary sets can be used in geographic information systems (GIS) to create maps or to facilitate data analysis.

Digital National Framework (DNF)

The Digital National Framework (DNF) is a nationally consistent geographic referencing system for Great Britain. All geographic features that have been surveyed and captured by Ordnance Survey are included - examples include buildings, roads, fields, rivers, woods etc. Each feature in the DNF has a unique topographic identifier (TOID), to which any data item can be referenced.

Directorate of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

Digital boundaries are electronic (as opposed to paper) records of geographic boundaries. Digital boundary sets can be used in geographic information systems (GIS) to create maps or to facilitate data analysis.

Further English Health Geography information

Disclosure

Disclosure in statistical terms refers to the release of data which could be traced to a particular individual. As it is critical that data supplied in confidence remains so, disclosure control is fundamental to National Statistics outputs. This explains for example why Census Output Areas (OAs) must have a certain minimum size.

District

'Districts are local administrative units and have at various times been used in all four countries of the UK. The only current references to districts however are found in metropolitan and non-metropolitan districts in England, and district council areas in Northern Ireland.

Metropolitan districts

Non-metropolitan (local authority) districts

District council areas

Further information on UK administrative geography

District Council Area

26 district council areas were established across the whole of Northern Ireland in 1996. Their respective councils form the single tier of local government in Northern Ireland.
Within Northern Ireland, district council areas are also commonly known as 'local government districts' (LGDs).

Further information on Northern Irish administrative geography

District Health Authority (DHA)

District Health Authorities (DHAs) were the lower tier of NHS administration in England between 1982 and 1996, when they were replaced by Health Authorities (HAs).

Further health geography information

Division

See electoral ward / electoral division and also county electoral division.

E

Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) Region

Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) were responsible for funding and planning post-16 education and training in Wales. ELWa had four regional offices; the four ELWa regions corresponded with the National Assembly Economic Regions. In April 2007, The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) replaced the ELWas.

Further information on DCELLS

Education and Library Board (ELB)

Education and Library Boards (ELBs) are responsible for the local administration of state sector education services in Northern Ireland. There are five ELBs, each covering one or more complete district council areas.

Further information on ELBs.

Electoral Division

See electoral ward / electoral division (below).

Electoral Region

Electoral regions are large areas from which multiple members are elected to legislatures on a proportional basis. The electoral regions in the UK include:
European electoral regions (EERs) - see EER section within this page
See Devolved Parliament for further information on Scottish parliamentary electoral regions and Welsh Assembly electoral regions

Electoral Ward / Electoral Division

Electoral wards/divisions are the base unit of UK administrative geography such that all higher units are built up from them. They are also used as a base unit for many other geographies such as parliamentary constituencies and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). Electoral wards are found across Scotland, Northern Ireland and most of England, whereas the equivalents in Wales, the Isle of Wight and six of the unitary authorities created in 2009 are known as electoral divisions.

Further information on electoral wards/divisions

Enterprise Regions (ERs)

Enterprise Regions are government-funded bodies which aim to foster local economic growth and development in Scotland. There are six ERs and these cover the whole of Scotland. Enterprise Regions replaced Local Enterprise Companies (LECs) in September 2007.

Further information on ERs

Enumeration District (ED)

See Census Enumeration District (ED).

Environment Agency Region

The Environment Agency is the leading public body for protecting the environment in England and Wales. It is divided into seven regions (six in England, one in Wales) that are defined by a combination of administrative and physical geography. Each region is subdivided into two, three or four Area Offices, of which there are 22 in all.
For Further information, see Environment Agency Website

European Electoral Region (EER)

European electoral regions (EERs) are used to elect members to the European Parliament in Strasbourg. There are 12 EERs in the UK, one in each of the nine Regions (Former GORs) in England, and one in each of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
Further information on European Electoral Regions

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Area

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is provided by the European Union and is co-ordinated in England by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It is considered to be an Area Based Initiative (ABI) and aims to promote economic development and regeneration in deprived regions.
Further information on the ERDF

European Structural Fund Area

Structural funds are the European Union's (EU's) means of supporting social and economic restructuring across the region. An area's access to structural funds depends on whether it has been classified as an Objective 1 area, an Objective 2 area or an Objective 3 area. Objective 1 areas are those which have less than 75 per cent of the EU average GDP; this applies to the least prosperous parts of the UK. The Objective 1 funding is the highest level of regional funding available from the EU. Objective 1 areas are equivalent to NUTS level 2 units.
Objective 2 areas are those defined as facing structural difficulties; the areas included cover around a third of the UK population. Objective 2 areas are built up of electoral wards. Objective 3 applies to the whole UK, apart from those areas which are Objective 1 areas.
There were also formerly Objective 4 and Objective 5 areas, but these schemes were ended in 1999.
For further information on the European Structural Fund Areas

F

Fire Service Area

In England there is one fire and Rescue service in each of the former metropolitan counties and Greater London, and also one in each of the non-metropolitan counties existing before the Local Government Reorganisations of the mid-1990s and 2009. In Wales there are 3 fire services (North; Mid and West; South), each covering a number of unitary authorities.

In Scotland there are 8 fire services, each based on one or more council areas (and reflecting the local government regions existing before 1996).

There is one fire service for Northern Ireland.

For Further Information on the UK Fire and Rescue Service

G

Gazetteer of the old and new geographies of the United Kingdom

ONS Geography's 'Gazetteer of the old and new geographies of the United Kingdom' is a comprehensive and illustrated guide to the changes resulting from the local government reorganisation (LGR) in the 1990s.

Further information about the Gazetteer

General Register Office for Scotland (GROS)

From the 1 April 2011, The General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) merged with the National Archives of Scotland to become the National Records of Scotland (NRS). The organisation is responsible for the registration of births, marriages, deaths, divorces and adoptions in Scotland, as well as the Scottish Censuses.

Further Information about the NRS

Geographic Information System (GIS)

Geographic information systems (GIS) are computer-based systems for managing, analysing and presenting geographically referenced data.

Government Office Region (GOR)

After the Comprehensive Spending Review, it was confirmed that the GORs would close at 31 March 2011, shifting focus away from regions to local areas. From 1 April 2011, the areas covered by the GORs will be referred to as 'Regions' for statistical purposes only.

Further information on the Regions (Former GORs),

Great Britain (GB)

Great Britain is strictly speaking just the largest island in the British Isles, but is generally taken to refer to the whole of England, Scotland and Wales, including offshore islands. It does not include Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

Greater London

Greater London is a collective term for the area covered by the 32 London boroughs and the City of London, and is also the area subject to the Greater London Authority (GLA). It is often considered as a county for statistical purposes, but does not have legal status as such.
Further information on Greater London.

Greater London Authority (GLA)

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is the body responsible for strategic citywide government for London, and consists of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly. The remit of the GLA covers the Greater London area.

Further information on the GLA.

Greater London Authority Assembly Constituency

The above constituencies, correctly known as the 'London Assembly Constituencies' (LAC), were created in May 2000. There are currently 14 London Assembly constituencies, each consisting of groupings of either 2 or 3 London boroughs. They are used to elect members to the London Assembly which is part of the GLA.

Further information on the GLA and Assembly constituencies.

Gridlink®

'Gridlink®' is the brand name for 'Joint Venture on Postcode Location' and its outputs. The Joint Venture has involved a coordinated cross-organisational approach to the creation of postcode location products, such as ONS Geography's postcode directories.

Further information on Gridlink®.

Grid Reference

See British National Grid.

H

Health and Social Care Board (HSCB)

A single Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) replaced the former four Health and Social Services Boards in Northern Ireland on 1 April 2009. It will focus on commissioning, resource management, performance management and improvement. It will identify and meet the needs of the local population through its five Local Commissioning Groups (LCGs).
Further information on Northern Irish Health Geography.

Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs)

Health and Social Care Trusts are coterminus with the Local Commissioning Groups, sub-committees of the new Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), in Northern Ireland and are named exactly the same although the codes are different. The Health and Social Care Trusts provide health and social services at the primary care level. Note though that ONS Geography does not hold names and codes for the Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs).
Further information on Northern Irish Health Geography.

Health and Social Services Board (HSSB)

Four Health and Social Services Boards (HSSBs) were responsible for local health and social services in Northern Ireland. They reported to the Northern Ireland Executive and were built from groups of district council areas. On 1 April 2009 a single Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) replaced the former four Health and Social Services Boards.
Further information on Northern Irish Health Geography.

Health Authority (HA)

Health Authorities (HAs) were the intermediate level of health administration in England prior to the NHS restructuring in April 2002. There were 95 HAs at the time of abolition, reporting to the eight NHS Regional Offices. They generally covered groups of one or more complete local authorities, but there were cases where local authorities were split.
In addition there were five HAs in Wales, reporting to the National Assembly. The HAs were built from groups of unitary authorities, each of which had its own Local Health Group (LHG). These HAs and LHGs were abolished when the Welsh NHS was restructured in April 2003.
Further Health Geography information.

Health Board (HB)

The 14 Health Boards (HBs) are responsible for local health care in Scotland. They report to the Scottish Executive and are based on groups of the local government districts that existed before the introduction of council areas in 1996. This means that although most HBs cover one or more complete council areas, there are cases where council areas are split. There were originally 15 HBs but in April 2006 the Argyll & Clyde HB was abolished and the area absorbed by two existing HBs (Greater Glasgow & Clyde HB and Highland HB).
Further information on Scottish Health Geography.

I

Imputation

Imputation is the process of estimating an unknown value. ONS Geography's postcode directories therefore contain imputed grid references for those postcodes that have not had a definitive grid reference supplied by Ordnance Survey.

Index of Place Names (IPN)

ONS Geography's Index of Place Names (IPN) relates over 70,000 named places in England and Wales to their respective local government areas and other geographies. Grid references are also provided for entries with legally-defined boundaries. The product from 2010 onwards includes the new 9 character coding, in line with the GSS Coding and Naming Policy.

Further information on the IPN.

Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe (INSPIRE)

INSPIRE is an initiative of the European Commission to develop the availability of spatial information for the formulation, implementation and evaluation of European Union policies. INSPIRE encompasses a wide range of subject matter including technical standards and protocols, organisational issues and data policy. It will coordinate the creation and maintenance of geographic information for a wide range of themes, of which environmental information will be the first.

For more information on INSPIRE

Inner London

Inner London refers to the part of Greater London falling within the boundaries of the former London County, which existed from 1889 to 1965. The Inner London area includes the City of London and 13 of the London boroughs.

Map of Greater London (456.5 Kb Pdf) showing the inner and outer London boroughs.

Intermediate Geography

The intermediate geography is a new geography used for small area reporting in Scotland. Intermediate zones are built from clusters of data zones and fit within council area boundaries. Each intermediate zone contains at least 2,500 residents. As with the Super Output Area (SOA) geographies in the rest of the UK, the intermediate geography is intended to be stable.

Further information on the intermediate geography.

Intermediate Zones

See Intermediate Geography.

Intra-governmental Group on Geographic Information (IGGI)

The Intra-governmental Group on Geographic Information (IGGI) is a body of representatives from around 80 different government bodies with an interest in Geographic Information (GI). IGGI's aim is 'to promote the effective use of government geographic information', benefitting member organisations by enabling them to operate more efficiently and better fulfil their duties as GI providers.

Further information on IGGI.

Irish National Grid

The Irish National Grid is a common referencing format for geographic data in Ireland, and covers both Northern Ireland and Eire (the Irish Republic). The result is that any location in Ireland can be described in terms of its distance from the origin (0,0), which lies off the southwest coast.

IT Cluster

IT clusters occured in the National Health Service (NHS) prior to April 2007 when they were replaced by Pan SHAs as a health geography. They consisted of groups of between five and seven Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) working together to implement the NHS's new technology and information systems.

Further information on IT Clusters.

J

Glossary terms can be added to this page if required.

K

Glossary terms can be added to this page if required.

L

Land and Property Services (LPS)

The Land and Property Services (LPS) in Northern Ireland has incorporated Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) into its organisation and produces mapping with the OSNI branding.
Further information on the LPS.

Learning Partnership Area

104 Learning Partnerships (originally 101) were set up across England in 1999 to promote lifelong learning opportunities and maximise the contribution of learning to local regeneration. The Learning Partnerships each cover one or more Local Education Authorities (LEAs), with the exception of Essex, Lancashire and Nottinghamshire LEAs, which have each been divided into two Learning Partnerships.
Further information about Learning Partnership Areas.

Line

In terms of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), a line is a feature whose general shape is defined by a set of coordinates in sequence - for example, a street or river.

Line in Polygon

Line in polygon is an overlay operation used in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). It is used to determine whether a given line crosses or lies inside a given polygon (area). For example, it could be used to determine whether a major road crosses a particular electoral ward.

Local Administrative Units (LAUs)

Local Administrative Units (LAUs) 1 and 2 are European Union Statistical units which replaced the former Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) 4 and 5 areas on 11 July 2003.
Further information on NUTS and LAUs.

Local Authority (LA)

Local authority (LA) is a generic term for any level of local government in the UK. In geographic terms LAs therefore include English counties, non-metropolitan districts, metropolitan districts, unitary authorities and London boroughs; Welsh unitary authorities; Scottish council areas; and Northern Irish district council areas.

Local Authority District (LAD)

This is an generic term used to cover London Boroughs, Metropolitan Districts, Unitary Authorities and Non-Metropolitan Districts in England, Unitary Authorities in Wales, Council Areas in Scotland and District Council Areas in Northern Ireland.

Further information on London Boroughs
Further information on Metropolitan districts
Further information on Council Areas
Further information on District Council Areas
Further information on Non-metropolitan Districts
Further information on Unitary Authorities

Local Commisioning Groups (LCGs)

Local Commissioning Groups will initially be sub-committees of the new Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) in Northern Ireland. They are coterminous with the five Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs) and are named exactly the same although the codes are different. The Health and Social Care Trusts provide health and social services at the primary care level.
Further information on the LCGs.

Local Education Authority (LEA)

Prior to 1 April 2009 Local Education Authorities (LEAs) were the bodies responsible for the local administration of state sector education services in England and Wales. In those parts of England that still had counties there was one LEA for each county - for example Cumbria LEA and Devon LEA etc. therwise there was one LEA in each unitary authority, metropolitan district or London borough. The Isles of Scilly also had its own LEA. The statutory duties of LEAs are now undertaken by the Director of Children's Services whose responsibilities also include Children's Social Services (CSS). The Children Act 2004 required every London borough, metropolitan district, top-tier local authority (county) or unitary authority in England to appoint a director of children's services. Additionally the Education and Inspections Act 2006 includes a clause which allows for the future renaming of Local Education Authorities as Local Authorities in all legislation, removing the anomaly of one local authority being known as a local authority, a local education authority, and a children's services authority.
Further information on the LEAs.

Local Enterprise Company (LEC)

Local Enterprise Companies (LECs) were government-funded bodies which aimed to foster local economic growth and development in Scotland. There were 22 LECs that cover the whole of Scotland. Local Enterprise Companies (LECs), were abolished in September 2007 and replaced with Enterprise Regions (ERs).
Further information on the LECs.

Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)

Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was established on 1 April 2010 and replaced the Boundary Committee for England. The LGBCE is responsible for conducting reviews of the structure of local government, the external boundaries of local authorities and the local authority electoral arrangements in England.

Further information on the LGBCE.

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland (LGBCS)

The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland (LGBCS) is responsible for reviewing local government boundaries and electoral arrangements in Scotland.

Further information on the LGBCS.

Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (LGBCW)

The Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (LGBCW) is responsible for reviewing local government boundaries and electoral arrangements in Wales.

Further information on the LGBCW.

Local Government Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland (LGBC-NI)

The Local Government Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland (LGBC-NI) is responsible for reviewing local government boundaries and electoral arrangements in Northern Ireland.

Further information on the LGBC-NI can be found here.

Local Government District (LGD)

See district council area.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is the collective term describing the extensive changes to local government structure that occurred in England, Scotland and Wales in the period 1995-98. In 2009, there was another LGR in England, which abolished seven non-metropolitan counties and created ten new unitary authorities. Two new Unitary Authorities that were to have been created in 2011 (Exeter and Norwich) were revoked by Parliament in 2010.

Further information on the LGR and other recent local government changes in the UK.

Local Health Board (LHB)

On 1 October 2009, the Local Health Boards (LHBs) in Wales were reorganised and the existing 22 were merged into seven. Each LHB covers one or more unitary authority. They are responsible for local health administration in Wales and were originally established as part of the restructuring of NHS Wales in April 2003. Each LHB reports to the appropriate Regional Office of the NHS Wales Department of the National Assembly.

Further information on Welsh Health Geographies.

Local Health Group (LHG)

Local Health Groups (LHGs) were responsible for local health administration in Wales prior to their replacement by Local Health Boards (LHBs) in April 2003. There was one LHG in each of the 22 unitary authorities (UAs); the LHGs reported to Health Authorities (HAs).

Further information on Welsh Health Geographies.

Local Health and Social Care Group (LHSCG)

The 15 Local Health and Social Care Groups (LHSCGs) were abolished on 30 September 2006. They were responsible for the planning and delivery of primary and community care in Northern Ireland and reported to the Health and Social Services Boards (HSSBs).

Further information on Northern Irish Health Geography can be found here.

Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)

A Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) is a land and property database maintained by a local authority.

See also: National Land and Property Gazetteer.

Local Learning and Skills Council (LLSC)

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) were abolished on 31 March 2010. It was responsible for funding and planning post-16 education and training in England. The LSC had 47 local offices known as Local Learning and Skills Councils (LLSCs). LLSC areas had a variety of local-authority-based constitutions and covered the whole of England.

Further information on LLSCs including a list of LLSC names and codes.

London Assembly Constituencies (LAC)

The above constituencies (formally known as the Greater London Authority Assembly Constituencies), were created in May 2000. There are currently 14 London Assembly constituencies, each consisting of groupings of either two or three London boroughs. They are used to elect members to the London Assembly which is part of the GLA.

Further information on the GLA and Assembly constituencies.

London Borough

The London boroughs are the local government areas within Greater London. The borough councils are unitary administrations with a status similar to metropolitan districts, but will also be affected by any policies implemented by the Greater London Authority (GLA). There are 32 London boroughs, but the City of London (which has a different legal status) is often considered as a borough for statistical purposes. The London boroughs and the City of London together cover the whole Greater London area.

Further information on Greater London and the London boroughs including a map and a list of borough names and codes.

M

Map Projection

A wide range of map projections have been developed to try to portray the curved surface of the Earth on a flat piece of paper. This cannot be done accurately so any map will contain some distortion, but different projections have different advantages. For example, some of them portray relative distances accurately, whereas others display relative areas better. Note that the distortion will be greater the larger the area of the Earth's surface portrayed.

Map Scale

Map scale refers to the extent to which reality is reduced to display it on a map - for example, a scale of 1:25,000 means that 1 centimetre on the map represents 25,000 centimetres (250 metres) on the ground. Large scale maps (for example, 1:1,250 or 1:2,500) show a small area of the Earth's surface in a lot of detail. Small scale maps however (for example, 1:1,000,000) show large areas in very little detail.

MasterMap

OS MasterMap is Ordnance Survey's intelligent digital map of Great Britain. It contains a wide range of different layers of mapping data and is designed for use with geographic information systems (GIS) and database systems. OS MasterMap is the branded product of the Digital National Framework (DNF).

Further information about OS MasterMap.

Metropolitan County

The six metropolitan counties were administrative areas in England from 1974 to 1986, forming the upper tier of a two-tier local government structure. They were subdivided into metropolitan districts but when the metropolitan county councils were abolished in 1986 the district councils became unitary administrations. The metropolitan county areas are still used for statistical purposes however.

Further information on Metropolitan Counties and Districts.

Metropolitan District

The 36 metropolitan districts are subdivisions of the six metropolitan county areas of England. Since the abolition of the metropolitan county councils in 1986 the metropolitan district councils have been unitary administrations.

Further information on Metropolitan Counties and Districts.

N

National Assembly Economic Region

The four National Assembly Economic Regions in Wales (North Wales, Mid Wales, South West Wales and South East Wales) are made up of groups of whole UAs with the exception is Gwynedd UA which is split on pre-1996 reorganisation boundaries.

National Assembly for Wales Constituencies (NAWCs)

National Assembly for Wales Constituencies (NAWCs) are used to elect members to the National Assembly for Wales (NAW). The 40 NAWCs were reorganised on May 2007 and were no longer identical to the Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales, they realigned with them at the 2010 general election.

Further Information on NAWC'S

National Assembly for Wales Electoral Regions (NAWERs)

National Assembly for Wales Electoral Regions (NAWERs) are used for the proportional component of the elections to the National Assembly for Wales (NAW). The five NAWERs are made up of groups of NAW Constituencies. The NAWERs were reorganised in May 2007.

Further Information on NAWERs'

National Assembly Regional Committee Area (NARCA)

Following the Government of Wales Act 2006 National Assembly Regional Committee Areas were abolished. Prior to this the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) had five regional committees to advise on regional affairs. NARCAs used to share the same boundaries as the four National Assembly Economic Regions but in April 2005 the NAW decided that the boundaries would share the same boundaries as the five NAW Electoral Regions, which themselves are made up of groups of NAW Constituencies.

National Land Property Gazetteer (NLPG)

The National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) is a national land and property database and is planned to become the single, authoritative source of address data for Great Britain. The NLPG is an aggregation of the Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPGs) produced by local authorities.

Further information on NLPG.

National Parks

National parks are designed to conserve the natural beauty and cultural heritage of areas of outstanding landscape value, and to promote public understanding and enjoyment of these areas. National parks exist in England, Scotland and Wales. Their boundaries are not constrained by any other geography.

Further information on National Parks

National Records of Scotland (NRS)

From the 1 April 2011, The General Register Office for Scotland (GROS), officially became the National Records of Scotland (NRS) when it merged with the National Archives of Scotland. The organisation is still responsible for the registration of births, marriages, deaths, divorces and adoptions in Scotland, as well as the Scottish Censuses.

Further Information about NRS

National Statistics Postcode Directory (NSPD)

ONS Geography's National Statistics Postcode Directory (NSPD) was replaced by the ONS Postcode Directory (ONSPD) in February 2011, which in turn had replaced the All Fields Postcode Directory (AFPD) in March 2006. The NSPD listed all postcodes in the United Kingdom and had assigned them to a range of administrative, health, electoral and other geographies. It had been a key product for anyone that needed to relate postcodes to statutory areas.

Further Information on the Postcode Products

National Statistics Postcode Look-up (NSPL)

The National Statistics Postcode Look-up (NSPL) is a new product that was first released in February 2011. The NSPL relates both current and terminated postcodes to a range of current statutory administrative, electoral, health and other geographies in the United Kingdom. The relationship between the postcodes and geographies is created via a best-fit allocation from Census Output Areas. Like the ONSPD, the NSPL is issued quarterly.

Further Information on the NSPL

Neighbourhood Statistics (NeSS)

Neighbourhood Statistics (NeSS) is ONS's online service providing socio-economic statistics (including 2001 Census data) for small areas. The primary rationale for NeSS is to provide detailed data to support the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, which will involve all levels of authority working together to tackle problems such as deprivation, crime and community breakdown. In practice however NeSS provides a valuable resource for the whole community.

Further information on NeSS

NHS

NHS is the acronym for the UK's National Health Service, and is often used in preference to the full name. The NHS is a public sector organisation providing a wide range of health services and infrastructure across the whole country.

Further information about the NHS

NHS Organisation Manual

ONS Geography's NHS Organisation Manual relates UK health authorities/boards to their respective local authorities.
This product has now been superseded by the Ward: Health Matrix.

NHS Postcode Directory (NHSPD)

ONS Geography's NHS Postcode Directory (NHSPD) is produced for the NHS and is a specially tailored extract of the ONS Postcode Directory (ONSPD).

NHS Regional Office

See Regional Office (NHS).

Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS)

The Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) is a hierarchical classification of spatial units that provides a breakdown of the European Union's territory for the purposes of producing comparable regional statistics. There were originally 5 different NUTS levels but as from 11 July 2003, NUTS levels 4 and 5 became Local Administrative Units (LAUs). The remaining NUTS levels 1-3 will be fixed for a few years but the LAUs will not. NUTS and LAUs are generally based on different levels of administrative geography, meaning that in the UK the levels vary from Government Office Regions (with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland counting as equivalents) down to electoral wards/divisions.

More information on NUTS and LAUs

Non-metropolitan (Shire) County

The 27 non-metropolitan (shire) counties form the upper tier of the two-tier local government structure found in many parts of England. The lower tier of the structure is the non-metropolitan districts.

Further Information about Non-metropolitan counties

Non-metropolitan (Local Authority) District

The 201 non-metropolitan districts (also known as local authority districts) form the lower tier of the two-tier local government structure found in many parts of England. They are subdivisions of the 27 non-metropolitan (shire) counties.

Further Information about Non-metropolitan districts

Northern Ireland Assembly Constituencies

The 18 Northern Ireland Assembly constituencies are used to elect members to the Northern Ireland Assembly. The constituencies are identical to the 18 Westminster parliamentary constituencies in Northern Ireland.

Further information on the Northern Ireland Assembly.

O

ONS Geography

ONS Geography is the geographic support service of the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Further information on ONS Geography.

ONS Geography User Guide

The ONS Geography User Guide provides a record of administrative area boundary changes in England and Wales between the 1991 Census and the 2001 Census.

Further Information about the User Guide

ONS Postcode Directory (ONSPD)

'From the February 2011 release, the ONS Postcode Directory replaced the National Statistics Postcode Directory (NSPD). The ONSPD relates both current and terminated postcodes to a range of current statutory administrative, electoral, health and other geographies as well as some abolished and frozen geographies in the United Kingdom. The ONSPD is released quarterly'

Further Information about the ONSPD

Ordnance Survey

Ordnance Survey is the national mapping agency for Great Britain.

Further information see Ordnance Survey website.

Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI)

The Land & Property Services (LPS) in Northern Ireland has incorporated Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) into it's organisation and produces mapping with the OSNI branding.

Further Information about LPS

Organisational Data Services (ODS)

The Organisational Data Services (ODS) supply the new codes for health geographies and organisation sites, such as hospitals and GP practices, in the United Kingdom. The ODS provide codes that are distributed to the wider NHS and loaded onto their IT systems, which in turn means that locations can be identified quickly and correctly.

Further Information about the ODS

OS MasterMap

OS MasterMap is Ordnance Survey's intelligent digital map of Great Britain. It contains a wide range of different layers of mapping data and is designed for use with geographic information systems (GIS) and database systems. OS MasterMap is the branded product of the Digital National Framework (DNF).

Further information see Ordnance Survey website.

Outer London

Outer London refers to the part of Greater London falling outside the boundaries of the former London County, which existed from 1889 to 1965. The Outer London area includes 19 of the London boroughs.

Further Information on London Boroughs

Output Area (OA)

Output Areas (OAs) are used across the UK as the base unit of census output. They were introduced in Scotland in 1991 and the rest of the UK in 2001. They superseded Census Enumeration Districts (EDs), although EDs are still used for census data collection.

Further information on the UK Census and census geography.

P

Pan Strategic Health Authorities (Pan SHAs)

Pan Strategic Health Authorities (Pan SHAs) - Pan SHAs are based on the NHS's National Programme for IT. There are three Programmes for IT in England, each made up of an individual SHA (in the case of London) or groups of whole SHAs. Pan SHAs are not legal entities. They are confederations of SHAs and any staff working as part of the Pan SHAs will be employees of the SHAs. Pan SHAs replaced IT Clusters as a health geography in April 2007

Parish

Parishes are subdivisions of local authorities in many parts of England, and their councils are the most local level of government. Unlike electoral wards/divisions however, parishes are not found in all parts of England. The Welsh and Scottish equivalents are communities. Note that the full term for administrative parishes is 'civil parishes', to distinguish them from the ecclesiastical parishes which are found in all parts of the UK.

Further Information about Parishes

Parliamentary Constituency

See Constituency

PO BOX

If individuals or organisations prefer that their mail is not delivered to an identifiable postal address, they may opt to set up a PO Box. PO Box addresses do not have a specific geographic location; instead the mail is sent to a local delivery office, from where it can be forwarded to the real address or collected by the addressee.

Point

In terms of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), a point is a feature that can be defined by a single (x,y) co-ordinate pair.

Point in Polygon

Point in polygon is an overlay operation used in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). It is used to determine whether a given point lies inside a given polygon (area). For example, it might be used to establish whether a particular address (identified by a grid reference) falls within a particular electoral ward.

Police Force Area

There are 43 police force areas in England and Wales, each covering one or more complete local authorities. Scotland has 8 police force areas, each covering one or more council areas. Northern Ireland is covered by one police force.

Further Information about Police Force Areas

Polygon

In terms of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), a polygon is a feature defined by a series of sequential co-ordinates that join up to make a closed shape. Examples of polygons include buildings, tracts of water and any geographic units (electoral wards, districts, health authorities etc).

Polygon in Polygon

Polygon in polygon is an overlay operation used in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). It is used to determine whether a given polygon lies inside (or overlaps) another polygon. For example, it might be used to establish which Census Output Areas fall within a particular electoral ward.

Postcode

Postcodes are assigned by Royal Mail to identify postal delivery areas across the UK. They are also a key means of providing locational references for statistical data.
Further information on postcodes. This includes information on postcode structure, large and small user postcodes and the use of postcodes for referencing data.

Postcode: Non-geographic

Non-geographic postcodes can either be special postcodes assigned to some large users of the postal service, or PO boxes that lie within a (pseudo) postcode district that does not form a discrete part of a postcode area.

Postcode: Terminated

Terminated postcodes are postcodes which are no longer used for mail delivery. The most frequent reasons for this are postcode reorganisations or the demolition/redevelopment of buildings. Terminated postcodes are occasionally re-used by Royal Mail but not before an elapsed period of 2 years. Terminated postcodes are retained on ONS Geography's postcode directories until or unless they are re-used.

Postcode Address File (PAF)

The Postcode Address File (PAF) is a database of all UK addresses and postcodes. It is produced by Royal Mail and is continuously updated.
Further Information about the PAF

Primary Care Group (PCG)

Primary Care Groups (PCGs) were a local unit of health administration in England between 1999 and 2002, although by the end of this period many of them had converted to Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). Until the reorganisation of English health geography on 1 April 2002, PCGs/PCTs reported to Health Authorities (HAs). Unfortunately they were defined in different ways in different parts of the country, thus providing a very inconsistent geography.
Further Information about English Health Geographys

Primary Care Organisation (PCO)

Primary Care Organisations (PCOs) is a generic term including English Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Care Trusts (CTs) based on the PCT model, and Welsh Local Health Boards (LHBs). It previously incorporated the former English Primary Care Groups (PCGs) and Welsh Local Health Groups (LHGs).

For Further Information about English Health Geographies

Primary Care Trust (PCT)

Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) are a local unit of health administration in England and since the reorganisation of English health geography on 1 April 2002 have reported to the Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs). Further restructuring of health administration in 2006 reduced the number of PCTs significantly. The majority of PCTs are now defined in terms of local authority districts, but there are exceptions. Although most of England falls within a PCT, some areas have Care Trusts (CTs) instead. PCTs did exist before 1 April 2002 and, together with Primary Care Groups (PCGs), reported to Health Authorities (HAs). Their remit was however much more limited than that of the current PCTs.

Further Information about English Health Geographies

Prison Service Area

Prison service areas cover England and Wales. There are 10 in England and 1 in Wales. The English prison service areas correspond with the Regions (Former GORS), with the exception of the South East Region which has been split into 2 prison service areas.

Further Information about the Prision Service Areas

Proportional Symbol Map

Proportional symbol maps display data by using symbols that vary in size in proportion to the data values.

Q

Glossary terms can be added to this page if required.

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R

Region

The term 'Region' is frequently used to describe any of the 9 Regions (Former Government Office Regions) of England.

Further information about Regions (Former GORs)

Region (Scottish Local Government)

9 Local Government Regions existed in Scotland between 1975 and 1996, where they were each split into a number of districts, thus forming a 2-tier local government structure. During this period Scotland also had 3 single-tier island authorities (Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands and Western Isles). On 1 April 1996, the existing Scottish administrative structure was abolished and replaced by 32 unitary council areas.

Further Information on Scottish Administrative Geographies

Regional Development Agency (RDA)

The 9 Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in England are responsible for promoting sustainable economic development and economic and social regeneration within their regions. The areas covered by the RDAs coincide with the Regions (Former GORs). RDAs will close at the end of March 2012.

Further Information about RDAs

Regional Health Authority (RHA)

Regional Health Authorities were the upper tier of NHS administration in England between the 1970s and 1996, when they were replaced by NHS Regional Offices.

Further Information about English Health Geographies

Regional Office (NHS)

Three Regional Offices were introduced in April 2003 as subdivisions of the NHS Wales Department of the National Assembly. Each Regional Office is responsible for performance managing groups of the new Local Health Boards (LHBs), one of which is found in each Welsh unitary authority.

NHS Regional Offices were also the top level of the NHS in England prior to April 2002, when they were replaced by 4 Directorates of Health and Social Care (DHSCs). The Regional Offices covered groups of Health Authorities (HAs) and did not fit into the Government Office Region (GOR) structure.

Further Information about Health Geographies

Registration District

Registration districts are the areas used for recording births, marriages and deaths.

Further information about Registration Districts

Royal Mail

Royal Mail Group plc is a public limited company wholly owned by the government, responsible for the main UK postal service.

Further Information about the Royal Mail

Rural Area

There is no single definition of a rural area as there are many different approaches to classifying what is 'rural' (or 'non-urban'). These include approaches based on population, on population density, on land use and on socio-economic characteristics, and all have different advantages and disadvantages depending on what the classification is being used for. However, the Rural and Urban Area Classification 2004 is now available as a National Statistics standard. This classifies Output Areas and wards as either urban or rural depending on whether the bulk of their population falls in a settlement of greater than 10,000 residents. It also offers subclassifications of urban and rural, based on population density.

Further Information about the Rural Areas

S

Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies

The 73 Scottish parliamentary constituencies are used to elect members to the Scottish Parliament.

Further Information about Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies

Scottish Parliamentary Electoral Regions

The 8 Scottish parliamentary electoral regions are used for the proportional component of the elections to the Scottish Parliament. They are made up of groups of Scottish parliamentary constituencies.

Further Information about Scottish Parliamentary Geographies

Shire county

See non-metropolitan (shire) county.

Standard Area Measurements (SAM)

Standard Area Measurements (SAM) are a definitive list of measurements for administrative and electoral areas in the UK. The measurements provided are defined by topographic boundaries (coastline and inland water) where available.

Further Information about SAM

Standard Names and Codes (SNAC)

ONS Geography's Standard Names and Codes (SNAC) database was an annual product containing definitive ONS names and codes for a range of UK geographies. From 2011 SNAC will contain only frozen geographies, as the Code History Database (CHD) will replace it for current geographies.

Further Information about SNAC

Standard Statistical Region (SSR)

The 8 Standard Statistical Regions (SSRs) were the primary statistical subdivisions of England before the Government Office Regions (GORs) were adopted for this purpose in 1996. They are now rarely used.

Further Information about SSRs

Standard Table Ward (ST)

Standard Table (ST) wards are those for which the 2001 Census Standard Tables are available. They are a subset of the Census Area Statistics (CAS) wards with the smaller CAS wards merged to prevent data disclosure.

Further information on ST wards

Statistical Ward

Statistical wards are a variant form of electoral ward/division; they were introduced across National Statistics in order to minimise the statistical impact of frequent electoral ward/division boundary changes. The policy was amended in 2006, and statistical wards are no longer produced.

Further Information about Statistical Wards

Statutory Ward

'Statutory wards' is another term used to describe the standard electoral wards/divisions that are defined by Statutory Instrument and used for local government elections across the UK. There are a number of other types of ward (statistical ward, Census Area Statistics ward and Standard Table ward) but these are used for statistical purposes only and are not statutory.

Further Information about Statutory Wards

Straddling

Straddling refers to the phenomenon of unit postcodes overlapping administrative (or other geographic) boundaries. This is due to the fact that postcodes are defined for mail delivery only and take no account of other geographies. Postcodes are frequently used for referencing data however, so straddling creates problems when we want to relate postcode-referenced data to any of these other geographies (eg electoral wards).

Strategic Health Authority (SHA)

The 10 Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) in England were created in July 2006, following restructuring of the 28 SHAs originally established in April 2002. The boundaries of the new SHAs are coterminous with Regions (Former GORs), with the exception of the South East Region which comprises two SHAs (which are constituted from groups of local authorities). SHAs are responsible for performance managing their respective Primary Care Organisations (PCOs).

Further Information about English Health Geographies

Super Output Area (SOA)

Super Output Areas (SOAs) are a new geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics.
- Within England and Wales a Lower Layer (minimum population 1000) and a Middle Layer (minimum population 5000) were introduced in 2004. Unlike electoral wards, these SOA layers are of consistent size across the country and won't be subjected to regular boundary change. Decisions on a possible Upper Layer are expected in 2006.
- In Northern Ireland there is a single layer of SOAs with minimum population 1300.
- The Scottish equivalents of SOAs are 'data zones' (minimum population 500) and the 'intermediate geography' (minimum population 2500).

Further information on SOAs

T

Thematic Map

Thematic maps use graphical styles (eg colours or fill patterns) to display information relating to a specific statistical theme - eg birth rates by district. Thematic maps are mostly choropleth maps or proportional symbol maps.

Topographic Identifier (TOID)

Topographic Identifiers (TOIDs) are the 16-digit numbers that uniquely identify every feature in the Digital National Framework (DNF) and the associated OS MasterMap. TOIDs are a stable geographic reference as they are assigned to a feature throughout its life and are not reassigned when a feature disappears.

Tourist Board Region

Tourist board regions are areas in which the respective tourist boards promote tourism. They are found across the UK - there are 9 in England, built up from local authority geography, and one in each of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Further information about England

Further information about Scotland

Further information about Wales

Further information about Northern Ireland

Training and Enterprise Council (TECs)

Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) were government-funded bodies which aimed to foster local economic growth and development. They existed across England and Wales, but were replaced in 2001 by Local Learning and Skills Councils (LLSCs) in England, and in Wales by the regional offices of Education and Learning Wales (ELWa). In April 2007, the ELWa regions in Wales were replaced by DCELLS (Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills)

Further information on TECs

Travel to Work Area (TTWA)

Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) are used in labour market analysis and reflect reasonably self-contained zones in which people both live and work. The current TTWAs were constructed using 2001 Census data, and are formed from aggregations of Lower Layer Super Output Areas (England and Wales), data zones (Scotland) and Super Output Areas (Northern Ireland).

Further Information about TTWAs

U

Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN)

Unique Property Reference Numbers (UPRNs) are the unique geographic identifiers used in the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG).

Unitary Administration

Unitary administrations' is used in this glossary to describe all local authorities that form a single tier of local government - i.e. all UK local authorities except for English counties and non-metropolitan districts. The term therefore covers unitary authorities, metropolitan districts and London boroughs in England; unitary authorities in Wales; council areas in Scotland; and district council areas in Northern Ireland. Note though that the term is not in common use and that it is a generic term rather than one which reflects a specific geographic type.

Unitary Authority (UA)

Unitary authorities (UAs) are areas with a single tier of local government (as opposed to the two-tier county:district structure). In practice the term is only applied to the 22 UAs established across the whole of Wales in 1996, and the 56 UAs established in parts of England between 1995 and 2009. However, London boroughs and metropolitan districts in England, council areas in Scotland and district council areas in Northern Ireland are all also served by single-tier (unitary) administrations.

Further Information about Unitary Authorities

United Kingdom (UK)

The United Kingdom (UK) is the nation state consisting of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

United Kingdom (UK) Statistical Geographies Database

The UK Statistical Geographies Database provides a consistent knowledge base of the range of statistical geographies which are being used across National Statistics (NS).
Further Information about the UK Statistical Geographies Database

Urban Area

There is no single definition of an urban area as there are many different approaches to classifying what is urban. These include approaches based on population, on population density and on land use, and all have different advantages and disadvantages depending on what the classification is being used for. However, the Rural and Urban Area Classification 2004 is now available as a National Statistics standard. This classifies Output Areas and wards as either urban or rural depending on whether the bulk of their population falls in a settlement of greater than 10,000 residents. It also offers subclassifications of urban and rural, based on population density.
Further Information about Urban Areas

V

Glossary terms can be added to this page if required.

W

Ward

Further Information about Electoral Wards / Divisions

Ward:Health Matrix

ONS Geography's Ward:Health Matrix lists the names and codes of the electoral wards/divisions (by local authority) occurring in each health authority across the UK. The information is ordered within each of the Health Boards (Scotland), Local Health Boards (Wales), Strategic Health Authorities (England) and Health and Social Services Boards (Northern Ireland).

Further Information about the Ward:Health Matrix

Ward History Database

ONS Geography's Ward History Database (WHD) provides details of changes to electoral wards/divisions in England between 1991 and 2010. The 2010 WHD was the last version as the Code History Database (CHD) will be used in conjunction with it. Eventually the Code History Database, will replace the Ward History Database.

Further Information about the Ward History Database

Welsh Assembly Constituencies

The 40 Welsh Assembly constituencies (National Assembly for Wales Constituencies, NAWCs) are used to elect members to the National Assembly for Wales (NAW).

Further Information about the NAWCs

Welsh Assembly Electoral Regions

The 5 Welsh Assembly Electoral Regions (National Assembly for Wales Electoral Regions, NAWERs) are used to elect members to the National Assembly for Wales (NAW).

Further Information about the NAWERs

Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies

Westminster parliamentary constituencies are used to elect members to the UK Parliament in Westminster, London. There are currently 650 such constituencies covering the entire UK. Constituencies may straddle local authority boundaries, but are always based on whole electoral wards/divisions at the time of definition.

Further Information about the Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies

X

Glossary terms can be added to this page if required.

Y

Glossary terms can be added to this page if required.

Z

Glossary terms can be added to this page if required.