



Webinar: Introduction to 2011 Census Geography

Questions and answers

17 May 2013

Q: What tools would you recommend for building thematic maps, especially interactive ones?

A: There are desktop GIS applications like QGIS or ArcGIS. It depends whether you want to do this on a desktop or if you are a web developer, in which case there are various libraries you can use. You can also use the Census Support Thematic Mapper application, it will allow you to upload a .csv file with area based statistics and you can use that to make maps.

Q: Is it easy to map to latitude and longitude? If so, is it for the centre point and how are the geometries stored?

A: If you have a set of latitudes and longitudes you can download the boundaries into a GIS application and overlay the latitudes/longitudes against the boundaries. The boundary geometries are stored as part of a shape file which you download.

Q: In 2001 it was possible to see what higher level geographies a geographic unit was in by looking at the code. How do you do that with 2011 OA identifiers?

A: In 2011 ONS produced a thing called the register of geographic codes and they provide the code history database which provides hierarchies and these are the two products that you can download these from ONS.

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/products/names--codes-and-look-ups/code-history-database/index.html

But you can also obtain lookup tables which encapsulate those hierarchies. You can also obtain some lookup tables from UK Data Service Census Support Easy Download, at least for English and Welsh data.

census.ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/boundary-data.aspx

Or direct from ONS:

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/products/census/lookup/2011/index.html

Q: What is the difference between the census site on the UK Data Service and the ONS site?

A: The National Statistics produce all the boundaries to download, whereas the UK Data Service provide data through value-added applications so you can download sub geographies or a portion of the data rather than all of the raw data.

For the aggregate data standard outputs are taken and presented, UK wide for 1971 onwards in a way that tries to simplify the process of finding data within the mass of tables and to find the metadata which allows you to understand what you have obtained.

For historical reasons there may be additional restrictions about who can use the UK Data

Service census support at present, but this should be fixed.

Q: Which month and year of postcode directory is the 2011 Census data pegged to?

A: May 2011.

However, ONS postcode directories released quarterly and available through Census Support provide links to 2011 Census geographies.

Q: If you are using data from both 2011 and 2001 in a project, are they both covered by the 2011 Open Government Licence.

A: Directly from ONS, yes both 2001 and 2011 are released under an Open Government License. But for now we are still using historic licences at present in UK Data Service Census Support for the 2001 data.

Q: Is there a lookup list between 2001 Output Areas and 2011 Output Areas to link them?

A: Yes there is, through ONS to allow comparisons over time.

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/products/census/lookup/2001-2011/index.html

Q: When will the flow data be available?

A: There is no ETA on this as these are still be created by ONS. When they are available for distribution the service will make them available.

Q: When is the Scottish geography going to be available? Is it different from England and Wales?

A: We understand from National Records of Scotland that this should be available June/July 2013. Like England and Wales there will be output areas grouped into higher geographies. When it's available it will be released by Census Support.

Q: Are the Lower Super Output Areas in 2011 different from those in 2001?

A: Yes they are, but the changes are at a similar level to output areas something like 2.5% overall. Again, there are products which describe the changes between 2001 and 2011.

www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/products/census/lookup/2001-2011/index.html

Q: For the 2011 Samples of Anonymised Records what will be the lowest level of geography available?

A: The specifications for the 2011 Samples of Anonymised Records (SARs) have not yet been published but these we will inform users when they are.