Postcodes With Locations Specification

Overview

This spread sheet contains a list of all current Postcodes for the relevant Postcode Area together with additional lookup information for the Postcode as detailed below. There are 124 Postcode Areas across the UK from AB (Aberdeen) to ZE (Lerwick) and therefore 124 separate Excel spread sheets containing Postcode location lookup information.

Table Structure

Field	Description
Postcode	The Full Postcode (eg UB7 0EB)
Postcode Sector	The Postcode Sector (eg UB7 0)
Postcode District	The Postcode District (eg UB7)
Postcode Area	The Postcode Area (eg UB)
Built Up Area Sub Division	The built up area sub-division
Built Up Area	The built up area name
Ward	Ward name
Parish	Parish name
District	Local Authority District
County	Traditional county name
Region	Region name
Easting	British National Grid Easting
Northing	British National Grid Northing
Latitude	Latitude
Longitude	Longitude
Introduced	Date Postcode was introduced
Terminated	Date Postcode was terminated

The Postcode

Formerly a Postcode could contain between 1 and over 300 addresses. This is now restricted to a maximum of 100 although the average number of addresses per Postcode is 15.

Postcode Sector

A Postcode Sector is everything bar the last two letters of the Postcode (e.g. UB7 0 from UB7 0EB). There are over 9,000 Postcode Sectors covering the UK - Sectors are used for more local and detailed mapping and analysis.

Postcode District

A Postcode District is the first half of the Postcode (e.g. UB7 from UB7 0EB). There are approximately 2,800 Postcode Districts covering the UK - Districts are often used for sales territory and franchise area applications.

Postcode Area

A Postcode Area is the first 1 or 2 letters of the Postcode (e.g. UB from UB7 0EB). There are 124 Postcode Areas covering the UK from AB to ZE. Postcode Areas are ideal for general national mapping and analysis.

Built Up Areas & Built Up Area Sub-Divisions

Built-up areas and built-up area sub-divisions were created as part of the 2011 Census outputs and provide information on villages, towns and cities, allowing comparisons between people living in built-up areas and those living elsewhere. Previously called urban areas, data has been produced every 10 years since 1981. A new methodology to capture the areas was used in the 2011 version, but it still follows the rules used in previous versions so that results will be broadly comparable.

This information is not available for Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Electoral Wards

Electoral wards/divisions are the key building block of UK administrative geography, being the spatial units used to elect local government councillors in metropolitan and non-metropolitan districts, unitary authorities and the London boroughs in England; unitary authorities in Wales; council areas in Scotland; and district council areas in Northern Ireland.

Electoral wards are found in Scotland, Northern Ireland and most of England.

In Wales, the Isle of Wight and several of the new Unitary Authorities created as part of the LGR in 2009, the equivalent areas are legally termed 'electoral divisions', although they are frequently also referred to as wards.

The only part of the UK without electoral wards/divisions is the Isles of Scilly, which has its own council but no electoral zoning.

For statistical purposes however, ONS treats the islands' five parishes as electoral wards.

The often very small size of electoral wards/divisions can be appreciated from the map below.

Electoral wards/divisions (and the Scilly parishes) cover the whole of the UK; in addition, all higher administrative units are necessarily built up of whole electoral wards/divisions.

They are also used to constitute many other geographies such as the Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) areas, health geographies and Westminster parliamentary constituencies.

English districts (metropolitan and non-metropolitan), London boroughs and unitary authorities average around 23 electoral wards/divisions each, Northern Irish districts around 22, Scottish council areas around 11 and Welsh unitary authorities about 40.

Population counts can vary substantially, even within a single local authority, but the national average is about 5,500.

More populous electoral wards/divisions tend to occur in large urban areas.

Electoral ward/division boundary changes are usually enacted on the first Thursday in May each year, to coincide with the local government elections.

As of 31 December 2011 the UK had 9,523 electoral wards/divisions.

Parishes

The smallest type of administrative area in England is the parish (also known as 'civil parish'); the equivalent units in Wales are communities.

England (parishes) English parishes are a very old form of spatial unit which originally represented areas of both civil and ecclesiastical administration. They used to be significant local government areas but now have very limited functions. Parishes are confined within local authority boundaries and are affected by the boundary changes of the county districts or unitary authorities in which they fall, but they are not contiguous with electoral wards. Some areas of the country have parishes and others not, making them an unsatisfactory unit for national statistical production. Many parishes are a similar size to wards, but some can contain several wards, and ward boundaries need not be followed.

There are 10,722 parishes in England. England (unparished areas) Within each English local authority, any area not covered by one or more parishes is known as 'unparished'. These areas are coded individually by local authority. Wales (communities) Communities, which fit into and change with unitary authorities, are the Welsh equivalent of parishes. Unlike parishes in England, communities cover the whole of Wales, and this gives them greater potential as a statistical unit. There are 870 communities in Wales.

Districts

In 1974 a new two-tier system of counties and districts was established across England and Wales.

Six of the upper-tier units, all in England and representing heavily built-up areas (other than Greater London), were designated 'metropolitan counties' and were subdivided into 'metropolitan districts'.

As with non-metropolitan areas the respective authorities covered all areas of local government, but the distribution of responsibilities was different to that of the county/district structure.

In 1986 however the metropolitan county councils were abolished, although the county areas (see map) are still recognised, especially for statistical purposes.

The 36 metropolitan district councils were left as single-tier authorities, a status retained to date, and accordingly have more powers than their non-metropolitan district equivalents.

Metropolitan districts are subdivided into electoral wards.

Traditional County Name

The county name provided is that defined by the Association of British Counties (http://abcounties.com/) and based upon the historic mediaeval definition of shires and counties.

Region

Government offices for the regions (GOR) were established across England in 1994. Reflecting a number of government departments, their aim was to work in partnership with local people and organisations in order to maximise prosperity and the quality of life within their area.

In 1996 the GORs became the primary classification for the presentation of regional statistics. There were originally ten GORs, but in 1998 Merseyside was merged with the rest of the North West.

GORs were built up of complete counties/unitary authorities, so although they were subject to change, they always reflected administrative boundaries as at the end of the previous year. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were not subdivided into GORs but are listed with them as regions in UK-wide statistical comparisons.

After the Comprehensive Spending Review, it was confirmed that the GORs would close on 31 March 2011, shifting focus away from regions to local areas. However, there is still a requirement to maintain a region-level geography for statistical purposes. The GSS Regional and Geography Committee (GSSRGC) have agreed that from 1 April 2011, the former GORs should be simply referred to as 'regions'.

These areas retain the names, codes and boundaries of the former GORs.

Easting & Northing

The 6 figure British National Grid Easting and Northing in metres.

The grid references provided for Northern Ireland postcodes are derived from the LPS 'Pointer·' product and use the Irish National Grid system that covers all of Ireland and is independent of the British National Grid.

No geographic coordinates are provided for postcodes in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

Latitude & Longitude

The degrees latitude and longitude are calculated from the 1 metre grid reference using an ESRI translation engine.

Introduced and Terminated Postcodes

These fields contain the dates the Postcode was introduced/ terminated in the format YYYYMM (Year and Month).

Postcodes are terminated by Royal Mail for various reasons but most commonly it is due to the demolition/re-development of buildings or to postcode reorganisations.

Terminated postcodes are occasionally re-used by Royal Mail but not usually before an elapsed period of two or three years. In such circumstances, all terminated postcodes and their grid references are retained and a 'termination date' is added which provides a clear indication of a postcode's status.