

Understanding Derbyshire's Geographies

Understanding geography is essential for collecting, processing and aggregating data. This document aims to help you understand the different types of geography and how they relate to each other.

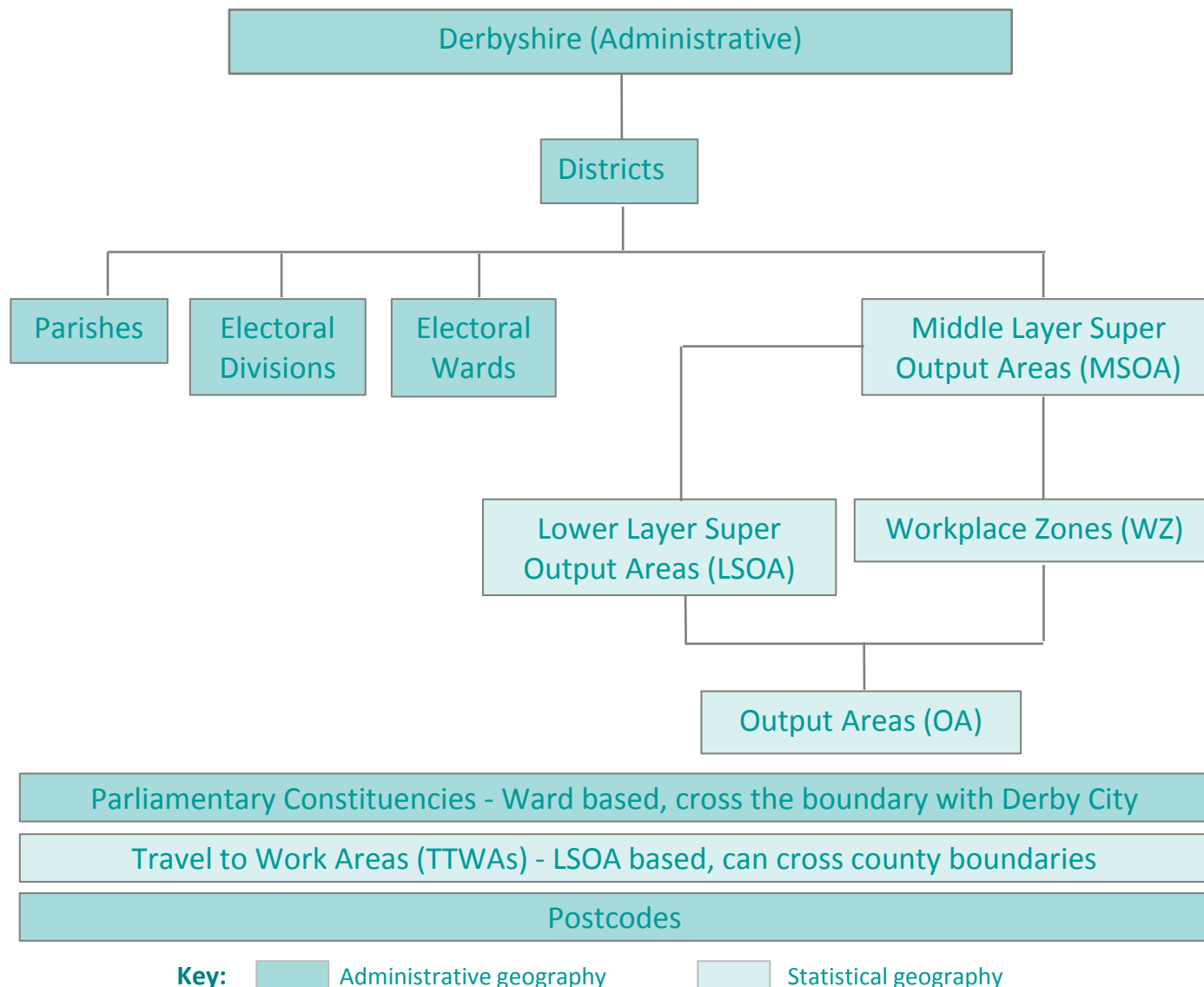
A geographical area is defined as an area of land with a defined boundary or region such as countries, local authorities or wards. These geographical areas are used for many purposes, e.g. defining administrative areas, planning of services, policing, displaying information. Information on the Derbyshire Observatory is available for both administrative and statistical geographies which can be defined:

Administrative geography is all about the hierarchy of areas relating to national and local government in the UK.

Statistical geography is the study and practice of collecting, analysing and presenting data that has a geographic or a real dimension, such as census or demographics data. It uses techniques from spatial analysis, but also encompasses geographical activities such as the defining and naming of geographical regions for statistical purposes.

Boundary, service location, density and thematic maps are the most common ways in which Derbyshire County Council display geographic information.

The chart below indicates how these geographies apply to the administrative county of Derbyshire, which excludes Derby City



The following gives a description of various geographies used for data and mapping

Administrative Geographies

Parliamentary Constituencies are the areas used for the election of Members of Parliament (MPs). They are ward based, and do not follow district or county boundaries. There are 11 Parliamentary Constituencies in Derbyshire.

Counties and unitary authorities (UA) form a geographic hierarchy covering most of England, except for London and areas covered by metropolitan districts. Counties are formed from groups of (non-metropolitan) districts, with UAs being split into electoral wards. Derbyshire County (Administrative) and Derby UA, together make up geographic Derbyshire.

Districts, also known as non-metropolitan districts, are the administrative boundaries for district and borough councils. They are built up from district electoral wards. There are 8 districts in Derbyshire (Administrative).

Electoral Divisions (EDs) are the boundaries used in the election of county councillors. They do not cross county boundaries and do not match other boundaries. There are 61 electoral divisions in Derbyshire (three of the EDs are two member divisions, giving a total of 64 Derbyshire county councillors).

Electoral Wards are the key building block of larger UK administrative geographies. Their primary purpose is as boundaries for the election of district or borough councillors. The wards do not cross district council boundaries. There are 174 wards in Derbyshire (2015), with populations varying between 1,500 to 10,000.

Parishes are the smallest administrative areas, which historically represented areas of civil and ecclesiastical administration. Parishes can share boundaries with wards/electoral divisions, but this is not usually the case. Many larger urban areas are not broken into parishes at all, and are classed as 'unparished', e.g. Ilkeston and Long Eaton in Erewash, and the town of Chesterfield. There are 225 parishes in Derbyshire.

Statistical Geographies

Output Areas (OA) are the smallest area for which census data are released. They are 'building blocks', with groups of OAs added together to give information for a larger area. Created in 2003, they are based on unit postcodes to fit in with ward and parish boundaries. OAs have an average total population of 125 and a minimum of 100 residents and 40 households in each. In Derbyshire there are 2,569 OAs with an average population of 300 and 129 households in 2011.

Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) are generally made up of four to six OAs, with at least 1000 residents and 400 households, with an overall mean population of 1,500 (2011 Census). There are 491 LSOAs in Derbyshire with an average population of 1,500 and 600 households in 2011.

Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOA) are typically made up of four to six LSOAs, with at least 5,000 residents. There are 100 MSOAs in Derbyshire, with an average population of 7500 and 3000 households in 2011.

Workplace Zones (WZ) are a new geography produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)

to release 2011 Census data about where people work rather than where they live. WZs were created by splitting and merging the 2011 OAs to create a workplace geography with fixed maximum and minimum numbers of employees and businesses.

Travel to Work areas (TTWA) have been developed using LSOAs to reflect commuters crossing a defined TTWA boundary on their way to work. Current criteria for defining TTWAs are that at least 75% of the people who work in the area also live in the area and there must be an economically active population of at least 3,500. As a result these areas can cross county boundaries.

Postal Geographies

Postcodes are administered by Royal Mail and do not fit other boundaries. Each postcode is around 15 households, but can contain up to 100. The elements that make up a postcode, e.g.

- Postcode area: DE
- Postcode District: DE4
- Postcode Sector: DE4 3
- Unit Postcode: DE4 3AG

Service Geographies

Council services and partner organisations such as the Police and Health have unique boundaries that are used to plan services and operational areas, including: Children and Younger Adults operational areas, Children's Centre Reach areas, Policing areas, Multi Agency Team (MAT) areas, Market Towns, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Peak District National Park.

These areas are usually built up from smaller geographies, such as OAs.

Contact us: If you would like to know more about geographic boundaries in Derbyshire: Email: Research@derbyshire.gov.uk or Telephone (01629 539174)