

UK's user defined geographies

Sarah Parker

30 October 2024



UK's geospatial building blocks



Granular data - address



Minimum thresholds

Thresholds	OAs	LSOAs (*~)	MSOAs (↔)
England	100 people, 40 households	1,000 to 3,000 people	5,000 to 15,000 people 2,000 to 6,000 households
Wales		400 to 1,200 households	
Scotland	50 people, 20 households	500 to 1,000 people	2,500 to 6,000 people
Northern Ireland	100 people, 40 households	1,300 to 2,800 people	

* In Scotland LSOAs are called Data Zones

↔ In Scotland MSOAs are called Intermediate Zone

~ In Northern Ireland they only have a single Super Output Area (SOA) geography instead of LSOAs and MSOAs

Population-weighted centroids



Strategic drive for User-Defined geographies

GSS subnational data strategy

Owner:	Subnational Statistics and Analysis Division
Approver:	National Statistician
Who this is for:	Producers and users of subnational data and statistics
Type:	Strategy
Contact:	Subnational@ons.gov.uk

[Print or download this report](#) 

Table of contents

- [1. Foreword](#)
- [2. Executive summary](#)
- [3. Ambition 1: Produce more timely, granular and harmonised subnational statistics](#)
- [4. Ambition 2: Build capability and capacity for subnational statistics and analysis](#)
- [5. Ambition 3: Improve the dissemination of subnational statistics](#)
- [6. Explore Subnational Statistics service](#)
- [7. Glossary](#)

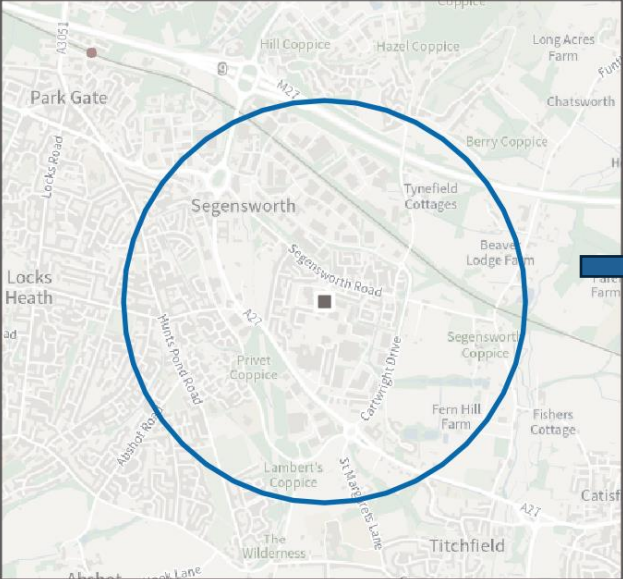
Ambition 1: Produce more timely, granular and harmonised subnational statistics

The demand for subnational statistics is increasing. Statistics at granular levels of geography are essential to understand the issues affecting local areas, ensuring the best evidence base to enable good decision making and monitoring of the impact of policies.

Feedback from local stakeholders indicates a need for more data at lower-level and user-defined flexible areas, to meet planning and policy needs. This includes more timely and accurate estimates of the size of the population broken down by demographics for small, local areas, and small area statistics that can help them to understand relationships between the outcomes people experience, such as their health, education or job, and their characteristics, for example their ethnicity or disability.

The case study on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Health Index describes how a new experimental statistic has been created to provide a single value to measure health for each local authority in England that can be tracked over time and compared between different areas.

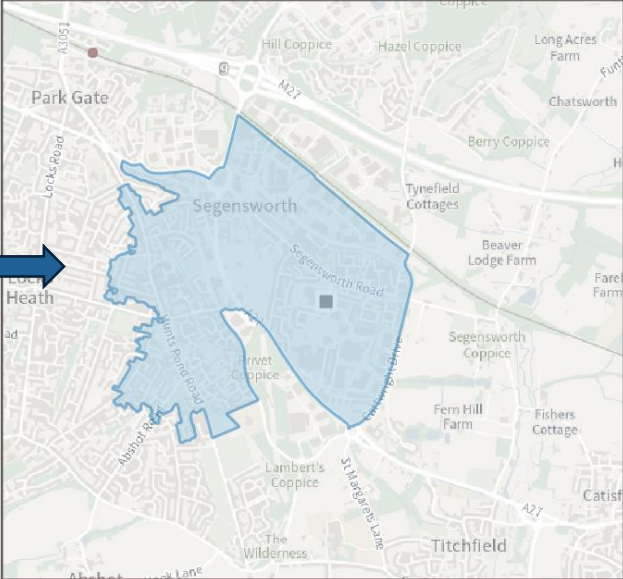
Creation:



User defines a geography

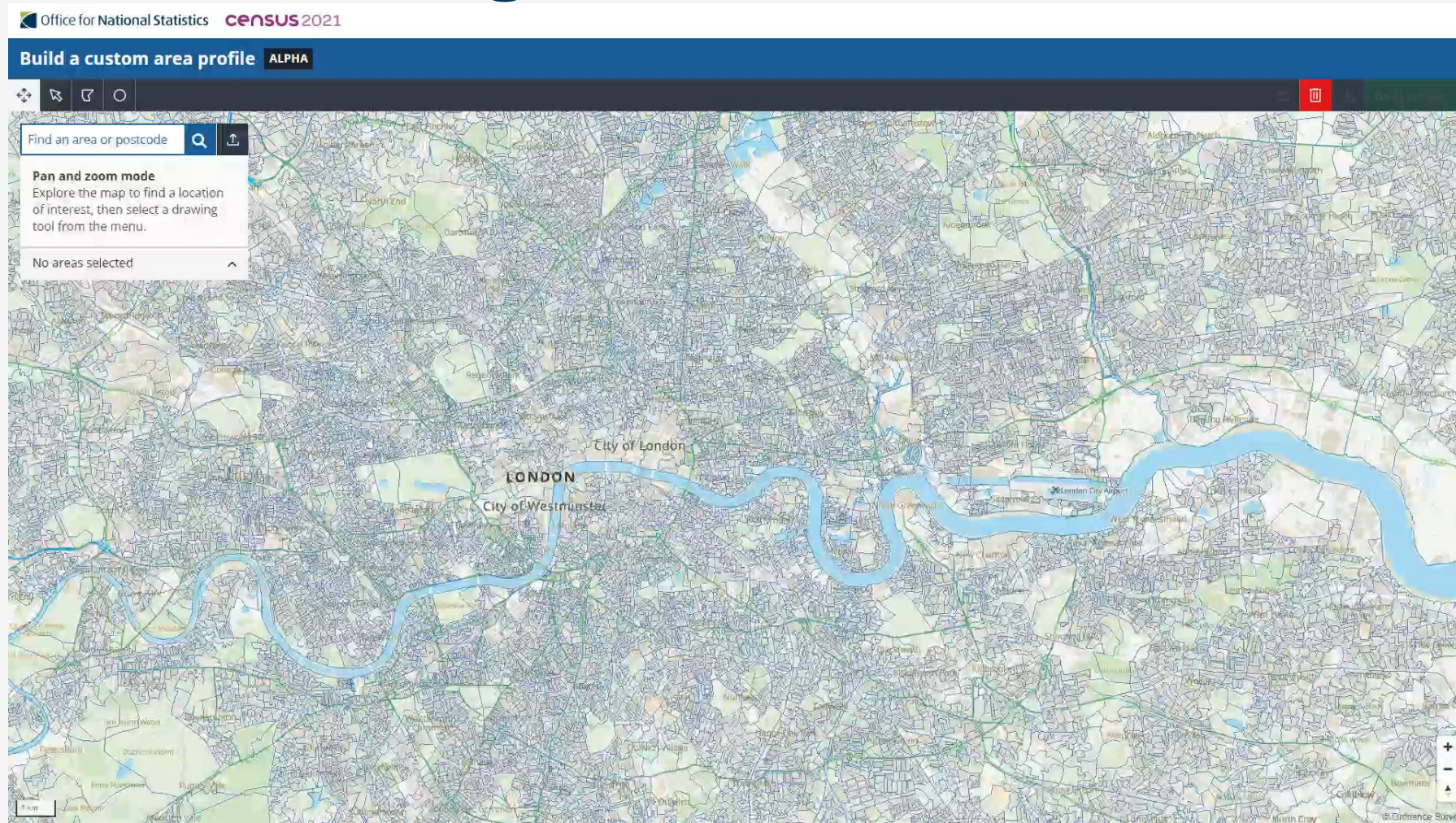


Small area geogs selected



Geographies aggregated and data statistics returned to user

What are we doing in ONS?



Build a custom area profile BETA

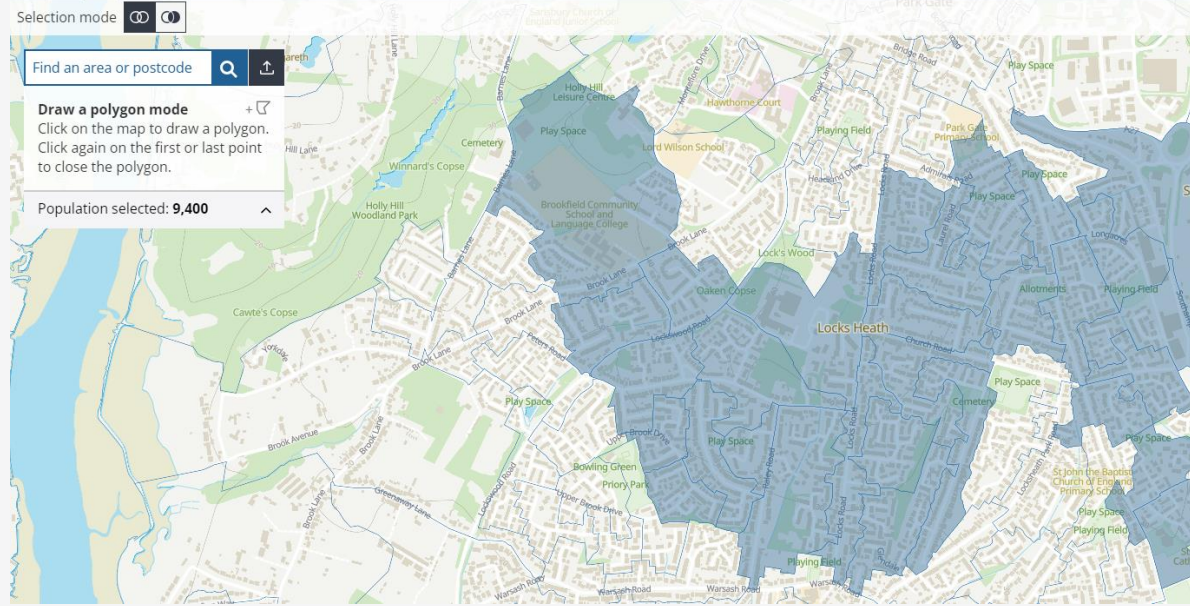
Selection mode

Find an area or postcode

Draw a polygon mode

Click on the map to draw a polygon.
Click again on the first or last point to close the polygon.

Population selected: **9,400**



Build a custom area profile BETA

[< Edit area](#)

Name your area

Include map

Select comparison area

England Country

Show on map

Select topics

- Accommodation type
- Age profile
- Central heating
- Disability

! Values for this variable will differ from other sources which provide age-standardised percentages. [Read more](#)

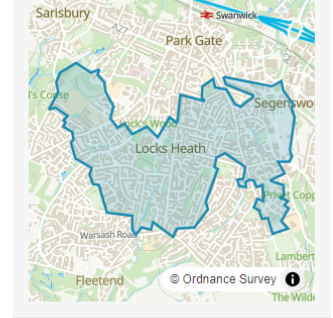
- Population
- Country of birth

[Show 28 more](#)

[Looking for another topic?](#)

Profile preview

Area map

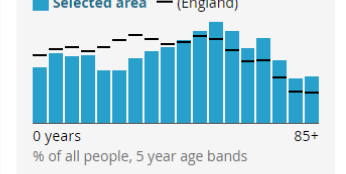


Population

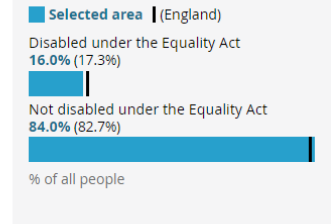
9,400 people

56,490,000 people in England
Rounded to the nearest 100 people

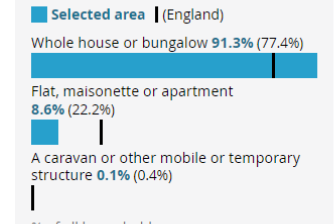
Age profile



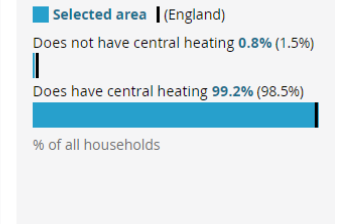
Disability



Accommodation type



Central heating



Impact



The Church of England

<https://www.churchofengland.org> › default › files PDF ⋮

Guide to the ONS Custom Area Profile Tool

The ONS custom area profile tool allows you to see data from the 2021 census related to an area of your choice by grouping Census Output Areas (OAs), each ...

6 pages



Harringay online

<https://harringayonline.com> › 844301:Comment:1547950 ⋮

Fascinating local population data insights with ONS Build a ...

Fascinating local population data insights with **ONS** Build a **Custom Area Profile** tool. Posted by Hugh on August 5, 2023 at 11:15 in Community News, Issues, ...



Dover District Council

<https://www.dover.gov.uk> › Census-2021 › Ward-Profiles ⋮

Tower Hamlets Custom Profile

The **ONS** has published a new tool which allows users to build their own **profile** for local **areas** in England and Wales using Census 2021 data. Please see Build a ...

Further work:

- Expanding beyond census data, i.e., statistics from administrative data sources

Some resources:

- [How to make a Census 2021 data profile for your local area | ONS Digital](#)
- <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/draw/>
- [Or google: 'ONS custom area profile'](#)