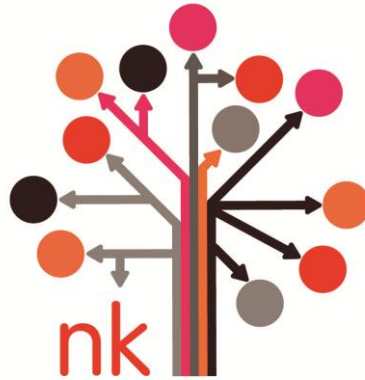


Northumberland Knowledge



Know Guide

Profiling Your Customers

- January 2013 -

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About this guide

The Know Guides are a suite of documents that provide useful information about using data and information supplied via the Northumberland Knowledge website. This guide outlines the National Statistics 2001 Area classifications used by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to classify areas according to socioeconomic and demographic data.

Further information about the classifications can be found on the [ONS](#) website.

Background

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has produced classifications of the population living in different areas of the UK. The Classifications are different to area profiles (that allow in depth analysis of an area across a range of specific topics or statistics) because they group the type of people typically living in an area using socioeconomic and demographic data from the Census and attach a descriptive category to them, for example 'Terraced Blue Collar'.

The ONS Output Area Classification can be used in similar ways to commercial products such as Mosaic and Acorn but it is a free product provided from Census results. The other difference to Mosaic/Acorn is that the smallest area the National statistics classifications are available at is Census Output Area (minimum size 100 people or 40 households) whereas Mosaic and Experian classifies individual households.

The current ONS area classifications are based on the 2001 Census results but are currently being reviewed and updated using results from the 2011 Census with the possibility that some data will be updated in between Censuses.

ONS provide area classifications for the following areas:

- Health Areas
- Local Authorities
- Census Wards
- Census Lower Super Output Areas
- Census Output Areas

Each classification is separate and the codes and names for each classification apply to that classification only. The datasets that make up these classifications are available from the [Neighbourhood Statistics website](#) or alternatively can be supplied directly by the Policy and Research Team.

This document describes in detail the area classifications for Local Authority Areas and Census Output Areas.

Local Authority Classification

The Local Authority area classification can help to identify local authority areas across the UK with a similar socioeconomic and demographic profile to Northumberland. This may be useful when carrying out analysis of datasets to provide meaningful comparisons with areas that share similar traits. It can also identify areas that may have tackled similar problems to those existing in Northumberland to allow sharing of experiences or as examples of best practice.

The classification groups local authorities into clusters based on similar characteristics. Variables were selected from the 2001 Census Key Statistics. The variables used to classify local authorities into clusters cover demographic, household composition, housing, socio-economic, employment, industry & sector. The final dataset contained 42 variables.

The largest clusters are called Supergroups. There are eight of these. Each supergroup is further divided into groups (13) and each of these is divided further into subgroups (24). For most purposes the 13 groups will be most appropriate but if required can be collapsed into supergroups or expanded into subgroups. Each supergroup and group has been given a name. These names have been chosen to represent the group as a whole and may not accurately describe an individual local authority.

Local Authority Classification Supergroup and Group Names and Codes

Supergroup	Group (number of subgroups)
1. Cities and Services	1.1 Regional Centres (1)
	1.2 Centres of Industry (2)
	1.3 Thriving London Periphery (2)
2. London Suburbs	2.4 London Suburbs (2)
3. London Centre	3.5 London Centre (2)
4. London Cosmopolitan	4.6 London Cosmopolitan (2)
5. Prospering UK	5.7 Prospering Small Towns (3)
	5.8 New and Growing Towns (1)
	5.9 Prospering Southern England (1)
6. Coastal and Countryside	6.10 Coastal and Countryside (3)
7. Mining and Manufacturing	7.11 Industrial Hinterlands (2)
	7.12 Mining and Manufacturing (2)
8. Northern Ireland Countryside	8.13 Northern Ireland Countryside (1)

In addition each subgroup has a code.

Northumberland is classified in the supergroup Prospering UK, the group Prospering Smaller Towns and the subgroup Prospering Smaller Towns - B.

A [cluster summary](#) is available for each supergroup, group and subgroup. These present the main characteristics of each cluster in text and on a radar chart. The radar chart shows the difference between the cluster and the UK mean for each of the variables.

The area classification was amended to reflect changes due to local government reorganisation in 2009.

Corresponding Authorities

As well as the area classifications ONS also provide a list of corresponding authorities which shows how similar two authorities are regardless of their geographic location. According to ONS Northumberland is most similar to the following local authorities:

Local Authority	Location / Region	Similarity level	Similarity Score / Classification
East Riding of Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	Most similar	1.80 / Very similar
Dover	South East	2 nd most similar	1.92 / Very similar
Allerdale	North West	3 rd most similar	2.14 / Very similar
Newark and Sherwood	East Midlands	4 th most similar	2.21 / Very similar
South Ayrshire	Scotland (South West)	5 th most similar	2.25 / Very similar

Source: ONS, National Statistics 2001 Area Classification for local authorities (lower tier and unitary authorities) as at 31 December 2010.

The ONS classification uses the following classification to describe how similar two areas are to one and other:

- Extremely similar if they have an SED (Squared Euclidean Distance) of less than 1 per cent of the range between the two most similar authorities and the two most dissimilar authorities.
- Very similar if they have an SED of less than 2.5 per cent of the range.
- Similar if they have an SED of less than 5 per cent of the range.
- Somewhat similar if they have an SED of less than 10 per cent of the range.
- Not similar if they are more than 10 per cent of the total range.

The Euclidean Distance is the straight line distance between two points so local authorities are said to be similar if the distance between them, based on the census variables used, is small.

Output Area Classification

The 2001 Area Classification of output areas is used to group together geographic areas according to key characteristics common to the population in that grouping. It is a way of summarising the complexity of census data. It provides a simple indicator of the characteristics of an area and of the similarity between areas, for comparative or targeting purposes, and as a variable for analysis with other data.

This is a new classification produced using the same principles but a different statistical methodology from that used to produce the other area classifications.

This classification groups output areas into clusters according based on similar characteristics derived using 2001 population census data. The largest cluster is the supergroup of which there are seven. Each supergroup is further split into groups (21 in total) and further into subgroups (52 in total). Summaries of each supergroup can be downloaded from the [ONS](#) website. The groups are summarised in the table below. The supergroups and groups have been given names. These have been chosen to represent the group as a whole and may not accurately describe each individual output area within that group.

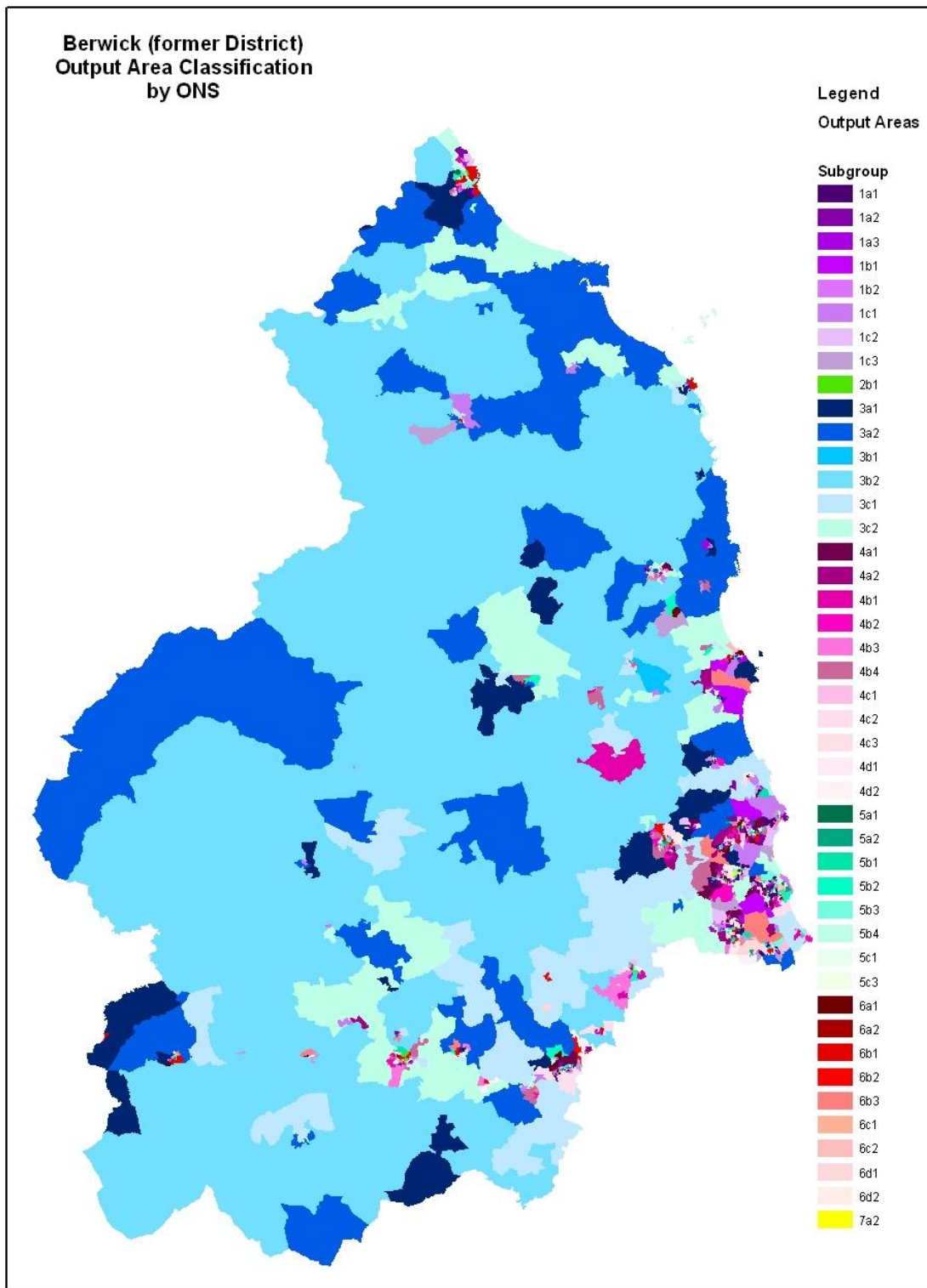
Output Area Classification Names and Codes

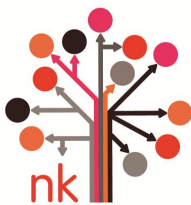
Supergroup	Group	Subgroup
1. Blue collar communities	1a Terraced Blue Collar	1a1, 1a2, 1a3
	1b Younger Blue Collar	1b1, 1b2
	1c Older Blue Collar	1c1, 1c2, 1c3
2. City Living	2a Transient Communities	2a1, 2a2
	2b Settled in the City	2b1, 2b2
3. Countryside	3a Village Life	3a1, 3a2
	3b Agricultural	3b1, 3b2
	3c Accessible Countryside	3c1, 3c2
4. Prospering suburbs	4a Prospering Younger Families	4a1, 4a2
	4b Prospering Older Families	4b1, 4b2, 4b3, 4b4
	4c Prospering Semis	4c1, 4c2, 4c3
	4d Thriving Suburbs	4d1, 4d2
5. Constrained by Circumstances	5a Senior Communities	5a1, 5a2
	5b Older Workers	5b1, 5b2, 5b3, 5b4
	5c Public Housing	5c1, 5c2, 5c3
6. Typical Traits	6a Settled Households	6a1, 6a2
	6b Least Divergent	6b1, 6b2, 6b3
	6c Young Families in Terraced Housing	6c1, 6c2
	6d Aspiring Housings	6d1, 6d2
7. Multicultural	7a Asian Communities	7a1, 7a2, 7a3
	7b Afro-Caribbean Communities	7b1, 7b2

Cluster summaries are available for each of the supergroups and their constituent groups and subgroups. These detail the characteristics of the clusters presented in text and on a radar chart.

As the map below shows, the majority of Northumberland's output areas are classified in the Countryside supergroup and the Agricultural group. Of the subgroups, 3b2 is most dominant.

Map: output area classification in Northumberland





Northumberland Knowledge

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