INTRODUCTION

Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) aims to make the most of the wealth of small area information held within central government which can help inform the development and monitoring of national and local policy. Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics has developed new, consistent, small-area statistical geographies and a range of socio-economic aggregate statistics from administrative systems that are being used across government.

SNS will continue to develop over the coming years, clearly demonstrating the Executive's ongoing commitment to making up-to-date small-area information available to as wide an audience as possible.

This guide outlines how SNS is being used, the data and geography being developed, and the main features of the internet site used to disseminate the statistics.

We would welcome any comments or suggestions that would help us to improve Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics.

Office of the Chief Statistician
Scottish Executive
USES OF SCOTTISH NEIGHBOURHOOD STATISTICS

Changing Needs
Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics is the Scottish Executive’s ongoing programme to improve the availability, consistency and accessibility of small-area statistics in Scotland.

Information from SNS is being used to inform the Scottish Executive, Community Planning Partnerships, and other public sector agencies’ approach to delivering services and improving the quality of life for people living in Scotland.

Increasingly, understanding the different needs of deprived, rural, and remote local areas is crucial to the way in which services are developed and delivered, and issues of local concern are addressed across Scotland.

The information contained within SNS is also readily available to community groups, voluntary organisations and individuals, and can be used to support grant applications.

Supporting Policy
The introduction of new, consistent, small-area statistical geographies (which are being used across government), and the development of statistics about these local areas is making it easier to support national and local policy making in a joined-up way.

- **Planning and Profiling**
  Sharing information across the public sector on consistent small-area geography to help understand the make-up of local areas, and comparing and contrasting them.

- **Targeting and Allocating Resources**
  Definitively identifying and agreeing which areas have the greatest need, allocating resources, and developing targets across the public sector accordingly.

- **Analysing and Monitoring**
  Examining the impact of policies and the progress made against both local and national commitments and targets.
DEVELOPING SMALL-AREA STATISTICS

Demand
Traditionally the decennial Census of Population has been one of the key sources of small-area statistics to support policy making. However, there has always been a demand for small-area information on a more regular basis and Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics is developing data to meet this demand.

Administrative Data
Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics is making the most of the wealth of administrative data held by central government and public sector organisations. A range of small area socio-economic statistics has been developed and work continues to develop further information about small areas.

- Deprivation
  Scotland’s most deprived areas have been identified through the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

- Population and Housing
  Population, household and housing statistics are crucial to most applications, and a programme of work is in place to develop these down to data zone level. The first outputs from this work are expected by Autumn 2005. (The new statistical geographies data zones and intermediate geography are described in more detail on pages 6 and 7.)

- Education
  There has been extensive modernisation of the collection and sharing of education statistics through the ScotXed programme.

- Health
  A range of hospital and practice team information is available from NHSScotland.
• **Community Care**  
Information about home care, day care and residential care is available at the small-area level.

• **Labour Market**  
Key information about the labour market is available at small-area level.

• **Benefits**  
Key information about receipt of benefits and credits produced by the Department for Work and Pensions, and Inland Revenue, is available on SNS.

• **Access**  
Indicators showing the accessibility to a range of services at the data-zone level.

• **Physical Environment**  
Indicators showing proximity to landfill sites, industrial pollutants and other environmental factors at the data-zone level.

**Confidentiality**  
Protecting the confidentiality of personal information is crucial and statistics disseminated through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics follow the National Statistics protocols for maintaining confidentiality. SNS contains no information at an individual person level. Only aggregations based on personal information which meet confidentiality protocols are included.
SCOTLAND’S STATISTICAL GEOGRAPHY

Statistical Geography
Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics has introduced two new, small-area statistical geographies to complete the Scottish statistical geography hierarchy as illustrated by the accompanying maps. The data zones and intermediate zones build on the well-established postcode and census geographies, and are now the key geographies for disseminating government statistics and for supporting policy making.

Data Zones
The data zone is the key small-area statistical geography in Scotland. SNS has introduced, for the first time, a common, stable and consistent, small-area geography called data zones. The data-zone geography covers the whole of Scotland and nests within local authority boundaries. Data zones are groups of 2001 Census output areas and have populations of between 500 and 1,000 household residents. Where possible, they have been made to respect physical boundaries and natural communities. They have a regular shape and, as far as possible, contain households with similar social characteristics.
Intermediate Geography
Not all statistics are suitable for release at the data-zone level because of the sensitive nature of the statistics, or for reasons of reliability, and it was apparent that a statistical geography between data zone and local authority was required. The intermediate zones are aggregations of data zones within local authorities and contain between 2,500 and 6,000 people.

Best-fit Geography
Data zones are a small geographic area and can be used to best-fit other geographies not in the statistical hierarchy (postcode unit – census output area – data zone – intermediate geography – local authority – Scotland). SNS includes best-fit statistics for health board areas and Scottish Parliamentary constituencies by aggregating the data zones which best describe these areas.

Improving Standards and Access
Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics’ geographies are increasingly recognised as the ‘industry standard’ and making the SNS geographic information freely available has been welcomed. This allows public and private sector organisations to efficiently, and effectively, share information.
HOW CAN THE SNS INTERNET SITE HELP ME?

**Area Browser**

The Area Browser gives a quick introduction to the type of statistics included in Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics and generates area profile reports. A selection of indicators have been pre-defined for this profile report which allows comparisons to be made between a single data zone, Scottish Parliamentary constituency and the local authority it falls in.
**Area Reporter**

In three easy steps the Area Reporter allows multiple areas and statistics about these areas to be selected and analysed in a tabular and geographic format.

**Step 1: Select the area of interest**
Select the geography of interest (e.g. data zone, local authorities) from the pull-down list and then select the zones of interest on either the map or look-up table, or by cutting and pasting. You may also register with the website to allow you to recall a geography created at a previous session.

**Step 2: Select the data of interest**
Select the data of interest from a wide range of socio-economic reports or indicators. Indicators from a range of topic areas may be selected at the same time. Important information about the indicators and reports can be easily accessed.

**Step 3: View the results**
Results are automatically displayed in a tabular format for the individual areas selected; these can be summarised into statistics for the complete area selected.

Results can also be displayed in a thematic map which shows the boundaries of the areas selected and with background mapping down to street level.
OTHER WAYS TO ACCESS THE STATISTICS AND GEOGRAPHY

Statistics CD
In addition to the information on the Internet site, a data CD is also available. This CD contains all the small-area statistics available at the small-area level on the SNS website. It is aimed at major users of the data and assumes that these users will have the capability to manipulate the data for use on their own systems.

Geography CD
Geographic information and boundaries are also available on CD. This includes the necessary geographic information and guidance to allow users to make use of the new Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics data zone and intermediate geographies.

UPDATES
At present the Internet site and statistics CD are updated on a quarterly basis and the geography CD is updated on an annual basis.

Users can receive the CDs by contacting neighbourhood.statistics@scotland.gov.uk
USEFUL LINKS

Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics:
http://www.sns.gov.uk

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation:
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/SIMD2004Mapping

Data Zone Background Information:

Scottish Executive Statistics:
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Stats

SCOTSTAT:
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Stats/SCOTSTATS.asp

Information and Statistics Division NHSScotland ISD Online:
http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/isd/

The General Register Office for Scotland: Scottish Census Results Online (SCROL):
http://www.scrol.gov.uk/

Neighbourhood Statistics Service:
http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/

National Statistics Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency:
http://www.nisra.gov.uk/

For further information on the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics please visit
www.sns.gov.uk
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If you would like to be consulted about new or existing statistical collections, or to receive notification of forthcoming statistical publications, please register your statistical interest on the Scottish Executive Scot Stat website at www.scotland.gov.uk/scotstat