

Town centre boundaries and statistics for England and Wales - 1999 to 2004 – metadata

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1. Types of statistical area

This section gives details of the classifications and data sources used in this project. The statistics on this website are presented for two different types of areas:

1.1 Area of Town Centre Activity

Areas of Town Centre Activity (abbreviated ATCA in the spreadsheet) are areas where there are concentrations of the type of activities and patterns of property development likely to be found in town centres. They occur where there are high levels of employment in town centre type economic activities (including retail, offices and leisure activities), a diversity of these activities, and a high density of office and retail floorspace.

1.2 Retail Core

Using the Areas of Town Centre Activity definition it was not possible to identify local centres in Central London from the full town centres model (which incorporates all the different facets of the town centre) and so a trimmed down 'retail only' model was used to define Retail Cores. These areas (abbreviated RC in the spreadsheet) contain high levels of retail employment, employment in a diversity of SIC retail categories (see below), and a high density of retail floorspace. Additionally, to be defined as a Retail Core, the area had to fall within the boundaries of an existing Area of Town Centre Activity.

2. Employment categories

2.1 Convenience Retail

- 52110 Retail sale in non-specialised stores with food, beverages or tobacco predominating
- 52111 Retail sale by confectioners, tobacconist and newsagents
- 52119 Retail sale in non-specialised stores with food, beverages or tobacco predominating not elsewhere classified
- 52210 Retail sale of fruit and vegetables
- 52220 Retail sale of meat and meat products

52230 Retail sale of fish, crustaceans and molluscs
52240 Retail sale of bread, cakes, flour confectionery and sugar confectionery
52250 Retail sale of alcoholic and other beverages
52260 Retail sale of tobacco products
52270 Other retail sale of food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores
52310 Dispensing chemists

2.2 Comparison Retail

52120 Retail sale in non-specialised stores where food, beverages or tobacco does not predominate
52320 Retail sale of medical and orthopaedic goods
52321 Retail sale of hearing aids
52329 Retail sale of medical and orthopaedic goods not elsewhere classified
52330 Retail sale of cosmetic and toilet articles
52410 Retail sale of textiles
52420 Retail sale of clothing
52421 Retail sale of adults' fur and leather clothing
52422 Retail sale of children's and infants' clothing
52423 Retail sale of other women's clothing
52424 Retail sale of other men's clothing
52430 Retail sale of footwear and leather goods
52431 Retail sale of footwear
52432 Retail sale of leather goods
52440 Retail sale of furniture, lighting equipment and household articles not elsewhere classified
52450 Retail sale of electrical household appliances and radio and television goods
52460 Retail sale of hardware, paints and glass
52470 Retail sale of books, newspapers and stationery
52481 Retail sale of floor coverings
52482 Retail sale of photographic, optical and precision equipment, office supplies and equipment (computers etc.)
52483 Other retail sale in specialised stores not elsewhere classified
52484 Retail sale of jewellery, clocks and watches
52485 Retail sale of sports goods, games and toys, stamps and coins
52489 Other retail sale in specialised stores not elsewhere classified
52500 Retail sale of second-hand goods in stores
52630 Other non-store retail sale

This definition excludes 52610 (Retail sale via mail order houses) and 52620 (Retail sale via stalls and markets) as they were either too large and are likely to skew the statistics (as in the case of mail order houses) or that they were not inclusive (many street markets are not included on the ABI).

2.3 Service Retail

52700 Repair of personal and household goods
52710 Repair of boots, shoes and other articles of leather
52720 Repair of electrical household goods
52730 Repair of watches, clocks and jewellery
52740 Repair not elsewhere classified
60220 Taxi Operations
63301 Activities of travel agents
63302 Activities of travel organisers
63303 Activities of tour guides
63304 Miscellaneous tourist assistance
63309 Other tourist assistance activities n.e.c.
64120 Courier activities other than national post activities
71401 Renting of sporting or recreational equipment
71402 Renting of other personal and household goods not elsewhere classified
71403 Renting of radios, televisions and video recorders
71404 Renting of video tapes, records and other pre-recorded media

71405 Renting of video tapes
71409 Renting of other personal & household goods n.e.c.
74812 Portrait photographic activities (excluding operation of photo coin-operated machines)
74819 Miscellaneous photographic activities (excluding portrait photography)
93010 Washing and dry cleaning of textile and fur products
93020 Hairdressing and other beauty treatment
93030 Funeral and related activities
93050 Miscellaneous service activities

This category excludes 74811 (Operation of photo coin-operated machines) since while these machines are often found in town centres, the offices that run them may not necessarily be so. This category is instead found in the office employment category.

2.4 Offices

22110 Publishing of books
22120 Publishing of newspapers
22130 Publishing of journals and periodicals
22140 Publishing of sound recordings
22150 Other publishing
65110 Central banking
65121 Banks
65122 Building societies
65210 Financial leasing
65221 Credit granting by non-deposit taking finance houses and other specialist consumer credit grantors
65222 Factoring
65223 Activities of mortgage finance companies
65229 Other credit granting not elsewhere classified
65231 Activities of investment trusts
65232 Activities of unit trusts and property unit trusts
65233 Security dealing on own account
65234 Activities of bank holding companies
65235 Activities of venture and development capital companies
65239 Financial intermediation not elsewhere classified
66010 Life insurance
66020 Pension funding
66030 Non-life insurance
67110 Administration of financial markets
67121 Fund management activities
67122 Security broking and related activities
67130 Activities auxiliary to financial intermediation not elsewhere classified
67200 Activities auxiliary to insurance and pension funding
70110 Development and selling of real estate
70120 Buying and selling of real estate
70201 Letting of conference and exhibition centres
70202 Other letting of own property other than conference and exhibition centres
70209 Other letting of own property
70310 Real estate agencies
70320 Management of real estate on a fee or contract basis
72100 Hardware consultancy
72200 Software consultancy and supply
72300 Data processing
72400 Data base activities
72500 Maintenance and repair of office, accounting and computing machinery
72600 Other computer related activities
73100 Research and development on natural sciences and engineering
73200 Research and development on social sciences and humanities
74110 Legal activities
74111 Activities of Patent and Copyright Agents
74119 Other legal services

74121 Accounting and auditing services
 74122 Book-keeping activities
 74123 Tax consultancy activities
 74130 Market research and public opinion polling
 74141 Public relations activities
 74142 Financial management
 74143 General management consultancy activities
 74149 Miscellaneous business and management consultancy activities
 74150 Management activities of holding companies
 74151 Management activities of wholesale holding companies
 74152 Management activities of transport holding companies
 74153 Management activities of construction holding companies
 74154 Management activities of catering holding companies
 74155 Management activities of motor trades holding companies
 74156 Management activities of service trades holding companies
 74157 Management activities of retail holding companies
 74158 Management activities of production holding companies
 74159 Management activities of non-financial holding companies
 74201 Architectural activities
 74202 Urban planning and landscape architectural activities
 74203 Quantity surveying activities
 74204 Engineering consultative and design activities
 74205 Engineering design activities for industrial process and production
 74206 Engineering related scientific and technical consulting activities
 74209 Miscellaneous engineering activities
 74300 Technical testing and analysis
 74401 Sale or leasing activities of advertising space or time
 74402 Planning, creating and placement of advertising activities
 74409 Miscellaneous advertising activities
 74601 Investigation activities
 74811 Operation of photo coin-operated machines
 74830 Secretarial and translation activities
 74841 Credit reporting and collection agency activities
 74842 Speciality design activities
 74843 Activities of exhibition and fair organisers
 74844 Activities of conference organisers
 74849 Miscellaneous business activities
 91110 Activities of business and employers organisations
 91120 Activities of professional organisations
 91200 Activities of trade unions
 91320 Activities of political organisations
 91330 Activities of other membership organisations not elsewhere classified
 92111 Motion picture production in film or video tape
 92119 Other motion picture and video production activities
 92120 Motion picture distribution
 92201 Radio activities
 92202 Television activities
 92319 Other artistic and literary creation and interpretation
 92400 News agency activities

This definition excludes 74500 (Labour recruitment and provision of personnel) 74602 (Security and related activities) 74709 (Specialised cleaning activities) and 74701 (Interior cleaning of buildings; window cleaning activities). Most of the people employed according to this classification do not necessarily work at the office where they are registered. For example, it is not uncommon for hundreds of people to be registered as working at an employment agency office on the high street when in reality, only four or five people may actually work there. This can clearly skew the statistics and so these categories are not included.

2.5 Civic and Public Administration

64110 National post activities
75110 General (overall) public service activities
75120 Regulation of the activities that provide health care, education, cultural services and other social services excluding social security
75130 Regulation of and contribution to more efficient operation of business
75140 Supporting service activities for the government as a whole
75210 Foreign affairs
75230 Justice and judicial activities
75240 Public security, law and order activities
75250 Fire service activities
75300 Compulsory social security activities

This excludes 75220 since this relates to defence activities and includes Army, RAF and Royal Navy establishments

2.6 Restaurants & Licensed Premises

55301 Licensed restaurants
55302 Unlicensed restaurants and cafes
55303 Take-away food shops
55304 Take-away food mobile stands
55401 Licensed clubs with entertainment
55402 Public houses and bars
55403 Tenanted public houses and bars
55404 Managed public houses and bars

2.7 Arts, Culture and Entertainment

91310 Activities of religious organisation
92130 Motion picture projection
92311 Live theatrical presentations
92320 Operation of arts facilities
92341 Dance halls, discotheques and dance instructor activities
92349 Miscellaneous entertainment activities
92510 Library and archives activities
92521 Museum activities
92522 Preservation of historical sites and buildings
92611 Operation of ice rink and roller skating rinks
92629 Other sporting activities not elsewhere classified
92710 Gambling and betting activities
92720 Other recreational activities not elsewhere classified
93040 Physical well-being activities

3. Floorspace categories - use classes

3.1 A1 - Shops

Use for all or any of the following purposes:

- for the retail sale of goods other than hot food
- as a post office
- for the sale of tickets or as a travel agency
- for the sale of sandwiches or other cold food consumption off the premises
- for hairdressing
- for the direction of funerals
- for the display of goods for sale
- for the hiring out of domestic or personal goods or articles
- for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired
- where the sale, display or service is to visiting members of the public.

3.2 A2 - Financial and professional services

Use for the provision of:

financial services, or

professional services (other than health or medical services), or

any other services (including use as a betting offices) which is appropriate to provide in a shopping area where the services are provided principally to visiting members of the public.

3.3 A3 - Food and Drink

Use for the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises or of hot food for consumption off the premises.

4. Floorspace categories - VOA bulk classes

4.1 Retail

In general the retail bulk class covers premises which serve the public 'off the street'. The class includes (but is not confined to) banks, building society outlets, betting shops, hairdressers and beauty salons, pharmacists, launderettes and dry cleaners, post offices, real estate agents, tax consultants, travel agents, ticket sales, takeaways bars, restaurants, cafes, wine bars, food courts, amusement arcades, showrooms, hyper markets, retail warehouses, superstores and department stores. Also included are markets, car sales showrooms and sales yards, shops selling car parts, farm and factory shops, hobby shops, kiosks, booths, photo booths, craft workshops that display and sell goods and street front repair shops. Some health centres may be valued as retail. The bulk class includes some wholesale premises (others are typically warehouses).

4.2 Offices

In the main the office bulk class includes premises being used as offices in purpose built office buildings, offices over shops and offices in converted houses. A considerable number of premises contain a substantial mix of office and retail space and depending on the mix and local circumstances, they may be valued as offices or retail. Hence those banks, building society outlets, post offices and estate agents with substantial office space are likely to be valued as offices. Non-office activity (e.g. laboratories, instrument manufacture and repair) in an office building or similar circumstances is likely to be valued as an office.

5. Main data sources

5.1 Employment

Employment data were provided by the ONS (Office for National Statistics). The source of employment data is the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI), a new business survey for which both employment (ABI/1) and financial information, including turnover (ABI/2) are collected. The ABI/1 began surveying employment in 1998, replacing the biennial Census of Employment (last run in 1993) and the Annual Employment Survey (AES) which ran from 1995 to 1998.

In the ABI/1 survey, totals are obtained covering the whole of a business. These totals are then apportioned across the business's sites using information about the structure of the business, which is held on the Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR). By this method, aggregate statistics for the whole business population, analysed by industry and geography are produced. Approximately 78,000 reporting units are selected for each year's survey.

5.2 Floorspace and rateable value

Floorspace data compiled by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) of the Inland Revenue was used as the source for floorspace data. The information comes from administrative databases used by the VOA in the process of assessing the value of non-domestic property in England and Wales. Data is held for individual units of occupation or hereditaments, which include groups of buildings, individual buildings, and parts of buildings (for example, an office building let in floors). Most of these hereditaments are classified as one of four bulk classes (retail, offices, factories, and warehouses), with the remainder (including hotels, public houses, libraries and leisure premises) in a non-bulk class.

The retail and office floorspace used is measured by taking the net internal area, which excludes common areas such as stairwells and shared foyers. Structural walls, lift shafts and columns are also excluded. This definition is not the same as the sales space for shops as sales space further excludes areas such as storage. Crown properties, including central

government offices, were added to the VOA's databases in April 2000 and are included in the floorspace data set.

Rateable value information is drawn from the 1995 and 2000 rating list and has been aggregated into the same categories as the floorspace. Care should be taken though when dividing rateable value by floorspace since the rateable value data are based on valuations two years prior to the list.

The Town and Country Planning use classes are not currently available in the VOA data and therefore use classes had to be derived from the existing VOA data classifications.