

## Scottish Postcode Directory 2021/1

February 2021

### Introduction

The Scottish Postcode Directory (SPD) bulletin contains specific information about each release of the Postcode Index and accompanying spatial data.

The Postcode Index links live and deleted postcodes to administrative, health, statistical and other areas. It also contains the Gridlink® one metre grid reference or National Records of Scotland (NRS) assigned grid references. The SPD is produced by NRS Geography, who provides geographic support to the Scottish Government (SG) and its associated agencies, as well as other organisations.

NRS have implemented the Government Statistical Service (GSS) standard 9-character codes for statistical geographies into the SPD. The SG maintains the 'Standard Geographic Codes Register – Scotland' and is responsible for assigning new geographies with a nine character code for Scotland. The register is available on the ['Small Area Statistics – Reference Material'](#) section of the Scottish Government website. Users are encouraged to adopt these standard names and codes, as they are the recognised standard to be used for National Statistics publications. More information on National Statistics can be found on the [UK Statistics Authority](#) website.

### Latest Statistics

The data is based on the January 2021 release of Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF) and contains:

	All postcodes	Live postcodes	Deleted postcodes
<b>All postcodes</b>	241,136	159,003	82,133
<b>Small User</b>	191,934	153,337	38,597
<b>Large User</b>	49,202	5,666	43,536
<i>Small User Linked<sup>1</sup></i>	19,242	3,849	15,393
<i>PO Boxes</i>	29,960	1,817	28,143
The number of live, digitised small user postcodes <sup>2</sup> is 152,133.			

<sup>1</sup> Small User Linked: The Small User postcode that contains the grid reference of the Large User postcode.

<sup>2</sup> Live digitised small user postcodes: There are 1,204 live, undigitised small user postcodes. These postcodes were planned for 'administrative' purposes; and cannot be digitised as they have no distinctive geographical position.

## 1. Updates since 2020/2

### 1.1 COVID-19

On 23 March the Prime Minister advised that people should work from home where possible to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. NRS took the decision to close the buildings following this announcement and we have been working remotely since.

Due to this situation it has added additional time on our operations and how we send data out to customers.

As ever, we are trying our best to keep things moving in a timely manner and we thank you for your patience during this time.

### 1.2 Geographies

There have been no changes to the geographies on the SPD Postcode Index.

### 1.3 Boundaries

Our continuous postcode improvement work using the latest Scottish Address Register data is ongoing.

We have also reviewed our multi-storey postcode boundaries to ensure they are digitised as concentric polygons. This review found that 15 postcodes needed to be re-digitised.

### 1.4 Scotland's Census 2022

Scotland's next Census is moving to March 2022 due to the impact of COVID-19, as announced on 27 July 2020.

The decision was not taken lightly. However, the quality of the census data must remain robust, and by moving to 2022 NRS can continue to deliver a census which ensures the highest possible response rate from people across Scotland, to allow government, local authorities and key services plan for every element of public life, from building homes to NRS support.

### 1.5 Stakeholder engagement exercise on draft Census Geographic Boundaries

As part of work leading up to the 2022 Census, colleagues in the Scottish Government and National Records of Scotland produced draft versions of new Data Zone (DZ) and Output Area (OA) boundaries. These were created to allow processes to be tested on creation of OA, potential issues with OA design and allow SG to access impact on DZ.

Due to COVID-19 we have been unable to respond to individual queries. Our GIS colleagues in Scottish Government who are working with us on this project are currently providing analytical support for COVID-19 resilience work. As such, it is going to take us a bit more time than we anticipated to respond with comments. We are very grateful for users taking the time to provide comments and feedback on this exercise. Please be assured that we will respond, once we have capacity.

Final OA and DZ boundaries will be based on results from the 2022 Census, rather than the Scottish Address Directory and population estimates used for these draft boundaries. It is also intended that there will be a public consultation on the final post-census DZ boundaries.

## 2. Known Errors

Corrections and identified omissions to the data content of the SPD Index and/or Spatial data are included on the subsequent SPD release.

### 2.1 Postcode Index – Assignment of 2011 Intermediate Zone

Following on from the 2020/2 bulletin, we are in the process of upgrading the software we use to create the Postcode Index.

As we are aware of the wrong assignment caused for TD6 9LQ in respect of the 2011 Intermediate Zone we have applied a manual fix as an interim measure.

### 2.2 Postcode Index – Islands 2020

There were 37 Large User postcodes that have a split postcode for their 'LinkedSmallUserPostcode' that were not receiving an assignment to Islands 2020. We have investigated this anomaly and updated our postcode management system to rectify this issue.

## 3. Changing Geographies

### 3.1 2019 Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

On 14 January 2019, the Local Government Boundary Commission began reviews of electoral arrangements for the 6 Council areas specified in the [Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#).

These are:

- Argyll and Bute,
- Highland,
- Na h-Eileanan Siar,
- North Ayrshire,
- Orkney Islands, and
- Shetland Islands.

The new islands legislation allows for use of 1 or 2 member wards, in addition to the current multi-member wards, where a ward includes an inhabited island.

More information can be found on the [Reviews in Progress](#) section of the [Local Government Boundary Commission's website](#).

### 3.2 Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries at Cardowan by Steps

Following on from the Cardowan by Steps Review ([SSI 2018/308](#)) which came into effect on 1 April 2019, the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland has completed an Interim Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries (Regions and Constituencies) at Cardowan by Steps.

The Commission submitted their report and final to Scottish Ministers, on 18 March 2020.



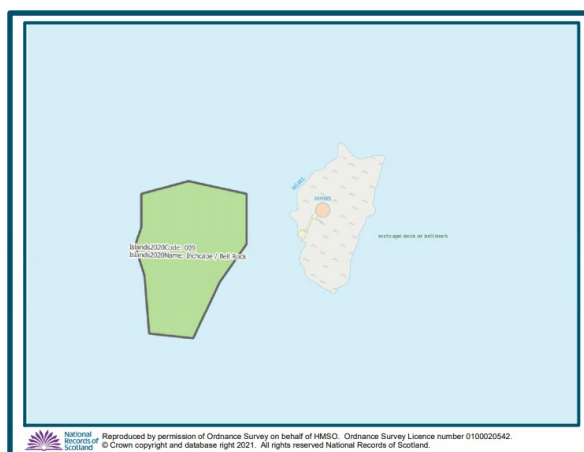
More information can be found on the [Reviews in Progress](#) section of the [Local Government Boundary Commission's website](#).

### 3.3 Ordnance Survey Positional Accuracy Improvement

We were advised in December 2020 that Bell Rock positional improvement occurred in October 2020 and was released in November OS MasterMap Topography Layer.

This discrepancy was due to original co-ordinates used to triangulate the position within MasterMap. New aerial imagery flown as part of Ordnance Survey's National Cyclic Revision allowed them to correct the error on their datasets.

Due to this, we will in turn update our Islands map, and the position of the grid reference for the deleted small user postcode DD11 2PTB. The image below shows the current placement on our Islands2020 map against the new placement of Bell Rock on OS MasterMap.



#### 4. Differences in Scottish data between the Scottish Postcode Directory (SPD) Postcode Index and the Office for National Statistics Postcode Directory (ONSPD)

##### 4.1 Postcode History

The SPD Postcode Index provides full postcode history; the ONSPD provides the most current version of the postcode only (as shown below).

SPD Postcode Index:

Postcode	Date of Introduction	Date of Deletion
G31 4QD	01-Aug-73	01-May-95
G31 4QD	20-Apr-12	06-Jul-12
G31 4QD	17-Apr-13	07-Aug-13
G31 4QD	16-Jan-14	

ONSPD:

Postcode	Date of Introduction	Date of Deletion
G31 4QD	201310	

##### 4.2 Postcode Updates

Due to differing update regimes existing between ONS and NRS, the dates for introduction and deletion can differ. The SPD Postcode Index contains quarterly PAF updates, whereas the ONSPD contains monthly PAF updates.

##### 4.3 Split postcodes

Unlike the SPD Postcode Index the ONSPD does not recognise split postcodes. Instead the ONSPD holds the postcode as a whole record.

##### 4.4 PO Box postcodes

Users are reminded that grid references for PO Box addresses are assigned to the local Royal Mail sorting/delivery office and are deemed low quality.

#### 5. Supply arrangements

##### 5.1 Data Formats

The 'Cut Version' of the Scottish Postcode Directory is available for free download from the [Scottish Postcode Directory](#) page of the National Records of Scotland website.

- Boundary files      Shape format  
Public Sector Geospatial Agreement (PGSA) members only
- Index files            CSV, or Microsoft (MS) Access 2000 compatible format
- Lookup files         CSV, or Microsoft (MS) Access 2000 compatible format

- 5.2 Full Version  
The 'Full Version' of the Scottish Postcode Directory can be supplied for a charge (a royalty payment to Royal Mail), please contact the [Geography Customer Services team](#).

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## 7. Enquiries

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