

West Sussex Census Geography: Briefing Note

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Author	<i>Neil Thomas</i> <i>Insight Team, WSCC</i> Neil.Thomas@westsussex.gov.uk

Note about the author

This document has been produced by West Sussex County Council Insight Team. The Insight Team works to ensure that West Sussex County Council and partners have a deep understanding of people who; live, work, visit and invest in West Sussex.

The Insight Team is part of the Strategic Development Directorate, which enables the Council's commissioning cycle by providing strategic direction and support for each of the cycle's main stages; Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Review.

Contact: insight.team@westsussex.gov.uk

All data and analysis provided by the WSCC Insight Team is depersonalised and therefore sits outside the remit of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Data Source

All information on Census geography is provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) via their website. Information on 2011 Census geography can be found on the following page:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/census-data/2011-census-prospectus/new-developments-for-2011-census-results/2011-census-geography/index.html>

Digital boundaries for 2011 Census geographies can be downloaded from the following page:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/products/census/spatial/2011/index.html>

Output Areas (OAs)

Background

Output areas (OAs) were created following the 2001 Census specifically for the output of census estimates. The OA is the lowest geographical level at which census estimates are provided.

2001 Census OAs were built from clusters of adjacent unit postcodes, but as they reflected the characteristics of the actual census data they could not be generated until after data processing. They were designed to have similar population sizes and be as socially homogenous as possible based on tenure of household and dwelling type. Urban/rural mixes were avoided where possible; OAs preferably consisted entirely of urban postcodes or entirely of rural postcodes. They had approximately regular shapes and tended to be constrained by obvious boundaries such as major roads.

2001 Census OAs were based on postcodes as at Census Day and fit within the boundaries of 2003 statistical Wards and Parishes (coterminous). If a postcode straddled an electoral ward/division or parish boundary, it was split between two or more OAs.

OAs were also required to have a specified minimum size to ensure the confidentiality of data. The minimum OA size in 2001 was 40 resident households and 100 resident people but the recommended size was rather larger, at 125 households. These size thresholds meant that unusually small wards and parishes were incorporated into larger OAs.

2011 Output Areas

For the 2011 Census, all Output Areas align to local authority boundaries, including those that changed between 2003 and 2011. The average population of an OA has increased from 297 resident people in 2001 to 309 resident people in 2011. Maintaining stability as far as possible was key for the 2011 Census. However, some modification of existing boundaries has taken place where:

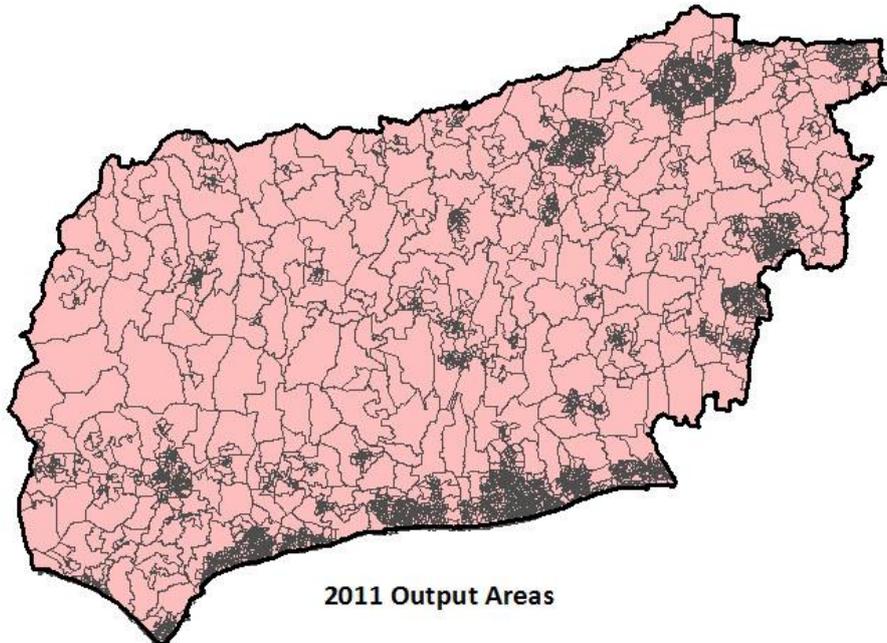
- Significant population change has occurred since the 2001 Census.
- Local authority boundaries have changed between 2003 and 2011.
- Areas have been independently assessed as lacking social homogeneity when they were created for 2001.

Splits were applied where an output area population exceeded 625 people or 250 households. Merges were applied where an output area population fell below 100 people or 40 households. The redesigned 2011 Output Areas:

- Do not align to ward and parish boundaries that have changed since 2003.
- Do not necessarily align to real-world features.
- Contain more than 100 persons and 40 households, even if they contain one or more communal establishments.

West Sussex

In 2001 there were 2,591 Output Areas in West Sussex. This figure has gone up by 54 to 2,645 for the 2011 Census. In five locations 2001 OAs were merged due to a decline in population, but the majority of changes were splits of existing OAs where the population or household number has increased since 2001.



Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)

Background

Super Output Areas were designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics and are built up from groups of Output Areas. Statistics for Lower Layer Super Output Areas were originally released in 2004 for England and Wales.

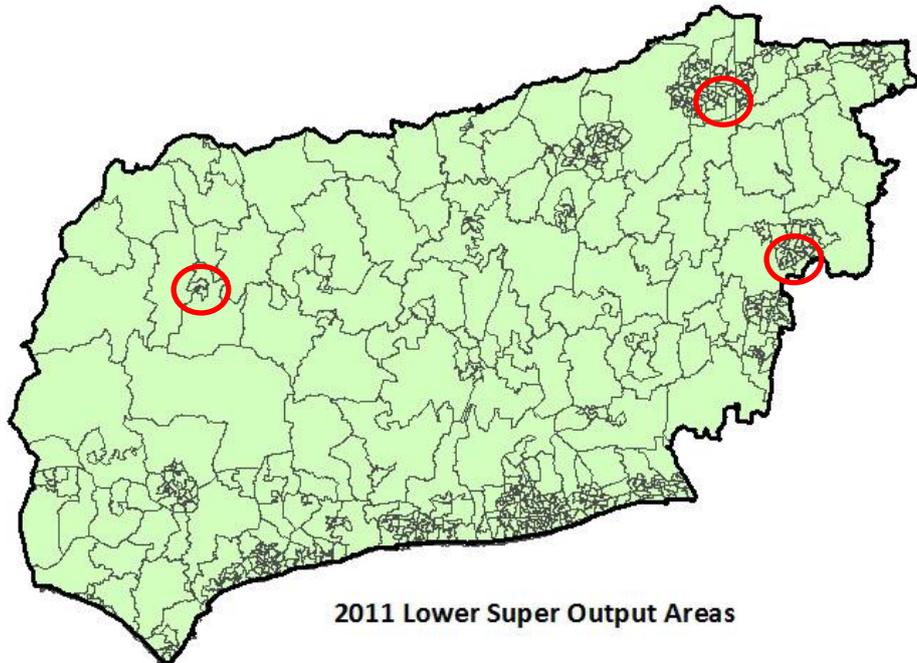
2011 Lower Super Output Areas

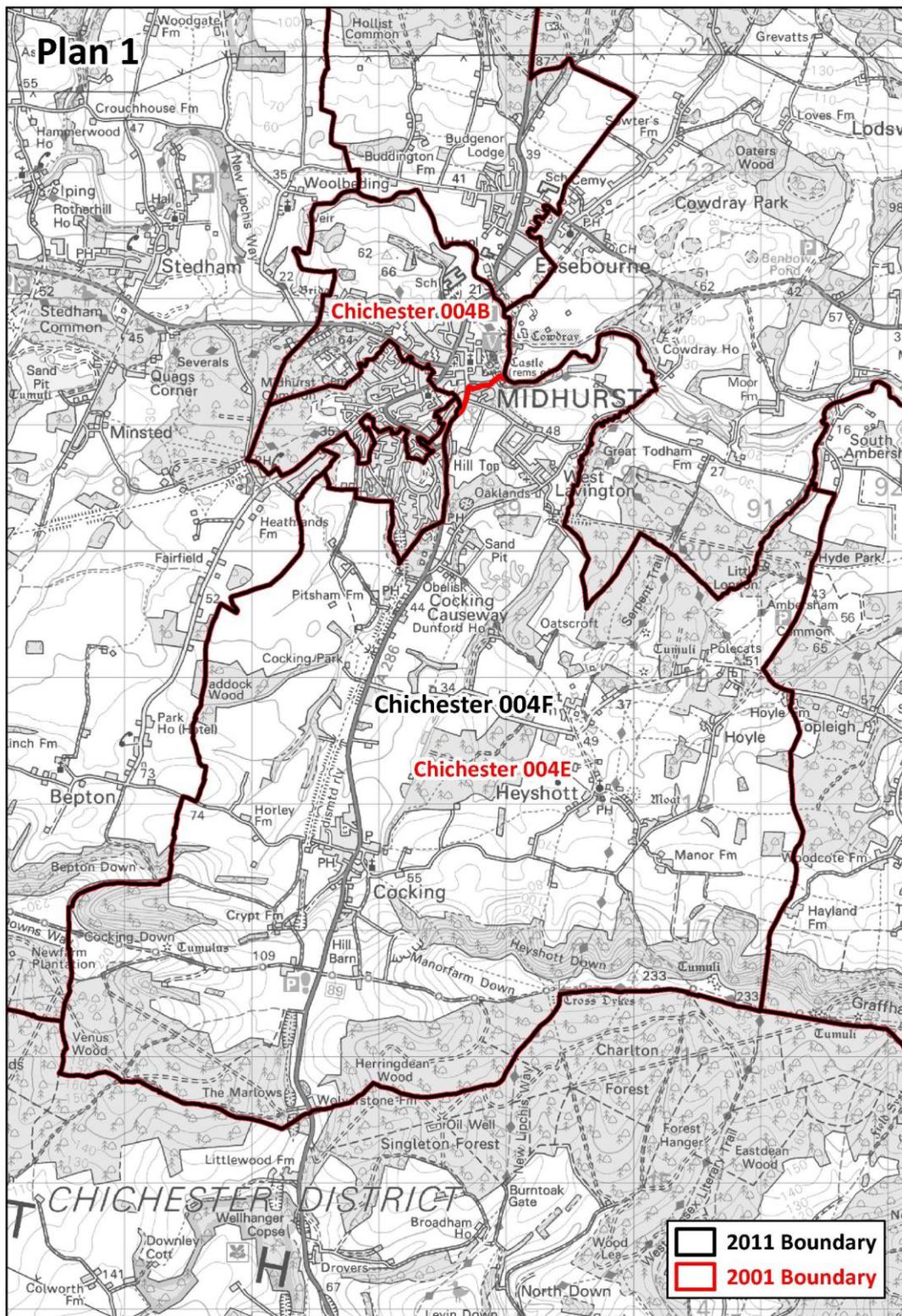
LSOAs created following the 2001 Census continue to exist unless a significant population change occurred between 2001 and 2011, and household minimum and maximum thresholds were breached. Simplistically, where populations have become too big, the LSOA has been split into two or more areas; where populations have become too small the LSOA has been merged with an adjacent one.

LSOAs conform to minimum and maximum thresholds for population and numbers of households. They contain a minimum of 1,000 and maximum 3,000 people, as well as a minimum 400 and maximum 1,200 households.

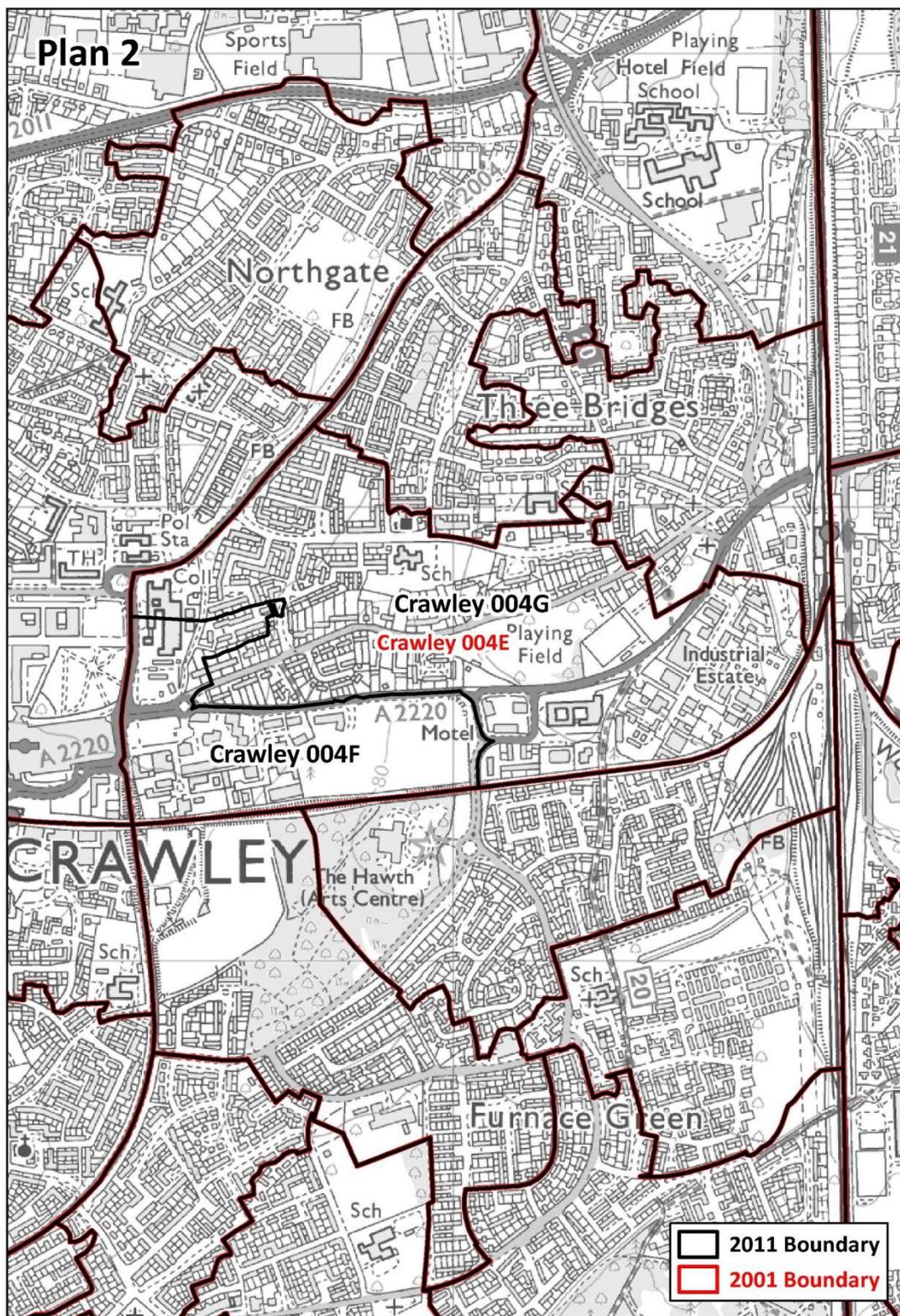
West Sussex

In 2001 there were 503 LSOAs in West Sussex. This number has gone up by two to 505 LSOAs for the 2011 Census. Boundaries have changed in three locations, maps of which can be found on the following pages.





2011 LSOA Chichester 004F at Midhurst has been formed by merging the 2001 LSOAs Chichester 004E and Chichester 004B.



2011 LSOAs Crawley 004F and Crawley 004G to the east of the town centre have been formed by splitting the 2001 LSOA Crawley 004E.

Middle Super Output Areas (MSOAs)

Background

Super Output Areas were designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics and are built up from groups of Output Areas. Statistics for Middle Layer Super Output Areas were originally released in 2004 for England and Wales.

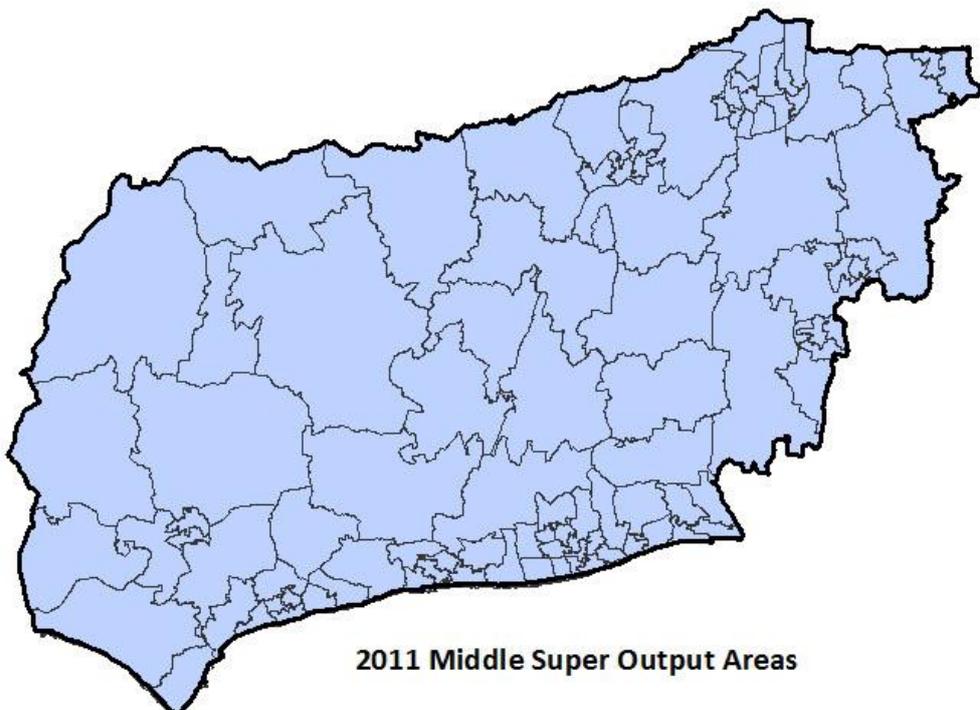
2011 Middle Super Output Areas

MSOAs created following the 2001 Census continue to exist unless a significant population change occurred between 2001 and 2011, and household minimum and maximum thresholds were breached.

MSOAs conform to minimum and maximum thresholds for population and numbers of households. They contain a minimum of 5,000 and maximum 15,000 people, as well as a minimum 2,000 and maximum 6,000 households.

West Sussex

In 2001 there were 100 MSOAs in West Sussex. This number has remained the same for the 2011 Census, and no changes to MSOA boundaries were required.



2011 Middle Super Output Areas

Workplace Zones

Background

A new output geography, workplace zones, has been produced from 2011 Census data. These zones are more suitable for disseminating workplace-based statistics and outputs.

Output Areas were originally created for the analysis of population statistics using residential population and household data. As a result, they are of limited use for workplace statistics as there is no consistency in the number of workers or businesses contained within an output area.

Workplace zones have been created by splitting and merging the 2011 Output Areas to produce a workplace geography that contains consistent numbers of workers. The workplace zones therefore align to the existing output area hierarchy.

Workplace zones are constrained to middle layer super output areas (MSOAs) to provide consistency between the output area and workplace zone geographies, and to allow comparison of the 2001 and 2011 Census workplace outputs at the middle layer super output area level.

West Sussex

There are 792 Workplace Zones in West Sussex.

