

Geography Guide

March 2014

This is a very short guide to some of the key geographical boundaries within the Cheshire West and Chester Council area.

Administrative boundaries (relate to national and local government areas)

- **46 wards** - electoral wards are the base unit of UK administrative geography, and are the areas from which local authority councillors are elected. New ward boundaries were created in Cheshire West and Chester in 2011. Cheshire West and Chester Council has 75 councillors and so wards are a mix of 1, 2 and 3 Member (Councillor) wards. The wards vary greatly in size, both in terms of geographical area and population.
- **166 civil parishes** - parishes and their councils are the most local level of government. Unlike electoral wards, parishes are not found in all parts of England and there are 2 large unparished areas in the area (one in Chester and one in Ellesmere Port). Not all parishes have a parish council and parish councils can cover more than one parish area. If there are fewer than 200 parishioners or if the parishioners do not want one, decisions can be taken at parish meetings instead. Administrative parishes are also known as 'civil parishes', this distinguishes them from ecclesiastical (church) parishes.

2011 Statistical boundaries (created by the Office for National Statistics) (there was a previous 2001 version)

- **1109 output areas (OAs)** – output areas have been used for data collection and output of Census data since the 2001 Census. They have a minimum size of 40 resident households and a minimum population of 100 but the recommended size was rather larger at 125 households.
- **212 lower layer super output areas (LLSOAs or LSOAs)** - these are a geography designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics. They are built up from groups of output areas (typically five). They have a minimum population of 1,000 and a mean population of 1,500.
- **47 middle layer super output areas (MLSOAs or MSOAs)** - these are a geography designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics. They are built up from groups of lower layer super output areas. They have a minimum population of 5,000 and a mean population of 7,200.

Health boundaries

- **2 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)** – There are two CCGs (West Cheshire CCG and Vale Royal CCG) that together cover the same geographical area as Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Other boundaries

- **4 localities** – Cheshire West and Chester is made up of four localities (Chester, Ellesmere Port, Rural and Northwich and Winsford). Locality teams are responsible for managing, planning and co-ordinating the strategic direction of matters concerning their local communities. The teams have responsibility for ensuring that all services are delivered in a way that suits the requirements of each community.

Map geographical boundaries

You can view standard geographical boundaries (including wards, parishes, MSOAs, LSOAs and OAs) using the map viewer on [Neighbourhood Statistics](#). The user can type in the name of the place they want to view on the map and then tick to select the geographies they want to show on the map or alternatively zoom in on the map and then select the boundaries they want to display.

Further information

- For more detailed information, the Office for National Statistics has a [Beginners Guide to Geography](#).