

SERVICE DISTRICTS: PROPOSED GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE

1. PURPOSE

The purpose is to divide the city into area units which can serve as an organisational framework for tiers 1 and 2 of the Children's Service and for Adult Care Services. Such areas are referred to in some papers as 'Full Service Districts' or 'Service Districts'.

2. CRITERIA

Several criteria have been taken into account in approaching the task:

2.1 Natural Communities

The primary consideration in deciding the area units is what makes sense on the ground. In effect this means keeping intact what might be seen as 'natural communities'. This principle, which has received widespread support from those consulted to date, is what will give the arrangements robustness over time.

2.2 Existing administrative boundaries

A wide range of administrative boundaries exist at present, and these have been taken into account in proposing the area units. These include the Primary Care Trust boundaries, GP commissioning groups, school families/catchments, Surestart areas, Social Services older people's service boundaries, Council wards, and the 12 Action Areas (i.e. the areas covered by area panels) to which some services have aligned their boundaries. Dialogue has also begun with South Yorkshire Police who are currently reviewing their operational areas in Sheffield.

In some areas of the city the various existing administrative boundaries conflict with each other – for example school catchments and the 12 Action Areas do not align at all well. So compromises will clearly be necessary. The approach taken has been to assume there are no 'sacred cows'. (i.e. no one set of administrative boundaries which has absolute priority over the others or over natural communities).

It should be noted that some of the existing administrative boundaries are not precise 'hard' boundaries but 'fuzzy' or 'permeable'. This is true of PCT boundaries, GP commissioning groups and school catchments, for example.

It should also be noted that some administrative boundaries are easier to change than others. For example, the Council ward boundaries are fixed by statute, whereas the 12 action area boundaries do not have a statutory basis.

2.3 Building Blocks

With minor exceptions the area units have been built up from the 100 geographical neighbourhoods formulated jointly by partner agencies. These neighbourhoods form the basis of a common neighbourhood information system for the city and so there are clear benefits in using them as building blocks as far as possible.

2.4 Size and Number of Areas

A key consideration in drawing up a geographical structure for the new service is the preferred number (and therefore size) of the new area units. On one hand a larger number of smallish units could maximise local identity and ownership on the ground. On the other hand, a smaller number of large units could maximise scale economies, flexibility and management robustness. On balance we have tended to the latter end of the spectrum, with a relatively small number of large area units. As managerial and staffing resources are likely to be tight, the managerial robustness and efficiency which larger units could bring is likely to be important.

One option which has been raised in consultation is that some of the very large or diverse areas could be subdivided for managerial purposes, with two divisions operating within them rather than one – at least for some services. We feel this idea could be an effective way of combining management robustness with local identity and ownership, and is worthy of further examination.

In any solution there is likely to be some variation in the size and levels of need of the various area units proposed. In general we have tried to create units with a ratio of no more than 2:1 between the largest/heaviest need area and the smallest/lightest need area on any indicator. It is assumed that within this range, resources/staffing could then be scaled to fit the level of need. It should be noted that the areas with the biggest populations of children are not necessarily the areas with the biggest populations of children in need. Nor are they necessarily the areas with the biggest numbers of older people or people with disabilities. The exercise, then, is one of balancing these various factors to give a 'best fit' solution which works well overall and avoids extreme variations in size or levels of service need.

Whatever solution is adopted, it should be recognised that the area units created will not be wholly self-contained. The arrangements must be sufficiently flexible to secure effective cross-boundary working.

3. APPROACH

The natural geography of Sheffield is shaped by strong physical features, and in particular by the river valleys of the Lower Don, the Upper Don, the Sheaf and the Upper Rivelin. These are steep-sided valleys and with their rivers and major roads and (in three cases) railways, form significant barriers to cross-valley movement. We have treated these as fundamental dividing lines, as they bound 'natural communities and are followed by most (though not all) existing administrative boundaries.

Having divided the city into four geographical 'blocks', the question then becomes one of how best to sub divide them into service districts. The paper will deal with each block in turn.

The appendices contain a map of the proposed service districts (Appendix A), demographic information (Appendix B), and details of how the 100 neighbourhoods fit into the proposed Service Districts (Appendix C). (The service district names are for identification purposes only; names would need to be decided upon when districts are finally agreed).

4. SOUTH EAST BLOCK (Lower Don to Sheaf)

This is a large block extending from the Lower Don Valley to the Sheaf Valley. A key issue was whether to divide this block into two or three area units. Having considered the options, we would propose that the block should be divided into two large area units, each of which could be sub-divided, if so desired, for operational purposes.

4.1 Arbourthorne/Manor/Darnall

Population	55813	Population 65+	9068
Population 0-19	15326	People 60+ on income support	3823
0-17s in households on benefit	5386	Older people receiving home care	580
Child Social Services cases	464	Disabled service users	472

This area unit is socially diverse, with rather different populations in Darnall and Tinsley from those in Manor and Arbourthorne.

The unit has fewer than the average number of children. However, in this area levels of need are very high and there are more than the average number of children in need (for these purposes we have used open Children's Social Services cases and children living in households on benefit as indicators of need). Likewise the area has fewer than average numbers of older people yet high levels of need, and above average numbers of disabled service users.

The area is entirely within the South East PCT area. It approximates to the Council wards of Arbourthorne, Manor Castle, and Darnall. It covers most of the Manor/Castle/Woodthorpe Action Area, most of Darnall and around half Park/Heeley.

In the Manor and Arbourthorne parts of the area, there is a good alignment with the catchment areas of Myrtle Springs and Waltheof schools which jointly are being considered for academy status. All Saints RC School is also located in this area.

A key question is whether Darnall and Tinsley (which have a relatively small population) best fit with this area unit or with the Handsworth area to the south east. On balance we feel there are strong enough children's service ties to put Darnall with Manor. Approximately half of the children in Darnall neighbourhood attend Waltheof school (five times as many as any other school). There is also close working in the Young Children's Service and on projects such as On Track.

Tinsley is difficult to place. The area is within the Hinde House School catchment though only 25% of the children attend Hinde House School with the rest attending a scatter of schools including schools in Rotherham. On balance, we would recommend that it should be placed with Darnall, with which it shares some social and cultural characteristics.

4.2 Mosborough/Handsworth

Population	8998	Population 65+	16098
Population 0-19	21341	People 60+ on income support	4494
0-17s in households on benefit	3550	Older people receiving home care	888
Child Social Services cases	329	Disabled service users	521

This unit has a significantly larger 0-19 population than the average, and around the average number of children in need. It has a large elderly population and large numbers of older people on income support and of disabled people.

The area is entirely within the South East PCT area. It is aligned closely to the school catchment areas of Westfield, Birley, City and Handsworth Grange Schools.

The area corresponds closely to the five Council wards of Mosborough, Beighton, Birley, Richmond and Handsworth.

The area includes the whole of the South East Action Area, plus the Handsworth part of Darnall Action Area, the Woodthorpe part of Manor/Castle/Woodthorpe, and the Base Green part of the South.

The solution proposed here works reasonably well in terms of school families/catchments, but less well in terms of GP commissioning groups. Alternative options have been advanced by the South East PCT to try to get a better fit with GP commissioning groups. These are discussed at Appendix D.

4.3 Greenhill-Gleadless Valley

Population	60216	Population 65+	11700
Population 0-19	13829	Population 60+ on income support	2830
0-17s in households on benefit	2386	Older people receiving home care	653
Child Social Services Cases	266	Disabled service users	318

This area unit has a rather smaller population and lower numbers in need than the average. However the area contains a number of high need areas such as Lowedges, Batemoor/Jordanthorpe and Gleadless Valley.

The area is virtually all within the South West PCT area – the area includes all the Gleadless Valley area, where the PCT boundary is rather fuzzy.

The area approximates to the catchments of Meadowhead and Newfield Secondary Schools.

The area closely aligns to the City Council wards of Gleadless Valley, Graves Park, and Beauchief & Greenhill. Bradway (which is in Dore and Totley ward and the South West Action Area) has also been included in this area as it lies in the Meadowhead school catchment, and is cut off from Dore by a very steep valleyside.

The area includes most of the South Action Area, the Heeley and Norton Lees parts of Park/Heeley, and the Bradway part of the South West.

5. SOUTH WESTERN BLOCK

This block is physically well-defined by the Sheaf Valley in the east and the upper Rivelin Valley in the north. It includes all the south west suburbs as well as the city centre.

5.1 Rivelin to Sheaf

Population	114,577	Population 65+	16264
Population 0-19	26,715	Population 60+ on income support	2436
0-17s in households on benefit	2,028	Older people receiving home care	791
Child Social Services cases	239	Disabled service users	387

This is the largest area, with large child and elderly population. It contains some areas of deprivation near the city centre including Sharrow and Broomhall. However levels of need are generally low in what is a predominantly affluent area. The number of children living in households on benefit is the lowest of the seven service districts.

The area is located partly in South West PCT, and partly in West PCT. The boundary between the West and South West PCTs is not geographically strong. In places it is very awkward (e.g. in the Sharrow area). On balance we feel it is more appropriate to use the very strong physical feature of the Rivelin Valley as the fundamental boundary between north and south on the western side of the city.

The Rivelin-Sheaf area approximates to the Council wards of Dore & Topley, Ecclesall, Netheredge, Fulwood, Crookes, Broomhill and Central.

It includes all the South West Action Area (except Bradway), all of the Broomhill, Central and Nether Edge Action Area, and the Crookes part of Netherthorpe/Hillsborough/Walkley.

The area takes in the secondary school catchments of King Ecgbert, Abbeydale Grange, Silverdale, High Storrs, King Edwards and Tapton. It also includes Note Dame RC School. The school catchments are awkward in shape, some very elongated, extending from the city centre to the outer edge of the city. It is therefore felt that the most effective solution is to incorporate all the catchments into one single area unit.

6. NORTH WESTERN BLOCK

This unit is physically well defined in the east by the Upper Don Valley, and in the South West by the upper Rivelin Valley. However there is an area which is less well-defined around Walkley and Netherthorpe,

where the most appropriate boundary with the Rivelin-Sheaf area unit is an issue for consideration. The block is not of a population size or level of need where it needs dividing into different area units.

6.1 Hillsborough/Upper Don

Population	72,682	Population 65+	12043
Population 0-19	15,999	Population 60+ on income support	
0-17s in households on benefit	2148	Older people receiving home care	674
Child Social Services cases	313	Disabled service users	368

The area is a little below average in child population though significantly below average in the number of children living in households on benefit.

The elderly population is around the average though again below average in the numbers of older people living on benefit. The area approximates to the Council wards of Stocksbridge & Upper Don, Stannington, Hillsborough and Walkley. It covers most of the Hillsborough/Netherthorpe Action Area, the Stocksbridge and Upper Don parts of the North, and the Owlerton part of Southey-Owlerton.

The area unit is located wholly within the West PCT area.

The area approximates to the secondary school catchments of Stocksbridge, Bradfield, Wisewood and Myers Grove. The Upperthorpe/Netherthorpe parts of the King Edwards/Tapton school catchments have been included in this unit as they might be considered to form part of the Upper Don Valley corridor.

7. NORTH EASTERN BLOCK

This block is clearly bounded by the Upper Don and Lower Don Valleys and is a strong geographical unit. It divides naturally into four broad 'communities' – Burngreave, Parson Cross, Shiregreen/Brightside and the Chapeltown/Ecclesfield area. A key question is whether the block should be divided into two or three area units. Both Burngreave and Chapeltown/Ecclesfield have small populations and are of insufficient size to form area units of their own. To divide the block into three units would therefore almost certainly mean having to divide Parson Cross – which would run counter to our fundamental principle of keeping natural communities together. The school catchments are awkward in this area and don't provide much help in reaching a solution. On balance we would recommend dividing the block into two units, each combining two of the natural geographical areas referred to above.

7.1 Parson Cross/Ecclesfield

Population	72377	Population 65+	12360
Population 0-19	17767	Population 60+ on income support	3795
0-17s in households on benefit	3797	Older people receiving home care	743
Child Social Services cases	445	Disabled service users	

This area is bounded by the Upper Don Valley in the west and Barnsley Road in the east. The area has a slightly bigger 0-19 population than the average, though very significantly higher levels of need. The population of older people is likewise slightly above the average, but again the indicators of need both for older people and people with disabilities are significantly above average.

The area is entirely within the North PCT boundaries.

The area includes the Council wards of West and East Ecclesfield, Southey, the Longley part of Firth Park, and the Shirecliffe part of Burngreave ward. It covers most of the Southey/Owlerton Action Area and the Chapeltown/Ecclesfield part of the North Action Area.

The area covers the school catchments of Ecclesfield, Yewlands, part of Chaucer and part of Parkwood. Parkwood catchment is rather awkward and takes in Woodside, which is an integral part of Burngreave community. Likewise Chaucer catchment takes in parts of Hillsborough and Owlerton communities. Following the 'natural community' principle we are recommending that these areas should not be included in the Parson Cross/Ecclesfield area unit, but should sit with their 'natural' communities.

7.2 Shiregreen/Burngreave

Population	47392	Population 65+	7148
Population 0-19	14225	Population 60+ on income support	2651
0-17s in households on benefit	5180	Older people receiving home care	346
Child Social Services cases	456	Disabled service users	370

This area unit is bounded by the Lower Don Valley in the east and Barnsley Road in the west. It comprises two 'natural' areas, Burngreave and Shiregreen/Brightside.

The area has a smaller than average 0-19 population, but high levels of need – particularly the numbers of children living in households on

benefit. In contrast the numbers of older people, older people on benefit and disabled service users are all well below average.

The unit is wholly within the North PCT area.

The area covers the Council wards of Shiregreen & Brightside, Burgreave (except Shirecliffe) and the Firth Park (but not the Longley) part of Firth Park ward. The area is almost identical to the Burngreave and Shiregreen/ Brightside Action Areas combined.

The area covers most of the school catchments of Firth Park, Hinde House (excluding Tinsley), Fir Vale, and the part of the Parkwood catchment which covers Woodside.

8. ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES

In terms of alignment with existing administrative boundaries, the fit with PCTs is reasonably good. One of the area units, Rivelin to Sheaf, significantly crosses PCT boundaries, the others all fall within a single PCT area.

The fit with school catchments is generally good, though there are some localised exceptions. In the north of the city the proposed areas do not fit particularly well with the catchments of Parkwood High School, or to a degree Chaucer (though they do fit reasonably well with where the children actually go to school). The Tinsley/Darnall parts of the Hinde House catchment do not fit well, though again a large proportion of the children living in these areas do not actually attend Hinde House. These areas have been placed in the Manor/Arbourthorne/Darnall district. The Netherthorpe/Uppertorpe parts of the King Edwards and Tipton catchments have been placed in the Hillsborough/Upper Don district. Other than that, the alignment with school catchments is generally strong.

The fit with the new Council wards is good. Of the 28 wards, only one (Firth Park) is seriously split between service districts. Four other wards lose relatively small parts of their areas to neighbouring service districts.. The remaining 23 wards lie wholly within a service district. In general then the alignment with wards is very strong.

The alignment with the 12 Action Areas (and consequently the services which have aligned themselves to these areas) is not very strong, though the suggestion of subdividing some area units for operational purposes could provide the opportunity to improve the alignment in places (e.g. the Shiregreen/Burngreave district could be subdivided in a way which aligned two operational divisions exactly with the Shiregreen/Brightside and Burngreave Action Areas. However such modifications would only offer a partial solution in other areas.

The proposals in this paper are essentially concerned with service organisation rather than local governance. There is nothing intrinsically in the current proposals which requires a change to Action Area boundaries. Having said that, if Council Members and partners wished to re-examine the Area Action boundaries over time to see whether a closer alignment could be achieved with the emerging Service Districts, this is something which could be addressed at a later stage.

COMMENTS

Comments on the proposals should be sent to ron.barrowclough@sheffield.gov.uk by 31 July 2005.

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