



AG Paper (02) 06

## 2001 AREA CLASSIFICATION

- 1 The purpose of this note is to inform Advisory Group Members that the ONS is currently developing the 2001 Area Classification, planned for release in June 2003 concurrently with the main 2001 Census Outputs.
- 2 Following the 1971, 1981 and 1991 Censuses the then OPCS produced general-purpose area classifications based on census information for government geographies and using a broadly common methodology. The 1991 edition provided a classification for Local Authorities, Health Authorities and Wards in Great Britain with the Local and Health Authority version being revised in 1999 to take account of Local Government and Health Authority boundary changes. The 1991 Area Classification was one of the most successful outputs from that Census and ONS continues to receive a steady stream of enquiries relating to the classification. The primary users are Local Government and Health Authorities, other Government Departments and Researchers as well as those from within ONS.
- 3 Initial consultation provided evidence of demand for a general-purpose classification based on administrative boundaries and down to Census Output Area level. Consultation also indicated that users considered it more important to obtain an optimal and updateable classification through the incorporation of different variables and data sources than to maintain continuity with previous classifications. In this context ONS has decided to produce a general-purpose classification following the 2001 Census.
- 4 No final decisions have been made as to the level of geography, variables used and method of classification.
- 5 Discussions are currently underway to explore the feasibility of extending the 2001 Classification to the United Kingdom.

### Action for Advisory Groups

- 6 **Members are invited to note the ONS proposal to produce an Area Classification from the 2001 Census.** Any initial queries should be directed to [heather.wagstaff@ons.gov.uk](mailto:heather.wagstaff@ons.gov.uk)

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