

Boundary maps

Maps provide an essential tool for reflecting the boundaries of physical features on the ground, and for indicating the line between areas of jurisdiction.

Some maps focus specifically on boundaries, including county and district, parliamentary constituency, ward and parish, or census enumeration boundaries.

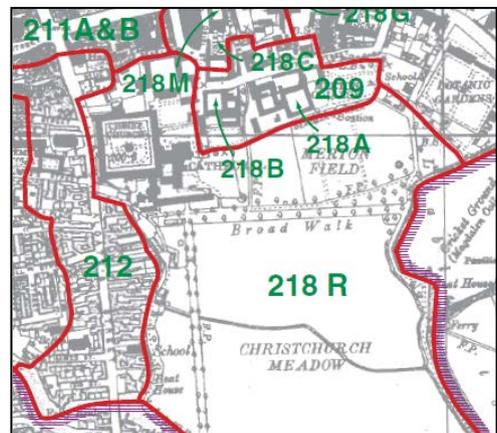


General maps

- By their very nature most maps show the boundaries between features or areas, whether between neighbouring parcels of land, or between neighbouring parishes and districts.
- You can particularly rely on [Ordnance Survey maps](#) to show you the accurate contemporary boundary line between administrative areas, and it has been systematically recording public boundaries since 1841. The six-inch / 1:10,000 and 1:2500 large scale maps are the best source of such boundary information.
- Richard Oliver's book, *Ordnance Survey maps: a concise guide for historians* (2005), pages 68-71 [ref: 942/(OLI)], has more information on the depiction of public boundaries on Ordnance Survey maps.
- With boundary reform legislation from the 1840s to 1880s, most Ordnance Survey maps were too late to record the boundaries of 'historic' or 'ancient' parishes.

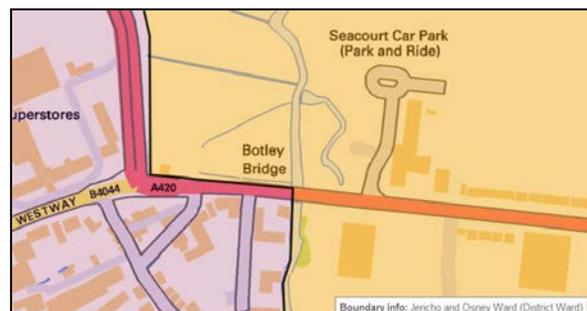
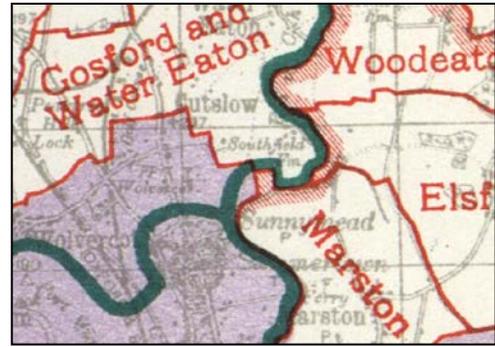
Historic parishes

- Andrew Bryant's *Map of Oxfordshire*, surveyed in 1823-4 [ref: MC3: MPC 150], is useful for indicating ancient parish boundaries.
- With Ordnance Survey maps largely coming too late, there has been no countrywide published resource to indicate historic parish boundaries, but this is rectified by Roger Kain and Richard Oliver in their *Historic parishes of England and Wales: an electronic map of boundaries before 1850* (2001) [ref: MR11: 352/(KAI)].
 - This is a three CD-ROM based collection of digital maps in PDF format which attempts to capture the line of all pre-1850 parishes.
 - Based predominantly on evidence from c. 1840 tithe maps and late 18th / early 19th century inclosure maps, the parish or township boundaries are indicated in red on a grey tone one-inch Ordnance Survey base map.
 - Reference numbers on the maps link places to the gazetteer and metadata in the accompanying printed index and handbook, *Historic parishes of England & Wales: an electronic map of Boundaries before 1850 with a gazetteer and metadata* (2001) [ref: OV 352/(KAI)].
- The [Institute of Historical Research](#) has more information about the Kain and Oliver electronic map.



Administrative Area Diagrams

- In addition to showing administrative boundaries on its regular topographical maps, the Ordnance Survey also published special maps in a series of county Administrative Area Diagrams.
- At a 1:100,000 or 1:126,720 scale, these maps indicate administrative boundaries for borough, urban and rural district and civil parish; some also show parliamentary constituency and petty sessional division boundaries.
- At this small scale the maps do not allow for detailed depiction of boundaries, but they are an invaluable guide to the administrative status of various areas.
- Local sheets held by Oxfordshire History Centre [ref: A:MC20, A:MC3 6.1A 352 or A:MC3 13.1 352] include:
 - Oxfordshire - 1917, 1933, 1973, 1974, 1975
 - Berkshire - 1934, 1967, 1974
 - Berks, Bucks and Oxon - 1984, 1989, 1992
 - South East England - 1996
- [Vision of Britain](#) has an extensive collection of historic boundary maps for England and Wales, including:
 - Administrative Area Diagrams, 1920-1931
 - Boundary Commission maps, 1832-1917
- Follow [this link](#) for Vision of Britain boundary maps for Oxfordshire and Berkshire.
- The fullest collection of small scale Administrative Area Diagrams (1888-1979) is held by [The National Archives](#).
- The Ordnance Survey no longer publishes the paper-based Administrative Area Diagrams. In recent Ordnance Survey maps, detailed administrative and electoral boundary information and is now incorporated into our digital mapping datasets for Oxfordshire, available on public computers in our Searchroom.
- You can also view current administrative and electoral boundaries through the Ordnance Survey's [Election Maps](#) website, and in a more limited fashion through [Open Data Viewer](#).



Census

- Boundary maps for Oxfordshire census enumeration districts (the smallest unit of census geography), as used in the 1971, 1981 and 1991 national censuses, are available at a scale of 6" to 1 mile (1:10,560) or 1:10,000.
- The boundary maps are an essential companion to the detailed small area statistical data published after each census. Our holdings are as follows:
 - 1971 maps [ref: A:MC3 7.1-7.4] ; data [ref: MR8]
 - 1981 maps [ref: A:MC3 7.5-7.7] ; data on microfiche [ref: MR8]
 - 1991 maps [ref: A:MC3 7.8] ; data on CD-ROM [ref: MR11: 312/(1991)].
- 2001 and 2011 census data and boundary maps (down to output area, the smallest geographical unit) are fully available through the Office for National Statistics [Neighbourhood Statistics](#) website.
- Use the Neighbourhood Statistics [Boundary Viewer](#) to help determine the right administrative jurisdiction before selecting a census dataset.



Postcodes

- Maps showing the boundaries of postal geography have been published by the Royal Mail in conjunction with Bartholomew Ltd.
- Postcode boundary maps indicate on a 1:100,000 scale grey tone base the boundaries of postcode areas and sectors - for example, sector "OX29 5" covering the Stanton Harcourt area of Oxfordshire.
- Oxfordshire History Centre holds historic postcode sector maps for 1993, 1999, 2000, 2002 and 2007 [ref: A:MC3 13.1 383]
- Online there are various free websites which can display current postcode sectors - for example, www.free-postcode-maps.co.uk

And how do I go about viewing them?

You can order up the paper maps and CD-ROMs listed above for consultation in our Searchroom. Just cite the references given in the text above, or consult our online catalogue, [Heritage Search](#), for more detailed descriptions.

[Contacting and visiting Oxfordshire History Centre](#)

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