



Research Methodology

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User Guide 2

SANDWELL TRENDS: Interactive Tools - charts, maps and tables

Sandwell Trends Local Intelligence System (LIS) is the first port of call for data, intelligence and analysis about the people and places in Sandwell.

The system is web-based, which hopefully means that most users will be familiar with how to navigate the site – however this series of user guides has been produced to help answer the more complex questions a user may have. The second in the series aims to provide the user with more detailed information on how to query data on the system.

Getting Started

Sandwell Trends can be accessed from www.sandwelltrends.info, via Sandwell Council's intranet homepage, or via the Research Sandwell website (www.researchsandwell.org.uk). The Sandwell trends home page offers the user the chance to log in to the system – for the majority of users, this is unnecessary, as all pages on the system can be viewed by any level of user. However, there are two main cases when logging in would be beneficial:

- if the user wants to be able to save queries (which could then be emailed to other interested parties)
- or if the user wants to create or contribute to “Topic Pages.”

If you think you would need a log in, then contact [Research Sandwell](#) who will provide you with the appropriate access level (this is currently restricted to Sandwell Council users).

Technical Bit

Just as a reminder, to use the system you'll need to have JavaScript enabled and have the latest version of Adobe Flash installed to use the maps, charts or Benchmarking tools. [User Guide 1](#) gives more details.



So what's first?

To start querying a dataset, you need to decide whether you want a chart, map or table. Then click on the appropriate option on the homepage either from the *interactive tools* menu or from the *tools* quick link at the top of the screen. Don't worry if you want to view the query in a different way later – it's easy to change. You then need to select a number of options from the drop-down menus as required:

1. **Area of interest.** All datasets are categorised into broad subject areas – select the one that is most likely for the dataset you want to query (datasets can appear under more than one area of interest). If you select *perception surveys* as an area of interest, a new drop-down menu will appear which allows you to choose which survey you would like the data from (allowing the user to view all data from a survey, rather than having to gather the data from various areas of interest).
2. **Topic.** Topics represent groups of indicators that have come from the same source i.e. if two topic areas have similar names, the data is likely to have come from two different sources. Select the one you need (if you find this topic doesn't include the data you want, you can always change later). *If you are producing a table or a map, all data series stored under a particular topic will be returned by your query.*
3. **Learning Community** (*this menu will only appear if you're looking at education data*). This relates to groups of Sandwell schools working in partnership. See the technical note explaining the geographies in Sandwell for more information.
4. **Data series** (*this menu will only appear if you're producing a chart*). This relates to the actual indicator you require.
5. **Theme.** This allows you to cross-tabulate your dataset by various groups of the population. Different topics will allow analysis by different groups – depending on the source of the data. Themes include age, gender, ethnicity, and Mosaic group. A theme must be chosen for analysis – you can't just get overall results – however all themes will also return the value for the population as a whole.
6. **Sub-theme.** This allows you to select a particular group of the population to analyse by i.e. if you select age as a *theme*, you could then choose 'age 18-25' as a *sub-theme*, to only return results for that group.
7. **Dates.** This allows you to choose data from a particular year (where available in the system).
8. **Other Theme** (*this menu will only appear if you're producing a table or chart*). This currently only relates to the *elections data* stored on the system. When an individual year has been selected from the *date* menu, the *other theme* allows the user to select an individual candidate that they would like to view the results for.
9. **Geography** (*this menu will only appear if you're producing a table or map*). For a map, you must select a geography, but for a table this is optional. As with theme, the geographies available will depend on the topic, but these may include LSOA (lower super output area – a Census geography), ward, natural neighbourhood or town. A technical note explaining the geographies in Sandwell is available on the system.
10. **Chart type** (*this menu will only appear if you're producing a chart*). Select the most appropriate chart type for the data you are querying i.e. line or column.



11. **Map template** (*this menu will only appear if you're producing a map*). There are 2 types of *map template* available. The *Single Map* template is ideally suited to viewing time series data and comparing trends for different geographies, and the *Profile Map* template enables at a glance analysis across a range of indicators for a selected area. It makes the comparison of profiles for different areas quick and easy.

Once all the options required have been selected, click on the *submit* button. Sandwell Trends will return the results of your query to you, in either chart, table or map format. A word of warning – some map queries can take a little time to load – so don't assume your query hasn't worked if you don't see a map straight away.

That wasn't what I wanted!

Don't worry if the result of your query wasn't quite the data or format that you wanted – just change your selections on the drop-down menus, and re-submit your query. You may find it useful to view the metadata which is produced as part of the query – this appears at the bottom of the screen – and provides details of the dataset.

If you want to change whether you view a chart, map or table, just select another format using the buttons that appeared when you submitted your query, and your new chart, map or table will appear (*only a format appropriate to the dataset will appear e.g. some datasets cannot be mapped, as there is no geographical component*).

What can I do with the results of my query?

- **Maps.** The results of a map query can be exported as an image to use in reports or presentations. You simply right-click on your single or profile map, and choose to export the full screen or individual elements (such as the map itself).
- **Charts.** These are produced to visualise data on screen – perhaps highlighting issues of interest. The data itself can also be exported to Excel by clicking on the Excel button, but this will not recreate the chart.
- **Tables.** The results of a table query can be sorted into a different order by clicking on the column headings. However if more manipulation is required, it is better to export the data to excel, by clicking on the link.
- **As a logged-in user.** If you have a username and have logged in, when you produce a map, chart or table, you can save your query by clicking on the *save query* button, and can then send a link to that query to others that you think may be interested in what you've found. (By clicking on the *send query* button, outlook will open with the link already pasted in). When the recipient receives the email, they can click on the enclosed link, and directly access the map, chart or table that you've just produced.

Some trickier datasets

The Finance and National Indicator Benchmarking Tools, and 2001 Census data have user guides dedicated to them, so they are not discussed in this user guide. However, there are a few datasets which have been treated in a slightly different way to others, but are still accessible from the main chart, table or map links – currently these datasets are the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), Annual Business Inquiry (ABI), the Mosaic Grand Index and Annual Household Income.



When one of these *topics* is selected, a button will appear, which says “*this topic requires a different page, click here to be redirected.*” Click on this button, and the user will be directed to the page appropriate for the dataset.

- 1. Index of Multiple Deprivation.** First select the required *domain*. All IMD data is available on the system – it is possible to select “All – Overall IMD, domains & sub-domains”, or you can choose to select an individual domain of interest, or the Income Deprivation affecting Children Index (IDACI) or the Income Deprivation affecting Older People Index (IDAOP). Next select the *date* required. For this dataset, data is available for 2004 or 2007. Finally, select the *geography* – Town, ward, pre-2004 ward, LSOA, MSOA and Co-op data can be viewed. Then click on *submit*. Only tables or maps are available for this dataset. The data returned gives the average score of the LSOAs within the geography, and the average rank. There are 32,482 LSOAs in England, so the rank tells you how deprived an area is in relation to the rest of the country (where 1 is worst).
- 2. Job Seekers Allowance Claimants (JSA).** First select the *date from* and *date to*. Data is available from January 2008. Then, select the *geography* – ward, LSOA and MSOA data can be viewed, as well as a comparator chart (which includes West Midlands districts and Great Britain comparisons). Then click on *submit*. Only tables or maps are available for this dataset. Data returned is the number of claimants and the rate as a proportion of the working age population.
- 3. Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).** First select the *date*. Data is currently available for 2007 and 2008. Then, select the *geography* – All or pre-2004 wards. Then click on *submit*. Only tables or charts are available for this dataset. Data returned is the proportion of total employment in the area selected, with comparisons with Sandwell overall.
- 4. Mosaic Grand Index.** This provides the data which underlies the Mosaic classification of households. First select the *category* of data required – this is the topic of the data. Then select the *sub-category* – a more detailed data selection. Then select the *profile* required – this will vary according to the *sub-category* selected – in all cases “All” groups can be chosen, but you may be interested in a particular group of the population. Then select the *date* – currently only 2009 data is available. Finally select the *geography* – data is available at the Town, Ward, MSOA, LSOA and Co-op level. Then click on *submit*. Only maps or tables are available for this dataset. Data returned shows the ‘net score’ of an area – this is the number of postcodes within that area that are significantly higher than the national average, minus the number that are significantly lower. This therefore shows the predicted propensity of a characteristic within an area – the higher the number, more likely it is that households within that area have the characteristic being displayed.
- 5. Annual Household Income.** First select the *date*. Data is currently available for 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009. Then select *geography* – Town, ward, MSOA, LSOA and Co-op data can be viewed. Then click on *submit*. Data returned is the median and mean income for each geographical area selected. The mean is the ‘average’ income for households, whilst the median is the middle value of all household incomes in an area when they are ranked (the median tends to be used more for this type of data, as it gives a truer value – the mean could be skewed by one particularly high or low income in an area).



How do I find out further information?

Further User Guides are available from the homepage of Sandwell Trends. These include:

- [Sandwell Trends – overview](#)
- [How do I find 2001 Census data?](#)
- [How do I use the Benchmarking tools?](#)
- [Publications and Topic Pages](#)
- [Getting the most from Maps](#)

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