

General Comments on Datazone Consultation

1. Falkirk Council very much welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposals for new datazones following the publication of the results from the 2001 Census. There are a number of areas where new datazones are required to cover areas of new development and where it has been possible to improve on the current boundaries.
2. However, we regret that there have been a significant number of changes to the underlying Census Output Area boundaries between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses which have resulted in relatively minor, but none the less significant, changes to the datazone boundaries. It would have been helpful to have had some consultation on the OA boundaries which might have reduced the number of consequent changes in the datazones

An example of this would be OA S00107936 which crosses Grangemouth Road in Falkirk and means that there is now a less good match at a datazone level to The Bog which is a distinct community in Falkirk.

3. The resultant changes to the datazone boundaries mean that comparisons over time with the existing areas will be more problematic than might have been necessary. This is particularly an issue where the only changes to the datazone boundaries are the results of differences in the 2001 and 2011 Census Output Areas.

An example of this would be the change in the boundary of 2001 Datazone S01002443. In 2012 there were 343 dwellings on that datazone (SNS). Our checks suggests that the new "equivalent" 2011 Datazone, DZ140077, has approximately 24 dwellings fewer – an decrease of 7%. This means that any comparisons between the 2001 and 2011 datazones will have to be treated with more caution than might have been necessary and may not be possible in any meaningful way.

4. In reviewing the boundaries, we have compared the proposed boundaries with the existing ones, and we have found the following. We note that the number of datazones in the consultation has increased from 197 to 213, an increase of 16 or 8%, which is roughly in line with the population increase in the area in the last decade.

4. Of the existing 197 datazones some 81 (41%) provided an exact match, or almost exact match where the mismatch does not contain any household population. Nevertheless, we are suggesting changes to a small number of these where such a change will create a more effective overall scheme.

One small technical issue. Why does the previous datazone S01002419 apparently disappear and instead we have S01002430_1 and S01002430_2 when S01002430_2 is very similar in boundary to S01002419 and contains on a small part of S01002430?

5. The suggested revisions are set out in the Appendix to this paper together with attached maps and tables showing the OA allocations to the consultation datazones and the ones proposed by Falkirk Council. A set of shapefiles has also been produced showing the new Falkirk scheme.
6. Regarding the naming of datazones and intermediate datazones mentioned in paragraph 13.3 of the consultation document (but not mentioned in the response document), we would very much wish to be involved in the naming of new datazones and any new intermediate datazones. The current datazone names for Falkirk were created by Falkirk Council. Some of them need to be revised and we would like to help with the naming of new zones rather than use the convention being suggested in para 13.3.

Suggested Revisions:**Dennyloanhead and High Bonnybridge areas**

A major revision is proposed to the datazones in the Dennyloanhead and High Bonnybridge areas which we believe better reflects the local settlement geography. This involves rezoning some Output Areas (OAs) in order to keep within the population thresholds and creating some new datazones while leaving a residual "rural" datazone which excludes all the new housing developments but includes the more "rural" parts of existing settlements.

In particular, OA S00108339 contains entirely address in Dennyloanhead and has therefore been added to datazone DZ140083 which is also Dennyloanhead addresses. There are consequent changes to datazones DZ140099 and DZ140090 in Bonnybridge in order to keep within the population thresholds. A new datazone is created covering parts of Dennyloanhead and Longcroft.

In Bonnybridge, a new datazone is created covering the built-up area of DZ140042 and to compensate the more rural OAs of DZ140044 and DZ140057 are added to make up a new rural datazone. There is a consequent change to DZ140064.

We believe that the new scheme better reflects the local geography and gives a better match to our settlements.

Dow Lane, Stenhousemuir

The proposal for DZ140181 would include OA S00108292 which consists of the new housing development of Dow Place and Dow Lane. Their postal address is Stenhousemuir while the remainder of DZ140181 has postal address Carron. It is therefore proposed to transfer S00108292 to DZ140198 whose properties all have a postal address of Stenhousemuir.

Airth

The proposal here is to create three datazones which cover the built up area of the village of Airth leaving a fairly large rural datazone covering the villages of South Alloa, Dunmore, Skinflats and Letham, as is in the current scheme. The proposed split of S01002369 splits the settlement of Letham while our alternative keeps Letham within the one datazone.

Reddingmuirhead/Wallacestone

The proposal here is for a small number of minor changes which will make the datazone boundaries a better match to local geographies

It is suggested that the boundary between DZ140016 and DZ140021 is moved by moving OA S00108151 from DZ140021 to DZ140016. DZ140021 then becomes a datazone consisting entirely of a new housing development constructed in the 2000's while S00108151 fits better geographically with DZ140016 which covers the settlement of Wallacestone.

Although this means losing the continuity of boundary of S01002389, it is felt that the gain of a better match to local geography outweighs the loss of continuity.

It is also proposed to revise the boundaries of DZ140027, DZ140028 and DZ140022. DZ140022 covers Reddingmuirhead but also three OAs in Brightons one of which is surrounded by S00108851. DZ140022 is also a large datazone with a population of over 1,000. It is proposed to create a new datazone covering the Reddingmuirhead OAs.

Secondly, it is proposed to extend DZ140028 to cover the whole of the Harlow Grange housing development i.e. adding in OAs S00108852 and S00108853. This leave a datazone covering the Brightons addresses formerly in DZ140022, with the OA covering Polmont Young Offenders Institution and the other two remaining OAs in DZ140027.

This scheme better reflects the local geography.

Lionthorn, Falkirk

This area consists of an area of established housing, together with an area of new build constructed in phases over the last 20 years, plus the surrounding rural area. It was previously three data zones, one of which the consultation document proposes to dissolve in creating five revised datazones.

Our proposal is to have four datazones, effectively recreating the dissolved datazone S01002410 but adding one OA which is currently in a datazone with the new build. Two datazones will cover the new build development, reflecting the phases of that development, leaving a remaining, quite large, datazone consisting of the established housing and the rural area. This scheme better reflects the local geography.

Shieldhill/Overton

In the consultation document datazone S01002379, which covers the western part of the village of Shieldhill, a large rural area and a new housing development in Redding (Overton) has been split into DZ140005 which covers most, but not all, of the Shieldhill part leaving DZ140006 covering a very small part of Shieldhill, the rural area and the new housing at Overton.

The two OAs covering Overton (S00108723 and S00108723) only had a Census population of 309 which is below the threshold for a datazone. However, the 2012 NRS datazone population estimates show that the population of datazone S01002379 had increased from 1,164 in the Census to 1,353, an increase of 189 which we believe will be almost entirely accounted for by the new housing in Overton. This would possibly give the Overton area a population of 498 by 2012. There are still several hundred houses to be completed on the site which would give a datazone well over the threshold population.

If these two OAs could be accepted as a datazone, it is proposed that the remaining OAs covering Shieldhill and the rural area would make up another datazone. This would in practice mean that this datazone would revert to almost the same in terms of population as S01001379 was when it was originally created following the 2001 Census. Although the inclusion of the rural area means that there is not a match to Shieldhill village, it is accepted that the rural area has to be added to a datazone and we are used to dealing with the mismatch issues regarding S01002379.

Rumford

It is proposed to reallocate OA S00108198 from DZ140014 to DZ140011. Although, in the consultation document, S01002384 is an exact match to DZ140011 and S01002387 is a close match to DZ140014, it is felt that this reallocation will provide two more compact datazones.