

Study 4828 - GIS of the Ancient Parishes of England and Wales

This documentation has been supplied by the depositor and has been modified by AHDS History

Introduction

This study contains GIS coverage created from the electronic map and gazetteer produced by Roger Kain and Richard Oliver [AHDS Study 4348; Historic parishes of England and Wales]. In short we [the depositor] have produced a single digital map for the whole of England and Wales. This map contains all the parish boundaries contained within the original electronic map sheets, and each polygon has been linked directly to the relevant row of data currently found in the gazetteer. This means that a user can search and display the parishes based upon any attribute contained within the gazetteer.

The documentation for much of the data is covered by Kain and Oliver's study. However, we [the depositor] have added a few more attribute fields. In addition, we [the depositor] have included a file containing the remaining errors [see file "guide_errors.pdf | .rtf].

Methodology

1. Opened each of the 115 maps in Adobe Illustrator, deleted everything apart from the parish boundary layer. Exported the boundaries into DXF format.
2. Whilst viewing in Adobe Illustrator, we noted down the eastings and northings of small crosses found on the parish boundary layer which had been drawn by Kain and Oliver in order that they could position their drawings in the correct position on maps during their research. The coordinates were read from the background map upon which the parish boundaries are displayed within the Adobe Illustrator files, the OS New Popular Edition 1":1 mile series.
3. Opened DXF files in MapInfo and converted them into ArcInfo export format. This was necessary as we wanted to build the GIS in ArcInfo but unfortunately it was discovered that ESRI products (ArcInfo and ArcView) do not read the DXF output from Adobe Illustrator at all well.
4. Each file was then imported into ArcInfo and registered to the British National Grid using the small crosses. Four of these registration points were used for each file.
5. All 115 maps were then combined to form a single map for England and Wales. In order to create a continuous coverage of polygons for the country, a significant amount of editing of boundaries was undertaken in order to match the edges of the individual map tiles. MATCHNODE, CLEAN and BUILD (ArcInfo commands) were used in order to create polygon topology.
6. In addition to the 115 map sheets there are also 58 files containing maps of areas that contain too much detail for inclusion in the 1":1 mile sheets. Steps 1 to 4 above were applied to these 58 files and the resulting boundaries integrated into the main parish map. Again, edge matching was carried out and polygon topology built.
7. In order to link each polygon to the correct row of data in the gazetteer, a label is required in each of the polygons containing the correct gazetteer record number. Fortunately, the gazetteer contains a National Grid coordinate for each record and so

after converting these into six-figure eastings and six-figure northings, they were used to generate label points on the map.

8. The map was then checked for errors, adding, moving and deleting labels where necessary in order to make sure each polygon had the correct label containing the correct reference number (NUM field).
9. Once correctly labelled, the map was then joined to the gazetteer table, using the NUM field.
10. As this map now had GIS functionality, it was then possible to shade the polygons by county and registration district, thereby spotting and correcting many labelling mistakes.

Additional attribute data

As part of the process of creating the GIS we [the depositor] have created some further attribute fields for each polygon.

1. AREA : polygon areas in metres
2. PERMIETER : polygon perimeter in metres
3. PAR1851# : internal gis identification number (ignore)
4. PAR1851-ID : gis identification number (ignore)
5. X-COORD: : the central easting coordinate of each polygon. This could be used to generate better coordinates for the NGR field than those provided by Kain & Oliver in their gazetteer.
6. Y-COORD : the central northing for each polygon
7. ERROR TYPE : numbers informing which polygons do not contain a reference number, or why it contains no gazetteer data. See the next section '*Error summary*' below and Error Log.doc for more details.
8. CEN_ASTRSK : 'Y' for yes, left blank for no. This indicates those gazetteer entries that contained an asterisk, as well as a reference number, in the CEN field. The CEN field contains reference numbers that correspond to numbers used to identify each place listed in the 1851 census. The asterisk indicates those census numbers that refer to more than one of these places. The asterisk has been removed from the CEN field and given a column of its own during this project so that the CEN field is then in the correct format to join it straight to the 1851 census parish table.
9. NGR_X : Kain and Oliver's NGR field resolved into a six figure easting
10. NGR_Y : Kain and Oliver's NGR field resolved into a six figure northing
11. GAZ_CNTY : county names as indicated by the two-figure county identifier given at the start of each entry in the NUM field

Error summary

Please see the accompanying document 'Error Log.doc' [guide_errors.pdf | .rtf] for a full list of the errors and an explanation as to why these errors have occurred.

167 out of 22729 polygons have a label point but no reference number (NUM). This means that these polygons can not be joined to the gazetteer. ERROR_TYPE = 1.

146 out of 22729 polygons that have a label and a reference number (NUM), do not have a corresponding entry in the accompanying gazetteer. Again, this means that these polygons can not be joined to the gazetteer. ERROR_TYPE = 2.

563 out of 18600 gazetteer entries have not joined to the GIS.