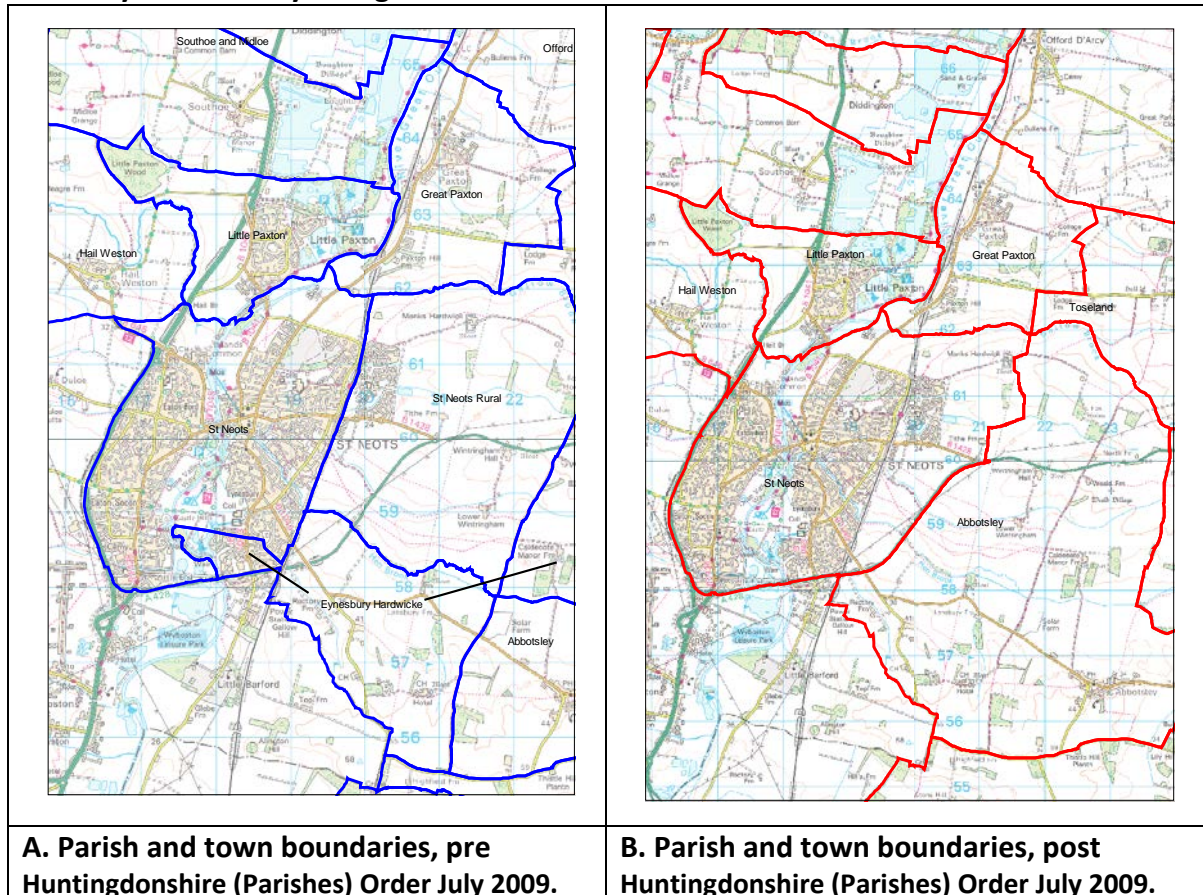


Methodology Note – St. Neots Parish Population Estimates, Cambridgeshire County Council

Background

We've been asked if the Research Team population estimates methodology for parishes (and towns) properly accounted for previous boundary changes implemented in the St. Neots area. We've also been asked to confirm if our methodology has properly accounted for recent housing growth in the area.

Summary of boundary changes



As places change and grow adjustments are made to administrative boundaries. There was a major change to the St. Neots area with the Huntingdonshire (Parishes) Order July 2009. The parishes of Eynesbury Hardwicke and St. Neots Rural (see map A) were dis-established.

- St. Neots parish incorporated part of the urban extent of the town that previously fell in Eynesbury Hardwicke and St. Neots Rural parishes, including the Love's Farm development (see map B).
- Abbotsley parish incorporated the remaining areas (see map B).

St. Neots Parish Population

(Extract from previously published material, Cambridgeshire County Council's Original Mid-2008 and Mid-2011 Population Estimates)

Previously published County Council population estimates demonstrate in numbers how the changes took effect, comparing the published 2008 mid-year estimate with the mid-2011 estimate.

Table One: Previously published estimates, Cambridgeshire County Council.

Parish	2008	2011 *
Abbotsley	420	580
Eynesbury Hardwicke	2,290	-
St. Neots Rural	140	-
St. Neots	26,390	30,580
Little Paxton	3,040	3,240

* These are Cambridgeshire County Council's (CCC) original estimates for mid-2011 which were published before the Census 2011 results were released and which have since been superseded.

Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2011 Census data also reflects the parish boundary changes included in the Huntingdonshire (Parishes) Order July 2009, as shown below in the comparison of the differences between the 2001 and 2011 census releases.

Table Two: ONS Census 2001 and 2011 data, Source: Nomis

Parish	Census 2001	Parish	Census 2011
12UE001 : Abbotsley	425	E04012018 : Abbotsley	446
12UE026 : Eynesbury Hardwicke (major part of 2)	1,016		
12UE062 : St. Neots Rural/Eynesbury Hardwicke (minor part of 2)	207		
12UE061 : St. Neots	26,356	E04012037 : St. Neots	31,165
12UE051 : Little Paxton	3,006	E04012032 : Little Paxton	3,244

Once the 2011 Census data was available the County Council readjusted its estimate of the population for mid-year 2011. The County Council's census population estimates for Abbotsley and St. Neots differed from ONS Census 2011 due to differences in the allocation of output area E00173821 which spans St. Neots and Abbotsley parish boundaries. ONS included this output area within St. Neots parish, whilst CCC estimates included it within Abbotsley parish, based on the distribution of housing at the time (see table three).

Table Three: Cambridgeshire County Council's population estimates, mid-2011 to mid-2015

Parish	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Abbotsley	740	720	720	720	720	720
St. Neots	30,870	31,200	31,940	32,330	32,760	33,140
Little Paxton	3,240	3,320	3,570	3,690	3,880	4,090

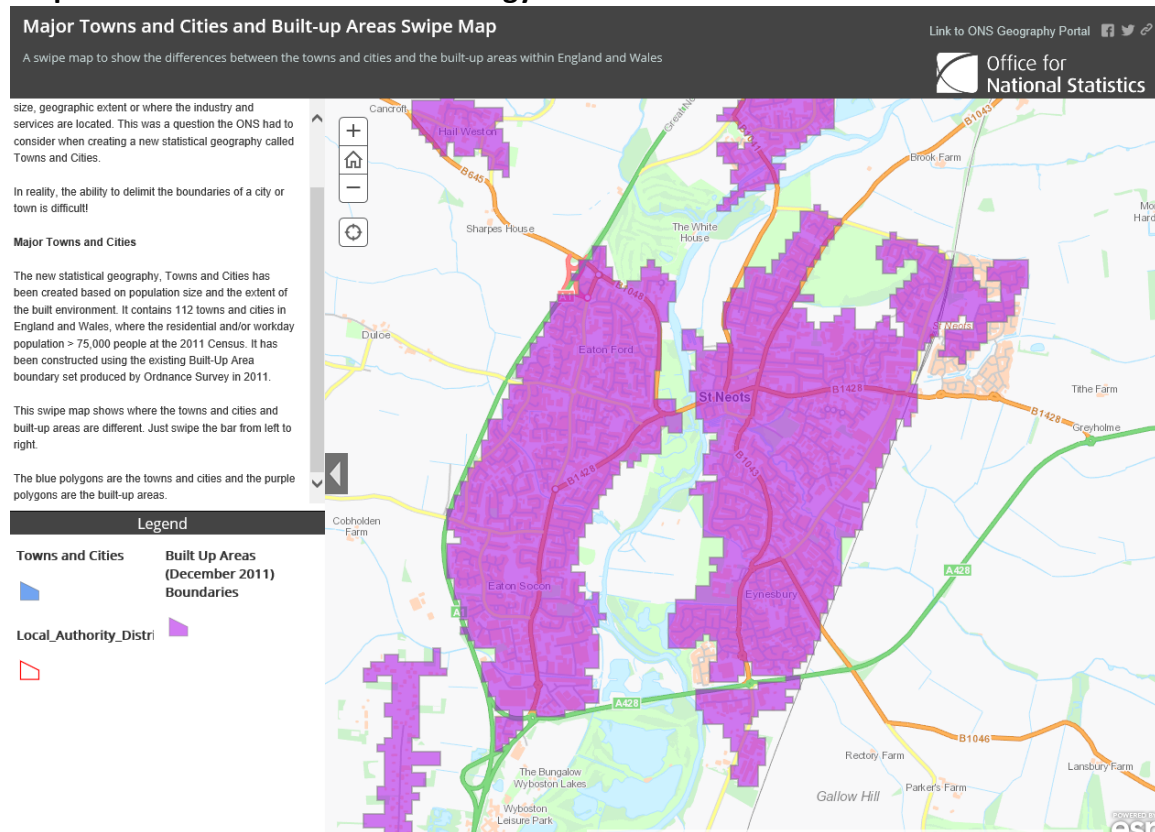
The County Council's current mid-2015 estimate for St. Neots parish of 33,140 correctly reflects recent growth, including the Loves Farm development and is consistent with our methodology (see below). Looking wider, comparing the rate of growth between St. Neots and the other Cambridgeshire market towns (St. Neots is the biggest of our market towns) the County Council's work properly reflects how St. Neots has grown by the largest number of people since 2011 and has almost the largest growth rate at 6.2% (Soham's growth rate is 8.3% since 2011, but from a much lower base) of any of our market towns.

Other sources of information

On occasion other population statistics are quoted for the wider area. These figures refer to areas greater than the parish of St. Neots. The 'St. Neots Spatial Planning Area', as per the District Council's local plan, also includes the part of Little Paxton parish lying east of the A1. The estimated population of St. Neots and Little Paxton parishes together is 37,230. District Council electoral divisions (areas represented by district councillors) which have St. Neots mentioned in the title of the division also cover a similar area. The County Council divisions (areas represented by County councillors) which have St. Neots mentioned in the title of the division cover a larger area still (including Abbotsley and Great Gransden) which means that occasionally a figure of closer to 40,000 is quoted.

One word of caution. The Office of National Statistics has produced population data for UK Urban Extents (based on a computer algorithm). In the case of St. Neots, this is an unsatisfactory method as the town is literally cut in two by green space, and the method identifies only the eastern side of the town as being 'St. Neots urban area' (see map C below).

Map C: ONS urban extent methodology



Cambridgeshire County Council's Mid-2011 to Mid-2015 Population Estimates and Forecasts: Methodology

Full methodology available: <http://cambridgeshire.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/2015-Cambridgeshire-and-Peterborough-Population-and-Dwelling-Stock-Estimates-and-Forecasts-Methodology-Note.pdf>

Population estimates methodology

Cambridgeshire County Council produced a revised set of population estimates for mid-2011 to mid-2015. As part of this process Cambridgeshire County Council compared the Census 2011 results with the population data provided by alternative sources, including health statistics, school rolls and electoral registers, to establish a mid-2011 set of population estimates. The mid-2011 population estimates therefore not only include the change that has occurred due to the time lapse between the date of the Census and mid-2011, but in some wards (notably in some urban wards) may also address an element of Census undercount. The population estimates have then been carried forward using a consistent set of data sources and methodology to produce a set of mid-year estimates to mid-2015.

The sources used to compile the population estimates cover the whole population age range: electoral registers and health service statistics for the adult population; child benefit data, school rolls and health service statistics for the school-aged population and child benefit data and health service statistics for the pre-school population. In addition, housing completions data is taken into consideration when producing the population estimates. Additional sources are used to monitor groups for which coverage is otherwise incomplete or uncertain. These include data sets on armed forces populations, higher education establishments, independent schools and other institutions such as nursing and residential homes and prisons.

Population forecasts methodology

Cambridgeshire County Council's population and dwelling stock forecasts are 'policy-led', so that they are consistent with planned levels of house-building. The population forecasts are produced by ageing forward the population by sex and single year of age from a base date, year by year. Population change is forecast by allowing for the main components of population change: births and deaths (the balance of which gives natural change), and migration, from ONS data. Planned levels of house-building are then taken into account when the population forecasts are produced. The local authorities produce annual housing trajectories, detailing the number and phasing of dwellings expected to come forward on individual sites. These trajectories are used to guide the distribution of house-building between wards and five-year time-bands, although some 'smoothing' may take place and the trajectories may not be followed exactly. The 2015-based population and dwelling stock forecasts are mainly based on the local authorities' 2015 housing trajectories, with some interpolation and extrapolation by Cambridgeshire County Council.