

About the NeSS Data Exchange

What is the NeSS Data Exchange?

The NeSS Data Exchange is a new online service designed to make it easier for you to interrogate and engage with the Neighbourhood Statistics (NeSS) Datastore. Using machine to machine technology it will speed up and simplify your data requests and still allow you access to over 300 geographically referenced datasets, free of charge.

The Neighbourhood Statistics website and enquiry service, launched in 2001, is a joint initiative between the Office for National Statistics and the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). The website has developed in response to the need to bring together previously unavailable data which describe the characteristics of a neighbourhood. In addition to Census data we collate and analyse recent figures from a wide range of sources across government. Our Datastore contains high quality, comparable statistics on topics such as health, crime, economic deprivation and educational attainment.

The data are referenced by the unique NeSS geography structure which is based on 'Super Output Areas' from the 2001 Census. We arrange topic data by small geographic areas of similar size so you can compare the statistical features of different locations. The NeSS website includes mapping and charting visualisation tools as well as Office for National Statistics guidance on analysing our data.

The NeSS Data Exchange is an extra service which lets you order data in an efficient, interactive way. It gives you direct access to the data allowing more complex analysis and meaningful interpretation.

Who is it for?

The Neighbourhood Statistics Datastore is already a key decision making tool used across government and beyond. Our new NeSS Data Exchange service is particularly aimed at Local Information Systems (LIS) Managers who are tasked with collecting, processing, storing and disseminating information about their local areas.

Our authoritative, consistent data are invaluable for everyone involved in tackling deprivation and improving local communities. In common with other web services such as the Data Interchange Hub from CLG, the NeSS Data Exchange will improve data handling for local authorities and help ensure that decisions on resource allocation are based on evidence.

The NeSS Data Exchange will be especially welcomed by those of you who are already engaged with the NeSS website and who have expressed an interest in incorporating data directly into your own systems without the need to 'cut and paste'. Our data can now be integrated easily into your existing business tools and we hope this new service will inspire you to experiment with other ways of using and providing our data to your audiences.

How does it work?

The NeSS Data Exchange works in two ways: 'Discovery' and 'Delivery'. 'Discovery' will give you ideas on how you can collect, manipulate and exploit our data. It guides you through the Neighbourhood Statistics topics, geographies and time series, showing you the full structure of the data. It's like a catalogue you can browse to see what's available. Once you've taken some time to see what data are available and which areas and time periods you are interested in, you are ready for 'Delivery'.

'Delivery' involves the construction of your query. When you know what you want to take from our Datastore you write the code which allows machine to machine interaction. All data matching your criteria are then delivered directly to your system for you to interrogate, model, store and distribute as you require.

The Delivery service can also be accessed directly when you already know what data you need, for example when you want a data refresh. Although all data are aggregated and subject to non-disclosure controls, we do use security protocols so we can monitor use of the NeSS Data Exchange and react quickly to any intended or unintended misuse.

How will this improve my business?

The NeSS Data Exchange is designed to make your statistical reporting and decision making quicker and easier.

Data ordering is much faster thanks to direct machine to machine operations.

In addition, you take from the system just what interests you. Personalised data queries deliver only the variables you need, for the geography and time period you want. The service also supports multiple area and multiple topic searches.

Use this service to help populate your website, providing citizens with information about their local area. Develop in-house tools to enable your staff to share and use statistics as part of their work. Associate your own data with ours to create a powerful analytical tool that helps you to meet your targets. The NeSS Data Exchange will allow you to do all this and more.

How will I know if the NeSS Data Exchange is for my organisation?

Are you currently using the Neighbourhood Statistics website?
Do you download information on a regular basis and could you benefit from the interoperability offered by the NeSS Data Exchange?

Can you see a future need in your organisation to access, store, distribute or exchange large amounts of statistical information?

Would you like to be able to find out what has been added to the NeSS Datastore quickly and easily?

The Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) Toolkit provides a forum for LIS users to discuss issues, swap experiences and talk about the possibilities that the NeSS Data Exchange opens up. Further information regarding the ESD Toolkit can be found at www.esd-toolkit.org.uk/communities/lis

Getting Started

For more information, including a detailed Technical Guide, please visit NeSS Data Exchange:
<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/Info.do?page=nde.htm>
where you can register for this free service by requesting an API key.

If you haven't already got an OPSI license you will also need to visit www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/index.htm to apply for a license which permits you to re-use the information provided by Neighbourhood Statistics.

We look forward to your feedback on this service and invite you to contact us at better.info@ons.gov.uk

