PostMap™ UK

Royal Mail Update 57

PRODUCT GUIDE

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Product Overview

1

Welcome to PostMap UK, Pitney Bowes Software's premium database of UK postcode geography.

In this chapter:

PostMap UK Overview

PostMap contains the boundaries of over 9,500 postcode sectors, 2,800 postcode districts, and 120 postcode areas in Great Britain, together with over 200 sectors and 80 districts in Northern Ireland. The boundaries have been digitised from information supplied by Collins Bartholomew with the approval of the Royal Mail.

PostMap provides an ideal basis for analysing customer, survey, and other postcoded data.

Pitney Bowes Software has enhanced PostMap by adding workspaces and more information.

Features

PostMap displays postcode sectors, districts, and areas for the entire United Kingdom using the British National Grid co-ordinate system. It also has separate data for Northern Ireland using the Irish Transverse Mercator Grid.

The Postcode Sector tables have two new columns of information. One contains the administrative area (either County, Unitary Authority, London Borough, or Metropolitan District) in which the postcode sector centroid is found. The other, which is labelled Sortsect, ensures that the postcode sectors are in ascending or descending order when you sort your records.

Additionally, PostMap Boundaries contains workspaces that display boundaries and labels at optimum zoom levels.

PostMap is available in either High or Low resolution. The High Resolution PostMap boundaries provide more detail than the Low Resolution boundaries. The Low Resolution version displays more quickly, and uses less disk space. The display characteristics and table structures of both products are the same.

About This Document

This Product Guide is your complete source for information about PostMap. The guide assumes that you are familiar with your mapping software. For information about MapInfo Professional, please consult the MapInfo Professional documentation set.

Getting Started

2

This chapter explains file names and provides you with instructions for installing and opening the data.

In this chapter:

File Names

PostMap contains three file sets for the United Kingdom and three separate file sets for Northern Ireland. The file sets are named:

United Kingdom Postcode Areas	**Postarea.***
United Kingdom Postcode Districts	**Postdist.***
United Kingdom Postcode Sectors	**Postsect.***
Northern Ireland Postcode Area	**Ni_ara_i.***
Northern Ireland Postcode Districts	**Ni_dist_i.***
Northern Ireland Postcode Sectors	**Ni_sct_i.***

The file sets contains five different file types. Refer to the table below:

MapInfo File Types

.DAT	Data file
.ID	Identification file
.IND	Index file
.MAP	Map file
.TAB	Tabular file

The table below shows a sample complete file set.

Example File Set

Postarea.DAT
Postarea.ID
Postarea.IND
Postarea.MAP
Postarea.TAB

In order to use the database properly, you must have access to all of the files in the file set. They must all be located in the same directory.

Installing the Files onto Your System

The data is supplied on disk(s) to ISO 9660 standard and may be either used directly from the disk or installed to your hard disk drive.

We recommend that the data is installed into a data directory separate from any program or application directories.

Proceed as follows:

1. Insert the installation disk into your disk drive, close all other Windows applications, and run **setup.exe** from the root of the disk.

2. Once the **Welcome** screen is displayed, click **Next** to continue.

3. Read the **License Agreement**, and, provided only that you accept all the terms and conditions, click "I accept the agreement", followed by **Next**.

4. Either accept the default destination location or click **Browse** to select a different folder (which must be on a local drive).

5. Click the **Install** button if you wish to proceed. Otherwise, click **Back** to change the folder, before proceeding.

6. Allow the installer to finish running. Once the installation is complete, you will be prompted to click **Finish**, in order to exit **Setup**. There is no need to restart the PC.

Opening Tables

To open PostMap in MapInfo Professional, use the **File > Open Table** command. For more information on opening files in MapInfo, see the MapInfo Professional documentation set.

Using Workspaces

PostMap contains two workspaces that display and label postcode boundaries at optimum zoom levels for the United Kingdom and for Northern Ireland alone.

PostMap Workspaces

	High Resolution	**Low Resolution**
United Kingdom	PostUK_h.wor	PostUK_l.wor
Northern Ireland	PostNI_h.wor	PostNI_l.wor

These workspaces open with preset display defaults to jump-start your map making.

To open a workspace, choose **File > Open Workspace**.

The chart below describes important information about the layers in the workspaces.

Note: The layers are listed in the order in which they are layered in a Map window, beginning with the topmost layer.

Layer	Opens As...	Zoom Min/Max (kilometres)	Label Details	Label Zoom Min/Max (kilometres)
Postcode Sectors	Postcode_Sector	0/32	Grey, 7 pt, Arial text, plain	0/32
Postcode Districts	Postcode_District	0/64	Black, 8 pt, Arial text, bold	0/64
Postcode Areas	Postcode_Area	Unlimited	Black, 9 pt, Arial text, bold	64/256

PostMap Layer Descriptions

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This chapter provides a brief description of each postcode boundary layer. The technical specifications for each table are contained in **Chapter 4: Data Descriptions**.

In this chapter:

PostMap Boundary Layers

PostMap contains the following postcode boundary layers, which are described individually below.

- **United Kingdom Postcode Areas**
- **United Kingdom Postcode Districts**
- **United Kingdom Postcode Sectors**
- **Northern Ireland Postcode Areas**
- **Northern Ireland Postcode Districts**
- **Northern Ireland Postcode Sectors**

United Kingdom Postcode Areas

The United Kingdom Postcode Areas layer contains all postcode areas in the United Kingdom (over 120). A postcode area represents an approximate average of 190,000 households.
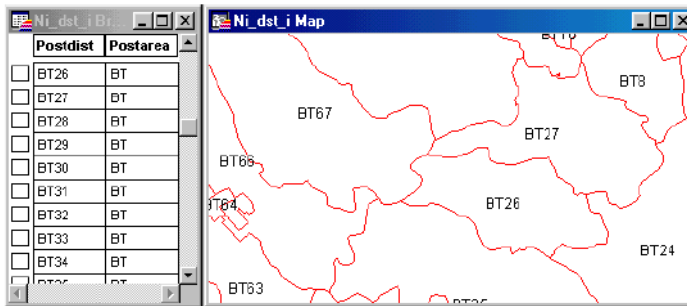
United Kingdom Postcode Districts

The United Kingdom Postcode Districts layer contains all postcode districts in the United Kingdom (over 2,800). A postcode district represents an approximate average of 8,500 households.
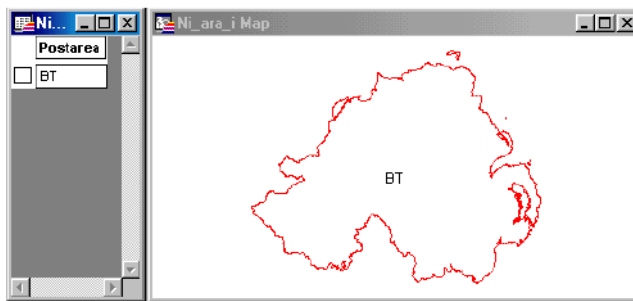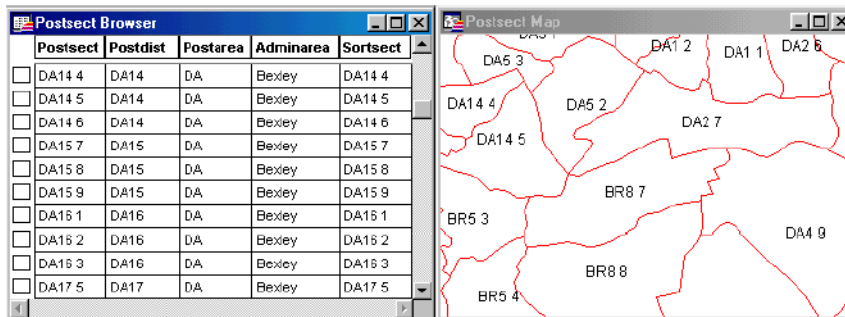
United Kingdom Postcode Sectors

The United Kingdom Postcode Sectors layer contains all postcode sectors in the United Kingdom (over 9,500). A postcode sector represents an approximate average of 2,500 households.

Northern Ireland Postcode Areas

The Northern Ireland Postcode Areas layer contains the Northern Ireland postcode area.
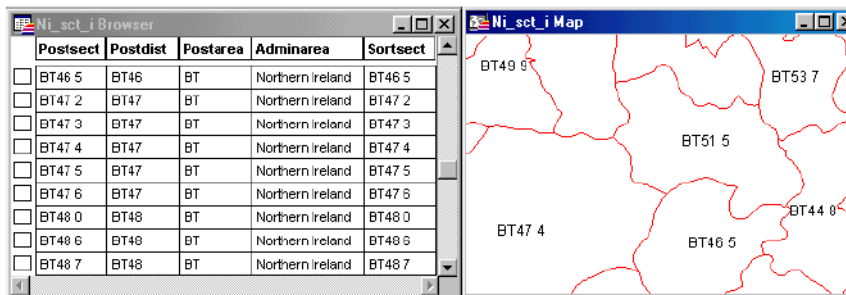
Northern Ireland Postcode Districts

The Northern Ireland Postcode Districts layer contains all 80 postcode districts in Northern Ireland.
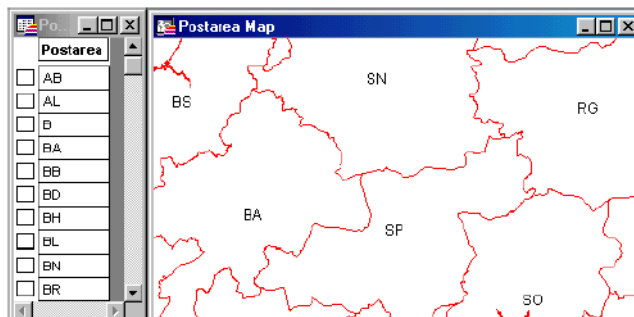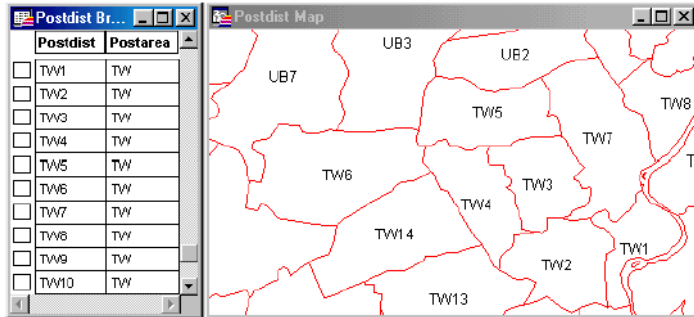
Northern Ireland Postcode Sectors

The Northern Ireland Postcode Sectors layer contains all postcode sectors in Northern Ireland (over 200).

Data Descriptions

This chapter contains information about each layer's spatial referencing and table structure.

In this chapter:

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United Kingdom Postcode Areas

Spatial Referencing

Projection	British National Grid
Co-ordinates	British National Grid co-ordinates

Table Structure

Field	Description	Type (Width)	Indexed
Postarea	Postcode area name	Character (2)	Yes

United Kingdom Postcode Districts

Spatial Referencing

Projection	British National Grid
Co-ordinates	British National Grid co-ordinates

Table Structure

Field	Description	Type (Width)	Indexed
Postdist	Postcode district name	Character (4)	Yes
Postarea	Postcode area name	Character (2)	Yes

United Kingdom Postcode Sectors

Spatial Referencing

Projection	British National Grid
Co-ordinates	British National Grid co-ordinates

Table Structure

Field	Description	Type (Width)	Indexed
Postsect	Postcode sector name as usually written	Character (7)	Yes
Postdist	Postcode district name	Character (4)	Yes
Postarea	Postcode area name	Character (2)	Yes
Adminarea	Administrative area name	Character (30)	No
Sortsect	Field used to sort sectors	Character (8)	Yes

Northern Ireland Postcode Areas

Spatial Referencing

Projection	Irish Transverse Mercator Grid
Co-ordinates	National grid co-ordinates

Table Structure

Field	Description	Type (Width)	Indexed
Postarea	Postcode area name	Character (2)	Yes

Northern Ireland Postcode Districts

Spatial Referencing

Projection	Irish Transverse Mercator Grid
Co-ordinates	National grid co-ordinates

Table Structure

Field	Description	Type (Width)	Indexed
Postdist	Postcode district name	Character (4)	Yes
Postarea	Postcode area name	Character (2)	Yes

Northern Ireland Postcode Sectors

Spatial Referencing

Projection	Irish Transverse Mercator Grid
Co-ordinates	National grid co-ordinates

Table Structure

Field	Description	Type (Width)	Indexed
Postsect	Postcode sector name as usually written	Character (7)	Yes
Postdist	Postcode district name	Character (4)	Yes
Postarea	Postcode area name	Character (2)	Yes
Adminarea	Administrative area name	Character (30)	No
Sortsect	Field used to sort sectors	Character (8)	Yes

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Appendix: General Information

Postcode Geography Summary

The table below details postcode structures in the United Kingdom

Postcode Geography	Standard Format	Number of Households per Geography
Full (unit) postcode	AB12 3DE	approximate average 15 households
Postcode sector	AB12 3	approximate average 2,500 households
Postcode district	AB12	approximate average 8,500 households
Postcode area	AB	approximate average 190,000 households

Notes

Administrative boundaries and postcode boundaries are not coincident in the United Kingdom. The postcode sectors have been allocated to administrative areas on the basis of the location of their centroids. Thus, some parts of the postcode sectors lie outside of their associated administrative areas.

Postcode districts and sectors represented as single dimensional points and non-geographical postcode districts and sectors have been excluded.

Due to the evolving nature of the postcode system, postcode boundaries are subject to change. If not updated regularly, the boundaries may cease to reflect current postcode geography.