

How to measure the reach of your community directory



Written by Peter Bates, peter.bates96@gmail.com

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Introduction

The community directories under scrutiny in this paper are called the SEND Local Offer and are collated by local authorities for use by disabled young people, their families and those who support them. aspect of their performance is to examine the extent to which the directory reflects the community it purports to represent.

This guide is being written in the United Kingdom, but international references appear in the text from time to time. A fuller explanation of the approach taken to creating this guide can be found at [How-to-write-in-public.pdf \(peterbates.org.uk\)](http://peterbates.org.uk). It is part of a suite of linked documents made up of the following:

1. [Detecting dark matter](#) demonstrates that a brief internet search will not locate many community resources and therefore mapmakers need to employ other search techniques.
2. [Introduction to community maps and directories](#) sets out some concepts and explains what people might mean when they use these terms.
3. [How to meet your statutory obligations in community mapping](#) brings together relevant legal requirements and policy guidance laid upon public services in the United Kingdom.

4. [How to choose between a community or service directory](#) unpacks the arguments for each option and shows that a community directory can be a valuable resource.
5. [How to measure the reach of community directories](#) suggests some performance indicators for checking whether a directory reflects the community it serves and provides some data about what is currently available.
6. [How to decide what to put in your map of community assets](#) addresses the specifics of how to obtain the data that will form the content of your Directory or map, what counts as data and what should be published.
7. [How to get your group listed](#) helps community groups decide whether to appear in a particular directory or map. This guide may also be useful to people who commission mapmakers.
8. [How to name your dragon](#) catalogues the threats to effective mapmaking in uncharted territory.
9. [Goldmining – how to find hidden community treasure](#) offers some strategies which might be adopted by mapmakers in searching for community assets.
10. The [Directory of Directories](#) provides a starting point for people wishing to build a local community directory. Examples of lists which collate material on individual sections of community life in one city include:
 - [Neighbourhood Facebook Groups](#)
 - [Sports and park facilities](#)
 - [Sports clubs and groups](#)
 - [Community kitchens](#)
 - [Active churches](#)
 - [Christian meetings in community languages](#)

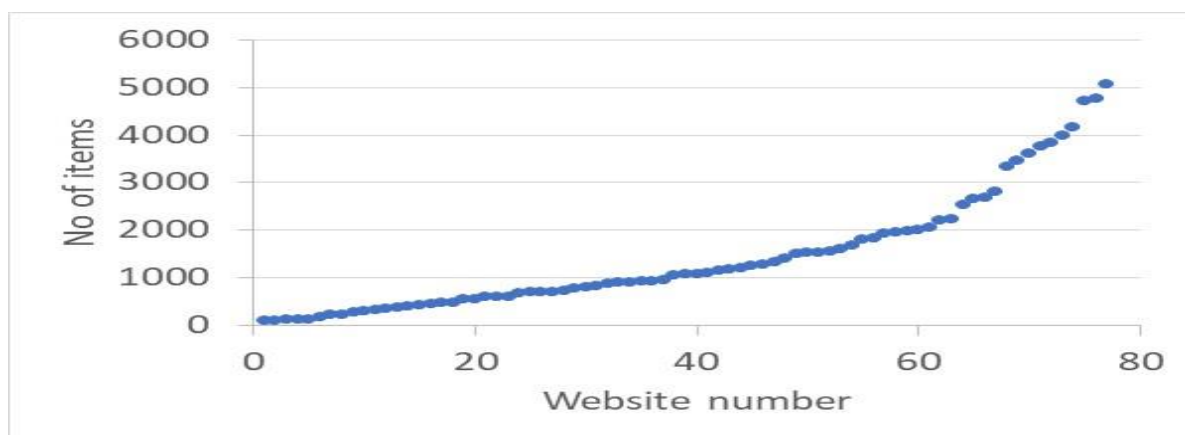
Finally here, the [List of English SEND Local Offer websites](#) provides the evidence source for much of the content of these papers.

I am grateful to the many people¹ who have responded to inquiries and contributed ideas to this group of papers. Please send your suggestions for further improvements to peter.bates96@gmail.com.

Size of the directory

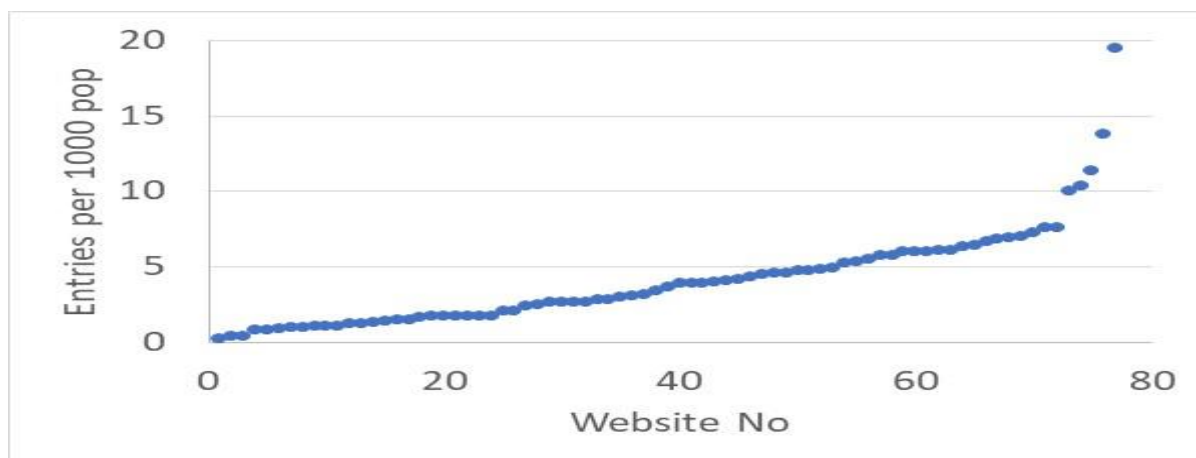
SEND Local Offer directories vary in size, as shown by a simple count of the number of items that appear. These might be a school, a diagnostic service or a toddler group. Since local authorities, education and the NHS are charged with delivery everywhere, all directories will include a minimum list of statutory provision and then exercise discretion on how much community activity to include as well. Seventy-seven of the 153 websites surveyed (57%) provided a total number of entries on their directory², ranging from a low of 114 entries to a high of 5,054 and giving a median of 959 entries.

Chart #1: Directories vary in size



The local authorities that compile the SEND Local Offer directories vary in size from the smallest (population 8,850) to the largest (population 1.87 million), so it would be reasonable to expect larger areas to have bigger directories for two reasons – first, larger areas will have multiple teams within its statutory services, while smaller areas may have only a single one for each kind of service; and second, larger areas may have more community groups and activities. Calculating the number of entries per 1,000 head of population shows a variation from 0.3 to 19 with the median at 3.4 entries and only 10% of directories listing more than 7 entries per 1,000 citizens of their area.

Chart #2: Only ten percent of SEND Local Offer websites list more than 7 items per 1,000 population



False positives

Most directories offer a search facility, requiring the inquirer to select a suitable search term and then review the returns. This can yield a considerable number of entries that turn out to be less relevant than hoped. So, for example, an inquirer searching in the Nottinghamshire Directory for an active 'church' community would initially get 371 returns. The total falls to 74 when duplicates and the following false positives were removed:

- 76 Toddlers groups and day nurseries meeting on church premises
- 56 Schools
- 43 Organisations offering room hire, welfare advice, healthcare or childminding
- 42 Social groups offering exercise, games, singing, art or conversation

- 31 Breakfast and after school clubs
- 23 Cafes, food banks and community pantries
- 19 Nursing or care homes

The extent to which a search will yield false positives will vary according to the search term, but it is the nature of most community life to contain some of this ambiguity and challenge. There will always be Mrs Church running a keep fit session in the church hall for residents from Churchfield Nursing Home.

Start with the real world

The reach of a directory can be tested by finding a single area of community life that might act as a proxy for everything. To continue with the example above, it is possible to seek out and count the number of Christian churches in a community and then see how many of them appear in the directory. If there are a hundred churches in an area and one of them is listed on the directory, then we can describe the directory as reaching 1%. An ideal proxy will have the following characteristics:

- The definition of the proxy will be clear enough to mean that it is easy to decide whether a community group or activity should be included in the count or not.
- There will be enough examples of the group or activity to stabilise the measure, since very low numbers will result in a wildly fluctuating reach ratio for different directories.
- There will be other data available to confirm that the numbers found in the community under scrutiny can be reasonably applied to the other localities which form the benchmark and enable comparisons to be made.
- It will have broadly similar characteristics to other community groups or activities, in life expectancy and turnover, popularity and uptake by different sections of the community. This will mean that it is reasonable to extrapolate the findings from the proxy to other areas of community life.
- It will not be advertised in advance, or mapmakers will turn the process into a game and hurriedly populate that one area of their directory whilst neglecting others.

The example of Scouts and Guides

The Scout Association runs around 7,500 uniformed groups for local children and young people in the UK and has clear membership rules and a national database of groups, so it passes many of the tests for a good proxy. The weakness lies in what might be termed a 'nested data' problem, as some SEND Local Offer Directories list the four age-separated groups within Scouts (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers), while other Directories treat them as a single organisation at a local level.

The Scout Association website and online directory lists 20 Scout groups in the area covered by Nottingham City Council, but none of them appeared on the local ASKLiON community directory in summer 2023.

In September 2023, the 153 Directories that cover the population of England were examined for Scout groups. A total of 44 of the Directories signposted readers to the Scout Association website where there is a full index. 14 of these 44 Directories also included at least one local Scout group,

and a further 20 Directories had no signpost to the Scouts website but listed at least one local Scout group. This leaves 71 Directories (53% of them, accounting for 49% of the population of England) that made no reference to the Scouts at all. Across the full set of 153 Directories, a total of 252 local Scout groups were listed. A generous estimate would be to guess that our 252 local groups across England each contain one each of the four different age-based groups, giving a total of 1008 altogether, compared with around 6,350³ reported on the Scout website, meaning that the SEND Local Offer Directories report only 16%. Seven of the groups listed on the SEND Local Offer Directories are described as especially designed for Scouts with disabilities.

A reach ratio of 16% may seem low, especially when there is a shared agenda for both the Directory and the Scout movement – providing opportunities for children and young people that are ‘open to all’, as Lord Baden-Powell so neatly phrased it. Further work on teasing out whether the 252 local groups do indeed contain one each of the four age-separated groups would determine whether this ratio should fall to a quarter of this level.

Examining the example of Scouts naturally suggests that a parallel exercise be undertaken with Guides. A total of 56 of the 153 SEND Local Offer websites mention The Guide Association (41%). Whilst the national Guides website asks potential members to register before details are provided of units in the vicinity, a total of 66 individual units have exercised their freedom⁴ to be listed on SEND Local Offer websites. This compares with data from annual reports which counted 27,000 units, 300,000 members and 70,000 volunteers⁵, generating a UK average of one unit per 2,480 members of the general population. Table #1 provides data for three local authorities, underscoring the observation that the 66 units found on SEND Local Offer websites represents a very small proportion of the whole. Across these three counties, the SEND Local Offer Directories found 15 of the 708 units which were operational in spring 2024.

Table #1: Few Girlguide units appear in SEND Local Offer Directories

Local authority	Population	Predicted number of Girlguide units ⁶	Actual number of Girlguide units ⁷	Number of Girlguide units that appear in the SEND LO Directory
North Somerset District Council	193,000	78	92	14
Nottingham City Council	323,700	131	50	0
Kent County Council	1,870,000	754	566	1

As an aside, just two of the 66 units listed on SEND Local Offer websites are segregated units exclusively for disabled children and young people, while all units are encouraged by the Girlguiding movement to make reasonable adjustments to welcome and accommodate disabled Guides⁸ in their activities. The encouragement has been welcomed, and 11% of UK Guides are disabled, compared to only 8% of the UK population⁹.

The example of Community Amateur Sports Clubs

The government provides tax relief¹⁰ for eligible community amateur sports clubs (CASCs) and publishes a [list](#) of 6,441 registered CASCs across England¹¹, averaging one for every 9,589 members

of the general population. Within this average lies considerable variation, with the Isles of Scilly at one end of the spectrum with 3 CASCs for a tiny population of 2,280 people, and the London Borough of Hackney at the other, with just one CASC for its entire population of 279,670 persons. The median number of CASCs for a local authority area (i.e. the area covered by a SEND Local Offer directory) is 21, with Kent listing the most at 286, or one CASC per 6,538 residents.

Table #2: Northern Ireland has registered fewer CASCs than the rest of the UK.

Region	Population	Number of CASCs	CASCs per 1,000 pop
England	57,110,000	6,441	8.9
Scotland	5,583,000	617	9.0
Wales	3,105,000	369	8.4
Northern Ireland	1,938,700	333	5.8
Total	67,736,700	7,767	8.7

In many cases, an English CASC is named for a single sport, such as the Wheelers Cycle Club, or for two sports, such as the Village Bowls & Tennis Club. Some are listed merely as 'Sports & Social Clubs' and a few remain obscure, so even a brief internet search does not enable them to be associated with a particular sport. The relative proportions of these groups are shown in Table #3 below.

Table #3: Most English CASCs focus on a single sport.

Sport group	Number of CASCs	Percentage
CASCs identified with a single sport	5,931	92.1%
The CASC name identifies two or more sports	152	2.4%
Generic 'Sports and social clubs'	350	5.4%
Obscure CASC names ¹²	8	0.1%
Total	6,441	100%

CASCs are formally constituted, hold funds and may own land and buildings, such as the cricket, bowls and football clubs which together account for half (50%) of the 6,441 English CASCs¹³. This means that they represent some of the largest, richest and most enduring sports groups in the community. A complete directory of sports groups would also include informal networks and groups that do not hold funds, land or property, but simply enjoy sports together. The number of such groups across the country is unknown¹⁴, although Nottingham City hosts at least 186 active sports clubs¹⁵, an average of one for every 1740 members of the public. Fifteen of them are CASCs, a ratio of fewer than one CASC to twelve community sports clubs. The local Directory, ASKLiON, lists 29 of the 186 active sports clubs in the city (16%).

Table #4: Just three sports deliver half of the English CASCs.

Sport	Number	Percentage of English CASCs
Cricket	1,360	23%
Bowls	978	16%
Football	655	11%
Tennis	618	10%
Rugby	480	8%
All other sports	1,840	31%

Total	5,931	100%
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The offer of tax relief must provide a significant incentive to register and while it is noted that the contact address may not be the venue for the sports activity¹⁶, it still provides a useful list to check against other information, such as the SEND Local Offer Directory. While some Directories include data about organisations that lie outside their local authority boundary, either because they have a regional or national reach or simply because they are accessible to residents in one local authority despite their address falling into a neighbour's area, these are not reasons to exclude local CASCs, so this exercise treated the local authority areas as mutually exclusive. Collating the entries on the CASC list and SEND Local Offer Directories was completed in January and February 2024¹⁷.

Table #5: Few CASCs appear on English SEND LO Directories.

Proportion of English CASCs that appear in their SEND LO Directory	Percent
Mean	9%
Median	0%
Mode	0%

These percentages are small, indicating that the majority of SEND Local Offer Directories are commissioned on the assumption that families and their disabled children and young people do not want to participate in the mainstream community or should be directed towards specialist provision away from other citizens. For example, cycling CASCs are under-represented, but the SEND LO Directory may include specialist tandem cycle hirers, enabling cycling to be enjoyed by people unable to balance, steer or pedal.

Before looking at the achievements of individual SEND Local Offer directories, the overall data permits a review of the representation of individual sports, as shown in Table #6 below. The evidence shown here about Individual sports provokes a series of questions. For example, are bowls clubs assumed to be suitable for older people and so under-represented on Directories compiled for children and their young families? Are flying clubs principally the domain of the wealthy and therefore inaccessible to most disabled people? Do disabled people need to be looked after on the water, justifying why team rowing gets more coverage than solo canoeing? Has the Lawn Tennis Association mounted an especially successful marketing campaign to help local clubs make reasonable adjustments? Are disabled people considered untrustworthy and thus denied information about guns and swords, but happily armed with bow and arrow? Are the differences between these percentages generated by statistical noise or do they reflect real variations in access?

Table #6: Some sports are of more interest to English SEND Local Offer Directories than others.

Sport	Number of English CASCs	Number of these CASCs that appear on SEND LO Directory	Percent
Cricket	1360	148	11%
Bowls (also Boccia, Bowling)	978	58	6%

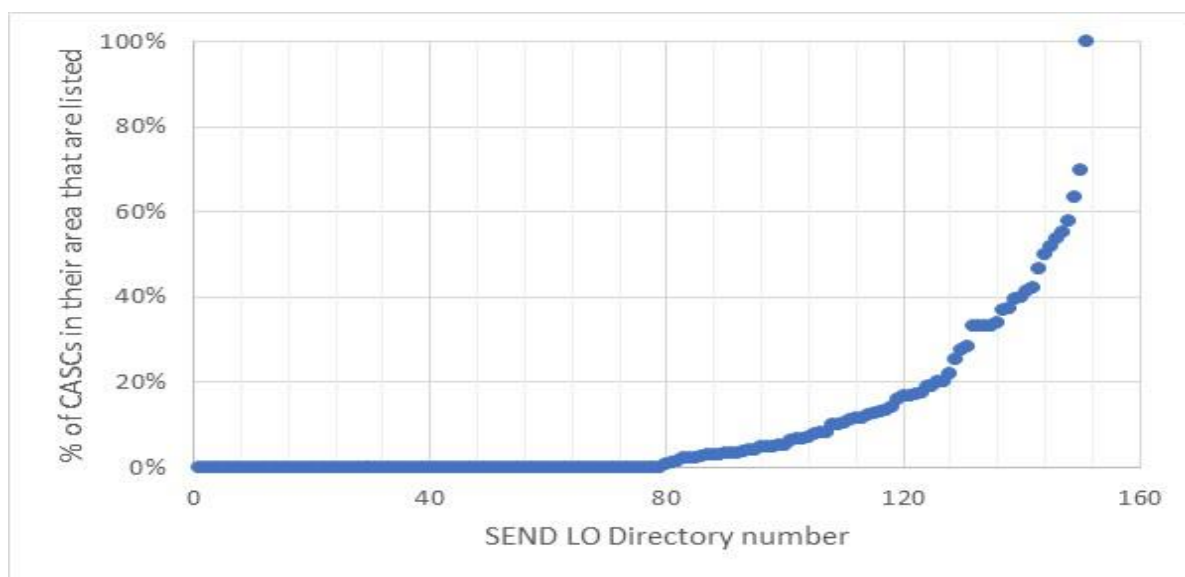
Sport	Number of English CASCs	Number of these CASCs that appear on SEND LO Directory	Per-cent
Football (also handball)	655	56	9%
Tennis	618	102	17%
Rugby	480	54	11%
Golf	298	20	7%
Sailing (boat, cruising, sail, yacht)	234	19	8%
Gun (rifle, pistol, air gun, target shooting, also sword and fencing)	149	3	2%
Hockey	132	21	16%
Athletics	125	10	8%
Rowing	123	21	17%
Swimming (also sub-aqua and diving)	118	12	10%
Boxing	110	12	11%
Squash	91	12	13%
Gymnastics	88	12	14%
Cycling	74	3	4%
Running (also walking, rambling, orienteering and mountaineering)	67	9	13%
Flying (gliding, aircraft, aero microlight and model planes)	70	2	3%
Canoe	62	6	10%
Martial arts	72	8	11%
Croquet	51	3	6%
Archery	49	8	6%
Angling	46	0	0%
Table Tennis	35	3	9%
Badminton	24	2	8%

As well as considering this dataset from the perspective of individual sports, it is possible to cut it the other way and look at the performance of individual local authorities and their SEND Local Offer Directories, as shown in the following chart. In all, 153 Directories were examined, and 79 of them (52%) contained none of the CASCs in their local area. Taken together, these 79 local authorities served a population of 27.2 million and could have listed 2,780 CASCs. On average, they were made up of the smaller local authorities, since this group formed 52% of all local authorities, but only 45% of the population). Of those Directories that do include CASCs, only seven included more than half of the CASCs in their area^a. This suggests that no Directory compiler has obtained the list of CASCs for their area and simply copied the entries into their local Directory^b.

Chart #3: Half of the English SEND Local Offer Directories list none of the CASCs in their area.

^a The three highest scores on the chart are achieved by local authorities that have a very small number of CASCs in their area. Hackney has 1 CASC and it appears on the SEND LO Directory, therefore showing as 100% on the chart, Rutland has 10 CASCs of which 7 appear in their Directory, showing as 70% and Brent has 11 CASCs and lists 7 of them, showing as 64% on the chart.

^b Harvesting the contact details from the register of CASCs and then checking details would probably have led to the removal of some items, but coverage would still approach 100% rather than the present low figure.



The two local authorities that hosted the largest number of registered CASCs illustrate the variation in approach. Kent has 286 CASCs in its patch but placed only 7 of them (2%) in its Directory while Surrey listed 128 (54%) of its 236 CASCs. Indeed, with this number of CASCs on its Directory, Surrey is responsible for 20% of all the CASCs listed in England. This speaks to the question of consent. Since these clubs are registered with the government and their details are published, it is hard to think of a reason why a local community directory would not include them, whether or not they had received formal consent from the club.

Compilers of the SEND Local Offer Directory may defend their work by mentioning the considerable number of sports activities that are listed, some of which display a commitment to combating exclusion. For example, in Stockport, Hale Cricket Club ran an extensive programme of tennis training for young people with Down's^c. In many other cases, these sports activities are arranged by disability support organisations rather than the mainstream sports club and so they inadvertently maintain the segregation of disabled children and young people from the rest of society and de-skill the mainstream sports provider. This issue is discussed in the companion paper [How to choose between a community or service directory](#), mentioned above.

The example of free hot food outlets

Organisations concerned about community building, poverty or food waste sometimes respond by preparing hot food for anyone who wants to turn up and eat for free. Locating a social eating project of this kind may be a lifeline to families in need alongside food banks and community pantries, fridges and supermarkets.

^c Closer examination reveals that Hale Cricket Club is not listed as a CASC and the information found on 11/02/2024 relates to a programme that ran in 2015. See [Down's Syndrome Tennis Programme - Hale | Stockport Information and Childcare Directory \(fsd.org.uk\)](#)

In 2023, a comprehensive community search was undertaken and the result was a [list](#) of 61 places in the Nottingham conurbation where free or cheap hot food was offered to all. The count is complicated by several factors, including (i) some venues lie outside the city boundary; (ii) there is no easy way to classify entries that offer hot snacks rather than a full meal; (iii) it is not always clear whether the meal is open to all or a specific eligible group; (iv) some projects provided subsidised meals rather than give them away, while others look for a donation; and (iv) some venues may use alternative descriptors (e.g. 'lunch') and so not appear in a search.

A search was undertaken in November 2023 of the local directory ASKLiON using the terms 'community kitchen', 'free meal', 'hot food', 'social eating' and 'food bank'. Forty-eight of the outlets lie within the city boundary of which 15 appear in ASKLiON – 31%.

This reach ratio gives a better score than the national picture for Scouts and suggests that the mapmakers seek out projects that meet need over those that build community. Scaling up this example would require a broader survey to establish whether Nottingham is unusual in its number of such food outlets.

The example of churches

Churches are longstanding communities where many people find friendship, belonging, community and faith. Some of them provide welfare services such as community meals, debt counselling, toddler groups and so on. As such, they form a litmus test for directories by discriminating between those that list:

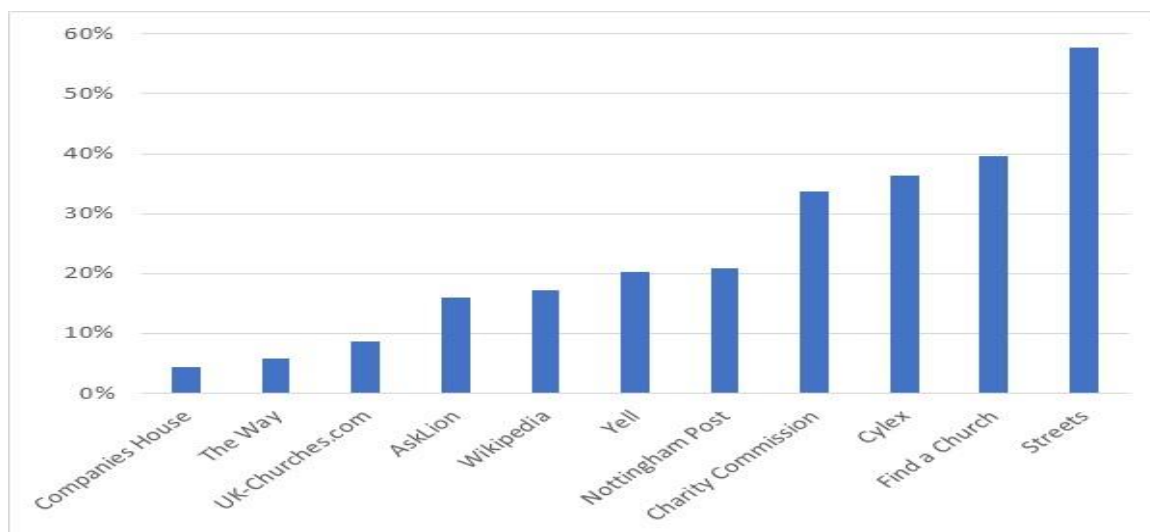
- only formal health, education and social care services;
- the welfare functions of the churches and other voluntary groups in the area; and
- the churches themselves.

It may be that a worshipping community is actively driving many of its welfare activities, but, in many cases, the church itself remains hidden from view, invisible to anyone searching the Community Directory. It's like professional footballers who advertise healthy eating, support the Black Lives Matter campaign and promote literacy in schools but never mention that they play football! So the debt advice service is listed in the directory, but not the religious service.

In spring 2023 a rigorous search identified 187 active churches holding their main public meetings in the Nottingham City Council area. Some of the searching was carried out by checking a wide range of existing directories, taking the investigation well beyond the SEND Local Offer directory to other listings of community activities. The best church directory found 74 (41%) of them, and, together, another five directories added a further 36 churches (20%) to the count. Searching an additional 11 church directories added no new churches to the list, and the remaining 69 churches were located by alternative methods¹⁸. This process revealed that one directory has a far greater reach in this one city than any of its competitors, but without the extensive work involved in undertaking this survey it would be difficult to be sure which of the directories is most useful¹⁹.

The following directories were excluded from the following chart, (i) online sources which lack effective search tools²⁰, (ii) directories that are confined to a subgroup, such as a single denomination or interest²¹, and (iii) directories that gave a nil return.

Chart #4: Percentage of the actual number of active churches in Nottingham that appeared in a selection of databases.

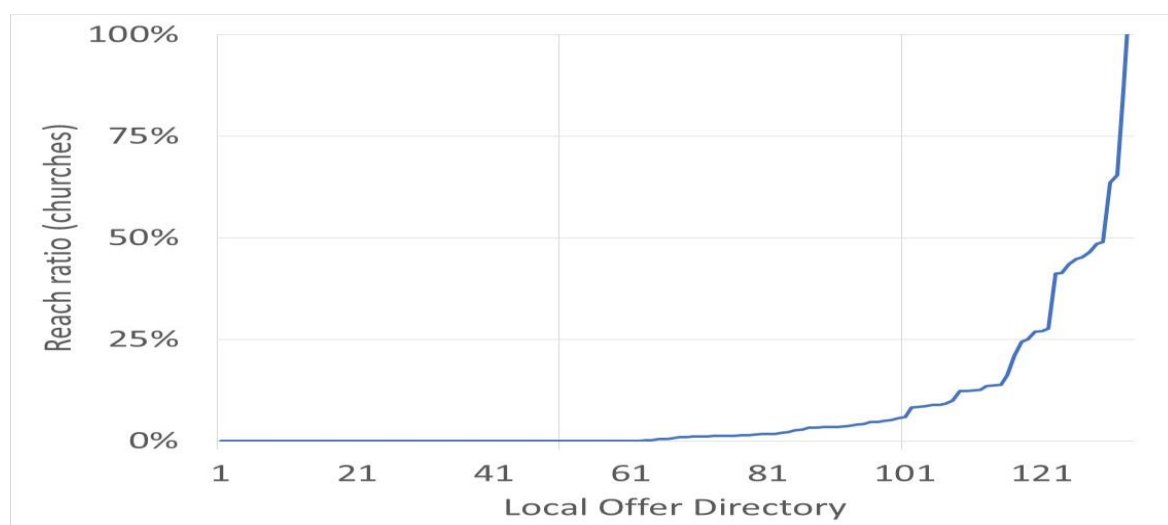


If the goal is to find no more than the name and address of the church, then all the specialist church directories are outshone by Streets, a free database built from geographical information and perhaps by using artificial intelligence to scrape data from the internet. Whilst the bar chart above refers only to active churches, all the directories found many false positives and listed churches that are no longer open. Churches are enduring community organisations with some of their buildings dating back a thousand years, so they will be much less troubled by information going out of date compared to community networks and groups that are short-lived and mobile.

The ASKLiON directory is hosted by Nottingham City Council and includes the SEND Local Offer but also collects information about the local community for many other purposes. It lists 27 of the 187 active churches that meet within the city boundary, giving a reach ratio of 14%.

We can now consider the SEND Local Offer directories available around England. The example from Nottingham City can be brought together with data from elsewhere²² to generate an estimate of the number of active churches in each of the 153 areas covered by a SEND Local Offer directory²³. Some Directories show each activity run by the church as a separate entry, thus inflating their figures. Others include churches that meet outside their area, since they may be more accessible to residents than those in their own patch. This means that summary data from one directory is not perfectly comparable to another and so care needs to be taken in drawing conclusions. The median reach ratio is 1% for churches in SEND Local Offer Directories.

Chart #5: Half of the SEND Local Offer Directories list no churches



Seeking correlations

The following correlation coefficients were derived from the data on SEND Local Offer directories²⁴. Seventy-seven directories gave the total number of entries in their listing and revealed a moderate relationship²⁵ (correlation coefficient = 0.59) between the size of the population covered by the local authority and the size of the directory, so a bigger population generally results in a larger directory.

However, simply increasing the size of the directory does not convincingly move it away from being a service directory towards a representation of the community, as illustrated by the data on Scouts and Guides, community amateur sports clubs and churches. Correlation coefficients show no relationship between the size of the population and the number of any of these groups that are listed, and a weak relationship between the number of entries per 1,000 population and the number of Guide units and the number of churches, as shown in Table #7 below.

Table #7: Correlation coefficients indicate a weak relationship at best

	Population (n=151)	Entries/1000 pop (n=77)
Scouts groups listed in directory	0.17	0.15
Guides units listed in directory	0.04	0.26
CASCs	-0.05	0.20
Churches listed in directory	0.13	0.33

Finally here, we might hypothesise that directories which include any aspect of the community beyond services will include everything, and so the correlation between different aspects of community life will be strong. In other words, a mapmaker who lists Scouts will be likely to include Guides, and their broad awareness of the informal community will lead them to list CASCs and churches too. Data were available for all 151 directories, and Table #8 shows that these correlation coefficients indicate a relationship between these elements, although the relationship is weak, and this suggests that a variety of factors must be at work to influence both the number and type of community groups that appear in SEND Local Offer directories.

Table #8: Correlation coefficients indicate a weak relationship at best

	Scouts groups in directory	Guides units in directory
Guides units in directory	0.35	
CASCs in directory	0.31	0.14
Churches in directory	0.27	0.31

Modelling an English town

The data reported here creates an opportunity to build a crude model of the average English town deriving the number of its community groups from the various reference points that have been identified above. Such an exercise is foolhardy, since the social capital and organisational preferences of any individual place will shape its reality. However, a model might challenge mapmakers and directory builders to continue searching for community life if their list is well short of the numbers shown in the model.

Thus a typical town of 100,00 people might approximate the following:

	Predicted number active in this average town
Scout groups ²⁶	11
Guide units ²⁷	40
Sports clubs ²⁸	56
CASCs ²⁹	10
Churches ³⁰	58

Two remarks may be offered about the numbers in this table. First, that Guides is either four times more popular than Scouts, or that they are counting their four age-differentiated groups separately, while Scouts treats them as one. Neither organisation has yet offered an explanation of this difference. Secondly, in one town at least, the number of sports groups is close to the count of active churches.

A working estimate of the reach ratio

In summary:

- SEND Local Offer directories altogether found 252 Scouts groups, which, if interpreted generously, gives a national reach ratio of 16% of those listed on the Scout Association directory. A total of 66 Guides groups were listed on the SEND Local Offer Directory, while Girlguiding UK host 27,000 groups.
- One in ten Community Amateur Sports Clubs appear in the SEND Local Offer Directory.
- Across 153 SEND Local Offer directories, the median reach ratio for churches was 0%.

Further work would be needed to derive a more accurate reach ratio for SEND Local Offer directories, but the broad inference seems to be that it is unusual for directories to list more than 10% of the formal, long-lasting groups and organisations in their area. Whilst many mapmakers are

to be congratulated for the sheer volume of data they have been able to collate and upload to their directories, it would appear that the material found in them commonly represents only a fraction of community life.

The examples of Scouts, Guides, Community Amateur Sports Clubs and churches given in this paper illustrate the value of the reach ratio as a way to evaluate and compare local community directories, especially if a different activity is picked for use as the proxy each time. The national, searchable directory of amateur football clubs would be a useful candidate, as there are likely to be several entries in each area and its coverage will be good since teams wish to play one another and so will advertise their existence. Overall, reach ratio offers a potential Key Performance Indicator to local communities such as Torbay³¹ that are in search of ways to measure their efforts³².

Conclusion

Several measures of the reach of community directories have been discussed in this paper:

- The number of entries in the directory
- The number of entries per head of population
- The number of Scout groups and Girlguiding units listed.
- The number of registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs that appear on the SEND Local Offer directory
- The number of places where free or cheap hot food is offered to all.
- The number of active churches listed.

Combining five of these measures³³ gives a composite measure³⁴ of all 153 SEND Local Offer directories and identifies the directories with the greatest reach into their communities, as shown in the Appendix to this paper. Alternative approaches could be tried. It would be interesting to explore the characteristics of the ten top-scoring directories³⁵ to try and discern what underpins their success. Possible reasons include a broad vision and widespread support, a generous budget to run the directory, low staff turnover and a focus on content rather than repeated reformatting.

This section must not be concluded without recognising that SEND Local Offer webpages have many duties, of which reflecting the local community is only one. Other approaches are needed to evaluate the extent to which the community is consulted about the Local Offer, about the accessibility of the contents, and, crucially, about the quality of life enjoyed by children with special educational needs and disabilities and their families. Improving the reach of directories into the community beyond services will help that ambition to be realised.

Appendix – the data

Website	Pop	In the community				On the SEND Local Offer Directory					Combined reach ratio (max=100)
		~ no. of churches	~no. of Scout groups	~no. of Guides units	On CASC dbase	Total no. of items	Scout groups	Guide groups	Churches	CASCs	
Barking & Dagenham	218900	126	23	88	9	919	1	0	15	2	12
Barnet	389100	225	41	157	29	560	0	0	0	1	1
Barnsley	244600	141	26	99	15	1416	0	0	36	0	11
Bath & North East Somerset	192400	111	20	78		?	0	0	0		0
Bedford	92,410	53	10	37	31	732	0	1	1	1	1
Bexley	246500	142	26	99	18	?	0	0	0	0	0
Birmingham	1452000	839	152	585	47	?	0	0	0	0	0
Blackburn & Darwen	154900	89	16	62	10	420	0	0	0	0	3
Blackpool	139310	80	15	56	6	1026	0	0	22	1	9
Bolton	296000	171	31	119	18	2246	2	1	15	5	16
Bournemouth Christchurch & Poole	400109	231	42	161	31	2111	3	0	0	5	3
Bracknell Forest	126880	73	13	51	5	659	0	0	0	0	0
Bradford	497400	287	52	201	29	779	0	0	0	0	2
Brent	338900	196	35	137	11	1098	14	1	90	7	33
Brighton & Hove	276300	160	29	111	33	?	0	0	0	1	1
Bristol	707000	408	74	285	42	?	0	0	0	1	0
Bromley	331100	191	35	134	42	?	3	1	81	1	11
Buckinghamshire	817260	472	85	330	99	3978	9	2	55	13	12
Bury	193800	112	20	78	27	?	1	0	6	0	2
Calderdale	210080	121	22	85	43	1281	1	1	0	11	12
Cambridgeshire	859830	497	90	347	100	888	0	1	1	0	1

Website	Pop	In the community				On the SEND Local Offer Directory					Combined reach ratio (max=100)
		~ no. of churches	~no. of Scout groups	~no. of Guides units	On CASC dbase	Total no. of items	Scout groups	Guide groups	Churches	CASCs	
Camden	262230	151	27	106	2	702	15	2	2	0	14
Central Bedfordshire	283610	164	30	114	30	326	0	2	0	0	1
Cheshire East	380790	220	40	154	43	?	31	0	0	0	16
Cheshire West & Chester	340500	197	36	137	37	2199	3	2	16	2	11
City of London	8853	5	1	4	1	122	0	0	2	0	22
Cornwall	568210	328	59	229	104	1542	0	1	7	0	3
Coventry	345328	199	36	139	12	?	1	1	0	1	2
Croydon	392220	227	41	158	32	339	0	0	0	0	0
Cumberland	306140	177	32	123	40	1207	0	0	0	0	4
Cumbria	499780	289	52	202	0	?	0	0	0	0	0
Darlington	92360	53	10	37	11	554	0	0	7	0	9
Derby	261400	151	27	105	16	?	0	0	0	0	0
Derbyshire	807183	466	84	325	94	3752	38	7	93	39	26
Devon	811640	469	85	327	227	4707	0	0	0	0	6
Doncaster	286866	166	30	116	15	128	0	0	0	0	6
Dorset	380000	220	40	153	90	683	1	1	28	12	0
Dudley	323488	187	34	130	24	?	17	1	49	8	8
Durham	508500	294	53	205	69	1526	2	3	34	1	22
Ealing	341980	198	36	138	17	?	0	0	0	3	4
East Riding	342200	198	36	138	29	365	0	0	0	0	1
East Sussex	545800	315	57	220	111	2537	0	0	0	4	5
Enfield	333870	193	35	135	31	?	1	0	0	0	1
Essex	1860000	1075	194	750	191	693	0	0	0	4	0

Website	Pop	In the community				On the SEND Local Offer Directory					Combined reach ratio (max=100)
		~ no. of churches	~no. of Scout groups	~no. of Guides units	On CASC dbase	Total no. of items	Scout groups	Guide groups	Churches	CASCs	
Gateshead	196100	113	21	79	18	?	0	1	0	0	0
Gloucestershire	640650	370	67	258	113	2664	1	1	29	16	9
Greenwich	282800	163	30	114	17	1972	3	2	13	0	11
Hackney	279670	162	29	113	1	959	1	1	2	1	25
Halton	119800	69	13	48	7	?	0	0	0	0	0
Hammersmith & Fulham	185430	107	19	75	7	233	0	0	0	0	1
Hampshire	1,860,000	1075	194	750	173	3348	1	0	20	6	3
Haringey	270620	156	28	109	16	?	0	1	0	2	3
Harrow	250150	145	26	101	33	?	0	0	0	0	0
Hartlepool	92028	53	10	37	8	374	1	0	32	0	18
Havering	257810	149	27	104	29	729	1	0	7	0	5
Herefordshire	50400	29	5	20	35	?	0	0	12	1	9
Hertfordshire	1200600	694	126	484	166	?	0	0	0	0	0
Hillingdon	304820	176	32	123	21	?	0	0	0	0	0
Hounslow	250000	144	26	101	14	?	0	0	0	0	0
Hull	259778	150	27	105	5	282	0	0	0	0	1
Isle of Wight	140400	81	15	57	25	?	0	0	1	0	0
Isles of Scilly	2280	1	0	1	3	?	0	1	0	1	7
Islington	239140	138	25	96	6	604	1	0	54	0	11
Kensington & Chelsea	180300	104	19	73	3	?	0	0	0	0	0
Kent	1870000	1080	196	566*	286	?	3	1	250	7	5
Kingston upon Thames	175470	101	18	71	12	309	0	0	5	0	3
Kirklees	433400	250	45	175	58	114	0	0	1	32	11

Website	Pop	In the community				On the SEND Local Offer Directory					Combined reach ratio (max=100)
		~ no. of churches	~no. of Scout groups	~no. of Guides units	On CASC dbase	Total no. of items	Scout groups	Guide groups	Churches	CASCs	
Knowsley	154500	89	16	62	5	?	3	1	1	1	8
Lambeth	321800	186	34	130	5	?	0	0	2	0	0
Lancashire	1236000	714	129	498	137	?	0	0	0	0	0
Leeds	530984	307	56	214	92	936	0	0	0	0	2
Leicester	355218	205	37	143	16	?	0	0	0	1	1
Leicestershire	712300	411	74	287	97	3834	0	1	0	0	5
Lewisham	300600	174	31	121	7	136	0	0	0	0	0
Lincolnshire	768364	444	80	310	132	1339	0	1	0	9	3
Liverpool	1551800	896	162	626	15	1507	0	0	0	0	1
Luton	225300	130	24	91	10	479	1	5	0	0	4
Manchester	586100	339	61	236	21	2803	1	1	9	4	10
Medway	278016	161	29	112	19	?	0	1	0	0	0
Merton	215200	124	22	87	9	189	1	1	0	1	4
Middlesbrough	140550	81	15	57	8	1189	3	1	0	3	8
Milton Keynes	287000	166	30	116	33	?	0	1	0	0	0
Newcastle	300200	173	31	121	21	1802	1	0	0	4	10
Newham	352010	203	37	142	10	611	0	0	2	1	4
Norfolk	916200	529	96	369	112	4158	1	0	5	1	5
North East Lincolnshire	156900	91	16	63	17	142	0	0	0	0	1
North Lincolnshire	170786	99	18	69	28	?	1	12	0	0	5
North Somerset	193000	111	20	92*	38	1937	17	14	120	15	60
North Tyneside	209151	121	22	84	19	?	0	0	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	618000	357	65	249	159	?	0	0	0	0	0

Website	Pop	In the community				On the SEND Local Offer Directory					Combined reach ratio (max=100)
		~ no. of churches	~no. of Scout groups	~no. of Guides units	On CASC dbase	Total no. of items	Scout groups	Guide groups	Churches	CASCs	
Northamptonshire	747622	432	78	301	87	1846	2	1	2	1	3
Nottingham	323700	187	34	50*	14	2072	0	0	3	0	7
Nottinghamshire	833400	481	87	336	102	5054	5	2	74	12	13
Oldham	96560	56	10	39	34	?	0	0	27	0	10
Oxfordshire	725314	419	76	292	129	3617	7	4	4	44	14
Peterborough	194000	112	20	78	14	701	0	0	3	0	1
Plymouth	263070	152	28	106	19	2015	1	2	5	2	12
Portsmouth	208100	120	22	84	21	816	0	0	53	1	14
Reading	162670	94	17	66	14	891	9	6	0	0	0
Redbridge	303860	176	32	123	31	427	0	0	0	0	1
Redcar & Cleveland	139500	81	15	56	14	939	0	0	2	4	13
Richmond upon Thames	195232	113	20	79	32	565	0	0	4	1	4
Rochdale	223773	129	23	90	18	1566	1	1	2	0	8
Rossendale	71010	41	7	29	13	?	1	1	19	0	13
Rotherham	109690	63	11	44	14	?	0	0	0	0	0
Rutland	41150	24	4	17	10	?	2	3	0	7	14
Salford	103890	60	11	42	20	493	0	0	0	1	1
Sandwell	341900	198	36	138	8	610	1	1	0	0	2
Sefton	281030	162	29	113	25	2375	8	7	78	13	20
Sheffield	577800	334	60	233	35	2788	2	0	34	6	5
Shropshire	323600	187	34	130	75	1990	6	3	116	35	22
Slough	158300	91	17	64	2	835	1	0	0	1	16
Solihull	216700	125	23	87	27	244	2	1	5	0	4

Website	Pop	In the community				On the SEND Local Offer Directory					Combined reach ratio (max=100)
		~ no. of churches	~no. of Scout groups	~no. of Guides units	On CASC dbase	Total no. of items	Scout groups	Guide groups	Churches	CASCs	
Somerset	965424	558	101	389	126	1255	0	0	0	0	1
South Gloucestershire	290400	168	30	117	39	?	1	0	43	0	6
South Tyneside	147800	85	15	60	10	?	0	0	8	1	4
Southampton	249000	144	26	100	12	1182	2	0	5	1	9
Southend-on-Sea	318553	184	33	128	13	?	19	0	6	1	14
Southwark	307700	178	32	124	14	?	5	0	2	1	5
St Helens	102629	59	11	41	21	?	0	0	0	0	0
Staffordshire	1140000	659	119	460	99	?	1	0	20	4	2
Stockport	295200	171	31	119	50	920	0	0	0	0	3
Stockton	451000	261	47	182	19	1682	1	1	31	7	14
Stoke	258400	149	27	104	21	?	0	0	2	0	0
Suffolk	763400	441	80	308	117	1619	55	2	1	0	16
Sunderland	303431	175	32	122	9	458	0	0	0	0	2
Surrey	1,199,870	693	125	484	238	4772	7	2	90	128	19
Sutton	204530	118	21	82	10	?	1	1	10	0	3
Swindon	155432	90	16	63	12	1066	0	0	5	0	8
Tameside	231073	133	24	93	20	?	0	0	0	0	0
Telford & Wrekin	185800	107	19	75	15	?	0	0	0	1	1
Thurrock	151600	88	16	61	9	1101	0	1	0	3	14
Torbay	135780	78	14	55	31	?	1	1	3	0	3
Tower Hamlets	317710	184	33	128	5	?	0	1	3	0	0
Trafford	235500	136	25	95	17	2676	3	1	6	2	17
Wakefield	333869	193	35	135	29	?	0	0	0	0	0

Website	Pop	In the community				On the SEND Local Offer Directory					Combined reach ratio (max=100)
		~ no. of churches	~no. of Scout groups	~no. of Guides units	On CASC dbase	Total no. of items	Scout groups	Guide groups	Churches	CASCs	
Walsall	284300	164	30	115	11	?	0	0	39	0	5
Waltham Forest	276350	160	29	111	15	?	0	0	0	0	0
Wandsworth	326470	189	34	132	21	482	1	0	6	1	4
Warrington	211200	122	22	85	24	1165	3	2	4	4	13
Warwickshire	583786	337	61	235	99	?	0	0	0	5	1
West Berkshire	161865	94	17	65	25	703	1	1	40	1	15
West Sussex	885100	511	93	357	140	?	16	2	6	18	6
Westminster	204200	118	21	82	3	125	0	0	0	1	7
Westmoreland & Furness	226000	131	24	91	82	709	0	0	0	0	6
Wigan	103610	60	11	42	20	1075	1	2	5	4	19
Wiltshire	513400	297	54	207	84	?	0	0	0	0	0
Windsor & Maidenhead	153900	89	16	62	21	?	1	1	4	0	2
Wirral	321238	186	34	130	20	?	0	0	3	0	0
Wokingham	177500	103	19	72	19	3458	17	1	84	11	66
Wolverhampton	264000	153	28	106	10	720	2	0	1	4	12
Worcestershire	613680	355	64	247	76	?	0	0	0	32	8
York	208400	120	22	84	29	68	0	0	0	0	0

* These three numbers marked with a * are the count of actual Girlguiding units provided by the Girlguiding Association in March 2024. All other numbers given in this column are estimates derived from the Girlguides national for the UK total divided by the population to give a figure for each area.

¹ A list of those who have been approached and responded to a request can be seen in [Introduction to community maps and directories](#).

² Some did not offer a searchable directory. Some of those that did provide a searchable directory did not publish a count of the returns. Yet others counted them under various categories without showing the final total. Where the count is broken down into categories, there is no explanation of whether they are mutually exclusive. So, the figures given in this column of the table are extremely tentative and give no more than an impression. No directories have yet been found that explain their rationale for categorising activities, groups and community organisations. Websites utilise different eligibility criteria for their entries, so for some, the total may include information about an issue, while for others, the count only includes information about an organisation, service or activity. The purpose of the chart is to seek out a general pattern, rather than to critically rate an individual website.

³ The Scouts website gives a total of 7500 for the UK. Assuming that the distribution matches the general population, we can estimate that there are around $7500 \times 55/65 = 6350$ groups in England. The Scouts website does not make it clear whether there are 7500 locations, each including up to four age-separated groups, or 7500 groups shared between approximately $7500/4 = 1,875$ locations.

⁴ Girlguiding is a federation, so local, area, regional, national and international bodies have considerable freedom within the overall structure and ethos of the organisation.

⁵ These figures from annual reports are for Girlguiding in the UK (Chloe Gee, personal communication 09 Jan 2024).

⁶ The figures in this column are derived by dividing the total number of units in the UK by the population to create an average. As this table knows, other factors affect the actual distribution of units, such as the age profile of the local population and perhaps rurality, ethnic diversity and access to alternative activities.

⁷ Data kindly provided by Chloe Gee, Girlguiding UK, March 2024.

⁸ See [Making reasonable adjustments | Girlguiding](#).

⁹ [For all girls - Girlguiding impact report \(foleon.com\)](#).

¹⁰ See [Register as a community amateur sports club \(CASC\): Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

¹¹ This analysis is based on the version of the CASC database downloaded in December 2023.

¹² Obscure club names include community, Edwardian, freeholds, gloves, replay, stars and vine.

¹³ A few CASCs were also counted twice, either because they appeared twice in the official list, or because their name identified two or more sports.

¹⁴ Nottingham City has 15 CASCs, while the [Active Places Power](#) database lists 53 sporting venues in the area. Both lists may contain some clubs which have ceased operations.

¹⁵ See [Sports-clubs-and-groups-in-Nottingham.pdf \(peterbates.org.uk\)](#).

¹⁶ The registered address for the CASC may be the venue for the sports activity, the clubhouse or the home address of the CASC secretary, which in exceptional circumstances may fall into a different local authority area as the sports venue.

¹⁷ The CASC list was downloaded in December 2023 from the UK Government website at [List of community amateur sports clubs \(CASC\) registered with HMRC - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). It includes the address for each CASC. Some 300 missing postcodes were assigned by using [Postcode Finder - Find an address | Royal Mail Group Ltd](#). Postcodes were then placed in the relevant local authority area by using data from the Office of National Statistics at [Postcode to Output Area Hierarchy with Classifications \(November 2019\) Lookup in the UK | Open Geography Portal \(statistics.gov.uk\)](#). CASCs associated with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were set aside. This left a list of CASCs for each English SEND LO Directory. Directories are listed at <https://peterbates.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/List-of-SEND-Local-Offer-websites.pdf>. Directories were then interrogated to find out if each CASC in its area was listed.

¹⁸ I found 74 active churches in Nottingham UA by looking at Find a Church, then added another 19 from Join my Church, 10 from a Church Near You, 4 from the Evangelical Alliance, 2 from the Assemblies of God and 1 from the Church of God. None were added by reviewing the following church directories: [Baptist church finder](#), [Catholic](#)

[Directory](#), [Congregational Federation church finder](#), Methodist church database, [The Way](#), [URC Churches list](#), [Welcome Churches](#), [Wesleyan Reform church finder](#), [Elim Church](#), [Vineyard churches](#), and [Plymouth Brethren](#). An additional 69 active churches were found by walking around and by looking at the [Charity Commission database](#), Facebook, Community Centre diaries, [Companies House](#), [Wikipedia](#), [Yell](#), Youtube and [Open Street Map](#).

¹⁹ Directories are loaded with false positives - entries which turn out to be former rather than active churches. Some directories provide a map rather than a list, inhibiting attempts to carry out a comprehensive check. Directories generally do not maintain a rigid border and so include many entries that are accessible to the local population but not based in the patch.

²⁰ This category included Facebook, Youtube (their search tools are ineffective unless you already know the precise details) and community centres. Wikipedia does appear on the chart because it lists Nottingham churches all together on a single page. Other churches may have a page on Wikipedia but not appear on this list so are not included in this count of the reach of Wikipedia.

²¹ This category included denominational directories (A Church near You, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Catholic, Church of God, Congregational Federation, Elim, Methodist, Plymouth Brethren, Wesleyan Reform, United Reform and Vineyard. Also interest groups, including Evangelical Alliance, NG Network and Welcome Churches.

²² Historic data are available from the English Church Census 2005 and successive commentaries which Peter Brierley interprets to derive an estimate of one church per 1,580 members of the population in England in 2020. Google suggests the population of Nottingham City is 323,700 and the count of churches that hold their main meeting within the city boundary is 187, giving an average of 1,731 residents per church. The table shown in the text uses a conservative estimate of one church per 2000 residents.

²³ A total of 153 SEND Local Offer directories were checked. The population figure was taken from a simple google search and the figure derived elsewhere in this paper of one church per 1850 residents was used to calculate the number of churches expected to be active in that area.

²⁴ This was simply achieved by applying the Correl function in Excel. A score greater than 0.3 generally is understood to confirm that there is a relationship between the variables.

²⁵ The descriptors used to interpret the correlation coefficient follow the advice given by Khamis H. Measures of association: How to choose? *Journal of Diagnostic Medical Sonography*. 2008 May;24(3):155-62.

²⁶ The Scout Association reports that they have approximately 7,500 Scout units in the UK. ONS gives the UK population as 67.0 million at mid-2021, giving a ratio of 8933 members of the public per Scout unit. Thus an average town of 100,000 would host 11 units.

²⁷ Girlguiding UK reports that they have 27,000 units in the UK. ONS gives the UK population as 67.0 million at mid-2021, giving a ratio of 2481 members of the public per Guide unit. Thus an average town of 100,000 would host 40 units.

²⁸ National figures are not known, so this row of our model assumes that the prevalence of sports clubs in Nottingham is typical. As 180 sports clubs were found in Nottingham where the population is 323,700, an average town of 100,000 people would support a total of 56 sports clubs.

²⁹ We saw above that there is an average of 1 CASC per 9,589 members of the English population. Thus an average town of 100,000 citizens would support a total of 10 CASCs.

³⁰ The study of Nottingham found 187 active churches serving a population of 323,700, averaging one church for every 1,731 citizens. Thus an average town of 100,000 people would support a total of 58 churches.

³¹ The Written Statement of Action produced in Torbay makes 14 references to Key Performance Indicators – see [torbay-written-statement-of-action-final.pdf](#).

³² The [SEND improvement plan](#) in Plymouth treats the quality of the community directory as an intermediate step in the process and lists outcome indicators instead – children’s academic attainment rises, searchers are satisfied with the directory, reduction in permanent school exclusions and so on. Meanwhile, Newham offers an SEN Dashboard containing an astonishing 196 ‘key’ performance indicators.

³³ It is deemed impractical to include hot food outlets in the overall estimate of reach ratio since no data are available on the prevalence of these projects, the category is slippery and there is no national body overseeing their development available to consult.

³⁴ The five measures that are combined to form a combined reach ratio are (i) number of entries in the SEND Local Offer Directory per 5,000 population in the local authority area, (2) the number of Scout groups listed/estimated number of Scout groups in the local authority area, (3) the number of Girlguiding units listed/estimated number of units in the local authority area. (4) the number of CASCs listed/the number of registered CASCs in the local authority area, (5) the number of churches listed/estimated actual number of active churches in the local authority area. Any measure where information is not provided (e.g. the Local Offer website is not searchable or does not publish the number of entries in the database) is counted as zero. Critics are welcome to suggest a better measure, since (a) including variables (i) and (ii) may give undue weight to this factor, and they are correlated anyway; (b) we don’t know enough about the actual numbers of Scout or Guide groups or churches in most areas; (c) a better proxy could be found.

³⁵ They are, in order and starting from the highest combined reach ratio: (1) Wokingham, (2) North Somerset, (3) Brent, (4) Derbyshire, (5) Hackney, (6) City of London, (7) Durham, (8) Shropshire, (9) Sefton, (10) Surrey.