

Exploring UK locations (Zoom In, Zoom Out)

The UK: settlements and navigating using maps

De-Graft: The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, or the UK as it's known, is made up of different countries, communities, and environments. There are loads of things to see and places to explore - for example, did you know, that there are more than 2,000 miles of canal tow-paths?

This is Manchester. Here waterways or canals were once the main way of transporting raw materials and trading goods, but now they're used primarily for leisure.

Later, locals Haniyah and Lola will be helping me understand a lot more about using a map to navigate around the UK. But first, let's zoom out.

I'm here in Manchester, one of the biggest cities in England. The UK is made up of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which can be found on the two largest islands within the British Isles. The biggest island is called Great Britain, which contains England, Scotland and Wales.

The UK is made up of different communities, rural and urban, that are distinct and have unique traits. As you can see on this puzzle, in England the country is divided into different areas called counties. In Northern Ireland there are districts, Wales there are principal areas, and in Scotland there are council areas.

We call all the places that people live in *settlements*, and there are a few different shapes and sizes. A *hamlet* is a very small settlement, with just a group of houses. A *village* is also small but as well as houses, there may be a shop, a school, a place of worship or a village hall. A *town* has all of the same features as a village but there may also be a railway station, a shopping centre, more places of work and places of worship. A *city* is even larger. Cities have a lot of housing, schools, universities, hospitals, offices, and often a cathedral. And a *megacity* is when a number of large towns and cities combined to create a massive urban area.

OK, time to compare. Across all of the settlements in the UK, in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, there's a total population of over 66 million people spread out over 242,500 square kilometres. The USA has around five times more people, living in an area of over nine million square kilometres.

De-Graft: Looking at maps is a great way of spotting settlements and locals Lola and Haniyah have joined me on the outskirts of Manchester to have a go. So guys, what do you make of this view around us?

Child: I think it's a nice, calm, relaxing view.

De-Graft: We've got all the nice scenery behind us but in front of us we've got a big, old map. What kind of things do you use maps for?

Child: It tells you how to get to places or where places are.

De-Graft: Absolutely right! Maps are two-dimensional drawings of an area, and they can be digital, like on our phones, or on pieces of paper. But we don't just have a map in front of us, we've also got a compass. Haniyah, can you grab the compass and show us where north is?

Child: So north, if I point the compass like that, would be facing there.

De-Graft: Very nice work. Maps are drawn to a much smaller scale so they can fit everything on a piece of paper. So, the map we've got in front of us is a 1:25000 scale map. That means every four centimetres on the map is the same as one kilometre in reality. Now I've got a bit of a challenge for you guys. I need you to get your rulers to tell me how far is Salford Quays from Manchester City Centre.

Child: 12 centimetres, but in real life it would be three kilometres.

De-Graft: That's right, three kilometres 'as the crow flies' - or if you were to draw a straight line. So why don't you have a go at map reading and plan some local routes to some nearby places? Zoom in and have a go for yourself!

Right guys, where are we off to next? Cool, let's go!