

Postcodes

In the session today we showed you how to plot data with XY coordinate data. We used the world-cities data which had coordinates in latitude-longitude and we used the Add XY data tool in QGIS to turn the coordinates into spatial data and to add them to the GIS project.

What if we have some UK postcodes data like the list shown below? How do we get that into QGIS?

M45 7SQ
NR7 8EX
GL12 7JU

With most things in GIS, we have a couple of options. Today, we will use a website called www.doogal.co.uk which will geocode the addresses we have. Geocoding takes a text based address, and returns a set of coordinates.

- Go to <https://www.doogal.co.uk/BatchGeocoding.php>
- Copy and paste the text from `postcode-input-file.csv` into the 'Addresses' box on the webpage
- Hit **Geocode**
- Wait a short time while the geocoding takes place
- When it is complete, click '**Download text**'
- Save the file (`locations.csv`) somewhere you can find it later

Things to remember:

- There must not be any quote marks (") in the addresses
- Always check the output - not all of the geocoding may be successful

The next step is to add the data to QGIS.

- Open **QGIS**
- As before, click **Layer > Add Layer > Add Delimited Text Layer...**
- Click **Browse** and find the `locations.csv` file
- Select **First record has field names**
- Check the output at the bottom of the screen - does it look sensible?
- Set the coordinates in the X and Y fields - we have both latitude-longitude and eastings-northings. As our data is for Great Britain, we can use eastings and northings (British National Grid).
- Click **Ok**
- QGIS will ask you select the Coordinate System the data are using - select **British National Grid (27700)** as before
- Check the data - do they look sensible for the addresses? (You may need to add some base map data)

Another approach would be to join Ordnance Survey Code-Point Open data to the Postcodes - have a look at <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/opendatadownload/products.html>.

This was written by Dr. Nick Bearman (nick@http://geospatialtrainingsolutions.co.uk). Thanks to Chris Bell for providing the geocoding resource at <https://www.doogal.co.uk>. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en>. The latest version of the PDF is available from <https://github.com/nickbearman/intro-qgis-spatial-data>. This version was created on 12th Feb 2020.