
Director General for Regulation

Iain Bell
Deputy National Statistician - Population and Public Policy
Office for National Statistics

27 February 2018

Dear Iain

Statistics on Housing and Planning in the UK

I'm writing to you following publication of our report *Public value of Statistics on Housing and Planning in the UK*¹ on 10 November 2017. We found that users are well served by a wide range of official housing data, and we also identified areas for improvement. These included creating more coherence across statistics outputs; innovating to help fill gaps, such as for the private rented sector; and greater cross-UK collaboration.

We discussed our findings at the Inter Administration Committee² meeting on 5 December 2017 where there was general support for our report, and discussion about improvement areas including the private rental sector, land supply and house building numbers.

We are very encouraged that housing statisticians from the UK's four countries met on 20 November 2017 and on 22 February to discuss a joint approach to the review's findings. We understand that you are now leading the coordination for developing a plan with the other producers, and your commitment to coherence and collaboration aligns well with the new *Code of Practice for Statistics*³. We understand you will jointly publish this plan by May 2018.

As a key producer of statistics for the UK, I am sure you will also consider what the findings of this review mean for the statistics that you provide. Should there be areas that are not covered in the joint plan, we anticipate you will publish the timescale for additional improvements you are planning. And to help inform these developments we encourage you to engage with a wide range of stakeholders. My team would be happy to support your engagement activities if this would be helpful.

Housing and planning matters are of high public interest. I appreciate your commitment to strengthen the public value of statistics on housing and planning, and we look forward to supporting you. We will seek an update from you in the Autumn about progress against the plans.

¹ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/public-value-of-statistics-on-housing-and-planning-in-the-uk/>

² <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/about/inter-administration-committee/>

³ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/>

I am copying this letter to Debra Prestwood and Chris Jenkins, Office for National Statistics; and to Colin Yeend at the Valuation Office Agency.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Humpherson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation