



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

11 June 2018

Mary Gregory
Deputy Director for Regulation
Office for Statistics Regulation

Dear Mary,

Thank you for your letter of 6th June 2018 relating to the code compliance checks recently undertaken on four of the departments housing statistical releases: *Net Additional Dwellings*, *New Build Dwellings*, *Affordable Housing Supply* and *Dwelling Stock Estimates*. We welcome the review work done by your team, which confirm the National Statistic status of these releases and the suggested recommendations for improvement in your letter.

As you are aware, we are actively involved with colleagues across government, including the devolved administrations, in a programme of work to improve housing statistics in response to the recent systemic review. We are also pushing ahead with implementing our Data Strategy in MHCLG, which will improve the data structures and capabilities within the department, offering greater flexibility for analysis and presentation in the future.

You have seen how we responded quickly to the findings in making changes and additions to the Dwelling Stock estimates, published last month, with further improvements planned for future releases. Below are some of the steps we are taking to implement your suggested improvements across the range of publications reviewed.

- We are committed to working as part of the cross government housing statistics user group to improve the harmonisation and coherence of housing statistics across the UK. MHCLG statisticians contributed to the recently published work plan¹ and are committed to its delivery.
- We will publish an action plan on improvements to New Build Dwellings on 28th June alongside the next statistical bulletin.
- We have engaged with the GSS Good Practice team and are planning a series of workshops over the summer focusing on the releases reviewed as part of your compliance checks. These workshops will seek to address your recommendations focusing on improving the presentation and commentary, user engagement, and the explanation of methods and quality assurance processes.
- We will review the data from the releases currently published on MHCLG's OpenData platform and make more datasets available on this platform where possible.

¹ <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/HousingWorkProgrammeMay2018.pdf>

It is our intention that following the work with the GSS Good Practice Team over the summer, changes to the content in the annual statistical releases, *Affordable Housing Supply* and *Net Additional Dwellings*, will be implemented in the next statistical publications due in November 2018. The annual *Dwelling Stock* statistics will be further improved in the next annual release due in May 2019. For the quarterly *House Building: new build dwellings* release the statistics improvement action plan will be published alongside the next release due on 28 June which will outline future improvement plans.

We look forward to continue working with you on delivering these improvements and will keep you informed of our progress.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Tudor

Head of Profession for Statistics MHCLG