
Deputy Director for Regulation

Glyn Jones
Chief Statistician
Welsh Government
(by email)

29 March 2019

Dear Glyn,

COMPLIANCE CHECK OF STATISTICS ON HOMELESSNESS IN WALES

As you are aware, we recently completed our compliance check of Welsh Government's (WG) [Homelessness Statistics](#) against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). I am pleased to confirm that these statistics should continue to be designated as National Statistics.

We initiated this check following the [public commitment](#) that we made in our 2018/19 Regulatory Work Programme to review the most important statistics on Housing. We considered the Trustworthiness, Quality and Value of these statistics in relation to the *Code* and have appreciated the positive and constructive way that the team has engaged with us during the compliance check. National Statistics status brings with it a commitment to the Code of Practice for Statistics and complying with this framework ensures statistics are of public value, are high quality and are produced in a way that is worthy of trust.

We found many examples of good practice around the production and presentation of the Homelessness Statistics annual report and quarterly bulletin. These include:

- Welsh Government demonstrating commitment to producing trusted statistics with integrity. The First Release and quarterly web releases have been written independently and we welcome your efforts to apply the Code of Practice standard. We did not identify any issues related to trustworthiness during this compliance check.
- Publishing comprehensive information about the quality of the statistics and quality assurance of the data in the [Quality Report](#). Overall this presents detailed information about the data source, collection method, and quality assurance for the data source used to produce Wales Homelessness Statistics. We welcome the publication of the Quality Report and appreciate the work done to produce it.
- The quarterly [Housing Information Group](#) hosted by WG which has broad membership of data providers and statistics users, and is an effective forum to discuss ongoing or planned developments. Making the agenda and minutes publicly available demonstrates openness and transparency.
- In addition to the Housing Information Group, demonstrating wider user engagement by inviting feedback on the outputs and involving Policy colleagues within the quality assurance process.
- The statisticians' ongoing work with Local Authorities (LAs) to quality assure the data submissions. This includes visiting LAs, holding training events and bringing LAs together to share best practice.
- Continued collaborative work with GSS Harmonisation team and statisticians across the other Devolved Administrations as part of the Cross-Government Housing Statistics Working Group to improve coherence across, and deliver a range of wider improvements to,

housing and planning statistics. This is particularly reflected in the recently published update from the GSS Harmonisation team on [Homelessness Harmonisation](#).

We identified some areas where we consider WG should enhance the information presented in the accompanying Quality Report, and improve the accessibility of the information within the First Release, to continue to meet the high standards required of National Statistics:

- There is scope for WG to strengthen its justifications within the Quality Report on its assurances of the quality of the data source. Some of the statements within the Quality Report could be more descriptive and we have highlighted to WG those where its judgements could be explained more clearly and fully. In line with the Authority's [QAAD toolkit](#) we would expect producers to have knowledge of suppliers' quality assurance checks and publish a brief description alongside a description of its own checks on the administrative data.
- The Quality Report should be further enhanced by transparently providing information on who has overall responsibility for the quality management process once the data have been delivered to WG.
- Accessibility to the associated data tables could be improved in line with examples of other statistical releases we have seen that contain hyperlinks, to aid users' experiences when navigating the statistics.

We welcome the recent update about the forthcoming refresh of the WG website which will allow greater functionality, the updating of hyperlinks accordingly, and will generally improve accessibility for users. Your statisticians have also confirmed that they will discuss the suggested improvements to the presentation of the statistics with the Government Statistical Service [Best Practice and Impact team](#), who have indicated they will be happy to work with you.

Thank you for engaging effectively with us during this review. Our Housing, Planning and Local Services Domain Lead will continue to engage with your team on progress in the coming months. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to discuss any aspects of this letter further.

I am copying this letter to Sue Leake (Head of Education and Public Services Statistics) Luned Jones and Judy David from the Housing Statistics team, and Lee Thomas from the Data Collection team.

Your sincerely



Mary Gregory

Deputy Director for Regulation