
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Iain Bell, Deputy National Statistician, Office for National Statistics
Paul Lowe, Registrar General and Keeper of the Records of Scotland
Siobhan Carey, Chief Executive and Registrar General for Northern Ireland
(by email)

4 October 2019

Dear Iain, Paul, Siobhan

We have today published our preliminary findings from our assessment of the 2021 Censuses in the UK being undertaken by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the National Records of Scotland (NRS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). I would like to recognise and thank you, and your teams, for your positive cooperation and engagement throughout the course of the assessment to date.

The Census is one of the most important sources of official statistics and the real value of the Censuses will be realised on the release of Census outputs. Census offices have shown a clear commitment to deliver high quality data and statistics in a variety of forms to support the wide range of different uses required. I would particularly like to highlight the evidence we have seen of strong collaborative working between the three Census offices. This is vital to ensure the needs of users across the UK, as well as in the individual countries, are met.

We have identified a number of areas where Census offices should act to enhance the public value, quality and trustworthiness of the data and statistics from 2021 Censuses in the UK. These actionable findings build on the existing work being undertaken by Census offices and should provide further direction and focus on pre-existing plans for Census as we move toward Census day in 2021 and beyond. My team will be happy to continue engaging with relevant Census teams as they work to address these areas.

I acknowledge all of the work undertaken to date so data and statistics from the Census will meet the standards set by the Code of Practice for Statistics. As Census rehearsals take place over the coming months, I will be keen to see the outcomes of this key testing activity and how Census offices work together to share their learnings. I wish you every success in this endeavour.

I am copying this letter to Jonathan Athrow, Interim National Statistician; Debra Prestwood, Head of Profession for Statistics, ONS; Roger Halliday, Chief Statistician and Data Officer, Scottish Government; Peter Whitehouse, Director of Statistical Services, NRS; David Marshall, Director of Census and Population Statistics, NISRA; Glyn Jones, Chief Statistician, Welsh Government.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
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