

From : Pete Whitehouse
Director of Statistical Services
28th October 2022

Dear Mark

Scottish Population Census

Thank you for your recent letter on Scotland's Census 2022 and advice on where National Records of Scotland (NRS) can focus further engagement with stakeholders as we work to deliver high quality Census Outputs which meet the needs of users.

NRS has long recognised the importance and benefit of ensuring that our stakeholders are provided with clear and accessible information on the census design and our delivery against it. I welcome your confirmation of NRS's commitment to this and also your most recent advice that we provide additional information on the steps we are taking to secure census outputs.

As we both agree, stakeholder engagement is an ongoing process which is vital to the delivery of high quality high public value statistics. You will be interested to note some of our recent work including [attendance](#) in front of the Scottish Parliament's Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee by National Records of Scotland in support of the Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and the attendance by Professor David Martin, and Professor Sir Ian Diamond (from the Registrar General for Scotland's International Steering Group) at an earlier meeting of the [Committee on 8th September](#). In both meetings there was discussion of the approach being taken by NRS to build on the solid foundation of the census collection phase through the proportionate and necessary use of administrative data.

Scotland's Census website continues to be updated and is a useful source of information. Most recently we have published a [paper](#) setting out how the census design is evolving to incorporate a greater use of administrative data within the estimation and imputation work, in addition to the planned use within our quality assurance of outputs work. We have also just published our [Outputs Consultation questionnaire](#) which will help our understanding of user needs and associated priorities, and will publish (w/b 31st October) another short paper on the use of Administrative data within Scotland's Census. We also continue to publish information on the discussions of the [International Steering Group](#) (ISG) as they provide expert guidance and support.

The work of the ISG has been significant and substantial, and I would suggest provides an excellent example of how producers of key statistical products can benefit from the advice, direction and experience of experts and colleagues. It is clear that many of the challenges being faced by Scotland's Census have and are being experienced by Census' across the globe, and that the adaptation NRS is making to our census design is based on a sound practical and theoretical basis.



I know we agree that publication of papers and Parliamentary discussions is important but is only one element of a rounded stakeholder engagement process. Therefore in addition to continuing to make available methodology and design papers and engaging in public discourse, NRS will make use of our Outputs consultation process to speak with groups and individuals about the evolving census design and how it will bring together census, census coverage survey, and admin data through our estimation and imputation methodology work to produce high quality census outputs of substantial public value.

I look forward to continuing to work with OSR and I thank you and your colleagues for your on-going support and advice.

Yours sincerely

Pete Whitehouse

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National Records of Scotland