



Paper Title: Update on production of Sub-council area projections

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Security marking	Not Sensitive
Can this be shared wider than PAMS?	Yes
Actions for PAMS members ahead of meeting	Please read this paper and consider whether your organisation would like to provide feedback on the sub council area projection for your area, as set out in section 4. If you would like to provide feedback please get in touch at research@improvementservice.org.uk . The deadline for feedback is the 17 th of July.
Aims for discussion	We would like to discuss the proposed outputs set out in section 7 and the proposed promotion channels set out in section 9. This will help ensure that the outputs of the sub council are projections work is of most value to users.
Key questions for PAMS members	<p>Please review the output suggestions outlined in section 7. We would like to know which of these suggestions would be of most value, and whether there are other outputs you would prefer.</p> <p>Please review the promotion channels set out in section 9. We would like to know which of these suggestions would best highlight the value of sub council area projections, and whether there are other promotion channels you think we may want to use.</p> <p>We would also like to hear from any users of sub council area projections, or the NRS support materials who would be interested in sharing their experience as part of a case study highlighting the value of this work.</p>
What is required from PAMS members	<p>Please get in touch at research@improvementservice.org.uk if you would like to provide feedback on the sub council area population projection for your area.</p> <p>Please provide feedback on the suggestions in section 7 and 9.</p>

Population And Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland)

Update on production of Sub-council area projections

Introduction

1. The Improvement Service is currently working with the National Records of Scotland to produce a standard set of sub-council area projections. This work is intended to support local authorities who do not have the capacity to produce their own projections as well as users who are interested in a standard set of local area projections for all areas across Scotland. It is not intended to replace projections already being produced by some local authorities. However, there remains significant demand from users as outlined in the recent survey carried out by NRS so we hope this work will provide a number of benefits in terms of providing updated projections to understand the potential future size and make-up of local populations and inform forward planning by local authorities and other partners.

Progress

2. Originally it was proposed that sub-council area projections would be produced for all 32 local authorities using a standard Multi-member ward geography. This geography was suggested as the preferable option by the majority of respondents to an NRS survey. However, following feedback from a previous PAMS meeting on 19th of November, it was agreed that local authorities could specify a custom geography to be used if multi-member wards were not suitable. A survey was carried out by the NRS between December 2019 and January 2020 to allow local authorities to specify their preferred geography. Six local authorities chose custom geographies, with the remaining being based on Multi-member wards.
3. A set of sub-council area projections covering the period 2018-2030 have now been created for all 32 local authority areas, using the specified geographies. These projections have been constrained to the 2018 sub-national population projections to ensure they are consistent with the most recently published NRS data. The Improvement Service is currently in the process of carrying out final checks on the data and taking note of any prominent changes.

Next Steps

4. We would like to provide local authorities an opportunity to provide feedback on the projections produced. Local authorities will have until the 17th of July to provide feedback, after which the projections will be published on the Improvement Service website with signposting also from the NRS website. We will be in contact with those who responded to the previous survey to offer them a chance to provide feedback, however if any PAMS members would like to provide feedback, please get in touch at research@improvementservice.org.uk. For those providing feedback, we will share a summary of the projections.

The purpose of this feedback will be to input into a 'cautions and caveats' booklet which will highlight areas users may wish to consider when interpreting the data. When providing feedback, we would be grateful if local authorities could highlight any local knowledge which could help contextualise the projections and help provide an understanding for large changes. Please note, these projections are based on recent trends and therefore do not take account of local policies such as housing developments, which may impact the projections. Therefore, feedback will not be used to change any assumptions in the projections, but to provide context for those interpreting the data.

5. We are aware that there is likely to be a concern about the impact of COVID-19 on the projections. This set of projections is based on the 2018 mid-year estimates and uses recent trends; therefore, they do not take account of recent and future changes occurring as a result of the current crisis. This is also true of the national and sub-national projections published by NRS. When the projections are published, a caveat will be included to highlight this point. However, the input and output files used in creating this set of projections will be made available for local authorities to use themselves. The NRS have also made additional resources available to support local authorities in producing their own projections using POPGROUP software¹. It is hoped that these materials will enable local authorities to build in their own assumptions into the standard set of projections if they wish to build on their understanding in their local area.

Proposed Outputs

6. Following the deadline for feedback from PAMS members by the 17th of July, a range of outputs will be published on the Improvement Service website at the start of August.

The primary output will be the set of population projections for all 32 local authorities covering the period 2018 to 2030 and available by sex and single year of age. The projections will be made freely available through the IS website in Excel and CSV formats. In addition, the produced input and output files will be made available on request to allow users to produce their own variant projections using POPGROUP software. A methodology document will be published, outlining how the projections were produced using the POPGROUP software. A 'cautions and caveat' booklet will also be published for each local authority, highlighting areas to consider when interpreting the data and local knowledge to contextualise large changes.

7. Following the initial publication there may be scope to provide additional outputs. The Improvement Service is looking for feedback on what outputs would be of value. Potential options include:
 - A summary analysis for each local authority including graphs and key points of analysis.

¹ These are available at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-projections/population-and-household-sub-council-area-projections/user-guidance>

- An online dashboard which allows users to explore the data and pull out their own analysis.
8. We would welcome feedback on the proposed outputs and in particular which outputs PAMS members would find most useful. For those wishing to provide feedback on any of the suggestions please get in touch at research@improvementservice.org.uk by the 17th of July. We will review this feedback and publish any additional outputs in early Autumn.

Proposed Promotion

9. The projections will be promoted through various channels to ensure high levels of engagement. If the projections are widely used and seen to be valuable this will allow us to make the case for future work in this area such as building in additional assumptions and regular updates to the data. The Improvement Service is looking for feedback on any potential routes for promoting these projections. Current suggestions include:
- Improvement Service communications channels, including newsletter and twitter
 - NRS blog post
 - Local Government Information Unit blog post
 - Webinar
10. We would welcome feedback from PAMS members on what promotion they would find most useful. We would also be interested in hearing from users of sub-council area projections and the range of support materials made available by the NRS². The NRS are currently looking to produce case studies from these users in order to further highlight the value of sub-council area projections. Please get in touch at research@improvementservice.org.uk

The Improvement Service
June 2020

² These are available at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-projections/population-and-household-sub-council-area-projections/user-guidance>