

<b>Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland)</b>
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**Minutes of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland):  
26 November 2014**
**Present**

Debbie Amabile  
Alyson Hearn Barr  
Dave Bisset  
Jenny Boag  
Chris Carr  
Esta Clark  
David Duncan-Fraser  
Graeme Gainey  
Donna Hosie  
Michael Hunter  
Darren Knox (minutes)  
Jay Lindop  
Kirsty MacLachlan (chair)  
Julie Ramsay  
David Readhead  
James Reid  
Thomas Robertson  
Esther Roughsedge  
Hannah Rutherford  
Nicholas Sobey  
Iain Stewart  
Sandy Taylor  
Tom Wallace  
Amy Wilson

**Organisation**

National Records of Scotland (NRS)  
Scottish Water  
Scottish Water  
Falkirk Council  
Argyll & Bute Council  
NRS  
Scottish Government (SG)  
City of Edinburgh Council  
UK Statistics Authority  
NRS  
NRS  
Office for National Statistics (ONS)  
NRS  
NRS  
NHS Information Service Division (ISD)  
University of Edinburgh  
NRS  
NRS  
NRS  
Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Renfrewshire Council  
NRS  
NRS  
NRS

**1. Introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 Kirsty MacLachlan welcomed the group. There were apologies received from Lorraine Cook, Jan Freeke, Alastair Harvey and Paul McNamara.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting (Paper 12 PAMS (14) 12)**

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved subject to minor corrections. It was pointed out that Chris Carr sent apologies for the previous meeting and that Linda Frost's name should be removed and the minutes amended to say that the data was disseminated via NOMIS ([www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk)).

**3. Update on action points from previous meeting (Paper 1 PAMS (14) 01)**

**Action point 2012.09** - Kirsty MacLachlan to contact Justice Analytical Services in the Scottish Government to request that they make available divorce statistics on a calendar year basis. Julie Ramsay advised that calendar year data is available for 2008 to 2011. Users can contact National Records of Scotland (NRS) if they are interested in more recent data - **closed**.

**Action point 2013.03** – Kirsty MacLachlan to investigate the potential for adding user defined geographies to the outputs dissemination system. There are plans to add the new NHS Board areas and data zones, plus any commissioned outputs. Jenny Boag raised an issue with slithers in East Dunbartonshire which Cecilia MacIntyre is aware of. Tom Wallace advised that Cecilia Macintyre's team are investigating the issues with slithers in East Dunbartonshire. Sandy Taylor advised that approximately 60 areas are affected. Jenny Boag asked whether or not it would be possible to flag these areas to bring them to the attention of non-expert users. Kirsty MacLachlan advised that documentation is being prepared – **ongoing**.

**Action point 2013.07** – For all: contact Tom Wallace about potential topics for special reports from 2011 Census data and any interest in contributing to these – **closed**.

**Action point 2013.09** – Amy Wilson to check if it is possible to include 2003 wards on the census online dissemination tool. Sandy Taylor advised that there are no plans to add this geography - **closed**.

**Action point 2014.01** – Tom Wallace to determine with Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) when and what census data will be available on their website. David Duncan-Fraser advised that there will be no wholesale changes until the new system goes live in April - **closed**.

**Action point 2014.02** – Jenny Boag to provide Sandy Taylor with a list of the key tables that were missing or have still to be released. She would also investigate whether or not there is anything that we can do to help users with regards to the tables that have already been released and the tables that are due to be released in the future - **closed**.

**Action point 2014.04** – Alastair Harvey and Nicholas Sobey to supply areas to test with regard to saving and then editing geographies on your own machine using the Census Data Explorer. Nicholas Sobey advised that he has not done this yet but he will email Tom Wallace explaining how it is currently utilised - **closed**.

#### **4. 2011 Census progress**

- 4.1 Sandy Taylor gave an update on the progress of the 2011 Census.
- 4.2 Release 3 is coming to an end; 3L will be released tomorrow (27 November 2014). The penultimate release is scheduled for 18 December 2014 and the final release is scheduled for January 2015.
- 4.3 Annex A of [Paper 2 PAMS \(14\) 14](#) (available on this website) contains a list of supplementary tables that Office for National Statistics (ONS) have produced and suggestions from users to fill any remaining gaps would be welcome.
- 4.4 There are plans to publish additional information at Scotland level, e.g. economic activity of the elderly. Microdata will also be published along with origin-destination statistics (through ONS). Travel to work tables are scheduled to be published in July, migration tables were published yesterday (25 November 2014). Travel to study tables will be published after release 3. There are also plans to produce alternative population tables, e.g. day time populations. Additional geographies, April 2014 NHS Board areas and new data zones will be added to the Census Data Explorer.

- 4.5 Reports on the inhabited islands and internal migration patterns are at the draft stage. Scottish Government colleagues have been working on an equalities report and an update of the 2001 report on the Gaelic language. Transport Scotland have been using data from the 2011 Census to update their transport models.
- 4.6 Work is also being undertaken to improve the quality and availability of metadata and supporting information, particularly around creating 2001-based data zones from 2011 output areas.
- 4.7 A survey from the Census conference in June is now available. National Records of Scotland are keen for feedback and user case studies for the Census website.
- 4.8 The Census Data Explorer has now been up and running for one year and National Records of Scotland are keen for feedback from users. They would also like feedback on the data warehouse which allows data to be bulk downloaded.
- 4.9 Tom Wallace asked Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee members to let him know what local users are doing with the data National Records of Scotland produce. National Records of Scotland can then advertise this to a wider audience to create further interest and encourage collaboration.
- 4.10 Kirsty MacLachlan asked the PAMS members if they had any requirements for additional tables.
- 4.11 Jenny Boag would be keen to get economic activity by country of birth and economic activity for those aged 16 to 64 (instead of those aged 16 to 74) or at the lowest level possible subject to disclosure concerns. Information on social housing, evidence for deprivation, e.g. single parent households, migration by tenure and population estimates by single year of age, gender and output area would also be of interest. Jenny Boag was frustrated that there were still disclosure concerns around the latter given that we were now three years on from the Census.
- 4.12 Steve Morley would be keen to get population estimates by single year of age, gender and output area to feed into small area population projections.
- 4.13 Chris Carr said that more detailed tables on Armed Forces would be of interest. Numbers by Council area would be very useful.
- 4.14 More generally, the PAMS members were of the opinion that access to travel to work/migration data for output areas would be of use. Tom Wallace commented that we have a data sharing agreement in place with Transport Scotland which may be one route by which access to this data could be opened up. James Reid pointed out that some of this data is available through the UK Data Service but you need to register to access it.
- 4.15 Kirsty MacLachlan asked for feedback on the Census Data Explorer.
- 4.16 The data warehouse page has been refreshed as the publications have been released and this policy will be reviewed after release 3. Jenny Boag commented that topic groupings and table numbers are useful. David Duncan-Fraser would like to be informed of the feedback National Records of Scotland (NRS) receives with a view to the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) website.

## 5. 2021 Census

- 5.1 Amy Wilson gave an update on plans for a Census in 2021.
- 5.2 It was announced on 27 March 2014 that NRS would be planning for a mainly online Census in 2021, making the best use of the available administrative data sources. Planning is less advanced than we might have hoped due to competing business priorities.
- 5.3 The work is currently being scoped out and will involve three main strands. Major digital and transformation programs will be required and the end to end operation is National Records of Scotland 's biggest priority.
- 5.4 National Records of Scotland are investigating the possibility of producing additional outputs using other data sources, e.g. income data from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). There are plans to produce trial statistics (population and household estimates) from alternative sources.
- 5.5 Funding is in place for 2015/16. A further business case will be put to ministers in early 2016 with the full business case being put to ministers in late 2017/early 2018.
- 5.6 It is planned that a dress rehearsal will take place in 2019.
- 5.7 National Records of Scotland are keen to work in partnership with others.
- 5.8 As mentioned earlier, National Records of Scotland plans to make the best use of administrative data sources. They have undertaken research matching Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data to the NHS Central Register (NHSCR) and the Census and have found a good match rate but not for postcodes. They have also matched the School Census for one local authority and found the data to be of high quality.
- 5.9 National Records of Scotland are considering options for improving estimates, including potentially using a triple system estimator if appropriate.
- 5.10 National Records of Scotland (NRS) are also planning the design of the 2021 Census and planning for the technical challenges that will lie ahead. They are analysing the questions asked in the last Census to determine whether or not they provided users (public, private and third sector) with what they needed. Current and future users of Census data presented at the Census conference in June 2014. Furthermore, NRS are making plans based on the likely digital landscape in 2021 and are also undertaking procurement planning.
- 5.11 Two people from National Records of Scotland attended the International Census Conference in September 2014.
- 5.12 Other areas of work which are being planned for are managing organisational transformation within National Records of Scotland and how to best involve Scottish Government (SG) colleagues in the Census.
- 5.13 James Reid asked whether or not there were plans to collaborate with Scottish Informatics and Linkage Collaboration (SILC) and was advised that this was happening via Gerry Donnelly.

- 5.14 Jenny Boag asked whether the address register would be used as a property spine. Amy Wilson advised that work on an address register is ongoing and can be discussed at the next Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee meeting.
- 5.15 Furthermore, Jenny Boag asked whether or not we are currently in a position to produce trial statistics from administrative data sources and was advised by Esta Clark that this was being developed. The recent Glasgow project undertaken by National Records of Scotland (NRS) has prompted NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to get all of their administrative sources into a safe haven, link them and produce alternative population estimates. Amy Wilson commented that NRS are developing the best use of administrative sources and are happy to take feedback and suggestions.
- 5.16 Kirsty MacLachlan asked the PAMS members how they want to be consulted on the plans for the 2021 Census. Jay Lindop commented that Office for National Statistics have separate meetings discussing the Census and population estimates. However, the PAMS members felt that there would not be enough material for an agenda if we were to have two meetings and, therefore, wished to continue with the current PAMS format, perhaps running subgroups as appropriate.

## **6. Household Estimates and Projections**

- 6.1 Esther Roughsedge gave an update from Household Estimates and Projections branch.
- 6.2 Household projections were published in July. The projections used data from the last three Censuses and survey results and were lower than the previous projections.
- 6.3 Projections for Strategic Development Plan (SDP) areas and National Parks were published today.
- 6.4 It is not possible to back revise the household estimates for new data zones but it will be possible to do this for dwellings and there is a demand for it.
- 6.5 Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee members were asked to let Esther Roughsedge know if they would like access to test data visualisations that her branch are working on. David Duncan-Fraser would be interested from a Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) perspective and Nicholas Sobey would be interested in the context of economic briefs.

## **7. Population and Migration**

- 7.1 Esta Clark gave an update from Population and Migration Statistics branch.
- 7.2 Since the last Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee meeting (May 2014) the 2013 mid-year population estimates have been published for Council areas, NHS Board areas and 2011 data zones and 2012 subnational population projections have been published for Council areas, NHS Board areas, Strategic Development Plan areas and National Parks.

- 7.3 The branch have met with local authorities to discuss their population estimates and PAMS members were encouraged to contact the branch if they feel a meeting would be useful.
- 7.4 Esta Clark mentioned that the branch were keen to hear PAMS members views on revised series for new data zones. Jenny Boag said that she would be very interested in revised estimates and wanted to hear more about how this would be done given that some data zones had no population in 2001. Esta Clark said that PAMS would be consulted on the method to be used.
- 7.5 The existing method used to produce small area population estimates is being reviewed in comparison to estimates created using alternative sources.
- 7.6 It is planned to publish mid-2014 estimates for new data zones in August with a revised series at the same time.
- 7.7 Population estimates for settlements and localities were published in August and Luke Main is in the process of writing back to those who responded to the consultation.
- 7.8 Esta drew the groups' attention to the paragraph from David Cruickshank in the Scottish Governments and asked if the PAMS Local Authority side members would look at the areas it was proposed to use for Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE) funding allocations. Jenny said that PAMS members would be happy to look at them as long as others in councils like Finance directors also had the opportunity to comment.

**Action:** Esta to let David Cruickshank know that PAMS Local Authority members were happy to look at the boundaries as long as others in their councils were also consulted.

- 7.9 Esta Clark explained that her branch are undertaking development work to use postcode information on the NHS Central Register (NHSCR) extract to produce migration data. This work is high priority as it needs to be complete before the mid-2015 population estimates can be published. In October 2014 Practitioner Services Division began work to implement the April 2014 NHS Board area boundary changes on the NHSCR. The work is being completed at different points in time for different areas and is expected to conclude in February/March 2015. This means that the files which are currently used to produce migration data will not be useable for the mid-2015 population estimates, as they are a mix of pre-April 2006 and April 2014 NHS Board area boundaries. Esta will keep PAMS up-to-date with the progress of this work.
- 7.10 Esta also explained that Office for National Statistics (ONS) are reviewing their national projections methodology and that National Records of Scotland have been in discussions with ONS regarding changes and that she would bring more details to the next PAMS meeting.
- 7.11 Esta informed the PAMS members that the branch are currently under assessment from the UK Statistics Authority and encouraged everyone to respond to the UK Statistics Authority requests for feedback.
- 7.12 Esta re-emphasised that the branch are happy to meet with PAMS members individually to discuss their population estimates/projections.

- 7.13 Jenny Boag asked whether or not it would be possible to produce sub-Council area projections. Esta Clark said that she was aware of the demand but that resource limitations restrict her team's opportunities to do this. It may also not be easy to agree on a common small area geography across Scotland. Esta asked that if anyone knew of potential funding opportunities to let her know.
- 7.14 David Duncan-Fraser commented that there may be funds available from the Statistics Development Fund to fund projects which are not business as usual.
- 7.15 The Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee members asked about the possibility of producing uncontrolled population projections. Esta Clark said that uncontrolled projections would be considered as part of the review of the sub national population projection method.
- 7.16 Chris Carr commented that small area population estimates by single year of age and sex would be useful as a standard output. Esta Clark said that this output is available on request. Jenny Boag commented that it would be useful to have separate tabs for each Council area. Esta said that this could be produced for the next release.
- 7.17 Jenny Boag asked whether or not it would be possible to get revised small area population estimates on Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) website. They are currently available for all years on only the National Records of Scotland (NRS) website. Esta Clark said that her team are currently working to get the revised small area population estimates on to the SNS website. David Duncan-Fraser explained that the focus for Office of the Chief Statistician and Performance (OCSP) at the moment is developing their new SNS website.

## **8. Statistical Information Services**

- 8.1 Kirsty MacLachlan gave an update on behalf of Statistical Information Services.
- 8.2 The new National Records of Scotland (NRS) corporate website has been successfully launched at the end of September.
- 8.3 HTML versions of NRS' main publications are not yet available from the new website. In the coming months Statistical Information Services will be making a decision on whether or not to continue with HTML versions of publications. The thoughts of the PAMS members were sought.
- 8.4 David Duncan-Fraser was of the opinion that NRS should continue to make their publications available in HTML format given that it is a widely accessible format.
- 8.5 Jay Lindop agreed with David Duncan-Fraser's assessment and pointed out that Office for National Statistics (ONS) are aiming to achieve the five star open data plan which involves a move away from PDF and Excel. However it was noted that there was a resource and cost implication of using HTML and that some users still liked PDFs.
- 8.6 Kirsty MacLachlan and Esther Roughsedge asked for feedback from PAMS members on the Registrar General's Annual Review (RGAR) and particularly the infographic summary that accompanied the 2013 RGAR. It was noted that there is a statutory requirement to publish a report and it is the only platform for some of the Vital Events statistics that it reports. Esta Clark also pointed out that the RGAR has been designated as National Statistics and, therefore, NRS would need to

consult users before making significant changes to the publication. One possibility is to shorten the publication by using links to publications already in the public domain and expanding the Vital Events sections of the website.

- 8.7 Jenny Boag raised concerns about the continued existence of the old General Register Office for Scotland (GRO) website. Jenny Boag was concerned that users would continue to use links to the old website. Kirsty MacLachlan agreed that this is a problem but advised Jenny that not all of the material from the old website has been migrated to the new website yet.

## **9. Vital Events Update**

- 9.1 Julie Ramsay gave an update from Vital Events.
- 9.2 Vital Events will be publishing statistics on same-sex marriage in March 2015 with further detail to follow in August.
- 9.3 Vital Events will be undertaking a consultation in the new year to determine what further breakdowns users require.
- 9.4 Information Services Division (ISD) are interested in obtaining birth registration records for linkage work. ISD require mother's date of birth but there is no legal route at present which allows this data to be shared; a Scottish Statutory Instrument would be required to allow sharing. Vital Events will be undertaking a consultation with a view to putting in place a Scottish Statutory Instrument which would allow this data be shared.

## **10. UK Data Service**

- 10.1 James Reid gave Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee members an introduction and overview of the UK Data Service.
- 10.2 The UK Data Service is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and has a remit to provide open data.
- 10.3 The UK Data Service has taken several data sources, e.g. census.ac.uk, Census Dissemination Unit (CDU), UK Borders, Centre for Interaction Data Estimation & Research (CIDER) and Samples of Anonymised Records (SARS), and combined them into a single service.
- 10.4 The service contains all historic Census outputs, a thematic mapper (to which users can upload their own Comma Separated Value (CSV) files and boundary data) and Web-based Interface to Census Interaction Data (WICID) – an interaction flow data tool. 85-90 per cent of the data is available free to use.

## **11. ScotStat Board update**

- 11.1 Jenny Boag gave an update from the ScotStat Board which met in October 2014.
- 11.2 Jenny Boag advised the PAMS members that the board had discussed the implications of the Smith Commission on their data requirements, e.g. how would the possible outcomes of the Smith Commission impact on data currently produced by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs /Department for Work and pensions and Office for National Statistics.
- 11.3 The board also discussed requirements for back series for new data zones.



11.4 David Duncan-Fraser advised the PAMS members to contact the relevant teams directly with regards to any data that they need back dated for new data zones. However, if they are unsure who to contact then he advised that they pass it to SNS.

## **12. Any Other Business**

12.1 There was no other business as such. However, an update from NRS Geography (particularly regarding plans for an address register for the 2021 Census) and an update from the Administrative Data Research Centre for Scotland (from Gerry Donnelly) were all suggested as interesting topics for discussion at the next meeting of the PAMS committee.

12.2 Amy Wilson noted that an overarching report from the 2011 Census will be available around the time of the next PAMS meeting and it would be good to see whether this report ties up with the views of users.

12.3 Jay Lindop said that she would be keen for someone from ONS to listen in to the next PAMS meeting.

## **13. Date of Next Meeting**

13.1 May 2015.