

POPULATION AND MIGRATION STATISTICS COMMITTEE (PAMS) (SCOTLAND)
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**Minutes of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland):
25 May 2011**

Present:

Jenny Boag
Chris Carr
Alistair Harvey
Jan Freeke
Kateryna McKinnon
Lorraine Cook

Richard Lawder
Kirsty MacLachlan (chair)

Peter Scrimgeour
Sandy Taylor
Keira Murray
Alasdair Anthony
Esta Clark
Ganka Mueller
Frank Dixon
Esther Roughsedge
Valerie Hale
Donna Hosie

Falkirk Council
Argyll & Bute Council
Edinburgh City Council
Glasgow City Council
Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
(COSLA) Strategic Migration Partnership
NHS Information Services Division (ISD)
National Records of Scotland (NRS)
Demography
NRS Census
NRS Census Outputs
NRS Population and Migration Statistics
NRS Population and Migration Statistics
NRS Population and Migration Statistics
NRS Alternative Sources
NRS Vital Events
NRS Household Estimates and Projections
NRS Household Estimates and Projections
NRS Dissemination and 2001 Census Analysis

1. Introduction and apologies

- 1.1 Kirsty MacLachlan welcomed the group, noting apologies from Alison Burlison, Paul McNamara, Ben Humberstone and Laura Murison.

2. Minutes of previous meeting (PAMS (11) 16)

The minutes were approved.

3. Update on action points (PAMS (11) 17)

Actions from 12/1/11

- 3.1 **Action 3.2** – Jenny agreed to raise the issue of small area income statistics work at the ScotStat board meeting and to feed in to the Beyond 2011 UK-wide consultation.
- 3.2 **Action 3.5** – It was agreed this action point could be closed.

3.3 **Action 5.3** – This action was being pursued and could be closed.

3.4 All other action points were closed.

3.5 **Action 2011.1** - Jenny to raise the issue of small area income statistics work at the ScotStat board meeting and to feed in to the Beyond 2011 UK-wide consultation.

4. **2011 Census Progress Report (Oral)**

4.1 Peter gave an update on progress with the 2011 Census. Although the fieldwork phase is finished there was still a great deal of work to do. The response rate looked to be around 96% which was pleasing as the environment for Census taking is generally accepted to have worsened since the last census. About 20% of returns had come via the internet, close to the proportion that had been planned for. The Census Coverage Survey and the Census Quality Survey are now underway. The Census forms are now all at the processing site where work on the downstream processing systems is on-going. The first batch of outputs is planned for Summer 2012.

4.2 Sandy provided an update of work on census outputs. The latest phase of user consultation had concluded at Easter. The number of responses received was not great but had provided a lot of good and detailed feedback. There was nothing particularly contentious coming through in the responses and the majority were in agreement with what is being proposed. Next steps will be to:

- evaluate the detailed comments made in the consultation responses;
- write up a summary analysis, for publication on our website around the end of June;
- engage with Analytical Services Divisions in Scottish Government (in July) on their requirements for census outputs;
- issue a planned order of release for outputs products and an indicative release timetable; and
- issue a full baselined outputs prospectus and associated dissemination timetable (early 2012).

4.3 A slightly bigger team was assembled for work on outputs as it moved forward to gearing up for outputs production. Training in the use of the Space Time Research SuperSTAR software is scheduled for June and work has started on mapping out the detailed process for creating and quality assuring (QA) table builds.

4.4 A prototype 2011 Census dissemination system will be designed and built over the second half of this year, including scoping out a facility for flexible table generation. There had been an encouragingly high level of interest expressed by users in the recent consultation in becoming involved in user testing of the prototype dissemination system.

4.5 Outputs teams from the UK census offices are now meeting regularly – next due to meet in mid-June. Their main task for the next few months will be to review and agree the extent to which the standard tabular outputs can be harmonised in order to provide comparable UK-wide results. Other UK harmonisation issues to be addressed include:

- census microdata
- metadata
- origin-destination analysis
- arrangements for defining and creating a UK census outputs database
- charging policy for commissioned outputs
- corrections and revisions policy.

- 4.6 The Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics team in Scottish Government is expected to publish their response to the consultation about data zones in the very near future (in weeks rather than months).
- 4.7 Jenny highlighted the point that it was generally more useful for papers sent out in advance of PAMS meetings rather than to receive oral updates as that made it easier for issues to be raised and discussed at the local authority pre-meeting.
- 4.8 Jenny thought that things had gone better this time in terms of communications and liaison with Census Liaison Officers. However, she felt that the press-release on non-compliance had been too negative with the result that some Local Authorities had not wanted to put their name to it. Jenny also reported that she had been made aware of difficulties in rural areas where multiple visits were required to get responses. She also mentioned some concerns that had been raised with her over the recruitment of staff to carry out the Census Quality Survey (CQS).
- 4.9 Peter briefly responded to Jenny's comments. He was not aware of any complaints about recruitment for the CQS.
- 4.10 Jan asked about future census outputs consultation. Sandy replied that the intention was to start issuing quarterly updates as proposals for outputs developed, seeking views from users where appropriate. An output prospectus and associated dissemination timetable would be available early next year.
- 4.11 The possibility that a new version of SASPac was to be produced in time for the first release of census results was discussed. Peter said that he hadn't spoken to SASPac but NRS were working to the same timetable as the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for first release of census outputs.

5. Census Quality Assurance (QA) Work (PAMS (11) 18)

- 5.1 In the absence of Laura, Peter briefly reviewed the main points from the paper.
- 5.2 Jenny Boag asked for confirmation that in Phase 3 of the strategy any adjustments to the counts for an output area would have to be absorbed within the Local Authority (LA) concerned. Peter confirmed that this was the case.
- 5.3 There was discussion about confusion between the requests from NRS for aggregate data for QA of the census and individual level data for longer term linkage work. Several different aspects to the data provision were raised including data confidentiality and the level of aggregation required and the workload that would entail. Peter indicated that if the data wasn't readily available in aggregate form for their own use, its value for QA uses might be doubted.

- 5.4 Kirsty described the work that is being done across the Scottish Government to improve data sharing processes.

6. **Beyond 2011 (oral)**

- 6.1 Ganka gave an oral update on Beyond 2011. She noted that the ONS Beyond 2011 programme was to be on a UK basis but was only funded for England & Wales, with Scotland involved as observers. The key objective is a proof of concept of a replacement for the traditional census. A user requirement consultation would begin in the Autumn of 2011. Current work was looking at international best practice and evaluating a range of different options. A decision on whether to proceed with a census in 2021 was needed by early 2014.
- 6.2 Current Beyond 2011 work in Scotland involved developing record linkage skills and assessing individual administrative sources, such as the NHS Central Register and Higher Education Statistics Agency data. Other sources under investigation include the migrant worker scan which is derived from National Insurance Number allocations and the Customer Information System (CIS) which is based on various Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) data sets. ONS is taking forward work to get access to full CIS data for use in population statistics. Ganka also mentioned that the Scottish Government was now leading on creating a framework for data linkage and was taking a strategic overview.

7. **NRS demography statistics plan (PAMS (11) 19)**

- 7.1 Kirsty introduced the statistics plan which was guided by the recent consultation.
- 7.2 It was noted that there would be no changes to the boundaries for the next release of Small Area Population Estimates.
- 7.3 There was a discussion about possibility and need for housing statistics by tenure. Esther concluded by saying that it was primarily a matter for the Scottish Government housing branch, though NRS could support any work they did.
- 7.4 **Action 2011.2** - Esther to find out if Scottish Government Housing branch are planning to develop statistics on housing by tenure and report back to next PAMS meeting.
- 7.5 **Action 2011.3** - Donna to update statistics plan to reflect that the PAMS conference would be held every 2 years rather than every 18 months.

8. **UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) assessment (oral)**

- 8.1 Kirsty reviewed some of the requirements on demography statistics following the recent assessments. One common requirement was to make NRS statistics more accessible and improve sign-posting between different publications. There was also requirement to provide guidance on comparisons between UK countries but it was under discussion as this would involve input from external bodies such as ONS and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. Kirsty concluded by saying that NRS had been complimented on aspects such as user engagement and it was anticipated that all requirements would be met.

- 8.2 Jenny asked about the time-scale for re-assessment. Frank said that there didn't seem to be any firm plans but it was likely that UKSA would return to problem areas and publications that had undergone major changes.
- 8.3 Sandy noted that phase 2 of the Census assessment was due to be published soon.
- 8.4 **Action 2011.4** - Donna to send ScotStat members a link from our website to the assessment reports.
- 9. Variant Household projections and alternative headship rates (PAMS (11) 20)**
- 9.1 Valerie gave a presentation on variant household projections and alternative headship rates (available at www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/user-consultation-groups-seminars/pams/pams-25-may-2011.html). The local authority members thanked Valerie and agreed that this work was very interesting and useful, and variant projections should be published, as recommended in the paper.
- 9.2 Jenny commented that the comparison with other sources seems to agree with her impression that the projected number of single person households was too high. Esther said that the possibility of making use of survey data to provide another variant projection was being explored.
- 9.3 Jan said he would also like to see one variant projection published using alternative headship rates. Esther said that she wanted to limit the number of variant projections that were produced but agreed that it was a good idea and that they would look into doing this. It was felt that of the options considered, Option 3 (mid-point between the projected trend from 1991 and 2001 Census points and the constant 2001 headship rate) was probably the most appropriate.
- 9.4 **Action 2011.5** - Valerie Hale to take forward the work to include variant household projections in the 2010-based household projections, due out next year..
- 10. Local migration data spreadsheet (oral)**
- 10.1 Keira gave a demonstration of a prototype version of the new spreadsheet that is intended to replace the local area migration reports. She noted that it was still a work in progress and there was still time to take comments on board.
- 10.2 Chris asked if the currently available age-breakdown of migrants would continue to be published. It was confirmed that the current set of migration tables available on the website would continue to be updated, with the next full release scheduled for July 2011.
- 10.3 There was discussion over whether the choice of three indicators was sufficient. It was thought that it was and if users wanted to do more elaborate comparisons then they had the facility to download the data and do it themselves. It was also felt that the automated commentary would be worth having but only if it was easy to implement. It was also confirmed that there would be Scotland level data for all the indicators.

11. Branch Updates

Household Estimates and Projections

- 11.1 It was noted that some local authorities had been in-touch with NRS about the difference between population estimates and household estimates. NRS had responded to these queries and said that the household estimates already feed-into the Small Area Population Estimates (SAPE) QA.
- 11.2 Jan asked about progress on the newly formed households paper. Esther said that work on this was on-going.

Dissemination and 2001 Census Analysis

- 11.3 Donna noted that there would need to be further changes to the website to reflect the merger to NRS but this meant that there would be an opportunity for other changes to be implemented. Any suggestions should be directed to Donna.

12. Any Other Business

- 12.1 Jenny said that she had been in touch with Norrie Jamieson who had formally been a PAMS committee member. It was suggested that Norrie could re-join the committee this time representing the Church of Scotland.
- 12.2 Jenny also gave a brief update on the ScotStat board from the minutes of the meeting that she had been unable to attend: There were general concerns over consultations with users, the impact of the spending cuts was being monitored by UKSA, the data linkage framework was being taken forward and Rob Wishart was due to retire shortly.
- 12.3 Kirsty said the following items were likely to be covered in the PAMS conference: National Population Projections, Ethnic population projections, 2011 Census, Alternative sources work, data zones, ageing and social care. There would also be a poster session and contributions were welcome.
- 12.4 Suggestions for the agenda for the next PAMS meeting were Beyond 2011 work and general updates.
- 12.5 **Action 2011.6** - Alasdair to invite Norrie Jamieson onto the PAMS committee.

13. Date of Next Meeting

- 13.1 End of November.