

# Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee Scotland

Minutes of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland) 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Ryan Scott welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting on 15 November 2022 (PAMS (22) 06) were approved without comment.

### **Summary of Actions**

- **Action Point 2022.5:** Chris McCrum to provide an update to PAMS on plans for revising data zone boundaries.

Dates for this consultation work still to be confirmed. Likely to take place in Summer/Autumn 2024. Once the new data zone boundaries have been published NRS will begin making census 2022 data available for them.

- **Action Point 2022.6** Ryan Scott to consider including an item on the use of data in creating 'place making' profiles on the agenda for a future meeting.

Covered in this meeting (see 3.2)

## **2. Census Update (PAMS (23) 01)**

This was Jon Wroth-Smith's first PAMS meeting, so he introduced himself to the group and explained that he has taken over Peter Whitehouse's census responsibilities. Jon highlighted that this presentation would focus on communicating NRS's updated methods and quality assurance. He also asked attendees to share any thoughts they might have on the material, as this material would be used for user engagement happening in the near future.

Jon explained that the first outputs will be relatively high level and are planned for publication in Autumn 2023. They will include population by 5-year age group and sex at local authority and Scotland levels, as well as population density and household numbers.

Jon described how NRS are supplementing the census coverage survey data with administrative data, to ensure confidence in the statistics. These methods have been developed with the help of an International Steering Group, that was established by the Registrar General for Scotland and is chaired by Professor James Brown (University of Technology Sydney). The [notes for these meetings](#) are published on the census website.

It was highlighted by Jon that stakeholder engagement is critical to NRS's work going forward and that the planning for keeping stakeholders informed has been shaped around three different phases; a) Ahead of first outputs, b) At first outputs and c) After first outputs. For phase 'a)', [webinars](#) will be held to explain the methods in more detail, as well as one-to-one meetings with key user groups. For phase 'b)', NRS will be publishing quality information to sit alongside the [census outputs statistical publication](#). For phase 'c)', NRS will publish further quality information and carry out direct user engagement where required.

There were no questions at this stage.

Jon explained the quality assurance approach that NRS are undertaking, which involves comparing NRS's estimates to other data and statistics to validate them. Information on NRS's quality assurance and validation has been published on the Scotland's Census website. When validating population estimates, NRS are looking for any inconsistencies that will require them to investigate further. Furthermore, Jon noted that census estimates will be made available to local authorities for quality assurance purposes, towards the end of the estimation process and under restricted conditions. The purpose of this is to look to identify where these estimates are inconsistent with the data local authorities hold. Any evidence provided will be considered and it will be decided whether any further action needs to be taken.

Esta Clark stated that NRS had written to local authorities asking for quality assurance representatives and asked local authorities to confirm that their CEO will also see the census estimates for quality assurance purposes before release.

Ryan Scott summarised the outputs consultation, stating that it was a successful exercise, as NRS received a good number and spread of stakeholder responses. He also noted that stakeholder engagement would continue throughout the year, with webinars coming up soon. NRS's plans for publishing census outputs were published as part of the consultation. Ryan went on to inform attendees of what key topics users were looking to receive data on. He explained that there were some questions around using the flexible table builder tool to generate tables. To address these concerns, Ryan stated that NRS will still be producing some pre-built tables for users and that there will be support and tutorials to show users how to utilise the flexible table builder. Finally, Ryan shared the [release schedule](#) for census outputs, with the first release scheduled for Autumn 2023.

Danny McAllion highlighted that the number one question he is asked is when the information will be available. He asked for local authorities to be informed of when information will become available, once specific dates for release have been finalised. There were no further questions or comments.

### **3. Presentations**

#### **3.1 Web app to display and download sub-council population projections – Nick Cassidy and Cara Connachan**

Cara gave a brief overview of the tool they have published for sub-council area population projections and noted that all the information was published on the Improvement Services website. Cara explained that the interactive data visualisation tool was created in response to thinking about how users will use data in practice. It can create bespoke selections to answer questions and support local-level decision making and planning. Nick gave a brief demonstration of how the tool works. Contact information was provided to attendees for people to ask questions post presentation.

Esther Roughsedge asked if they had a map that shows percentage change in population over a time period or if it only showed population figures. Cara responded that the map doesn't show the percent change, however the graph does and that this is something they could maybe build on.

Esther Roughsedge also asked how people could hear about when a tool like this is created. Cara responded that there is an Improvement Service newsletter where they share this information. Cara offered to share the newsletter sign up with attendees.

Ryan Scott asked if there they had received any requests for more commentary and Cara replied that they had not received any.

Danny McAllion noted that population projection was very important for planning (schools, infrastructure etc.) and that they could send people the link for this rather than having to create this ourselves internally.

### **3.2 Shaping places for wellbeing programme – Alex Wilde and Kirsten McNicol**

Alex initially provided some context to the programme, detailing that they were now two years into the three-year programme, a programme with the ambition to improve Scotland's wellbeing. To do this, they were focussing on three core areas; 1. local project work, 2. local learning cohort and 3. national leadership cohort, to create systems change in local process to deliver on the place and wellbeing outcomes set. Alex highlighted that the programme focuses practical collaboration in communities rather than a grand strategy.

Alex explained that they collect and use both qualitative and quantitative data community data to understand what is happening in an area. To do this, they look at the inequalities experienced in the town, what groups are impacted the most in the community and where these groups live, work and play to bring the 'lived experience' to light. They then think about what they want to happen in that area, using the place and wellbeing outcomes. Evidence and research on what is effective in places to improve wellbeing is then used to think about how the programme could help and then a plan is developed and implemented. Alex shared some examples of plans and proposals that have been looked at across the programme. Alex noted that the data sources being used for the programme were the Scottish Public Health Observatory Profiles, National Records of Scotland Statistics and Data, Improvement Service Community Planning Outcomes Profile, Department for Work and Pensions Stat-Xplore and Scottish Government Statistics.

Ryan Scott asked what sort of the feedback the programme had received so far and Kirstin responded that the programme had created a bespoke data area for Dalkeith, that showed inequalities within the area. There was a positive reaction from users, as they had not seen something like this before, as some see the area of Dalkeith as different to that depicted in a standard geographical data zone boundary.

James Arnott asked if they were you in contact with the Glasgow Population Centre for Health and Kirstin replied that as far as she was aware, they had not been involved in the project towns, but were involved in the consultations.

## **4. Demography updates**

### **4.1 Statistics Engagement and Promotion – Joe Adams**

The team are currently working on how best to present the first outputs for the census. They are also increasing the number of spreadsheets that comply with accessibility guidance. Additionally, commissioned census tables are being provided, for topics not covered by other available data tables.

Danny McAllion asked if there will be any charges associated with requests for commissioned tables and Ryan Scott responded that NRS will clarify this before the commissioned table service is opened for 2022 data next year. NRS are hoping that the need for commission tables will decrease with the introduction of the flexible table builder.

## **4.2 Population and Migration – Esther Roughsedge**

Esther reported that the team are doing developmental work to improve their methods, so that when census data becomes available, they can publish things as quickly as possible. Esther also ran through the planned publication dates and highlighted that these dates were provisional. Esther concluded by emphasising that it would be good to have a clear summary of what Scottish users' needs are for population projections.

Danny McAllion confirmed that Emma Fitzpatrick was going to put a summary together from a meeting that morning with their needs.

## **4.3 Household Statistics - Sandy Taylor**

Sandy confirmed that household and dwelling statistics had to be published by June 22<sup>nd</sup>. He noted that the household projections timing is reliant on when the subnational projections are done. He asked attendees to provide summary of how the household data projections are used and is there anything else they can do to improve.

Danny McAllion notified Sandy that there is interest in the assessors data and suggested a blog article on the Scottish households survey, particularly a guide on what you can use this information for in practice.

## **4.4 Vital Events - Daniel Burns**

Daniel stated that a baby names update was coming, where they are going to use data going back to 1935. He also notified attendees that the team had just concluded their user consultation for life expectancy statistics on when they will publish them.

Danny McAllion thanked Daniel for the publication updates.

## **5. AOB and date of next meeting**

Ryan confirmed that the aim to have the next meeting in November. He also noted that there was going to be plenty of opportunities for people to provide feedback and engage with the census outputs in between now and then.

Ryan thanked attendees for coming to the meeting and the feedback they provided.

### **Actions:**

- Chris' update on new datazone boundaries to be circulated in full.
- Census outputs slides to be circulated to the group – [webinar slides](#) covering the same material were published on the census website