

<b>Population and Migration Statistics Committee (PAMS) (Scotland)</b>
--

**Minutes of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) Committee (Scotland):  
3 October 2012**
**Present**

Jenny Boag  
Chris Carr  
Lorraine Cook  
Chris Dibben  
Andy Gasiorowski  
Hervey Gibson  
Alistair Harvey  
Norman Jamieson  
Paul McNamara  
Ken MacKinnon  
Steve Smallwood  
Ian Stewart  
Konrad Zdeb  
Debbie Amabile

Alasdair Anthony (minutes)  
Esta Clark  
Frank Dixon  
Jules Goodlet-Rowley  
Valerie Hale  
Donna Hosie  
Kirsty MacLachlan  
Keira Murray

**Organisation**

Falkirk Council  
Argyll & Bute Council  
CoSLA  
St Andrews University  
NHS Information Services Division (ISD)  
Cogent Strategies International  
City of Edinburgh Council  
Church of Scotland  
Stirling Council  
Bord na Gàidhlig  
Office for National Statistics (ONS)  
Renfrewshire Council  
Improvement Service  
National Records of Scotland (NRS)  
Household Estimates and Projections  
NRS Population and Migrations Statistics  
NRS Population and Migrations Statistics  
NRS Vital Events  
NRS Data Access and Communications  
NRS Household Estimates and Projections  
NRS Statistical Information Services  
NRS Demography  
NRS Population and Migrations Statistics

**1. Introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 Kirsty MacLachlan welcomed the group, noting apologies from Ian White, John McGurk, Jan Freeke, Kateryna McKinnon and Alison Burlison.
- 1.2 Kirsty explained that there was a change to the agenda as there would now not be anyone from NRS Census division attending the meeting. A separate meeting on Census progress would be held in early November. (**Note:** due to the late change to the agenda the order in which items were taken in the meeting differed to that in the previously circulated agenda).
- 1.3 Jenny said that she and other council area representatives were very unhappy with the situation regarding Census. They felt that they were not being kept informed of developments and that user consultation had not been up to the standards of previous censuses.
- 1.4 Concerns over resourcing of the Census were seconded by Ken. He said it appeared that economies had been made in the resourcing of the Census and that this was causing a strain on the production of results. Norman noted that the Church of Scotland uses Census statistics to allocate Ministers throughout Scotland and made a plea for the data to be made available as soon as possible and as accurately as possible.

- 1.5 There was a feeling that this issue should be taken to a higher level. After some discussion Jenny said she would write to the acting Registrar General on behalf of the non-NRS members of PAMS.
- 1.6 Jenny was keen that all 32 council areas are invited to the November Census meeting. Ken made the point that there are over 200 public bodies in Scotland that also have a stake and representatives from them should be invited too.
- 1.7 **Action 2012.05** - Kirsty to ensure that the invite to the November Census meeting is extended to representatives of all 32 council areas and the non-council area PAMS representatives.

#### **Update 9 November 2012**

A Census Stakeholder Information day was held in Edinburgh on 5 November 2012. All presentations and papers relating to this are held within the [Events & Seminars](#) section on the National Records of Scotland website.

## **2. Minutes of previous meeting (Paper 8 PAMS (12) 08)**

- 2.1 The minutes were approved.

## **3. Update on action points (Paper 1 PAMS (12) 09)**

- 3.1 **Action 2011.01** is ongoing. Jenny said that the project Glen Bramley was working on was coming to a conclusion and the final report was due to be published in December. The project involves the use of modelled data from surveys. Chris noted that there was a working paper from the Centre for Population Change on estimating income using occupation information.
- 3.2 **Action 2011.05** is closed.
- 3.3 **Action 2011.10** is ongoing
- 3.4 **Action 2012.01** has been completed and can be closed.
- 3.5 **Action 2012.03** has been completed. Paul Davison does not want to be involved at this stage. Jenny is happy to be involved at any stage. Closed.
- 3.6 **Action 2012.04** Roger Halliday said that the consultation had been placed on the Scottish Government website and it now appears to have reached all the interested people. Closed.

## **4. Beyond 2011 (Paper 3 PAMS (12) 11)**

- 4.1 Jules introduced the paper and gave an overview of the main points. On stakeholder engagement, the user event on 8 November as part of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) festival of Social Science was highlighted. While discussing the two consultations planned for 2013, Jules said she was keen for committee members to think about their consultation responses in advance.
- 4.2 Jenny asked if the second consultation planned for 2013 would include alternative census options, such as used in USA or France. Jules said that the consultation would cover all the options that were under consideration, including alternative forms of Census.

## 5. Sub-national Population Projection options (Paper 4 PAMS (12) 12)

- 5.1 Sub-national Population Projection options ([Paper 4 PAMS \(12\) 12](#)) Keira talked through the main points from the options paper. Following the consultation, it was decided that the National Population Projections would be 2012 based and published in Autumn 2013. The projections would be based on mid-2012 estimates rolled forward from the 2011 Census. The assumption setting process will use revised data for England and Wales and data rolled forward from 2001 for Northern Ireland and Scotland. Sub-national Population Projections for Scotland are planned for in Spring 2014. Historic migration and population estimates, re-based on the 2011 Census, should be available in time to feed into the Sub-national Population Projections. The effect of using a different historic back-series for population and migration estimates depends on the exact nature of the differences caused by re-basing.
- 5.2 Keira discussed the various options for producing Sub-national Population Projections. The recommended option was option 3. Jenny said that the representatives at the morning meeting were happy to accept option 3.
- 5.3 It was also pointed out that there was interest from some council representatives for NRS to produce a set of Sub-national Population Projections that were not constrained to the National Population Projections. On this point, Hervey mentioned that there was a parallel with economic statistics where it is perceived that the move to creating un-constrained Scottish data has resulted in more accurate estimates.
- 5.4 In discussion about the merits of constrained versus un-constrained projections views were heard supporting both methodologies. In the end, Esta said that NRS would proceed with option 3 and consider looking at the possibility of producing un-constrained projections in the future, time and resource permitting.

## 6. England and Wales 2011 Census

- 6.1 Steve gave a summary of the current situation with the Census in England and Wales. He mentioned that the first release had been accompanied by a wealth of methodological papers and all the information was available on the ONS Census 2011 website. Unrounded data was released recently in advance of mid-2011 population estimates. For these estimates small adjustments were made to the base population, for example some members of the armed forces were moved to the location of their base. Upcoming outputs include the release of second address data that may help explain perceived anomalies in certain areas, for example where there are a lot of second homes. Further releases throughout 2013 will include estimates for small and special areas, univariate tables and multivariate tables.
- 6.2 Steve explained that the 2011 Census had been generally well received by users. ONS had proactively engaged with a number of local authorities where their population was lower than previously estimated. ONS will continue to engage with users at various events and conferences.
- 6.3 There was some discussion about the large resource used by ONS to produce their Census data. Steve explained that most of the people that worked on the first release were now working on future releases, had moved to positions elsewhere in ONS or have left the organisation entirely.

- 6.4 In response to a question from Paul about the availability of online tools for accessing the data, Steve said that there were some tools available through the ONS Census 2011 website but that the data cubes would not be available until later.
- 6.5 Ian asked about the reasons for the total population for England and Wales being higher than previously expected. Steve explained that the Census had found more 10-19 year olds and women aged 20-39. It is thought that the international migration estimates may have under estimated people in these categories in previous mid-year population estimates.

## 7. Branch updates

### **Household estimates and projections (Paper 6 PAMS (12) 14)**

- 7.1 Val talked through the main points in the update paper. Alistair Harvey asked if there were plans for another Household Analysis Review Group meeting. Val said that there may be one after the team has had the chance to look at the data from the 2011 Census.

### **Population and migration (Paper 7 PAMS (12) 15)**

- 7.2 Esta went through the paper explained that the main issue for her team at present was the churn of staff in the team. There were no objections to the proposed use of old (current) data zone boundaries in preparation of the Sub-national Population Projections. Jenny mentioned that at least one council area representative was keen to have access to any data zone estimates that are prepared. Esta said that this should be possible.
- 7.3 On the subject of population estimates for data zones, Norman said that he was keen for estimates on the new boundaries to be published as soon as possible.
- 7.4 There were no objections to the proposals for the production of Life Expectancy estimates. The committee felt that while it would be preferable to have a re-based back series for old and new data zones, if resourcing is an issue the focus should on producing a re-based back series for new data zones only.

### **Statistical Information Services (Paper 8 PAMS (12) 16)**

- 7.5 As some members of the committee had not received the Statistics Plan until just before the meeting it was agreed that comments should be fed back to Kirsty by Friday 12 October.
- 7.6 **Action 2012.06** All to feed back comments on the Demography Division Statistics Plan to Kirsty by 12 October.

## 8. ScotStat Board update (Paper 9 PAMS (12) 17)

- 8.1 Jenny talked through the main points from the paper.
- 8.2 Hervey raised the issue that his working group at the SCOTSTAT Board meeting had come to the conclusion that the forthcoming independence referendum was a very important event requiring analytical input but this was not reflected in the summary of meeting provided by Roger Halliday.
- 8.3 **Action 2012.07** Kirsty to feed back to Roger Halliday that the independence referendum should have high priority in the Scottish Government Statistics Plan.

## 9. Use of Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and data zones

- 9.1 Chris described how the University of St. Andrews' Geography Department, as part of its preparation for the Research Excellence Framework (REF), is gathering evidence on the impact of the development of Scottish data zones and the Scottish Index of Deprivation. Chris asked committee members to consider if they felt able to comment on either or both of these tools in terms of its impact in their own area of work. With the general approval of the committee, Chris undertook to email the committee with a formal request for their assistance.
- 9.2 **Action 2012.08** Chris to email the PAMS committee to ask for their assistance with the University of St. Andrews' Geography Department's preparation for the Research Excellence Framework.

## 10. Divorce Statistics Publication (Paper 5 PAMS (12) 15)

- 10.1 Frank covered the main points in the paper. He stated that there was potential for confusion between NRS figures for calendar years and SG figures for financial years, so it was now proposed that SG become the only publisher of Divorce statistics.
- 10.2 Jenny asked about the possible implications of the figures only being available for financial years on the production of estimates of the population broken down by marital status. Esta explained that producing marital status estimates was on hold indefinitely, due to the lack of resource. Frank said that NRS would continue to receive divorce data records, and so would be able to provide Esta's branch with divorce figures for mid-year periods should they resume estimating the marital status breakdown of the mid-year population.
- 10.3 Norman raised a concern over the comparability of the marriage data which will be published by NRS for calendar years and the divorce figures which will be published by Scottish Government for financial years. Jules advised that it would be technically possible for the Scottish Government to make calendar year data for divorces available.
- 10.4 Kirsty concluded that the Committee was happy with the proposal for the Scottish Government to be the sole publisher of divorce statistics, as long as it makes divorce statistics available on a calendar year basis.
- 10.5 **Action 2012.09** Kirsty to contact Justice Analytical Services in Scottish Government to request that they make available divorce statistics on a calendar year basis.

## 11. Any Other Business

- 11.1 Hervey reiterated that he was keen for non-council area representatives to be invited to the November Census update meeting.

## 12. Date of Next Meeting

- 12.1 It was agreed that the next regular PAMS committee meeting should take place in spring 2013.