

## Beyond 2011: Newsletter – July 2013

### Background

The Beyond 2011 Programme was set up by ONS in April 2011 to review all of the options for producing 'census-type' statistics in future. Improvements in technology and administrative data sources offer opportunities to either modernise the existing census process, or to develop an alternative by re-using existing data already held within government. This newsletter provides an update on progress.

The programme continues to move quickly. We have now published a further series of research reports (outlined below) to add to more than 20 papers already published. These include our second full assessment of the shortlisted options.

### The Options

While we continue to assess a shortlist of six options, two front running options have emerged:

#### **THE ONLINE CENSUS OPTION**

A modernised census, making much more use of online completion - to be carried out every 10 years. This would be supplemented by the use of administrative data to take account of population change in intervening years, as at present.

and;

#### **THE ADMINISTRATIVE DATA OPTION**

An approach that depends on the re-use of the 'administrative data' already held within government to estimate the population, supplemented by a 4% rolling annual survey to allow us to estimate for the characteristics of the population.

There are clear pros and cons to these two approaches in terms of quality, frequency and the nature of outputs and they bring different risks. An online census would produce the wealth of small area data and detailed cross-tabulations including data down to Output Area level that have traditionally come from the census – but only every 10 years.

An administrative data solution would deliver statistics much more frequently (on an annual basis for many key topics), and has the potential to be much more responsive to changing user needs, but would not provide the level of detail currently provided by the census.



Beyond 2011 Research Conference 2013  
Southampton University

## Public consultation

Presenting the pros and cons of the two options and gaining views on which approach best fits user needs is the main focus of the public consultation which is expected to run from late **September to December 2013**. The consultation document will be published on the ONS website along with a link to an electronic questionnaire and we would encourage all users of our data and anyone with an interest to respond. We will send a link to everyone who has registered an interest as soon as the consultation is launched.

We will be holding a series of public events throughout this period. These free events will provide an opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of the different approaches and will provide more information about what data might be available under each option. Everyone with an interest in using census or other small area data is encouraged to attend.

An initial list of venues and locations are provided here:

Date	Location	Venue
18 September 2013	Cardiff	SWALEC Stadium
23 September 2013	London	Local Government Association
25 September 2013	Manchester	Manchester Town Hall
26 September 2013	Nottingham	HMRC, Fitzroy House
22 November 2013	London	Local Government Association
27 November 2013	Manchester	Mechanics Centre

Precise details on timings and the agendas will be circulated to those attending but the events are likely to run from approximately 10.30 until 15.00. Places can be booked via an online system which can be accessed here <http://events.eventmanagerpro.com/all/events>

For more information Email us at [beyond2011@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:beyond2011@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

## User Statements

An understanding of how data is used within each sector is fundamental to informing our conclusions. We are recording the requirements of particular sectors in a series of 'User Statements' and a summary of these will be published as part of the consultation which starts in September 2013.

A number of draft [user statements](#) are already published on the ONS web pages. These represent our understanding of the sector, as well as how each group use the data currently produced by the census, whether directly or indirectly through third party suppliers and products. Other statements are also being developed and will be published over coming months.

These drafts are published to give users the opportunity to provide further comments on how they are using data. In particular, we are interested in exactly how statistics for areas smaller than the local authority level are being used and how they are adding value.

You can contribute in a couple of ways. You can:

- email us at [beyond2011@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:beyond2011@ons.gsi.gov.uk); or
- comment on the statements in a discussion forum through [StatsUserNet](#). This is the Royal Statistical Society's User Forum and you will need to register as a user to access the Beyond 2011 community. This only takes a couple of minutes.

## Publications

More than 20 reports and discussion papers have already been published on the ONS Website Search Beyond 2011 @ [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) - or click <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/what-we-do/programmes---projects/beyond-2011/news/reports-and-publications/index.html>

To these we are now adding the following research papers providing updates to July 2013:

- **Beyond 2011: Progress Report, July 2013 (P3)**
- **Beyond 2011: Options Report 2 (O2)**
- **Beyond 2011: The Options Explained 3 (M5)**
- **Beyond 2011: Producing Population Estimates Using Administrative Data (M6)**
- **Beyond 2011: Producing Population Estimates Using Administrative Data: In Practice (M7)**
- **Beyond 2011: Producing Population Estimates Using Administrative Data: In Theory (M8)**
- **Beyond 2011: Matching Anonymous Data (M9)**
- **Beyond 2011: Safeguarding Data for Research: Our Policy (M10)**
- **Quality Assurance of Methodological Research carried out by the Beyond 2011 Programme (M11)**
- **Beyond 2011: Rolling census performance update (R4)**
- **Beyond 2011: Administrative Data Sources Report: DWP and HMRC CIS and L2 Combined (S5)**

Further reports will be published on the Beyond 2011 web pages in August covering:

- A summary of the Beyond 2011 Research Conference
- Producing Socio-Demographic Statistics
- Public Acceptability
- The Business case
- A summary of User Requirements

**The Beyond 2011: Progress Report, July 2013 (P3)** provides a general summary on developments on the programme and on statistical research to date. It also provides a brief summary of, and links to, the statistical reports outlined above, so is a good place to start for anyone looking for more details.

## Next steps and consultation

- **Our next consultation**, focussing on the pros and cons of the online census option and the administrative data option (with a 4% annual survey), will run from late September to end November 2013. A link to the consultation will be sent to everyone who has previously registered an interest in our work and will be widely promoted. A series of events to outline progress and explain the issues are being run in support of the consultation and are outlined above. The results of the consultation will be published in early 2014.
- Statistical research continues at full pace and our next round of findings and policy papers will be published early in 2014. We will publish a revised version of our **options assessment** at this time.
- Given our growing confidence that we will be able to produce good estimates of local authority population from administrative sources the focus of our research in this next stage is very much upon estimation for **smaller level geographies** and on understanding how a rolling survey might be used to estimate the **characteristics or 'attributes' of small areas**.
- At the same time we continue to work on building the **business case** for our recommendation. There is no funding for a future census or alternative in ONS' baseline. Without proper evidence it will be impossible to justify the continued production of small area data and we would urge all users who feel there is a case for this type of data to contact us to discuss their needs. The consultation will ask users to check and add to our understanding of benefits.
- Work continues with **privacy, equality, methodology, genealogical and international** experts to help us fully understand the implications of the different options.
- The next **Beyond 2011 Progress Report** will be published early in 2014.
- We **plan to present our conclusions** to Government in 2014.

## Contact us

We are very happy to talk to anyone about any aspect of the Beyond 2011 work

If you would like any further details or wish to discuss any aspect of our work please contact us at [beyond2011@ons.gov.uk](mailto:beyond2011@ons.gov.uk)