

EMAIL 1 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 14 July 2021 16:47

**To:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Update from Wednesday

Hi [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

A quick update from me:

- **Article:** I updated the article and accepted tracked changes and had a tidy where I could. Thanks for the updates to this. There are some areas and issues I was unable to completely resolve and where input from others is required. Those points remain in it for the moment. I sent the article out to those in our list to review. I didn't send to publishing – do we have a contact there who can look or do we need to use the general email?
- **Blog:** [REDACTED] and I had a discussion around what this might cover and how to differentiate it from the article this morning. A first draft has been done and I fed back on this.
- **Letter:** SET said that they don't have capacity to write this. We probably need to pick this up a and work on drafting on if we can – I have a couple of versions of what has been used for similar pieces in the past. I'll see who else can assist us.
- **Stakeholder event:** I spoke with [REDACTED] about the stakeholder event which we are now planning for 29 July. SET are working on setting this up and the arrangements. Susan has asked about comms and I said that we are working on these.

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 13 July 2021 17:50

**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Update from Tuesday

Hi James,

Sending you an update from progress on Tuesday.

I was wary of creating the entries on the publishing hub for the blog and letter without speaking to anyone so I contacted [REDACTED] from the Coordination team. He called and explained this would be a 'publishing' issue but there was a small possibility that they might want to include the extra materials in the 3,000 word count. So he's forwarded by query to them and if we've not heard back by 3.30 tomorrow, he has a meeting with publishing then, and he will raise it. I've not seen his query forwarded on so I'll send him a note before I log off. So he's asked us to hold off putting it on the planner for now but he suspects it should be ok to add in on Thursday.

I've read all the other email history and see that the letter and blog are being drafted elsewhere which is helpful.

I've actioned comments from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I tried to make things more specific as [REDACTED] suggested but struggled a little - I have tried to add back in a few specifics and taken out some of the 'possibly's', not sure how useful it is. Any changes made are still as track changes so you can accept or reject as you wish. It's a new doc called [response to OSR](#). Both [REDACTED] and Chris have offered some help tomorrow but I'm aware this needs to get sent on quickly (you'll see the correspondence).

I'm sorry I've not sent it out tonight but I felt it needed a view from you before I sent it out. I've not had any comments from Liz or Jonathan btw. I've drafted a couple of emails which I've sent to you, one for the G6 and G7s and one for publishing to do a once over.

I'm about to draft a note to [REDACTED] as he is in tomorrow. I was going to ask him to think about the comms plan and lines to take.

I think that's it. I will chase SET on Thursday as they haven't come back to me re how to sign up for the newsletter. OSR did respond fortunately.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED], [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) |  
Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#)

Please note: My working days are Tuesday and Thursday.

EMAIL 1 END

EMAIL 2 START

**From:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 17 June 2021 13:17

**To:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Wording for OSR review to be included in update to population transformation overview page

Hi Nigel,

Nothing to add from me on this except to say I'm happy with avoiding saying the end of July if we can. We're working to that date, but as you say, no guarantees we'll get a slot. James and [REDACTED] are moving this forward, I'm currently waiting for the latest version of the proforma from the coordination team.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

**From:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 16 June 2021 16:11

**To:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Bowers, Megan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Wording for OSR review to be included in update to population transformation overview page

Fair enough. I'm happy 😊

**From:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 16 June 2021 16:11

**To:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Bowers, Megan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Wording for OSR review to be included in update to population transformation overview page

Ideally yes, but... We know we have to get back to OSR on our response by the end of July, but finding a publication slot by then is still slightly up for grabs, so I thought I'd see if I can hedge my bets a bit with that line by not putting a date.

Maybe I'm getting too used to the weaselly words approach!

**Nigel Henretty** | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics  
[redacted] | [redacted] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

**From:** Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 June 2021 15:58  
**To:** Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Bowers, Megan <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Wording for OSR review to be included in update to population transformation overview page

Thanks Nigel – I'm happy with this. Do we want to say "in July" as part of the last sentence?

**Rich Pereira** | Deputy Director, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Public Policy Analysis  
Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[redacted] | [redacted] | [redacted] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

**From:** Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 June 2021 15:56  
**To:** Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Bowers, Megan <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Wording for OSR review to be included in update to population transformation overview page

Hi all,

Just to let you know that I've drafted the following wording to be included in the update to the population transformation overview page which Megan (copied) is working on and which will be published alongside the population estimates and projections update on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June:

In May 2021 the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) published a [review of population estimates and projections](#). The review identified that we use internationally recognised methods and sources as the basis for population estimates and projections that are fit for purpose for national level estimates. However, the review also identified the need to keep these current and responsive especially at some lower levels where there is more variability, and made some recommendations accordingly. We are already progressing work in this area as we consider how best to meet these recommendations, and we will report back to OSR about our plans while continuing to gather feedback on them more broadly.

Let me know if you have any suggested edits, by the end of tomorrow if at all possible.

Thanks,

Nigel

Nigel Henretty | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics

[redacted] | [redacted] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 2 END

EMAIL 3 START

**From:** Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 18 February 2021 13:40

**To:** Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Cobb, Pamela <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Dormon, Oliver <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Morgan, Edward <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Nash, Andrew <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Newman, Jim <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Sharfman, Amanda <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Storey, Angele <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Risks

Hi all,

Following our risks meeting just now, here's the list of agreed risks and owners:

[redacted]

[redacted]

To create a draft risk, go to the [Risks and Issues SharePoint Database](#) and select Create Risk. In the Title field, please start the title with "Population Statistics Division –" followed by the name of your risk.

There is also some [detailed guidance on creating and managing risks](#).

I hope this helps, and let me know if you have any problems or questions.

Thanks,

Nigel

Nigel Henretty | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics

| [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 3 END

EMAIL 4 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 16 July 2021 13:51

**To:** Barton, Susan <[ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Cc:** Stickney, Chris <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; <> <[ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** RE: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Thanks Susan.

We have used your text for these two passages.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Barton, Susan <[ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Sent:** 15 July 2021 12:46

**To:** Park, Neil <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; Robards, James <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; Stickney, Chris

<[ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Cc:** Webber, Dominic <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; Smallwood, Steve <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; McNally,

Justine <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; <> <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; Henretty, Nigel

<[ons.gov.uk](#)>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; <>

<[ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** RE: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Both

I can't comment or write on this document as it's 'read only for me' and whilst you've allotted me recommendation 7, stakeholder engagement is a constant thread throughout the response. There are a couple of places I would have commented but without the ability to write in that means someone has to add them later. In the meantime a quick spot detailed below needs fixing:

Page 4:

integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes

We will seek and understand user feedback on our approach to methodological change and consider the best way to integrate the findings from this feedback in the timing, communication and planning of methodological change and the delivery of our statistics. Over the last five years we have made methodological improvements to our estimates and projections and ~~would we~~ welcome feedback on the way we have ~~comment~~ – 'would indicates you would, but you won't and the sentence ends in the air. If you try want feedback you don't say how to give feedback either. Otherwise just change would to 'we'.

### Re recommendation 7:

I'd prefer it if we framed this in a more proactive and constructive fashion. We invite feedback through a short survey on every email we send to our users (from pop.info) – do other joint mailboxes do this? It's also on every publication we issue. We're also investigating the opportunity for more webinars (SUN seminar shared this week

for example). We certainly can revisit and publicise how to feedback which includes complaints and work on that challenging feedback piece. Happy to lead on that.

I've changed the paragraph below.

[@Stickney, Chris](#) you may want to comment as I've said we 'can do' some things which were previously drafted as a 'may' do.

**Take a more open and constructive approach to responding to user engagement by improving its complaints procedure and viewing challenge as an opportunity to improve the statistics and outputs. A fully open approach will help ONS demonstrate its commitment to user engagement and ensure a range of perspectives are fed into the development of the statistics.**

We welcome and value all feedback. We will do more to inform users of population estimates and projections about how share their views on the data and methods we use to develop these statistics. We will ensure our complaints procedure is clear and accessible. In addition to inviting feedback in our correspondence and publications, we will highlight this and any further guidance in newsletters and bulletins.

We have engaged with those who wish to comment on and challenge our methods and statistics. We are always looking to develop new opportunities to engage and involve our users, and will also continue our ongoing engagement with users at relevant conferences and events.

We are holding stakeholder engagement events to give users the opportunity to discuss this OSR review with us. We will hold a further event for us to present findings from our work outlined in this plan in response to the recommendations.

**Reflect and learn from its experience of challenging user engagement and identify potential solutions and best practice from the User Engagement Strategy for Statistics.**

All user feedback is important to us and we will review and redevelop our approach to handling challenging user feedback. In doing this we will also consider the User Engagement Strategy for Statistics in developing best practice and solutions.

Best wishes

*Susan*

**Susan Barton** | Head of Stakeholder Engagement Team

[Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | [Centre for International Migration](#)

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**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 16 July 2021 15:09  
**To:** Webber, Dominic <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Thanks Dom – looks good.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Webber, Dominic <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 July 2021 14:48  
**To:** Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; McNally, Justine <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi James,

Have just reviewed recommendation 3, and replaced with wording that is more consistent with other updates we've published recently. Am around for the next couple of hours if you want to pick up with me.

Thanks

Dom

**From:** Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 July 2021 13:02  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Webber, Dominic <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; McNally, Justine <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi James

Dom and I have gone through recommendation 3 and I think he will drop that in the linked version if he hasn't already. Regarding Section 5, I think it is looking good. Three things I would suggest [REDACTED] has picked up somewhat as well) is:

1. about wider engagement – in particular the Census consultation that went live on 13 July: [proposals for the content design and release of Census 2021 data and analysis](#); and
2. the 2023 recommendation consultation to be launched in October – I think? [REDACTED] or Vicky Staples can confirm.
3. We said we would meet most commitments by May 2022. Are we committing to providing an update then ? If so, let's say that.

Chris

---

**Chris Stickney** | Assistant Deputy Director of the Centre for International Migration (Migration Analysis and Engagement) | Public Policy Analysis directorate |

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**From:** Robards, James <ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 15 July 2021 16:41

**To:** Gadsdon, Kerry <ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel

<ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Barton, Susan <ons.gov.uk>; Webber, Dominic <ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve

<ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <ons.gov.uk>; McNally, Justine

<ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>

<ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Thank you to those who have commented so far.

Kerry - OSR set the May 2022 deadline. sought out more information from OSR on reporting and we have included a passage in this document explaining that where we are unable to complete activities in response to a recommendation then we will update and indicate why and what we are still working on.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Gadsdon, Kerry <ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 15 July 2021 16:37

**To:** Park, Neil <ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel

<ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Barton, Susan <ons.gov.uk>; Webber, Dominic <ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve

<ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <ons.gov.uk>; McNally, Justine

<ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>

<ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Interesting comment [@Park, Neil](#)

Who set the deadline? Should we add in a milestone to lay out the timelines for the commitments?

Noted we will be reporting back to OSR on a mid-point for the year, so we have time to talk to them about the timeline and confirm before that point.

Kerry

**From:** Park, Neil <ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 15 July 2021 08:39

**To:** Robards, James <ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Barton, Susan <ons.gov.uk>; Webber, Dominic <ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve

<ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <ons.gov.uk>; McNally, Justine

<ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel

<ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <ons.gov.uk>; <ons.gov.uk>

<ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections



Hi James,

I've looked through this and made a few comments. I do have concerns that not much of what we're offering is achievable within the time to May 2022 (the sequencing of the review, alongside census publication, changes to international migration and rebasing/reconciliation mean that a lot of key information will not be available until after we've promised to respond). Further, there is a lot of work of here. I know there a lot of overlaps between things we'd be doing anyway but I am concerned we're offering something that we don't have the information or staffing to complete by May 2022. Whilst I think the nature of what we're offering makes sense the timeline doesn't. I think we need to manage expectations more clearly.

Thanks,

Neil

From: Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Sent: 14 July 2021 15:32

To: Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Webber, Dominic

<[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; McNally, Justine

<[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve

<[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Subject: Response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Dear colleagues,

[REDACTED] Nigel, [REDACTED] and I have been working on our [response to OSR \(SEE: EMAIL 62 ONS RESPONSE TO OSR PUBLICATION DRAFT VERSION\)](#) following the [review of population estimates and projections](#) and we would be grateful for your comments on the draft response by end of Friday.

We have an unannounced publication date of Monday 26 July (in order to meet the OSR requirement to respond in July). Over the last week or so we have discussed the draft with OSR and the Heads of Profession Statistics Office who are both satisfied / have been positive about our planned approach to responding (format and content in broad terms from a briefing / run through with each). On Monday, the article was discussed at the 'All Things Population' group and the version we are circulating has most feedback from that group included (some changes are still pending and included as comments).

**Please feedback by end of Friday 16 July. We are highlighting the specific recommendations you may like to look at if you do not have time to read the whole document; please consider where we can be more specific and detailed on our planned actions as in some places these would still benefit from being stronger and clearer:**

Recommendation 1 [@Park, Neil](#) [@McNally, Justine](#) (item 3)

Recommendation 2 [@Park, Neil](#) [@Stickney, Chris](#)

Recommendation 3 [@Stickney, Chris](#) [@Webber, Dominic](#)

Recommendation 4 [@Park, Neil](#)

Recommendation 5 [@Park, Neil](#)

Recommendation 6 – Population and Household Projections (PHP)

Recommendation 7 [@Barton, Susan](#)

Recommendation 8 [@Park\\_Neil](#) and PHP

Section 5 [@Stickney\\_Chris](#)

Alongside the article, we are writing a letter and blog post (both based on the article but with different emphasis). OSR were particularly keen on a blog, feeding back to us that they consider the blog format is one which has been working well over recent months.

Please feel free to make any changes to the document via track changes or send comments via email to both [REDACTED] and me. I have granted editor access but please let me and [REDACTED] know if you have difficulties accessing the document and as site owners, we will resolve it as soon as possible.

We will also be arranging for the commitments which being made in this response to be logged.

CC'd to Steve – We'd value your thoughts on this article, but please only feedback if you have time.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

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EMAIL 4 END

EMAIL 5 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 22 July 2021 13:52

**To:** Staples, Victoria <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Response needed Monday / Tuesday please - ONS response to OSR on OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi Vicky,

No problem – hope you are better now.

All the best,

James

**From:** Staples, Victoria <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 22 July 2021 09:15

**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Response needed Monday / Tuesday please - ONS response to OSR on OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi James,

Sorry I wasn't able to get you a timely reply – have been off sick this week and [REDACTED] was also in leave.

Vicky

**Victoria Staples** | Census and Transformation Policy and Engagement Team

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

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My pronouns are she/her

**From:** Robards, James <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 21 July 2021 09:18

**To:** Teague, Andy <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Staples, Victoria <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Stickney, Chris <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Response needed Monday / Tuesday please - ONS response to OSR on OSR review of population estimates and projections

Thanks ██████████

I'll use the form of words from that.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Teague, Andy <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 21 July 2021 09:16

**To:** Robards, James <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Staples, Victoria <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Stickney, Chris <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Response needed Monday / Tuesday please - ONS response to OSR on OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi James

I'm just back from leave and not sure if Vicky replied. I suggest you quote from Pete Benton's blog – that contains the appropriate wording.

<https://blog.ons.gov.uk/2021/07/13/population-and-social-statistics-in-a-rapidly-changing-world/>

Any questions, let me know.

Andy

**Andy Teague** | Head of Engagement, Census and Transformation Policy and Engagement Team, Population and Public Policy,

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ [@ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | @ONS

**From:** Robards, James <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 16 July 2021 14:14

**To:** Staples, Victoria <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Teague, Andy <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Stickney, Chris <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Response needed Monday / Tuesday please - ONS response to OSR on OSR review of population estimates and projections

Vicky, ██████████

We are currently finalising an ONS [response to OSR](#) (SEE: EMAIL 62 ATTACHMENT) following their [review of population estimates and projections](#). As part of this – in our final section – we would like to point ahead to the planned consultation in the autumn on the future population and migration statistics system. Is this acceptable?

We have this text in our draft and would appreciate your feedback:

ONS is committed to reviewing its population statistics through a fresh approach to the Census and the wider transformation of the population and migration system which will embed

administrative sources into population and migration statistics. Users can feedback on our [proposals for the content design and release of Census 2021 data and analysis](#) from now until 5 October 2021. In the autumn we are consulting on what a future population and migration statistical system will look like. We regularly engage with users to ensure they are aware of how this wider programme of work is progressing and to seek feedback from them on their future requirements and the planned direction of our work.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

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EMAIL 5 END

EMAIL 6 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 29 April 2021 11:55

**To:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** RE: Read-out: Coherence and change working group, 23 April

Thanks Nigel.

I'm minded to pass to ██████████ to work on:

1. confirming how we will deal with / respond on the recommendations.
2. who will deal with each.
3. Monitoring progress against these (quarterly – do we get 12 months before we report back?).

Best wishes

James

**From:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Sent:** 28 April 2021 16:38

**To:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>; Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Cc:** Park, Neil <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** RE: Read-out: Coherence and change working group, 23 April

Hi James,

Thanks for this. The additional columns are helpful and I've added some comments.

It'll be interesting to see how different the final version of the OSR report is to the one we commented on. I doubt we'll see it again before it's published but will be worth re-reading then because it may subtly change our actions in response to it, especially if some of the good stuff in the early indicators publication is reflected in the OSR report.

We shall see.

Nigel

**Nigel Henretty** | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics  
[redacted] | [redacted] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

**From:** Robards, James <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 28 April 2021 16:14  
**To:** Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Park, Neil <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Read-out: Coherence and change working group, 23 April

Hi Nigel,

Re.  
*James, I know your team had helpfully created a table of the OSR recommendations as part of our opportunity to review them. I wonder if you could adapt/add to that table to include any initial thoughts on practical steps we could take.*

We added in two further columns after you may have last looked at it:

1. Possible solutions to the feedback (including where different areas may need to contribute) – these might not all be possible but hopefully it is a starter.
2. To record actions taken.  
Document is [here](#).

It would be helpful to revisit the thoughts on practical steps as a group.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 28 April 2021 15:43  
**To:** Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Robards, James <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Read-out: Coherence and change working group, 23 April

Hi Rich,

From a population statistics perspective, the blog to be published on 14<sup>th</sup> May will be quite handy for us to describe how we're planning to handle the challenges of producing mid-2020 population estimates, and also potentially for offering some initial suggestions of how we can meet the recommendations of the OSR review (at very high level only I suspect!).

To help with that, Neil perhaps you could draft a couple of paragraphs which would basically be a text version of the PowerPoint content you've presented recently to the likes of the CLIP-Population group? I'm pretty sure all the content already exists somewhere so no rush here!

James, I know your team had helpfully created a table of the OSR recommendations as part of our opportunity to review them. I wonder if you could adapt/add to that table to include any initial thoughts on practical steps we could take.

Rich, do you have a sense of how much we should mention the projections in the blog? Obviously the OSR review covered both projections and estimates, but the focus of the blog is on estimates. I'd be tempted to try to weave in both, in the spirit

of coherence, but conscious it can quickly get messy, especially considering the blog will contain LFS content too!

Thanks,

Nigel

Nigel Henretty | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

**From:** Pereira, Rich <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 28 April 2021 14:58

**To:** Briggs, Rebecca <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Miltiadou, Myrto <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; James, Mike <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Blackwell, Louisa <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Rogers, Nicky <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Georgeson, Brendan <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Freeman, David <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Lindop, Jay <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Read-out: Coherence and change working group, 23 April

Hi Becca et al

I think 14 May is good – it fits with what I was expecting on timing as mentioned the other day.

I don't think there is a problem with the OSR release on 10 May – as you say, it's a great opportunity to respond at a high level quickly (ie, refer to the report, acknowledge things we are going to do etc) in the blog.

Cheers

Rich

Rich Pereira | Deputy Director, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#), Public Policy Analysis

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@RichPereira](#) [ONS](#)

**From:** Briggs, Rebecca <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 28 April 2021 13:12

**To:** Stickney, Chris <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Miltiadou, Myrto <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; James, Mike <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Blackwell, Louisa <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Rogers, Nicky <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Georgeson, Brendan <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Pereira, Rich <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Freeman, ██████████ <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Lindop, Jay <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Read-out: Coherence and change working group, 23 April

Afternoon all,

A quick update on next publication – from a brief chat with the coordination team, Fri 14 May could work as there's a slot on the publishing calendar. Does that work from a labour market and population perspective? Rich, have seen the OSR report is coming out 10 May, so if there's any considerations here just shout (but we'd already said there may be a few messages that could be drawn out in the blog if wanted).

Thanks

██████████

EMAIL 6 END

EMAIL 6 ATTACHMENT START

Recommendations updated in orange to reflect the <a href="#">published OSR report</a> as this differed slightly from draft version provided by OSR. Lines to take have not been amended as minor changes to recommendations do not change the lines to take.						
OSR Recommendation	ONS internal lines to take	OSR detailed recommendations	ONS actions previously taken	ONS possible future work	Commented [1]: Under development – James to return to this with [redacted]	taken
<p><b>1.Ensuring future population statistics are based on sound methods and suitable data.</b></p>	<p>In addition to our existing work on identifying the most appropriate data sources to inform population estimates, we will carry out some investigations on case studies on several cities to help inform our future approach. We will work with stakeholders in local authorities to identify the areas where this exercise will be most beneficial.</p>	<p>1.1 Investigate the root and scale of the issue associated with cities with large student populations to understand how suitable mitigation can be applied and communicate its findings publicly, to support the appropriate use of existing data.</p>	<p>Background - The Higher Education Leavers Method (HELM) was implemented in the 2017 MYEs onwards to address onward migration of students at the end of their studies. This developed the methodology introduced for 2012 onwards which attempted to address this problem. The HELM method and its impact is described here =&gt;</p> <p><a href="#">understanding impact of introducing HELM method</a></p> <p>HH - Look at work Andrew did on students and fertility, JR has sent link.</p> <p>HH - We've carried out case studies in student areas, which ones were they?</p> <p>HH - What work have we done with Coventry so far?</p>	<p>PEU - Can the HELM method be improved? Should PEU /PSRU investigate this further?</p> <p>PHP/PEU - Carry out case studies in cities with large student populations (inc Coventry), to include some of above. Need to consider how to choose areas systematically, pop size and proportion of students?</p> <p>Once plan is developed, take to i) CLIP, ii) ONS Combined Authorities Liaison Group [redacted] to seek feedback.</p> <p>PHP - Review work to date on students and fertility [redacted] and consider what HHP research has been carried out.</p> <p>ACTION - [redacted] to speak to [redacted] and [redacted] re planned discussion with [redacted] re students in admin data. Last feb there was a publication which looked at students and migration, exit checks, visas and duration of stay.</p>	<p>1. Develop a plan for case studies in areas with high student populations (plan to be peer reviewed at CLIP and ONS Combined Authorities Liaison Group)</p> <p>2. Review recent research work including Admin Based Migration Estimate (ABME) work on student exit checks and RAPID to determine what other work is needed to address issues.</p> <p>3. Consider impact of assumptions being rolled forward, taking approach to UK Population Theme Advisory Board (UKPTAB).</p> <p>4. Continue to work with Population and Migration Statistics Transformation (PMST), ensuring issues raised by OSR are considered as work progresses.</p> <p><i>Could combine 2 and 4 but for now, keep separate.</i></p> <p><i>Ask OSR for clarification re assumptions and</i></p>	

				<p><b>PHP</b> – Bring together what’s already been done, then consider what else needs to be done to address issues.</p>	<p><i>rolling forward as these are approaches for projections and estimates.</i></p> <p><i>Selection of areas: need to have a systematic approach (possibly use Neil’s work on error), but also ensure those areas that have written to us are included. Use a ‘hybrid’ approach.</i></p> <p><i>Find out about STAR work, ██████████ and ██████████ re demographic indicators and PAYE data for students leaving after studies.</i></p>	
		<p>1.2 Use its partnership with experts to discuss the evidence provided to OSR in the review concerning the impact of decisions around unattributable population change and assumptions being rolled forward.</p>	<p>Have we done any research on impact of rolled forward assumptions. Could find UPC work but it will be old? There were users that wanted us to apply an adjustment for UPC, see roadshow minutes.</p>	<p><b>PEU and PHP</b> -</p> <p>Suggest bringing to a UKPTAB meeting on the approach we take here. UPC is an SNPP issue. (Reference to UPC now taken out of final report.) Would be helpful to see comments from respondents.</p>	<p><b>Commented ██████████</b>: I wonder if we can acquire the specific comment(s) obtained by OSR that gave rise to this recommendation? It’s partly because I don’t understand it. It almost feels like the concepts of unattributable population change and projections assumptions setting are being conflated here, but maybe I’m missing something obvious.</p>	
				<p><b>PHP</b> - Need to consider for planning integration of 2021 data (<i>is this referring to Census data, back series and trends?</i>)</p> <p><b>PSRU</b> – Also one for ██████████’s team.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> – Should we ask for more detail on</p>		



				evidence provided to OSR?		
		1.3 Assure itself and others that issues raised concerning concerns raised regarding the current methods are considered throughout the development of its admin-based population estimates.	What have we published in ABPE work? Does it refer to our involvement and concerns. [redacted] - Include links to recent updates here. Check we have referred to ABPEs in Rich's latest blog.	<p><b>PEU and SDR -</b> (PHP as a 'customer')</p> <p>Need ongoing liaison with transformation team. PEU/PHP attend transformation meetings but when should we be more involved?</p> <p><b>Action -</b> Ensure transformation work and sprints for ABPEs are aware of issues raised here and are including them in their work.</p> <p>[redacted] - Find out the best way to share this.</p> <p>[redacted] - to talk to colleagues on Friday at divisional transformation meeting.</p>	<p><b>Commented [redacted]:</b> We could do with a line on plans for ABPE to use in the blog. Could [redacted] provide this?</p>	
2.Enhancing the transparency of developments concerning the quality of the statistics.	We will make sure we continue to use our working relationships with local stakeholders and in the devolved administrations to identify and handle any concerns and issues regarding the quality of population estimates and projections. We have provided early insights into the UK population size and age structure for the first time this year, and we will continue to share our findings as early as possible to help provide insight into the changing UK population	2.1 Integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes in its design for admin-based population estimates. While we appreciate that there should not be adjustments made in response to every concern raised, ONS's population estimates and projections team should work with its partners in local government, academia and across the devolved nations, so that changes are implemented in a more timely way.	Refer to ongoing liaison with partners including regular CLIP meetings, cities group, UK PTAB, where we update and discuss our ongoing research. Ask for feedback on proposals.	<p><b>PEU, PHP, SDR(?) -</b> Need to consider wide engagement and timeliness of methodological review beyond what we already do. Note PHP user engagement of 2020 would have covered this at NPP and SNP</p> <p><b>PEU -</b> Carry out engagement on [redacted]. When do users want to see new methods, revisions etc. ?</p>	<p>1. Carry out wide user engagement regarding the timing of methodological reviews, asking users for preferred timing on resulting revisions.</p> <p>2. Continue to share [redacted] DRAFT</p> <p><b>Commented [redacted]:</b> 4: It makes me wonder whether (post mid-2020 estimates) we should do an equivalent exercise for population estimates, although we'd have to be specific in terms of what we want feedback on.</p> <p>extra information they would like us to share.</p> <p>Ask OSR about this.</p> <p>We have published a blog and early indicators work.</p> <p>Sometimes, users don't want updates too regularly, depending on their uses.</p>	

		2.2 Share the insights it has gathered from the work it is doing to understand the changing nature of migration and population, as part of its transformation programme, so that users' views inform the way this work is taken forward.	Link to recent publication on 'changing UK population', and transformation paper, and blog. And Rich's blog.	<p><b>MSD / SDR?</b></p> <p>One for [redacted] to look at?</p> <p>Question back to OSR on PMST transformation overview and what is missing from this?</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> – Ask OSR what they want to see here as ONS do publish updates on transformation work.</p>		
3.Continuation of plans for the future of migration data.	We always use the best estimates of migration available. Currently, the model-based estimates of migration, published on 16 <sup>th</sup> April, offer the most complete view possible of international migration, and we will continue develop our estimates using the best available data on an iterative basis.	ONS's population estimates and projections team should communicate its short-term and long-term plans for addressing the challenges with the migration component of population estimates to users more widely, even if tentative. 3.1 ONS's migration team should be open with users about its short-term solution to bridge the gap of migration data until the administrative data alternative is fit for purpose and ready to use.	We published information on methods on 16 April. [redacted] to read again.	<p><b>PEU and PHP:</b> 16 April publications did this in part – perhaps a need for more on possible future ways challenges might be addressed?</p> <p>Explain again that we're using modelled estimates of migration until ABMEs are available.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> - Talk to MSD and [redacted]</p>	<p>1. Continue to keep users informed of progress and current solutions. Remind users about the use modelled estimates of migration until Admin Based Migration Estimates (ABMEs) are available.</p> <p>2. Tell users more about possible future ways that challenges might be addressed.</p> <p><i>Talk to FA, when are they publishing something, is it at the same time as the MYEs?</i></p> <p><i>We have published a blog and early indicators etc.</i></p>	
		ONS's migration team must not be overly reliant on the administrative data model for measuring migration and determine a short-term solution to bridge the gap of migration data until the administrative data alternative has been created. If a short-term solution is not possible then		<p><b>MSD:</b> quite surprising about the pace here – should feedback to MSD re. upcoming work and plans.</p>	<p><b>Commented [redacted] 5]:</b> I think the answer is basically that we re using modelled estimates of migration (which themselves make use of admin data) as a tactical solution to fill the gap between IPS-based LTIM and the ABMEs being ready. But of course the ABMEs themselves may ultimately make use of some sort of modelling, so it all gets a bit circular!</p>	

		ONS should make this clear to users.				
4.Enhancement of approach to quality assurance.	We will engage with stakeholders and other producers or estimates to share best practices on quality assurance. We will also continue to investigate sensitivity analysis around the estimates to further enhance our approach to quality assurance, and to better understand and describe potential uncertainty around the estimates.	4.1 Collaborate with others to learn from best practice – for example learning from demographers and the Greater London Authority who produce their own estimates and projections.	What have we already done with the GLA? We do talk to them and they are represented on CLIP (check). Look to see what correspondence there is. I think AN was talking to them last year about running projections with different trends(10 year migration) and not constraining to NPPs.  █ to find this.	<b>PEU &amp; PHP</b> – possibly follow up with █, also re. GLA projection range.  <b>Action</b> - discuss approaches with GLA and hold further sessions to learn from their approach and what they do (only had one brief meeting so far). We can't do the unconstrained projections as system is not set up to do this.	1. Continue discussions with experts to share experiences of QA of projections.  2. Engage with LAs to see how using local data can flag up major issues, while maintaining a consistent approach across all LAs. Also consider how we can build local insight into the production process.  3. Develop sensitivity analyses for MYEs, SNPPs, and HHPs to support quality assurance.  <i>Talk to █ about the MYEs that will be published that include an option for students at term time address. Could be referred to as sensitivity analysis.</i>  <i>Local insight links in with case studies.</i>  <i>What about the Python tool?</i>  <i>Local insight will be part of the case studies.</i>	
		4.2 Incorporate local insight and evidence as part of its deep dives and investigations into issues	Have we carried out case studies in the past that included use of local data? I know we did years ago as part of IMPS but what about more recently?  Our old approach to quality assurance included	<b>PHP (SNPPs and HHPs)</b> – there is a need for a standard methodology at a national level. (Need to take care on this one and potentially explain about how realistic this is).  But we need to engage with local areas where		

			<p>consultation meetings where LAs were invited to comment on provisional data for their area and on any changes to the methodology. No longer run as rarely resulted in a change to the data, strengthening of rules restricting advance access to ONS data prior to publication and the ability to publish the SNPPs 2 months earlier alongside the variant SNPPs.</p> <p>However, changes that were made include an adjustment to Oadby and Wigston and the redistribution of armed forces in Wiltshire.</p>	<p>appropriate. We can look at supporting data, but we can't use it in our methods, only to flag up major issues.</p> <p>Need to explain this to LAs, but would be good to do some analytical work on this. Maybe with case study areas?</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> – Consider what we can build into the production process for SNPPs and HHPs to receive local insight.</p> <p>Considering the old 'consultation' approach, what can we use from the 2018 projections data for example. Could we send them the published 2018 data and ask for their local insight?</p>		
		4.3 Run sensitivity analyses to accompany the existing estimates and explain to users how these analyses should be interpreted.	<p>Has PEU already done some sensitivity analysis? Ask them. Refer to HHP sensitivity analysis. Was this / could this be published?</p>	<p><b>PEU:</b> PEU to carry out some sensitivity analysis.</p> <p><b>PHP:</b> Have we done any sensitivity analysis. Did we do some on the HHPs? Need to expand on this and run sensitivity analysis for population projections.</p> <p><b>Action</b> – [redacted] to speak to [redacted] and [redacted] about sensitivity analysis carried out for HHPs and develop sensitivity analysis for SNPPs.</p>		
<b>5.Supporting users' understanding of the uncertainty associated with ONS statistics.</b>	In addition to the information we provide about the uses of populations estimates and projections we will further explore ways to	5.1 Research and implement additional ways to communicate the uncertainty around the population estimates and projections, beyond the use	<b>PEU</b> - a paper was published in 2017 on <a href="#">uncertainty around population estimates</a> for 2012 to 2016.	<b>PEU and PHP</b> - This needs to be explored more fully. Options include the GLA	1. Consider how best to approach uncertainty, possibly using the GLA approach of using a range.	

	<p>communicate appropriate uses and limitations of the statistics, to aid understanding and reduce the risk of inappropriate use.</p>	<p>of confidence intervals and variant projections.</p>		<p>approach (using a range?).</p> <p>Could we make some of the uncertainty work more accessible. Maybe write a separate paper which outlines example uses of the estimates and projections, talks about limitations, example uses and advice on how not to use them but also referencing the more detailed <a href="#">uncertainty work</a> that methodology have published.</p>	<p>2. Publish a paper which makes the MYE uncertainty work more accessible. This would consider the MYEs and SNPPs, discuss uncertainty, uses and limitations and reference the MYE uncertainty work.</p> <p>3. Provide more guidance in bulletins and QMIs, including key messages and suitability of releases to users, to help users understand how to use the MYEs and SNPPs in short and longer term planning.</p> <p><i>Talk to Neil about uncertainty paper and how useful it was.</i></p>	
		<p>5.2 Provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty associated with the statistics, to help users understand the appropriate use of the statistics for short-term planning compared with longer-term planning.</p>	<p>Should we refer here to the published accuracy reports? They demonstrated uncertainty but the papers are old (published 2016).</p>	<p><b>PEU and PHP:</b> Key messages and suitability of releases to users ('dos and don'ts'). Include in future bulletins and also in QMI.</p>		
<p><b>6. Maximising the use of ONS variant projections</b></p>	<p>We plan to develop case studies on examples of the uses of variant projections, which will help aid users' understanding of them, and their limitations. The 2020-based interim national population projections will not include variants, but the existing 2018-based projections will still be useful in understanding different projected population scenarios, until projections</p>	<p>Promote the use of variants and continue to work with users to ensure the development of the variants is customer led.</p>		<p><b>PHP</b> - We have done this in our recent user engagement – will need to revisit ahead of 2021-based projections. Data explorer is a valuable tool for HHPs.</p> <p><b>PHP</b> – Develop a user guide to include how variants should be used. Could feature OBR use of variants for example. Could we re-contact respondents to user</p>	<p>1. Develop the text on variants already in releases, to provide more support and address specific needs.</p> <p>2. Develop a user guide on how variants should be used. This may utilise feedback received in our recent user engagement exercise and include case studies on how</p>	

**Commented [6]:** I think we'll have a short section on uncertainty in the MYEs bulletin too.

	after the 2021 Census results are available.			engagement work and ask to use their examples of how they use variants.	variant projections have been used.  <i>This wouldn't be release specific, doesn't have to be especially long.</i>  <i>What about the python tool?</i>	
		6.1 Expand on the support it gives users to illustrate where the use of these alternative projections may be beneficial and develop case studies of where they have been used in practice.	PHP asked users what variants they would like to see in the recent user engagement. Look to see what we have in the NPP bulletin on the use of variants.	<b>PHP:</b> Confident we have good text on this in our releases. Options in response to feedback:  <i>Expand support</i> - needs to be targeted and address specific user needs.  <i>Illustrate (case studies):</i> could be part of a release within information on the variant projections. May need some user agreement to share specific case studies. Fine line with messaging re. Principal Projection.		
<b>7.Ensuring that ONS statistics remain relevant to users</b>	We will do more to inform users of population estimates and projections on how to raise concerns and provide feedback about the data and methods we use.	7.1 Take a more open and constructive approach to responding to user engagement by improving its complaints procedure and viewing challenge as an opportunity to improve the statistics and outputs. A fully open approach will help ONS demonstrate its commitment to user engagement and ensure a range of perspectives are fed into the development of the statistics.	The old SNPP consultation process was a good way for users to feed back concerns. Opportunities are more limited now although we do include a 'was this table useful to you' feedback button on our outputs.	<b>ONS as a whole:</b> review complaints procedure.  <b>PEU and PHP</b> - Approach challenge as an opportunity to improve. Be careful not to continue to draft responses to queries which close the issue down. Need to be more open with complaints.  Do emails from SET make it clear how to raise concerns. Could it be included in our newsletter? Bulletin	1. Respond to concerns in an open way and consider how users can easily raise complaints. This could include guidance in correspondence, newsletters, bulletins etc.  2. Consider the User Engagement Strategy for Statistics to develop best practice and potential solutions. (?)  <i>Refer as 'feedback'. Need to say how to raise feedback then</i>	

					<p><i>outline our approach, what we will do. Who can advise on approach to dealing with issues.</i></p> <p><i>Do the ?? have any guidance on this or HOPs office?</i></p> <p><i>Look at the user engagement strategy , then we can say where we use it.</i></p>	
		7.2 Reflect and learn from its experience of challenging user engagement and identify potential solutions and best practice from the Government Statistical Service's User Engagement Strategy for Statistics.		<p>ONS as a whole / more broadly:</p> <p><b>Action</b> : HH to look at user engagement strategy.</p>		
8.Increasing public value of ONS statistics and supporting their use	We will make sure that our user engagement events and stakeholder strategy continues to develop our plan of developments for both population estimates and projections.	8.1 Carry out user engagement to understand who is using the data and for what purposes. Through this, it should promote the statistics and support appropriate use of the data.	Refer to the user engagement report just published, where we asked users how they use projections. Have PEU done anything similar?	<p><b>ONS more widely:</b></p> <p><b>PHP:</b> our user engagement work of autumn 2020 has been valuable in this regard (NPPs and SNPPs).</p> <p><b>PEU:</b> Should they carry out user engagement to understand how users are using MYEs.</p>	<p>1. Recent user engagement on projections has helped to understand how the projections are used. A further user engagement exercise could help to understand how the MYEs are used. <i>Speak to Neil. Need to be more informed on how MYEs are used.</i></p> <p>2. The proposed case studies could be used to illustrate how the MYEs and projections are used and show appropriate uses. These examples could be included in the proposed user guide.</p>	
		8.2 Collaborate with experts to frame the statistics for different audiences and scenarios, presenting	Have we done anything with experts to date on use of the statistics?	See future case study work. Show how MYEs		

		appropriate use cases of the data.		and projections have been used.  ---  Do we publish a user guide, to include variants, how they should be used, appropriate uses by users etc.		
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**Factual inaccuracies**

Location	Comment in document	Correction
Page 12/13, bullet 2.25	ONS's population estimates and projections team has made a concerted effort to communicate the statistical uncertainty of the population estimates and projections, including presenting confidence intervals and caveats. It also publishes a range of variant projections, which are explained in more detail in the next section of this report, to provide an indication of the 'fan of uncertainty' around its assumption setting. Despite this, the language used to describe the statistics, for example 'the number of women <b>has</b> increased by' rather than 'is <b>estimated to have</b> increased by', and lack of rounding in the figures implies a precision that doesn't exist and can therefore be interpreted as an exact figure rather than a central estimate.	The population projections and household projections releases use the wording 'is projected to..'. Generally, the figures used in the projections releases are rounded, there a few instances in graphs where the hover labels show unrounded figures. Not sure if this comment extends to the data tables we publish, as some of the tables are unrounded. This comment may be more applicable to the MYEs bulletin as they report unrounded figures in some of the tables in their release and don't  Commented [7]: I think we can use this type of wording in the MYEs bulletin.

**Next steps**

Suggested pieces of work	Further detail	Actions	recommendation
<b>1.Ensuring future population statistics are based on sound methods and suitable data.</b>			
1.Develop a plan for case studies in areas with high student populations (plan to be peer reviewed at CLIP and ONS Combined Authorities Liaison Group)  Study on university cities and population change – case studies	To bring together material ONS already have on:  - MYEs  - Projections – SNPPs, HHPs  - [redacted] – PMST / SSTAR findings on population change in cities  - Find out about STAR work, [redacted] and [redacted] re demographic indicators and PAYE data for students leaving after studies.  - Devise an objective list of cities to be included(?). <i>Selection of areas: need to have a systematic approach (possibly use</i>	[redacted] - Look at work [redacted] did on students and fertility, JR has sent link.  [redacted] - We've carried out case studies in student areas, which ones were they?  [redacted] - What work have we done with Coventry so far?	1.1 Investigate the root and scale of the issue associated with cities with large student populations and communicate its findings publicly, to support the appropriate use of existing data.

Commented [8]: First go at bringing the above into different points to work on - still needs work



	<p><i>Neil's work on error), but also ensure those areas that have written to us are included. Use a 'hybrid' approach.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Last paragraph of section 5 in <a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/whatcanadministrativedatasourcesstellusaboutthepatternsofpresenceofnoneustudents/2020-02-14">https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/whatcanadministrativedatasourcesstellusaboutthepatternsofpresenceofnoneustudents/2020-02-14</a> - we have data for cities – would need to go back to the Home Office for approval if we wanted to put something out.</li> <li>- Seek comment and feedback from [redacted] – ONS LA Liaison lead / Cities expert</li> </ul> <p>Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include thoughts from [redacted] re HESA data. See =&gt; <a href="#">link</a></li> <li>- Include thoughts from LAs at recent CLIP meeting. See =&gt; <a href="#">link</a></li> <li>- Take up [redacted] offer of help for students moving across Welsh border. See =&gt; <a href="#">link</a></li> <li>- PEU - Can the HELM method be improved? Should PEU /PSRU investigate this further?</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTION</b> [redacted] to speak to [redacted] and [redacted] re planned discussion with [redacted] re students in admin data. Last feb there was a publication which looked at students and migration, exit checks, visas and duration of stay.</p>	
<p>2. Review recent research work including Admin Based Migration Estimate (ABME) work on student exit checks and RAPID to determine what other work is needed to address issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review ABME work on student exit checks and RAPID to determine what other work is needed to address issues.</li> </ul>		<p>1.1 Investigate the root and scale of the issue associated with cities with large student populations and communicate its findings publicly, to support the appropriate use of existing data.</p>
<p>'User guide' as part of all projection's releases  (note to [redacted], I have this later under recommendation 5)</p>	<p>To cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limitations of the projections data and method</li> <li>- How the projections can be used and how they should not be used</li> <li>- Examples of the use of variant projections, why these have been used and what they show</li> <li>- Link across to the QMI, uncertainty measures in the MYEs, international migration data sources and their limitations – provide context to the statistics/</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[ ] What do other teams do – are there other examples in ONS?</li> <li>[ ] Scope content to form one of these with 2020-based NPPs</li> <li>[ ] What is done internationally in other statistical releases – NL, DE, Australia</li> </ul>	<p>5.1 Research and implement additional ways to communicate the uncertainty around the population estimates and projections, beyond the use of confidence intervals and variant projections.</p> <p>5.2 Provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty</p>

			<p>associated with the statistics, to help users understand the appropriate use of the statistics for short-term planning compared with longer-term planning.</p> <p>6.1 Expand on the support it gives users to illustrate where the use of these alternative projections may be beneficial and develop case studies of where they have been used in practice.</p>
<p>3. Consider impact of assumptions being rolled forward, taking approach to UK Population Theme Advisory Board (UKPTAB).</p> <p>UKPTAB – take content on the methods being used in the estimates and projections – seek review and comment on the methodological assurance and how to seek more / widen / develop this</p>	<p>Some form of pa ?</p> <p>Consider impact of assumptions being rolled forward, taking approach to UKPTAB. What research have we done so far? We do have UPC analysis but it will be old. (There were users that wanted us to apply an adjustment for UPC, see roadshow minutes.)</p> <p><b>PHP</b> - Need to consider for planning integration of 2021 data (<i>is this referring to Census data, back series and trends?</i>)</p> <p><b>PSRU</b> – Also one for [redacted]'s team.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> – Should we ask for more detail on evidence provided to OSR? <i>as these are approaches for projections and estimates. See response from OSR.</i></p>		<p>1.2 Use its partnership with experts to discuss the evidence provided to OSR in the review concerning the impact of assumptions being rolled forward.</p> <p>2.1 Integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes in its design for admin-based population estimates. While we appreciate that there should not be adjustments made in response to every concern raised, ONS's population estimates and projections team should work with its partners in local government, academia and across the devolved nations, so that changes are implemented in a more timely way.</p>
<p>User engagement on SNPPs and HHPs</p> <p>(think I have this covered under separate recs further down).</p>	<p>In advance of a new release consult on the contents and information in the previous release. [redacted] has said that in the past we would consult on the SNPP assumptions. Clearly that is no longer possible so suggest using the previous assumptions to seek feedback from LAs and those with an interest.</p>		

	<p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How have you used the projections?</li> <li>- Was anything missing from the release or anything else you would have liked to have seen as part of the release?</li> <li>- Do you have any comments on the assumptions used last time and what you think these should be for the next set of projections?</li> </ul>		
Expert engagement and advice			
<p>4. Continue to work with Population and Migration Statistics Transformation (PMST), ensuring issues raised by OSR are considered as work progresses.</p> <p>Continue to work with PMST to develop ABPEs.</p>	<p>Ensure issues raised by OSR are considered as work progresses.</p> <p>What have we published in ABPE work? Does it refer to our involvement and concerns. Have we referred to ABPEs in Rich's latest blog?</p> <p>We need ongoing liaison with transformation team. PEU/PHP attend transformation meetings but think about when should we get more involved?</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> Ensure transformation work and sprints for ABPEs are aware of issues raised here and are including them in their work.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> to Find out the best way to share this.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> to talk to colleagues on Friday at divisional transformation meeting.</p>	<p>1.3 Assure itself and others that concerns raised regarding the current methods are considered throughout the development of its admin-based population estimates.</p>
<b>2.Enhancing the transparency of developments concerning the quality of the statistics.</b>			
<p>1.Carry out wide user engagement regarding the timing of methodological reviews, asking users for preferred timing on resulting revisions.</p>	<p>We already have ongoing liaison with partners including regular CLIP meetings, cities group, UK PTAB, where we update and discuss our ongoing research. We do and should continue to ask for feedback on proposals at those meetings.</p> <p>We (PEU, PHP, SDR(?) ) need to consider wide engagement and timeliness of methodological review beyond what we already do. Note PHP user engagement of 2020 would have covered this at NPP and SNPP level.</p> <p>Should we do a similar exercise after the publication of the 2020-based MYEs although we'd need to be specific on what we want feedback on eg when do users want to see new methods, revisions etc. ?</p>		<p>2.1 Integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes in its design for admin-based population estimates. While we appreciate that there should not be adjustments made in response to every concern raised, ONS's population estimates and projections team should work with its partners in local government, academia and across the devolved nations, so that changes are implemented in a more timely way.</p>

<p>2. Share progress on PMST work with users but also ask OSR what extra information they would like us to share.</p>	<p>Ask OSR what additional info they would like us to share. We have published a few things, 'changing UK population', early indicators work (or is that the same thing, need to check), and blogs.</p> <p>Maybe speak to MSD / SDR / Kerry.</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> Ask OSR what they want to see here as ONS do publish updates on transformation work. What is missing from this?</p>	<p>2.2 Share the insights it has gathered from the work it is doing to understand the changing nature of migration and population, as part of its transformation programme, so that users' views inform the way this work is taken forward.</p>
<p><b>3. Continuation of plans for the future of migration data.</b></p>			
<p>1. Continue to keep users informed of progress and current solutions re migration data. Remind users about the use modelled estimates of migration until Admin Based Migration Estimates (ABMEs) are available.</p>	<p>16 April publications did this in part - explain again that we're using modelled estimates of migration until ABMEs are available.</p> <p>FA advised publication on 25/06 will be a progress update and discussion of plans/next steps. PEU will be modelled estimates as part of 2020 MYEs release.</p>	<p>Speak to PEU to determine how international migration numbers will be published on 25/06.</p>	<p>3.1 ONS's migration team should be open with users about its short-term solution to bridge the gap of migration data until the administrative data alternative is fit for purpose and ready to use.</p>
<p>2. Tell users more about possible future ways that challenges might be addressed.</p>	<p>16 April publications did this in part – perhaps a need for more on possible future ways challenges might be addressed?</p>		<p>3.1 ONS's migration team should be open with users about its short-term solution to bridge the gap of migration data until the administrative data alternative is fit for purpose and ready to use.</p>
<p><b>4. Enhancement of approach to quality assurance.</b></p>			
<p>1. Continue discussions with experts to share experiences of QA of projections.</p>	<p>We've spoken to GLA but this could be pursued further. Check they are on CLIP. AN was talking to them last year about running projections with different trends (10 year migration) and not constraining to NPPs. However, we are not able to produce unconstrained SNPPs as our production system is not currently set up to do this.</p> <p>Is the Python tool any use here?</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> Review what we've already done with GLA, find correspondence.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> Arrange further sessions with GLA to alternative approaches to QA. Can we learn from what they do?</p>	<p>4.1 Collaborate with others to learn from best practice – for example learning from demographers and the Greater London Authority who produce their own estimates and projections.</p>

<p>2. Engage with LAs to see how using local data can flag up major issues, while maintaining a consistent approach across all LAs. Also consider how we can build local insight into the production process.</p>	<p>Our 'old' approach to quality assurance included consultation meetings where LAs commented on provisional data for their area and on changes to the methodology. No longer run as rarely resulted in changes and stronger rules restricting pre-release access.</p> <p>Have we carried out case studies in the past that included use of local data, more recently than the IMPS studies?</p> <p>For projections, there is a need for a standard methodology at a national level. But we need to engage with local areas where appropriate while explaining how realistic this is. We suggest we look at supporting data, but only to flag up major issues (cannot use it in our methods).</p> <p>All needs careful handling with LAs but would be good to do some analytical work on this. Maybe will form part of case studies?</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> Consider what we can build into the production process for SNPPs and HHPs to receive local insight.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> Considering the old 'consultation' approach, what can we use from the 2018 projections data for example. Could we send them the published 2018 data and ask for their local insight?</p>	<p>4.2 Incorporate local insight and evidence as part of its deep dives and investigations into issues</p>
<p>3. Develop sensitivity analysis for MYEs, SNPPs, and HHPs to support quality assurance.</p>	<p>Some sensitivity analysis has already been carried out. This needs to be explored for MYEs, SNPPs and HHPs.</p> <p>Sensitivity analysis on HHPs needs to be expanded and developed for SNPPs.</p> <p>Could the HHP sensitivity analysis be published?</p> <p>The 'variant' MYEs that include students at term time address could be considered sensitivity analysis.</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> Find out what sensitivity analysis has already been done for MYEs and HHPs.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> Talk to [redacted] about the MYEs with students at term time address.</p>	<p>4.3 Run sensitivity analyses to accompany the existing estimates and explain to users how these analyses should be interpreted.</p>
<p><b>5.Supporting users' understanding of the uncertainty associated with ONS statistics</b></p>			
<p>1. Consider how best to approach uncertainty, possibly using the GLA approach of using a range.</p>	<p>Review the paper published in 2017 on <a href="#">uncertainty around population estimates</a> for 2012 to 2016.</p> <p>Our approach to uncertainty for the estimates and projections needs to be explored more fully. Options include the GLA approach (using a range?).</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> read paper on <a href="#">uncertainty around population estimates</a> for 2012 to 2016.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> Talk to [redacted] about uncertainty paper and how useful it was.</p>	<p>5.1 Research and implement additional ways to communicate the uncertainty around the population estimates and projections, beyond the use of confidence</p>

			intervals and variant projections.
2. Publish a paper which makes the MYE uncertainty work more accessible. This would consider the MYEs and SNPPs, discuss uncertainty, uses and limitations and reference the MYE uncertainty work.	This would use the MYE uncertainty work already published and make it more accessible to users. A paper is proposed that outlines example uses of the estimates and projections, talks about limitations, and advice on how not to use them, but also referencing the detailed <a href="#">uncertainty work</a> that methodology have published.	ACTION Find previously published MYE uncertainty work.	5.2 Provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty associated with the statistics, to help users understand the appropriate use of the statistics for short-term planning compared with longer-term planning.
3. Provide more guidance in bulletins and QMIs, including key messages and suitability of releases to users, to help users understand how to use the MYEs and SNPPs in short and longer term planning.	The guidance will include key messages and suitability of releases to users and include 'dos and don'ts'. This will be included in future bulletins, QMIs etc.  Should we refer here to the published accuracy reports? They demonstrated uncertainty but the papers are old (published 2016).		5.2 Provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty associated with the statistics, to help users understand the appropriate use of the statistics for short-term planning compared with longer-term planning.
<b>6. Maximising the use of ONS variant projections Variants</b>			
1. Develop the text on variants already in releases, to provide more support and address specific needs.	For projections, we are confident we have good text on this in our releases. Options in response to feedback:  <i>Expand support</i> - needs to be targeted and address specific user needs.  <i>Illustrate (case studies)</i> : this could be part of a release (see user guide below?) within information on the variant projections. May need some user agreement to share specific case studies. There will be a fine line with messaging re. Principal Projection.  We considered variants in our recent user engagement. We will need to revisit this ahead of 2021-based projections.  Data explorer is a valuable tool for HHPs. ( <i>not sure what we want to say here</i> )	ACTION ■ asked users what variants they would like to see in the recent user engagement. Look at the results.  ACTION Look to see what we have in the NPP bulletin on the use of variants.	6.1 Expand on the support it gives users to illustrate where the use of these alternative (variant) projections may be beneficial and develop case studies of where they have been used in practice.
2. Develop a user guide on how variants should be used. This may utilise feedback received in our	For projections, develop a user guide to include how variants should be used. This could feature OBR use of variants for example.		6.1 Expand on the support it gives users to illustrate where the use

recent user engagement exercise and include case studies on how variant projections have been used.	Could we re-contact respondents to user engagement work and ask to use their examples of how they use variants.		of these alternative (variant) projections may be beneficial and develop case studies of where they have been used in practice.
<b>7.Ensuring that ONS statistics remain relevant to users</b>			
1. Respond to concerns in an open way and consider how users can easily raise complaints. This could include guidance in correspondence, newsletters, bulletins etc.	<p>The old SNPP consultation process was a good way for users to feed back concerns. Opportunities are more limited now although we do include a 'was this table useful to you' feedback button on our outputs.</p> <p><b>For ONS as a whole:</b> review complaints procedure.</p> <p><b>PEU and PHP -</b> Approach challenge as an opportunity to improve. We need to ensure we do not draft responses to queries which close the issue down. Need to be more open with complaints.</p> <p>Need to say how to raise feedback then outline our approach, what we will do with that feedback. Ensure emails from SET make it clear how to raise concerns. Could we also include this guidance in our newsletter and bulletins?</p> <p>Think about who can advise on approach to dealing with feedback.</p>	ACTION find out who can advise on standard approach for dealing with complaints.	7.1 Take a more open and constructive approach to responding to user engagement by improving its complaints procedure and viewing challenge as an opportunity to improve the statistics and outputs. A fully open approach will help ONS demonstrate its commitment to user engagement and ensure a range of perspectives are fed into the development of the statistics.
2. Consider the User Engagement Strategy for Statistics to develop best practice and potential solutions. (?)	<p>This is more ONS as a whole / more broadly:</p> <p>Read and understand the user engagement strategy, then consider where it is used and how this can be improved.</p> <p>Talk to the</p>	<p>ACTION look at user engagement strategy.</p> <p>ACTION ask if the HoPs office (or??) has any guidance on this.</p>	7.2 Reflect and learn from its experience of challenging user engagement and identify potential solutions and best practice from the User Engagement Strategy for Statistics.
<b>8.Increasing public value of ONS statistics and supporting their use</b>			
1. Recent user engagement on projections has helped to understand how the projections are used. A further user engagement exercise could help to understand how the MYEs are used.	<p>Refer to the user engagement work of 2020, where we asked users how they use projections - it has been valuable in this regard.</p> <p>We do need to be more informed on how MYEs are used. Have PEU done anything similar? Ask [redacted] If not, should PEU carry out some user engagement to understand how users are using MYEs.</p>	ACTION speak to [redacted] about user engagement carried out in PEU.	8.1 Carry out user engagement to understand who is using the data and for what purposes. Through this, it should promote the appropriate use of the data.

<p>2. The proposed case studies could be used to illustrate how the MYEs and projections are used and show appropriate uses. These examples could be included in the proposed user guide.</p>	<p>See future case study work above. As part of that work, we will gather information on how MYEs and projections have been used with specific examples. This can be included in the user guide on how the statistics should be used, providing examples of appropriate users by users.</p> <p>Have we done anything with experts to date on the use of the statistics?</p>		<p>8.2 Collaborate with experts to frame the statistics for different audiences and scenarios, presenting appropriate use cases of the data.</p>

EMAIL 6 ATTACHMENT END

EMAIL 7 START

**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 26 April 2021 09:19

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Readout from meeting with [REDACTED] (OSR)

Hi all,

Nigel and I had a conversation with [REDACTED] (OSR) on Thursday.

I'm sending a note so you're all aware of the feedback and there are some items to include in what we're working on and planning for the rest of the year. We can come back to some of these on Thursday in our session then.

**OSR Review of estimates and projections**

OSR will clarify the timescales for us to respond to them on how we are responding to the recommendations made. Thanks [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for putting together the draft document for us to use on responding and monitoring our progress to address recommendations. This is saved [here](#) with the recommendations and some initial ideas on possible solutions / next steps. These are TBC.

**Action:** Please all take a moment to read the list of recommendations.

With best wishes,



James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 7 END

EMAIL 8 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 25 May 2021 09:23

**To:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>; ██████████ <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Cc:** Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>; ██████████ <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** RE: Request for CLIP population sub-group update - meeting 11/06/2021

Hi Nigel,

To respond to your question about if I think we should take something about our response:

Yes, I agree, I think we should do this and it would be a good group to bring it to. They are likely to have all read the report or at least be aware of the media so something on (1) the actual recommendations and (2) our planned approach would be good and allow us to also get some more feedback.

We'll start to work on this and have a couple of weeks until 11 June.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Sent:** 21 May 2021 16:58

**To:** ██████████ <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Cc:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>; Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>; ██████████

<██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** RE: Request for CLIP population sub-group update - meeting 11/06/2021

Hi ██████████

██████████ I do like the idea of starting a conversation with LAs, particularly as we'd like to look at some LA case studies regarding the movement of students etc. Rich had a couple of [slides already available from a recent population steering group meeting](#) (slides 11 and 12).

It would also be good to get their thoughts on the OSR review and any thoughts they might have on how to meet the recommendations, as this will help inform our formal response to OSR in July.

Copying in James, ██████████ and Rich for further thoughts too. Do you think it would be worth adding to the above slides to show a summary of the recommendations and possibly early thinking on actions we could take to meet them?

Thanks,

Nigel

Nigel Henretty | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics

| [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

From: [ons.gov.uk](#)

Sent: 19 May 2021 17:36

To: Henretty, Nigel <[ons.gov.uk](#)>

Subject: Request for CLIP population sub-group update - meeting 11/06/2021

Hi Nigel,

I am just preparing the agenda for CLIP and Kerry suggested you may want to present a section on the OSR review and how this will impact our work with local authorities. Would a 15 minute slot be long enough for this or is it more of an open discussion that may take more time?

will begin compiling papers/slides and updates on my return, if there is any material you would like distributed prior to the meeting.

Kind regards,

| [Ageing Analysis Team](#) | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

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EMAIL 8 END

EMAIL 8 ATTACHMENT START

## OSR Review

Recommendations relating to:

- Improving methods
- Enhancing communication
- Embracing challenge

## OSR Review – To Do

- Carry out some investigations on case studies for several cities to help inform our future approach. Work with stakeholders in local authorities to identify the areas where this exercise will be most beneficial
- Engage with stakeholders and other producers of estimates to share best practices on quality assurance.
- Continue to investigate sensitivity analysis around the estimates
- Further explore ways to communicate appropriate uses and limitations of the statistics, to aid understanding and reduce the risk of inappropriate use
- Develop case studies on examples of the uses of variant projection
- (Note – we will cover how we're developing a coherent narrative later in the agenda, when we look across 2021 products and outputs)

 Office for National Statistics

EMAIL 8 ATTACHMENT END

EMAIL 9 START

**From:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 18 June 2021 20:20  
**To:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Outputs Group template - ONS response to OSR review

Thanks all - yep I'm happy. Great as far as I can tell.

---

Sent from [Workspace ONE Boxer](#)

On 18 June 2021 at 17:45:11 BST, Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi James,

This looks good. I've added a couple of suggestions but all minor.

I'm copying in Rich for info but he's on a course next week so I'm happy to approve for use at outputs group, unless Rich would like to comment further.

Thanks,  
Nigel

Nigel Henretty | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics  
[redacted] | [redacted] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

**From:** Robards, James <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 18 June 2021 13:15  
**To:** Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Outputs Group template - ONS response to OSR review

Hi Nigel,

We would like to send the following to Outputs Group to seek approval for publication at the end of next month. I understand the end of WC 26 July is very full – from negotiations so far [redacted] has established that only the start of the week is on offer to us. I'm therefore being slightly pushy at this stage in requesting 29 July (but seems like it is worth a try). Please feel free to amend and share with Rich for his approval so we can get go through the outputs group to the coordination team and agree a slot with PST. Thanks.

[redacted]

With best wishes,  
James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)  
Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol  
[redacted] | [redacted] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 9 END

EMAIL 9 ATTACHMENT START

<b>Publication title:</b> Office for National Statistics response to the Office for Statistics Regulation review of population estimates and projections produced by the ONS
<b>Proposed publication date:</b> Thursday 29 July 2021
<b>Reason for publication:</b> OSR require ONS to respond by the end of July to their review of population estimates and projections. In this article we outline: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Context - OSR recommendations on ONS actions required.</li><li>2. Planned ONS actions to address OSR recommendations.</li><li>3. We welcome further feedback from users on these plans.</li></ol>
<b>Research questions:</b> N/A, this article fits best within a progress report template
<b>Key messages:</b>  OSR completed a review of ONS population estimates and projections in response to concerns raised with us in November 2020 regarding the population projections

and mid-year population estimates for Coventry. The review made 8 key recommendations.

- We are outlining in further detail about how we will address the recommendations made in the review.
- We welcome feedback on our plans to address the plans outlined today.
- We will update and share with users on our work as we make progress on addressing the recommendations from OSR.

**Additional information:** this publication also helps maintain a transparent approach to engaging with users.

Ahead of publication we will be seeking feedback from:

- OSR
- HoPs Office
- Devolved administrations

**Sources used:** N/A

**Product type:**

*Select all that apply*

- Bulletin
- Analysis article
- Headline bulletin
- Blog post
- Roundup entry
- Digital content article
- Data set
- Other, please specify:

**Additional methodology accompaniment:**

- New methodology
- New QMI
- Updates to existing methodology or QMI, please specify roughly how much will require updating:

**Target audience/user group:** OSR, signatories to original letter to OSR, OGDs, Local Authorities, City Regions, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Academic experts.

**Syndication/ partnership details:** We will share an early draft of this article with NRS, NISRA and the Welsh Government.

**Stakeholder engagement required (internal/external):** Proactive communications from the M/PSD Stakeholder Engagement Team using GovDistribution lists to ensure our planned approach to the recommendations is clearly communicated to stakeholders.

**Related activities:** Propose to tweet from PSD / Rich.

**Confidence** [high/med/low]

- High
- Medium
- Low

*If Medium or Low, please specify why:*

**Potential impact:** Moderate / high – media interest in the review has continued since the OSR publication in May 2021, centred around implications of the projections for local housing need allocations (policy use by MHCLG).

**Authors:** [REDACTED] James Robards, Nigel Henretty

**DD Sign-off:** Rich Pereira (via email on 18 June 2021)

EMAIL 9 ATTACHMENT END

EMAIL 10 START

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 25 May 2021 17:22

**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** OSR work so far

Hi James,

I've tidied up the actions doc a bit more today. Thank you for adding the new section at the end. I've not worked on that section, but can develop it on Thursday if necessary. I've created a [powerpoint doc](#) which summarises the recommendations and our actions. Currently, there's a slide for each rec, so I'll shorten it and convert to a table for CLIP. It was a useful exercise though in summarising what we have so far and will probably be useful for our meeting with Nigel. I'm also aware that what I've proposed in each action will probably need some editing. Logging off now but will continue to work on this on Thursday.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) |  
Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#)

Please note: My working days are Tuesday and Thursday.

EMAIL 15 END

EMAIL 15 ATTACHMENT START

# OSR review of population estimates and projections produced by the Office for National Statistics



Population and Household Projections | ONS Centre for Ageing and Demography

[projections@ons.gov.uk](mailto:projections@ons.gov.uk)

11 June 2021

CLIP June 2021

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## Review of population estimates and projections produced by the Office for National Statistics

Published: 10 May 2021  
Last updated: 11 May 2021

# OSR recommendations and our initial plans on responding

## **1. Ensuring future population statistics are based on sound methods and suitable data**

- Explore case studies covering areas with large student populations – potentially combining some existing work.
- Review recent research including Admin Based Migration Estimates (ABMEs) to determine what else is needed to address feedback.
- Continue to work with Population and Migration Statistics Transformation.

## **2. Enhancing the transparency of developments concerning the quality of the statistics**

- Look at further user engagement regarding the timing of methodological reviews, asking users for preferred timing on resulting changes.
- Continue to share progress on transformation work with users but also clarify with users and OSR what extra information they would like us to share.



### 3. Continuation of the plans for the future of migration data

- Continue to keep users informed of progress and current solutions.
- Tell users more about possible future ways that challenges might be addressed.
- Communicate with users about use of modelled estimates of migration until Admin Based Migration Estimates (ABMEs) are available.

### 4. Enhancement of approach to quality assurance

- Continue discussions with experts to share experience of quality assurance of projections.
- Explore how we may engage with LAs to understand potential for local data to flag up major issues, while maintaining a consistent approach across all areas.
- Look at developing sensitivity analyses for MYEs, SNPPs, and HHPs to support quality assurance.

## 5. Supporting users' understanding of the uncertainty associated with ONS statistics

- Consider how best to report on uncertainty (e.g. user feedback on ranges).
- Scope publication of a paper on uncertainty which is accessible to a wide range of users. This could discuss uncertainty, uses and limitations but also refer to more technical uncertainty work already published.
- Provide more guidance in bulletins and QMIs to help users understand how to use the MYEs and SNPPs in short and longer-term planning.

---

## 6. Maximising the use of ONS variant projections

- Further develop text in releases on variants, providing more support and addressing specific needs.
- Potentially develop a short user guide on how variants can be used. This may utilise feedback from the recent user engagement exercise on projections and possibly case studies on how variant projections have been used.

---

## 7. Ensuring that ONS statistics remain relevant to users

- Continue to respond to feedback in an open way.
- Further consider / review processes around how users can provide feedback and include guidance in correspondence, newsletters and bulletins.
- Consider the User Engagement Strategy for Statistics to develop best practice and potential solutions.

---

## 8. Increasing public value of ONS statistics and supporting their use

- Recent user engagement on projections has helped to understand how the projections are used. A further user engagement exercise could help to understand how other statistics are used.
- The proposed case studies could be used to illustrate how the MYEs and projections are used and show appropriate uses.

---

## Feedback and questions

Population and Household Projections, ONS Centre for Ageing and Demography  
projections@ons.gov.uk

 Office for National Statistics

CLIP June 2021

EMAIL 10 ATTACHMENT END

EMAIL 11 START

**From:** Rogers, Nicky <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 22 April 2021 15:23

**To:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Blackwell, Louisa <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; James, Mike <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Lindop, Jay <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: OSR review of population est/projections - comments welcome by 23rd April

Dear Rich,

Louisa and I have reviewed and have no substantive comments to make.

Best wishes,

Nicky

**From:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 19 April 2021 17:07

**To:** Blackwell, Louisa <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; James, Mike <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Lindop, Jay <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Rogers, Nicky <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: OSR review of population est/projections - comments welcome by 23rd April

Hi colleagues in methodology and MSD

Nigel and I are formulating a reply n accuracy as required by Friday on this. I think most of the onus is on pop stats but please can you feed in any thoughts to both me and Nigel asap.

Cheers all

**Rich Pereira** | Deputy Director, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#), Public Policy Analysis

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@RichPereira\\_ONS](https://twitter.com/RichPereira_ONS)

**From:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 14 April 2021 16:56  
**To:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>; Park, Neil <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR review of population est/projections - comments welcome by 23rd April

Hi James,

I was going to review it, but from a factual correctness perspective on the detail/history, it would be great if someone like ██████████ could review it too!

Thanks,

Nigel

**Nigel Henretty** | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](https://twitter.com/ONS)

**From:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 14 April 2021 15:17  
**To:** Park, Neil <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>; Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR review of population est/projections - comments welcome by 23rd April

Nigel – do we need anyone to review this?

Neil – is anyone in PEU reviewing it?

██████████ is likely to have some capacity to review this with ██████████ Or ██████████ next week.

Best wishes

James

**From:** ██████████ <██████████ [Statistics.gov.uk](mailto:Statistics.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 07 April 2021 15:09  
**To:** Park, Neil <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>; Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>; Blackwell, Louisa <██████████ [@ons.gov.uk](mailto:@ons.gov.uk)>; Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>; Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>; James, Mike <██████████ [@ons.gov.uk](mailto:@ons.gov.uk)>; Rogers, Nicky <██████████ [@ons.gov.uk](mailto:@ons.gov.uk)>; Lindop, Jay <██████████ [@ons.gov.uk](mailto:@ons.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** ██████████ <██████████ [Statistics.gov.uk](mailto:Statistics.gov.uk)>; ██████████ <██████████ [statistics.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** OSR review of population est/projections - comments welcome by 23rd April

Dear All,

Thank you again for taking the time to speak to us about the population estimates and projections as part of our review. I am pleased to be able to share the draft report and cover letter with you for comment.

The report has been sent to our Regulation Committee for review on the 15<sup>th</sup> April. We have made it clear in our cover note to the Committee that we are expecting ONS to publish a suite of outputs on population and migration statistics on the 16th April and that where we feel these outputs address our proposed recommendations, we will amend the recommendations in the report and letter accordingly.

We'd be grateful if you could provide us with any comments, particularly from a fact checking perspective if we have misunderstood anything, by COP 23<sup>rd</sup> April. We would ask that you please

don't share this report more widely until we have been able to make any changes that you or the Regulation Committee suggest.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Thanks,

■■■■

■■■■ ■■■■ ■■■■ | [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) | [UK Statistics Authority](#)  
■■■■ | ■■■■ [statistics.gov.uk](#)

<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/> | [@StatsRegulation](#) | [OSR LinkedIn](#)

EMAIL 11 END

EMAIL 11 ATTACHMENT (A) START



Office for Statistics Regulation  
1 Drummond Gate  
London SW1V 2QQ

0207 592 8659  
[regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk)  
[osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk](https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk)  
[@statsregulation](#)

---

**Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation**

Jonathan Athow  
Deputy National Statistician and Director General, Economic Statistics  
Office for National Statistics  
(by email)

XX April 2021

Dear Jonathan

### **Review of population estimates and projections produced by ONS**

As you are aware, we recently undertook a review of population estimates and projections produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), against the Code of Practice for Statistics. A summary of our review, findings and recommendations is provided below, and set out in more detail in the report attached to this letter.

#### **Background**

Our review was initiated in response to concerns raised with us in November 2020 regarding the population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry. The concerns were around the perceived inaccuracies of the population estimates on which the household projections and subsequent housing need are based. The population estimates and projections are important data with implications for many other statistics and influence decision making. The projections feed into local planning decisions which can have a long-term commitment and therefore the impact of issues can have far reaching consequences.

It is not within our remit to regulate operational decisions made by government or local authorities, nor to form a judgement on decisions about government policy. Therefore, our review solely focused on the population estimates and projections in the context of the principles in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

#### **Coventry**

Our review considered the population estimates and projections against the Code, independent of the specific issues raised with us concerning Coventry. In carrying out our research and speaking to a number of demographers, academics and representatives from local government, we found that the population estimates did appear to be higher than local evidence suggests in some smaller cities that had a large student population. While ONS acknowledged that there are limitations with data on highly mobile groups such as students, ONS did not adequately address the issue given the long-term consequences of the way these data are used. ONS should work with areas such as Coventry and independent demographers as it develops new population estimates through its transformation programme.

#### **Summary of our findings**

We have grouped our findings into themes focusing on methods, uncertainty and uses of the data, which are set out in more detail in our report.

ONS collaborates with a range of experts to determine the methods, data and assumptions which underpin the population estimates and projections. Its approach is generally seen as fit for purpose and is highly regarded internationally. One area of challenge has been migration, where there are limitations in the data available. You have sought to address this challenge by introducing some methodological fixes, such as the way students leaving university are identified. However, more needs to be done to investigate the scale of the issue as it relates to the current population estimates and projections particularly for cities with large student populations. More broadly, as ONS is seeking to make improvements to its population migration estimates, you must understand and address known issues such as the nature of international student emigration and the impact of that on local population profiles. It will be important for you to draw on the knowledge and experience of ONS teams working directly on the current population estimates and projections in understanding these issues.

ONS has a number of methods for quality assuring the statistics, including deep dives, triangulation of data it holds and comparisons against historic data. You have developed a range of variant projections to cater for the different uses of the data. We suggest you develop case studies of how these variants are being used in practice to promote their use more widely, as we found that users involved in local planning decisions lack the confidence to use the variants as they are not seen as akin to the principal projection.

Users feel that ONS's data cannot be challenged and that it does not consider the real-world consequences of decisions being made based on these statistics. We would like to see you be more open and responsive to issues when they first arise and view challenge as an opportunity to improve outputs and not a criticism of your approach. We recognise that you are balancing competing priorities, but a more open and constructive approach to user engagement would create opportunities for you to continually improve your outputs and ensure users feel listened to.

#### **Summary of our recommendations**

We have identified a number of actions that should be taken by ONS's population estimates and projections team in response to our findings. These are provided in more detail in the report and are summarised below.

##### **Improving methods**

- ONS needs to investigate the root and scale of the issue associated with cities with large student populations and communicate its findings publicly, to support the appropriate use of the existing data.
- ONS needs to integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes in its design for admin-based population estimates, working with its external partners, so that improvements are more timely.
- ONS should collaborate with others to incorporate local insight and carry out sensitivity analysis to enhance its approach to quality assurance.

##### **Enhancing communication**

- ONS should communicate its short-term and long-term plans for addressing the challenges with the migration component of population estimates to users more widely, even if tentative.

- ONS should provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty associated with the population estimates and projections, to help support the appropriate use of the statistics.
- ONS should develop case studies of where the variant projections have been used in practice and beneficial to users, to support their use more widely.

#### **Embracing challenge**

- ONS should take a more open and constructive approach to user engagement, viewing challenge as an opportunity to improve the statistics and outputs.
- ONS should be a vocal advocate for the appropriate use of the statistics and collaborate with experts to frame the statistics for different audiences and scenarios.

#### **Next steps**

We expect ONS to action our recommendations and also reflect on our findings when developing its new approach to population estimates and projections. The Census will help determine the scale of the apparent overestimation, but you should ensure the issues we have highlighted are addressed in the design of the new admin-based approach.

To support the delivery of the recommendations, you should focus on determining whether the issues raised here have an impact on other official statistics. It would be worthwhile considering whether colleagues in the ONS Centre for Subnational Analysis can carry out some further analysis to support you in meeting the recommendations. We would also encourage you and the team to engage with the devolved administrations to assess how the issues concerning students and emigration may impact their estimates and projections, and to identify whether there are lessons to be learned from them about how to approach quality assurance and user engagement with local areas.

During the course of this review, we received further concerns from other local areas regarding the way population estimates feed into the household projections from which housing need is determined. Our findings will support our imminent compliance checks of household projections in Scotland and Wales, and will inform the direction of further regulatory work we carry out on household projections in England.

We will continue to monitor the development of these statistics and support you in working towards our recommendations. We would like you to report back to us with your plans for addressing these recommendations by **[DATE]**.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation

EMAIL 11 ATTACHMENT (A) END

EMAIL 11 ATTACHMENT (B) START

Review of population estimates and projections produced by the Office for National Statistics

April 2021

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## The role of the Office for Statistics Regulation

As an independent UK-wide regulator, we are in a unique position to take a broader look at issues of importance to society and to make the case for improved statistics across organisation and Government boundaries. This is supported by our ability to convene, influence and highlight best practice from other sectors.

This review forms part of our programme of systemic reviews which, underpinned by the Code of Practice for Statistics, are aimed at driving improvements in the public value provided by official statistics.

We want to ensure that statistics provide a robust evidence base for national and local policy development and decision making. We champion the need for statistics to support a much wider range of uses, including, by charities, community groups and individuals. They should allow individuals and organisations to reach informed decisions, answer important questions, make the case for change or hold government to account.

## Executive summary

### Introduction

ES.1 Our review was initiated in response to concerns raised with us in November 2020 regarding the population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry. The concerns were around the perceived inaccuracies of the population estimates on which the household projections and subsequent housing need are based.

ES.2 The population estimates and projections are important data with implications for many other statistics and influence decision making. The projections feed into local planning decisions which can have a long-term commitment and therefore the impact of issues can have far reaching consequences.

ES.3 It is not within our remit to regulate operational decisions made by government or local authorities, nor to form a judgement on decisions about government policy. Our review focused on the population estimates and projections in the context of the principles in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

### What we found

ES.4 ONS collaborates with a range of experts to determine the methods, data and assumptions which underpin the population estimates and projections. Its approach is generally seen as fit for purpose and is highly regarded internationally. One area of challenge has been migration, where there are limitations in the data available. ONS has sought to address this challenge by introducing some methodological fixes, such as the way students leaving university are identified. However, more needs to be done to investigate the scale of the issue as it relates to the current population estimates and projections particularly for cities with large student populations.

ES.5 ONS has a number of methods for quality assuring the statistics, including deep dives, triangulation of data it holds and comparisons against historic data. ONS developed a range of variant projections to cater for the different uses of the data. We suggest that ONS develops case studies of how these variants are being used in practice to support their use more widely, as we found that users involved in local planning decisions lack the confidence to use the variants as they are not seen as akin to the principal projection.

ES.6 Users feel that ONS's data cannot be challenged and that it does not consider the real-world consequences of decisions being made based on these statistics. We would like to see ONS be more open and

responsive to issues when they first arise and view challenge as an opportunity to improve outputs and not a criticism of its approach. We recognise that ONS is balancing competing priorities, but a more open and constructive approach to user engagement would create opportunities for ONS to continually improve its outputs and ensure users feel listened to.

#### Recommendations

ES.7 We have identified a number of actions for ONS's population estimates and projections team to take in response to our findings. These are provided in more detail later in this report and are summarised below.

#### Improving methods

- ONS needs to investigate the root and scale of the issue associated with cities with large student populations and communicate its findings publicly, to support the appropriate use of the existing data.
- ONS needs to integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes in its design for admin-based population estimates, working with its external partners, so that improvements are more timely.
- ONS should collaborate with others to incorporate local insight and carry out sensitivity analysis to enhance its approach to quality assurance.

#### Enhancing communication

- ONS should communicate its short-term and long-term plans for addressing the challenges with the migration component of population estimates to users more widely, even if tentative.
- ONS should provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty associated with the population estimates and projections, to help support the appropriate use of the statistics.
- ONS should develop case studies of where the variant projections have been used in practice and beneficial to users, to support their use more widely.

#### Embracing challenge

- ONS should take a more open and constructive approach to user engagement, viewing challenge as an opportunity to improve the statistics and outputs.
- ONS should be a vocal advocate for the appropriate use of the statistics and collaborate with experts to frame the statistics for different audiences and scenarios.

#### Next steps

ES.8 We expect ONS to action our recommendations and also reflect on our findings when developing its new admin-based approach to population estimates and projections.

ES.9 To support the delivery of the recommendations, ONS should focus on determining whether the issues raised here have an impact on other official statistics. We would encourage ONS to engage with the devolved administrations to assess how the issues concerning students and emigration may impact their estimates and projections, and to identify whether there are lessons to be learned from them about how to approach quality assurance and user engagement with local areas.

#### Introduction

##### Scope of this review

1.1 Our review was initiated in response to concerns raised with us in November 2020 regarding the population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry. The concerns were around the perceived inaccuracies of the population estimates on which the household projections and subsequent housing need are based. Upon announcing our review, we received further concerns from a number of other areas with related concerns.

1.2 While we investigated the concerns raised to us as part of our review, we also considered whether the methods and approaches are as good as they can be, and to what extent the estimates and projections can bear the weight put on them where they are used in decision making, in line with the principles set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics. It is not within our remit to regulate operational decisions made by government or local authorities, nor to form a judgement on decisions about government policy.

1.3 Our review is based on national and subnational mid-year population estimates for England and the biennial national and subnational population projections for England.

1.4 Some of the concerns we received related to the way population estimates feed into the household projections from which housing need is determined. We took the decision to focus our review on population estimates and projections, as an underlying source for household projections, to understand in the first instance whether the concerns raised to us affect other areas or other policies beyond house building.

1.5 To inform our review, we carried out interviews and focus groups with individuals with an interest in or experience using population estimates and projections. This approach ensured that we obtained the views of a wide range of users from differing backgrounds. These meetings took place between February and March 2021. A list of users we engaged with is provided in Annex A.

#### The statistics

1.6 The population estimates and projections are important data with implications for many other statistics as they are used as denominator. For example, in labour market statistics that are based on sample surveys that use the population estimates to be scaled up for the population. The projections feed into local planning decisions which can have a long-term commitment and therefore the impact of issues can have far reaching consequences.

1.7 The population estimates and projections for England and Wales, at national and subnational level, are a long-standing set of data produced by ONS. The subnational mid-year population estimates for England and Wales are calculated first and the national estimates are produced by aggregating the subnational estimates. The estimates are produced annually in June and are initially rebased following a census year and then the component parts of births, deaths and migration are rolled forward each year by applying the cohort component methodology.

1.8 The population estimates then act as the starting population for producing the population projections. Projections for successive years are produced by taking the starting population for each age and then accounting for net migration, births and deaths for each onward year projected. Again, the subnational population projections take the mid-year population estimates as the starting point and for the principal projection, data for the preceding five years are used. The principal projection is the headline figure presented in the main statistical bulletin and analysis. ONS also produces several variant projections which are based on differing underlying assumptions to the principal projection. The projections based on these trends are then constrained to the totals used in the principal population projections for England.

#### Wider Context

1.9 In March 2014, the National Statistician recommended that the census in 2021 should be predominantly online, making increased use of administrative data and surveys to both enhance the statistics from the 2021 Census and improve statistics between censuses. The government's response to this recommendation was an ambition that censuses after 2021 will be conducted using other sources of data. In 2023, ONS plans to present its recommendations to government as to the future of census arrangements, in the light of the progress that has been made in switching to an Administrative Data Census.

1.10 As part of this ambition for an admin-based approach, the ONS has been working to transform its population and migration statistics more broadly. The current population system is heavily reliant on the decennial census which affects the quality of population estimates as we move further away from the census year. Using its data-sharing powers through the Digital Economy Act 2017, ONS has been progressing research into how it can bring a range of government data sources together to build an integrated system for measuring population and migration.

## What we found

### Quality

ONS takes a sensible approach to measuring the population

2.1 The methodology documents published by ONS on the population estimates and projections, at both the national and subnational level, are very detailed and informative. They include information on how the estimates and projections are derived and record any changes that have been made to the methodologies. The impact of these and details of data sources used for quality assurance purposes are also documented.

2.2 At the national level, we consider the approach taken by ONS to produce population estimates and projections is fit for purpose. The choice of methods, data and assumptions has been supported by expert advice from demography and academic partners. The methods are viewed by demographers and statisticians as strong internationally and ONS is seen as being at the forefront of addressing the complex challenge of measuring the population, in the absence of a national identification register.

2.3 At the subnational level, it is widely understood by users that the accuracy of the estimates will be variable due to factors such as the size and mobility of the population in a given area. We found that in some smaller cities that had a large student population, the population estimates did appear to be higher than local evidence suggests. ONS's population estimates team recognises that areas with high population churn are harder to estimate and it has introduced a number of methodological changes, which are detailed later in this annex, aimed at mitigating this issue. However, these fixes have not done enough to address the overestimation of these groups in some areas. This has led to an over reliance on insufficiently robust data to inform local planning decisions such as the need to build additional schools and housing.

2.4 The mid-year population estimates (MYE) are produced annually and the population projections once every two years. Following each decennial Census, the estimates are rebased to be in line with the Census population estimates so at this point they are reasonably reliable. Each year thereafter, the cohort component method is applied to roll forward the estimates, taking account of the three base components of births, deaths and migration. Whilst the Census provides the most complete data on the population, the timeliness of the data affects the quality of estimates in the interim years and there are known coverage issues for some groups such as young men and those in houses of multiple occupancy.

2.5 ONS works with expert partners to review and update the assumptions which underpin the methods used to produce the population estimates and projections. Where assumptions are made based on historic trends which do not reflect current behaviour, there is a risk that ONS builds in systematic bias by carrying through an error into the rolled forward estimates and then subsequently the projections, which compounds the effect of the error. For example, where the female student population in an area is over-estimated, as this group is of child-bearing age, the rolled forward estimates will impact the fertility rate which further exacerbates the issue.

2.6 The rebasing every 10 years of the population estimates to the Census data involves calculating the Unattributable Population Change (UPC) which in 2011, was the difference between the Census results and the population estimates rolled forward from 2001. No adjustment for UPC was made in the 2012-based and later sets of projections or in the series of population estimates as ONS determined the UPC specific to the previous decade was unlikely to be replicated in continuing subnational trends. ONS's decision not to incorporate a UPC element seems to have led to an overestimation of the growth in international students, who had not been sufficiently picked up in the data as leaving the country, being carried forward.

2.7 To ensure future population statistics are based on sound methods and suitable data, ONS's population estimates and projections team needs to:

- a. Investigate the root and scale of the issue associated with cities with large student populations to understand how suitable mitigation can be applied.
- b. Use its partnership with experts to discuss the evidence provided to OSR in the review concerning the impact of decisions around unattributable population change and assumptions being rolled forward.

c. Assure itself and others that issues raised concerning the current methods are considered throughout the development of its admin-based population estimates.

ONS has introduced a number of methodological fixes but the impact of these changes is still unclear

2.8 ONS's population estimates and projections team has tried to address some of the methodological challenges it faces in relation to the migration component that feeds into the population estimates, despite it being no easy feat. For example, it introduced the Higher Education Leavers Methodology (HELM) to improve estimating the internal movement of students on leaving university and a change in the modelling approach for estimating international outward migration. These changes have resulted in some improvements but the resulting change for the affected Local Authorities seems quite small. When the results from the 2021 census are available, ONS can more accurately assess the impact of the steps they have taken.

2.9 Some users told us that previous fixes that have been made to the methodology have had unintended consequences on other areas. For example, a fix introduced for international migrants arriving in London who were previously being recorded in Westminster rather than the borough they intended to stay in, has led to errors in the way international migrants are recorded elsewhere.

2.10 ONS told us it does consider whether there are systematic issues when it receives complaints but that it is hard to see if the impact is likely to be temporary until a few years down the line. It told us that it aims to limit methodological changes to once per decade to prevent disrupting the time series. Whilst we understand that it would not be sensible to have too frequent changes to the methods underpinning the estimates and projections, ONS has a responsibility to prevent systematic bias being built into the statistics and should have a more flexible approach to addressing issues where the impact is felt across a number of areas and over time.

2.11 The pandemic has sharpened the focus on the definitions of migration and population in these statistics, and what the population estimates and projections were designed to do. The definitions are premised on stability which has raised questions about whether they are fit for purpose in this period.

2.12 The pandemic and the UK's departure from the EU have both caused shocks to migration patterns in the UK. It is difficult to unpick how these shocks interplay in the data and to what extent they have individually impacted migration behaviour. The standard cohort component methodology is designed around stability but doesn't deal well with shocks to the system. ONS has been exploring this issue and is looking to communicate its work in this area with users to draw out the insights from how our understanding of population has changed during the pandemic.

2.13 To enhance the transparency of developments concerning the quality of the statistics, ONS should:

a. Integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes in its design for admin-based population estimates. While we appreciate that there should not be adjustments made in response to every concern raised, ONS's population estimates and projections team should work with its partners in local government, academia and across the devolved nations, so that changes are implemented in a more timely way.

b. Share the insights it has gathered from the work it is doing to understand the changing nature of migration and population, as part of its transformation programme, so that users' views inform the way this work is taken forward.

Migration data continues to be a challenge for ONS

2.14 We found that users generally had no issues with the source data used for births and deaths which feeds into the population estimates. However, there were some strong concerns expressed about the potential bias in the emigration data for some groups, such as international students, that are hard to count.

2.15 The accuracy in the internal migration (i.e. movement within England) component of the estimates can be problematic as it is largely dependent on General Practice (GP) registration data which is known to suffer from data quality issues. For students and young professionals in particular, they may not re-register with a new GP when moving to a new area until they need to use its services, or they may not re-register at all. Some individuals may also choose to register with a GP close to their work rather than their home.

2.16 The international migration component that feeds into the population estimates has been predominantly based on ONS data derived from the International Passenger Survey (IPS) with additional input from administrative sources. ONS has acknowledged the limitations and weaknesses of using IPS data for international migration and continues to work to develop new and exploratory methods and data solutions to improve these statistics. This work has been expedited as the IPS was suspended in March 2020 as a result of the pandemic and no long-term migration estimates have been produced since the last publication covering long-term migration in the year ending March 2020.

2.17 International outward migration has historically been hard to estimate as there are few and only partial data sources which do not provide a complete picture. ONS's population estimates and projections team takes a modelling approach to estimating emigration but the outflow of people is more uncertain. This creates issues for capturing international students who return home after their studies.

2.18 ONS is taking a joined-up approach to tackling the challenges in measuring migration, population and the labour market during the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of its longer-term transformation programme, ONS is looking to make greater use of administrative data to enhance these statistics but there is no quick solution to addressing this data gap. The pandemic has also created a greater time lag for some of the administrative datasets that it was intending to use for measuring migration, which were already lagged due to the nature of measuring long-term migration, and it is now exploring greater use of modelled estimates and nowcasting for migration data.

2.19 As ONS continues to develop its plans for the future of migration data:

a. ONS's population estimates and projections team should communicate its short-term and long-term plans for addressing the challenges with the migration component of population estimates to users more widely, even if tentative.

b. ONS's migration team must not be overly reliant on the administrative data model for measuring migration and determine a short-term solution to bridge the gap of migration data until the administrative data alternative has been created. If a short-term solution is not possible then ONS should make this clear to users.

ONS could think more creatively about its approach to quality assurance

2.20 ONS has processes in place to quality assure the data and methods used to produce the population estimates and projections. This often involves ONS's population estimates and projections team triangulating data it holds and making comparisons against previous trends. ONS receives advice from a panel of experts in the fields of fertility, mortality and migration, which helps it determine the underlying assumptions. ONS also publishes an interactive mapping tool to allow users to compare Subnational Population Projections (SNPP) with other areas and projections.

2.21 The team in ONS carries out 'deep dives' into areas which have counter intuitive results and will use external sources to investigate the issue. For example, it sometimes uses Google Maps to look at changing street pictures or data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to look at changes in student numbers in a given area.

2.22 Although ONS does look to triangulate data sources to quality assure the estimates or to investigate issues, we found that it could be more open to local sources of information where it overwhelmingly disputes the population estimates. We acknowledge that it is not practical for ONS to do this for all areas and that one source of information will not provide a complete picture for an area. However, where substantial local evidence points to a trend contrary to the population estimates, this should be investigated as a priority during the quality assurance process.

2.23 The systems which ONS is working with enable it to carry out sensitivity analysis. We found that the Greater London Authority (GLA), who conduct their own analysis of population estimates and projections, make good use of sensitivity analysis to understand the impact of different assumptions and scenarios and publish the results. We would encourage ONS to enhance its approach to quality assurance by carrying out and publishing relevant sensitivity analysis.

2.24 To enhance its approach to quality assurance, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- a. Collaborate with others to learn from best practice – for example learning from the Greater London Authority who produce their own estimates and projections.
- b. Incorporate local insight and evidence as part of its deep dives and investigations into issues.
- c. Run sensitivity analyses to accompany the existing estimates and explain to users how these analyses should be interpreted.

ONS has taken steps to communicate uncertainty

2.25 ONS's population estimates and projections team has made a concerted effort to communicate the statistical uncertainty of the population estimates and projections, including presenting confidence intervals. Despite this, the language used to describe the statistics, for example 'the number of women has increased by' rather than 'is estimated to have increased by', and lack of rounding in the figures implies a precision that doesn't exist and can therefore be interpreted as an exact figure rather than a central estimate.

2.26 We found that ONS could do more to interpret the uncertainty for non-analytical users to highlight the robustness of the data for practical uses. For the projections in particular, there should be clearer guidance on the uncertainty or 'shelf-life' of different length trajectories so that decision makers can determine the appropriate projections to use to inform longer term strategies.

2.27 The effects of the pandemic and the UK's departure from the European Union are challenging for population statistics. ONS's population estimates and projections team is currently collaborating with international colleagues to share insights and explore the best way forward in dealing with these challenges. We found that ONS could do more to inform users about how it is meeting this challenge and communicate its plans in an open and transparent way, considering the various user need for this information in the short-term until its plans are realised.

2.28 To support users' understanding of the uncertainty associated with these statistics, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- a. Research and implement additional ways to communicate the uncertainty around the population estimates and projections, beyond the use of confidence intervals.
- b. Provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty associated with the statistics, to help users understand the appropriate use of the statistics for short-term planning compared with longer-term planning.

ONS produces a range of variant projections to meet the range of user needs for population projections

2.29 ONS produces a range of variant population projections in addition to the principal projections. These variant projections are based on different assumptions of future fertility, mortality and migration which users find helpful as it allows them to select the projection which most suits their needs for the context which they are working in. These variants also provide projections which are based on different lengths of historic data so that users can benefit from the trend length which suits their purposes for the projections.

2.30 For the internal (within-England) migration component needed for the SNPPs, the variants are also based on the number of years used for the base period. Previously, ONS used the latest five years of records as the basis for its principal projection but changed in the most recent projections to the latest two years of data and also released a 5-year and a 10-year-based alternative. To illustrate, a projection that has been produced using 5 years of past trend data will be less suitable for making planning decisions for the forthcoming 15 to 25 years than one that has 10 years or even 25 years of historical trend. The more years of past trend data that are included, the more stable the projection for future local planning needs. However, there will be other situations where a projection based on 5 years of past data will be suitable.

2.31 The pros and cons of switching from a 5-year to 2-year base for the principal projections are likely to vary depending on the use to which they are put. ONS suggested that the latest 2 years might better represent the

future as the latest methodological changes are included but suggest that users should refer to the variants if this was felt not to be the case.

2.32 ONS's population estimates and projections team told us that its approach to producing the variant projections is customer led and the team offers advice on how to use them. However, we found that users involved in local planning decisions lack the confidence to use the variant projections as they are not seen as carrying the same weight as the principal projection. At the Local Authority level, the process for using the SNPPs is built around using the principal projection.

2.33 Some users also told us that it would be beneficial to have projections which are based on more than 10 years' worth of data, as some government departments deliver projects with up to 25-year timescales that would benefit from a longer trajectory – for example transport planning.

2.34 To maximise the use of the variant projections, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- a. Promote the use of variants and continue to work with users to ensure the development of the variants is customer led.
- b. Expand on the support it gives users to illustrate where the use of these alternative projections may be beneficial and develop case studies of where they have been used in practice.

#### Value

Users feel ONS's data cannot be challenged and could be more open in its approach to user engagement

2.35 ONS's population estimates and projections team engages regularly with experts in demography and subject matter experts for the components which underpin the population estimates. Where issues have been raised about the statistics, ONS has met with these users, listened to their views and explained how the statistics are produced. It has made improvements to the methods to deal with some aspects of the estimates that are affecting areas with high student numbers for example.

2.36 However, there seems to be a disconnect in how much ONS feels they have supported users and how well users feel listened to. We found that the way ONS engages can at times be perceived as ONS being selective in its choice of points to respond to and that the engagement can become closed if ONS feels it has already addressed the concerns elsewhere.

2.37 Users do not feel there is a reasonable process to challenge the estimates even when presenting local administrative data to illustrate their points. While we acknowledge the competing priorities that ONS must balance, inviting and responding to external scrutiny is an important way for ONS to improve its work. ONS could do more to involve local decision makers in the production of the statistics so that they can aid understanding and provide insight which may be useful for enhancing the methodology.

2.38 To ensure the statistics remain relevant to users, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- a. Take a more open and constructive approach to user engagement by viewing challenge as an opportunity to improve the statistics and outputs. A fully open approach will help ONS demonstrate its commitment to user engagement and ensure a range of perspectives are fed into the development of the statistics.
- b. Reflect and learn from its experience of challenging user engagement and identify potential solutions and best practice from the Government Statistical Service's User Engagement Strategy.

ONS needs to be a vocal advocate of using these statistics appropriately to serve the public good

2.39 The population estimates are vital and have a very widespread use in non-Census years. They are used as the denominator in the production of many other statistics, and they feed into the population projections that are in turn used for many aspects of local planning.



2.40 There is a potential risk to other statistics that use the population estimates as a denominator if a systematic bias in the estimates (even if one segment of the population) is relevant for a particular topic area. A second issue comes from the nature of the method for disaggregating the national level to local areas, when the disaggregated data are constrained to match the national level, inherent biases in the data could lead to skewed local area data.

2.41 Where the estimates for some Local Authorities are not reflecting the local situation well enough, it can have a knock-on effect well into the future. This issue is compounded by the fact that most planning policies are designed around having one figure to reflect need and do not take into account the uncertainty of that figure. We heard from users that there is a lack of analytical resource within most Local Authorities to question the figures and therefore the principal estimates and projections are interpreted as precise and not open to challenge. This can lead to local planning interventions being mismatched with local needs.

2.42 The population projections inform the household projections. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) made a policy decision to direct Local Authorities to use 2014 household projections rather than the more recent 2018 household projections produced by ONS. Its decision was based on a view that methodological changes made by ONS since 2014 have applied assumptions around household formation which do not reflect an earlier trend of smaller household sizes continuing into the future. However, other methodological changes made by ONS to improve the population estimates are therefore not reflected in the statistics which inform housing need. For some Local Authorities, this means the over-estimation of population in certain age groups is driving policy targets in a different direction to local priorities.

2.43 It is not the role of ONS to regulate how the statistics are used to inform policies, but it is its role to advocate for the appropriate use of the data. ONS must take responsibility for ensuring the strengths and limitations of the statistics can be appropriately understood by those who intend to use them, particularly where the use of the statistics will have significant long-term impacts on those affected by the policy. ONS should be vocal in speaking up against those who choose not to use the most up to date and comprehensive figures, where there is not a reasonable argument for them to do so.

2.44 To increase the public value of these statistics and support their use, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- a. Carry out user engagement to understand who is using the data and for what purposes. Through this, it should promote the statistics and support the appropriate use of the data.
- b. Collaborate with experts to frame the statistics for different audiences and scenarios, presenting appropriate use cases of the data.

#### Trustworthiness

ONS is seen as a capable and informed statistics producer

2.45 ONS is seen as a credible and reliable statistics producer, whose methods are robust and highly regarded internationally. At the local authority level, this means the estimates are sometimes seen as "fact" rather than estimates, and the level of uncertainty associated with them is not sufficiently considered. This relates to our findings around the wider lack of understanding of how to interpret uncertainty.

2.46 ONS could be more transparent about its approach in dealing with challenge around the population estimates and projections, as we have set out earlier in this report.

2.47 We do not have any recommendations concerning the Trustworthiness pillar of the Code.

#### Summary of recommendations

3.1 We have identified a number of actions that we would like ONS to take in response to our findings. These are set out below.

3.2 To ensure future population statistics are based on sound methods and suitable data, ONS's population estimates and projections team needs to:

- Investigate the root and scale of the issue associated with cities with large student populations to understand how suitable mitigation can be applied.
- Use its partnership with experts to discuss the evidence provided to OSR in the review concerning the impact of decisions around unattributable population change and assumptions being rolled forward.
- Assure itself and others that issues raised concerning the current methods are considered throughout the development of its admin-based population estimates.

3.3 To enhance the transparency of developments concerning the quality of the statistics, ONS should:

- Integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes in its design for admin-based population estimates. While we appreciate that there should not be adjustments made in response to every concern raised, ONS's population estimates and projections team should work with its partners in local government, academia and across the devolved nations, so that changes are implemented in a more timely way.
- Share the insights it has gathered from the work it is doing to understand the changing nature of migration and population, as part of its transformation programme, so that users' views inform the way this work is taken forward.

3.4 As ONS continues to develop its plans for the future of migration data:

- ONS's population estimates and projections team should communicate its short-term and long-term plans for addressing the challenges with the migration component of population estimates to users more widely, even if tentative.
- ONS's migration team must not be overly reliant on the administrative data model for measuring migration and determine a short-term solution to bridge the gap of migration data until the administrative data alternative has been created. If a short-term solution is not possible then ONS should make this clear to users.

3.5 To enhance its approach to quality assurance, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- Collaborate with others to learn from best practice – for example learning from the Greater London Authority who produce their own estimates and projections.
- Incorporate local insight and evidence as part of its deep dives and investigations into issues.
- Run sensitivity analyses to accompany the existing estimates and explain to users how these analyses should be interpreted.

3.6 To support users' understanding of the uncertainty associated with these statistics, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- Research and implement additional ways to communicate the uncertainty around the population estimates and projections, beyond the use of confidence intervals.
- Provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty associated with the statistics, to help users understand the appropriate use of the statistics for short-term planning compared with longer-term planning.

3.7 To maximise the use of the variant projections, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- Promote the use of variants and continue to work with users to ensure the development of the variants is customer led.
- Expand on the support it gives users to illustrate where the use of these alternative projections may be beneficial and develop case studies of where they have been used in practice.

3.8 To ensure the statistics remain relevant to users, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- Take a more open and constructive approach to user engagement by viewing challenge as an opportunity to improve the statistics and outputs. A fully open approach will help ONS demonstrate its commitment to user engagement and ensure a range of perspectives are fed into the development of the statistics.
- Reflect and learn from its experience of challenging user engagement and identify potential solutions and best practice from the Government Statistical Service's User Engagement Strategy.

3.9 To increase the public value of these statistics and support their use, ONS's population estimates and projections team should:

- Carry out user engagement to understand who is using the data and for what purposes. Through this, it should promote the statistics and support the appropriate use of the data.
- Collaborate with experts to frame the statistics for different audiences and scenarios, presenting appropriate use cases of the data.

#### Next steps

4.1 We expect ONS to action our recommendations and also reflect on our findings when developing its new admin-based approach to population estimates and projections. ONS should ensure the issues we have highlighted are addressed in the design of the approach.

4.2 To support the delivery of the recommendations, ONS's population estimates and projections team should focus on determining whether the issues raised here have an impact on other official statistics. We would encourage ONS to engage with the devolved administrations to assess how the issues concerning students and emigration may impact their estimates and projections, and to identify whether there are lessons to be learned from them about how to approach quality assurance and user engagement with local areas.

#### Annex A – User engagement

Our review was based on desk research of published material as well as written submissions we received from users. We also carried out stakeholder engagement in the form of interviews and focus groups. We spoke to users from a range of different backgrounds including:

- ONS statisticians working on population statistics
- ONS statisticians working on migration statistics
- Home Office statisticians working on migration statistics
- Statisticians in the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Representatives from the Countryside Charity - Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)
- Representatives from several local areas including Guildford, Greater London, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and the Wirral. These representatives had a range of backgrounds from town planning to working in local government.
- Opinions Research Services
- Population specialists in academia
- Expert demographers including:
  - o [REDACTED]
  - o [REDACTED]
  - o [REDACTED]
  - o [REDACTED]

o [REDACTED]  
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o [REDACTED]  
o [REDACTED]  
o [REDACTED]  
o [REDACTED]  
o [REDACTED]

EMAIL 11 ATTACHMENT (B) END

EMAIL 12 START

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 15:27  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Dormon, Oliver <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** OSR review - supporting information

Hi [REDACTED] and Oli,

Following on from our meeting this afternoon, here are some links to some documents that we talked about.

- Table of recommendations and suggested actions (used as the basis for the response doc) => [link](#) (SEE: EMAIL 6 ATTACHMENT)
- Email from OSR confirming the timing expectations for meeting the recommendations => [link](#) (SEE: EMAIL 12 ATTACHMENT (A))
- Email from [REDACTED] offering involvement in the work on students => [link](#) (SEE: EMAIL 12 ATTACHMENT (B))

We will send a more final version of the response document to you at the beginning of next week.

James talked about logging commitments with the Project Management Office. Oli said that the contact there is [REDACTED].

We'll let you know some more information about the stakeholder event planned for the 29<sup>th</sup> when some of the details are finalised.

Thanks

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) |  
Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol  
[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#)

Please note: My working days are Tuesday and Thursday.

EMAIL 12 END

EMAIL 12 ATTACHMENT (A) START

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@Statistics.gov.uk> on behalf of [REDACTED]

**Sent on:** Friday, July 9, 2021 3:35:51 PM

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**CC:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@Statistics.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Question re OSR review into population estimates and projections and timing

Hi [REDACTED]

A good question, the aim would be to meet the requirements within 1 year from the publication of the review but that is not a hard and fast rule. It has to be a realistic target for the producer team(s) so if recommendations can't be implemented within that time frame then it's a case of saying what could be done and outlining when you think the recommendation(s) could be met beyond that.

Hope that makes sense but let me know if you need any further clarification.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Office for Statistics Regulation

Queen Elizabeth House | 1 S bald Walk | Edinburgh | EH8 8FT

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email:

Website: <https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

Twitter: [@StatsRegulation](https://twitter.com/StatsRegulation)

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 08 July 2021 14:50

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@Statistics.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@Statistics.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Question re OSR review into population estimates and projections and timing

Hi [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

In drafting our response to the recent OSR review into population estimates and projections, I have a quick question that I hope you will be able to answer. Can you confirm please that the expectation is that we will meet the recommendations by May 2022? We understand we have a period of 12 months and are assuming it is from when the initial report was published rather than from the date of our response (July), but wanted to check that this was the case.

Hope you can advise.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

Please note: My working days are Tuesday and Thursday.

EMAIL 12 ATTACHMENT (A) END

EMAIL 12 ATTACHMENT (B) START

**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk> on behalf of Robards, James

**Sent on:** Wednesday, May 19, 2021 7:42:54 AM

**To:** [REDACTED]@llyw.cymru; Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**CC:** [REDACTED]@gov.wales; [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: OSR review of ONS population estimates and projections

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for getting in touch. [REDACTED] (cc'd in) is looking at the recommendations and responding to them. Would be interesting to hear if you have done anything so far in response to the cases you mention and also be good to speak in due course.

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED]@llyw.cymru <[REDACTED]@llyw.cymru>

**Sent:** 17 May 2021 17:22

**To:** Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** [REDACTED]@gov.wales

**Subject:** OSR review of ONS population estimates and projections

Hi both,

Just sending you a quick e-mail in light of the OSR review of the estimates and projections for England.

I've had a read of it and just wanted to note that we would be happy to work with you on the recommendations, in particular the issues concerning students and emigration that may impact the estimates and projections for Wales. We're aware that some of our users have raised similar issues in the past, in particular in relation to Aberystwyth University in Ceredigion and Bangor University in Gwynedd. Student populations make up a high proportion of the population in these areas so are particularly sensitive to any issues in relation to students and emigration.

I know that we engage regularly with the NPP team so happy to continue that and perhaps extend our engagement on the MYEs. Happy to have a chat once you've had an opportunity to consider the next steps.

Thanks,



[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Gwasanaethau Gwybodaeth a Dadansoddi | Knowledge and Analytical Services

Llywodraeth Cymru | Welsh Government

Ffôn | Phone: [REDACTED]

E-bost | E-mail: [REDACTED]@llyw.cymru

EMAIL 12 ATTACHMENT (B) END

EMAIL 13 START

**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 26 July 2021 17:43  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** DL\_SET <DL\_SET@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR response release

Hi [REDACTED]

We have a list of email contacts to be used for the publication when that goes out (on a separate list). That will deal with notifying those internally who should know about the article.

I see the Slido and Eventbrite are up and have been editing them with [REDACTED]. Handing on to Nigel for anything tomorrow as I'm on leave.

Thanks,  
James

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 26 July 2021 13:53  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** DL\_SET <DL\_SET@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** OSR response release

James,

Within ONS, who needs to be notified of Thursday's release and meeting?

Eventbrite, Sli.do and Teams meeting will all be in place ready for sending out tomorrow morning.

[REDACTED] has sent you a list of the Gov.Delivery lists to be included in the mailout.

Anything else we need to do?

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

---

[REDACTED] | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | [Centre for International Migration](#) |

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [\[REDACTED\]@ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

Subscribe to the ONS migration and population statistics [mailing list](#). Our stakeholder privacy notice is viewable [here](#).

[REDACTED]  
Member, Work/Life Balance Group, leading on caring issues

EMAIL 13 END

EMAIL 14 START

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 14 June 2021 16:20  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR response - citing it in MYE bulletin

It is – at the end of section 10 I've basically paraphrased the blog that Rich put out after the review was published. All I've really added is that the response will be out in July.

Top of the office is keen that we're really open about the OSR review, so I might see if we can slip another reference into one of the earlier sections as well, so it doesn't look like we're burying it at the back.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 14 June 2021 14:54  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR response - citing it in MYE bulletin

Hi [REDACTED]

That's spot on – we're planning to publish a response in July. Is it included in the current draft? (Asking as I am due to have a read of it).

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 14 June 2021 14:07  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** OSR response - citing it in MYE bulletin

Hi James

We're discussing the OSR review in our MYE bulletin on the 25<sup>th</sup>. I've mentioned that we're publishing a response to the OSR review, and Neil suggested saying we intend to publish that response in July is reasonable. If that's not the right date to use, please let me know by the end of this week.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

---

[REDACTED], [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#), PPA,  
Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [\[REDACTED\]@ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

I am a member of the [REDACTED]

Subscribe to the ONS migration and population statistics [mailing list](#). Our stakeholder privacy notice is viewable [here](#).

EMAIL 14 END

EMAIL 15 START



**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 03 December 2020 12:19

**To:** Morgan, Maggie <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Gadsdon, Kerry <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Projections <Projections@ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** OSR letter to ONS today re. estimates, projections and use of our statistics

Hi Maggie, [REDACTED]

In response to the recent CPRE Warwickshire letter, OSR will be writing to ONS at 2pm today. They will state that they are to undertake a review into Population Estimates, Projections and use of our statistics. I've attached a draft of this letter. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is our point of contact and can let you know when this is live on the website.

Our present lines are:

- We produce estimates regularly, projections every 2 years – and, as you will know, projections aren't predictions.

You will find the latest 2018-based household projections, which were published in June, here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/householdprojectionsforengland/2018based>

The interactive map (Figure 3) allows you to search by local authority for the projected percentage change in number of households in England from 2018 to 2028.

- “The Government considers using the 2014-based household projections to be the most appropriate approach for providing stability and certainty to the planning system in the short-term. MHCLG has clearly stated that this decision does not mean that it doubts the methodological basis of ONS’s subsequent household projections and that they will be reviewing the local housing need formula over the next 18 months.
- “Projections aren't predictions or forecasts and simply show the trajectory of the population or number of households based on a set of plausible scenarios of what could happen to births, deaths and migration. Projections are updated every 2 years to ensure they use the latest data and methods, new versions supersede old versions.
- “We are continuing to have conversations with residents and academics in Coventry and all of our methods have been explained to be fully transparent and helpful.”

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | @ONS

EMAIL 15 END

EMAIL 15 ATTACHMENT START



Office for Statistics Regulation  
1 Drummond Gate  
London SW1V 2QQ

[regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk)  
[osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk](http://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk)  
[@statsregulation](https://twitter.com/statsregulation)

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**Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation**

██████████  
Chair, CPRE Warwickshire  
(by email)

3 December 2020

Dear ██████████

Thank you for your letter of 13 November 2020 regarding the population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry.

We note that you have concerns around housing allocations resulting in the unnecessary loss of countryside within and around Coventry, which are based on decisions that you feel are misinformed due to perceived inaccuracies of the population estimates on which the household projections and subsequent housing need are based.

In light of the matters raised within your letter we have decided to undertake a review of the population projections and population estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and how they are used.

It is not within our remit to regulate operational decisions made by government or local authorities, nor to form a judgement on decisions about government policy. The scope of our review will be formed around the principles within the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and will include ensuring that the official statistics are used appropriately, and that they can bear the weight put on them where they are used in decision making. To support this, we will review some of the methods and data that underpin the population projections and estimates in line with the Code.

We are aware that with the next [Census](#) taking place in March 2021 and the recently closed consultation from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on [changes to the planning system](#), which includes proposed changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need (LHN), a different picture may emerge of the housing need across England. We will therefore be looking at what broader lessons can be learnt on how these data are used to support decision making.

As part of our review, we will be engaging with ONS and MHCLG as well as speaking with other parties we have identified as being key stakeholders in this matter. We would also be very interested in meeting with yourself and your colleagues.

We aim to share an update with our progress in early 2021 and will be in touch in due course.

I am copying this letter to Iain Bell, Deputy National Statistician and Director General for Population and Public Policy at ONS; Rich Pereira, Deputy Director Centre for Ageing and Demography at ONS; Sandra Tudor, Head of Profession for Statistics at MHCLG; and Scott Dennison, Deputy Director and Head of Strategic Analysis at MHCLG.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Ed Humpherson

Director General for Regulation

EMAIL 15 ATTACHMENT END

EMAIL 16 START

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 17 June 2021 15:14

**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** OSR report

Hi James,

I'm working through the response doc, I haven't finished yet but will do before the end of the day. Do you want a quick chat about where I am with it all? If you're busy, I can send you a note to update you. Whatever is best for you.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) |  
Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#)

EMAIL 16 END

EMAIL 17 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 20 July 2021 13:57

**To:** Morgan, Maggie <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: OSR population blog

I responded to one comment in there and have suggested a small amend.

Thanks

James

**From:** Morgan, Maggie <[Maggie.Morgan@ons.gov.uk](mailto:Maggie.Morgan@ons.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 20 July 2021 13:52

**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: OSR population blog

Just one comment from me.

Maggie

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 20 July 2021 10:33  
**To:** Morgan, Maggie <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** OSR population blog

Morning both,

Here's an updated version of the OSR population blog. I've left a couple of comments on from [redacted] as a) I'm not sure what changes she is suggesting; b) whether they are needed?

James – happy for you to steer on that.

Once you're both happy, we'll get a clean version and share more widely.

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] | **Office for National Statistics**

Office for National Statistics | Room 4300N | Segensworth Road | Titchfield | Fareham | PO15 5RR

Email: [redacted]@ons.gov.uk | Direct line : [redacted]

EMAIL 17 END

EMAIL 17 ATTACHMENT START

#### **Ensuring our population statistics meet the needs of everyone**

**The impact of the pandemic and Brexit means there has never been a greater need to understand changes in our population.** In this blog Rich Pereira explains some priority areas for our population estimates and projections, ongoing user engagement and our response to the recent Office for Statistics Regulation review of our population statistics.

Next year the first results from Census 2021 will be published [link]. They will not only provide information on our population and our health – they will also shed light on social and economic changes to our lives. While they will provide us with new information that we will be able to use for years to come, we know that local authorities and stakeholders are keen to see more timely data to meet their needs.

These numbers – and subsequent detailed statistics – will also provide the baseline of population statistics for the months and years to come. Our mid-year estimates for 2021, published next summer, will be based on the new census data, as will our population and household projections which follow.

As Sir Ian Diamond pointed out this spring, the pandemic has revolutionised data and there is no turning back [insert link]. The census will enable us to provide excellent population estimates from which the pandemic recovery can be planned.

But that's not to say the ONS is waiting for these results to give the most up-to-date picture of the population. We are already going through a period of transformation to ensure our data is as timely, accurate and useful as possible.

#### **What we're doing now**

In April we published early indicators of the UK population, which provided important insights on the size and age structure of the UK using the latest available data. These were followed by our mid-year population estimates in June, which provided more detail at a local level.

**Commented [redacted] 9]:** How about...With fresh data from 2021, we will be able to update the analysis we have already done and use it alongside new data sources to give us the richest data we have ever had.

We have reweighted our labour force survey [link] and in September will publish our population by country of birth and nationality statistics, which will give us the best picture of our foreign-born population right up to the end of 2020.

Since May we have been engaging with the Office for Statistics Regulation following its review of our population estimates and projections [link] and today have set out how we intend to progress our work [link] over the next 12 months.

The review was initiated in response to concerns raised with OSR in November 2020 regarding the population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry. The concerns were around the perceived inaccuracies of the population estimates on which the household projections and subsequent housing need are based.

We welcome the recognition in the report that the ONS is at the forefront of addressing the complex challenge of measuring the population using internationally recognised methods and sources and we recognise the need to keep these current and responsive.

We are committed to producing the best estimates of the population and will continue working with users of our statistics to ensure we are doing just that. Local knowledge is crucial to our understanding of change that might be occurring and we will continue developing our methods to incorporate these insights.

There are several areas where work is already well underway, including on-going engagement with users of our data, as well as focus on the specific impact of students and migration on population estimates.

#### Understanding the movement of students

One area of particular challenge in recent years has been around the ONS' counting of students. In areas such as Coventry, Canterbury and Cambridge, campaigners have argued that over or under counting of students has impacted the accuracy of population estimates and projections in cities with a large proportion of students.

The ONS has long acknowledged that the movement of students presents a specific challenge in our population – and migration - estimates. As part of the OSR review, we plan to complete detailed case studies on cities with large student populations.

When Census 2021 data becomes available, we will seek to use this to understand implications for mid-year population estimates and projections for cities with large student populations. Ahead of this we will review how recent work using administrative sources (for example, Home Office Exit Checks, Higher Education Statistics Agency and Pay As You Earn data) can provide insights on student population movement in to and out of local areas and explore how student populations change in combination across our population estimates and projections.

We will share insights with experts and consider any further areas which need to be addressed with regard to our measurement of cities with large student populations.

#### Transforming migration statistics

Historically, our key measure for how many people immigrated into or emigrated out of the UK, the International Passenger Survey (IPS), was paused in March 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

We've previously stated our intentions to measure international migration using administrative sources, including Home Office visa data. This work remains challenging due to coverage gaps in the data, for example students. In the future, our work on administrative based migration estimates will be supported by statistical modelling, which we've developed over the past year to help plug those gaps.

Modelling of international migration allows us to produce timely population estimates and is consistent with our wider ambitions to transform population and social statistics. We'll have further updates on this later in the year.

#### We want to hear from you

As we address the recommendations made by OSR we will continue to provide updates on the findings from the work we complete and resulting changes to our processes and plans so all users are aware of the changes we make.

**Commented [10]:** Even though the blog is broadened out, wonder if we need to get to this hook a bit earlier given today, we set out...

**Commented [11]:**

**Commented [12R11]:** Did others join in? I seem to recall Surrey and possible Oxford?

**Commented [13R11]:** Is this using direct wording from OSR? I did wonder if we wanted to take a slightly different approach here

**Commented [14R11]:** OSR text on their website is "Our review was initiated in response to concerns raised with us in November 2020 regarding the population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry."

**Commented [15]:** Suggesting to make it feel more responsive – the first passage recognises the benefit of census data but this should try to convey that we will do something in the shorter term.

ONS continues to welcome feedback on the planned approach we have outlined to respond to the OSR review and on our statistics and methods. Please provide feedback to us at [pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk).

The Census 2021 outputs consultation has also begun [\[link\]](#). We will be looking at the detailed needs for data and analysis, to ensure the data produced helps to answer the most important questions facing our society. Most importantly, we want to hear from users on their need in topic areas that may be subject to rapid change since the latest census.

Users are at the heart of what we do and across our population statistics, and we will make sure we build your feedback into our future plans so that we deliver the data and insights the country needs.

EMAIL 17 ATTACHMENT END

EMAIL 18 START

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 17:50  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR Publication - 26 July 2021

Thanks [REDACTED] this will be really useful. I am not in the office on Monday so cannot attend the meeting but James will have access to the comms plan that we have drawn up, which will help with this.

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 12:18  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** OSR Publication - 26 July 2021

Hi James & [REDACTED]

Please find attached the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and the Tweets Template, which we will work through with you at our meeting on Monday 19 July.

[Stakeholder Engagement Plan OSR Publication - 26 July 2021](#) (SEE EMAIL 18 ATTACHMENT (A))

[Tweet Template OSR Publication - 26 July 2021](#) (SEE EMAIL 18 ATTACHMENT (B))

Regards,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] | Stakeholder Engagement Team

[Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | [Centre for International Migration](#)

Public Policy Analysis | Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | ONS

Subscribe to the ONS migration and population statistics [mailing list](#). Our stakeholder privacy notice is viewable [here](#).

EMAIL 18 END

EMAIL 18 ATTACHMENT (A) START

**Stakeholder Engagement Plan - Future plans for research on population estimates and projections – 29 July 2021**

**SET: One week before publication**

- Meet with the outputs team in the week before publication to go through this plan. **Met on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July. Met again on 28<sup>th</sup> July**
- Ensure the team will be able to supply *all* materials the day before the release. **Yes, should be able to**
- Ask if there is anything to be done pre-release (eg advertising tweets). **No**
- Check if the team need to brief or present to SET before publication. **█████ kindly gave us an overview of the article**
- Ensure the team know we will start at 9:30am after checking links and work through this plan. This can be done in a priority order if preferred.

**SET: The day before publication**

- Meet with outputs team as a final check to ensure SET have everything needed for the release. **Meeting arranged for Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July - Will need to meet with James, █████ again next week as the release isn't going out on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> anymore, but will be at some point next week. Met again on 28<sup>th</sup> July as release date is now 29<sup>th</sup> July.**

**1. Media Relations Office - Maggie Morgan**

Outputs team to provide the name of the contact in media relations.

**2. Publication Information**

Outputs team to be aware they will need to provide SET with links to the following where relevant:

- Stats bulletin / article **Yes**
- Statistician's quote **No**
- Tweets **Yes - James, █████ to liaise with █████**
- Blog **Yes**
- Lines to take/ Q&A **Yes**

**3. Subscriber lists**

Outputs team to advise which subscriber lists are to be used:

Ageing	Electoral Statistics	Ethnicity, Identity, Language, Religion
Families & Households	Fertility	Gender Identity
<b>Household Projections</b>	Internal Migration	International Migration
Life Tables, Life Expectancy	Living Abroad Publications	Longitudinal Study
Marital Status, Living Arrangements	Overview of the UK Population	<b>Population Estimates, Mid-Year</b>
<b>Population Estimates, Small Area</b>	<b>Population Projections, National</b>	<b>Population Projections, Subnational</b>
Sexual Orientation	Travel and Tourism	Admin Data Census ( <i>use for PMST only</i> )
MSD & PSD Newsletter*	* To be used for NEWS / EVENTS only – not for general use	
Stakeholder Events*		

**4. Text for GovDelivery - James, █████ to provide – Send to James on 29<sup>th</sup> morning to double check before we send it out via GovDelivery. 29 July – GOV Delivery sent**

Outputs team to provide SET with finalised text for GovDelivery email at least 24 hours before scheduled release, ensuring it has been seen and approved by all relevant parties.

Please note standard wording will be applied in GovDelivery (apologies for cross posting, pop.info contact details, Jay/Rich twitter addresses, links to subscriber page and privacy notice).

**SET: record the subject header and wording in the table below.**

<b>Future plans for research on population estimates and projections</b>
Today we have published ' <a href="#">Future plans for research on population estimates and projections</a> '. This includes our planned responses to the recommendations from the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) review of population estimates and projections. You can find out more in the summary below and in the accompanying <a href="#">blog</a> written today by Rich Pereira.
<b>Future plans for research on population estimates and projections</b>

Our [future plans](#) provides a high-level overview of our planned integration of Census 2021 data into estimates and projections and our planned responses to the OSR review of population estimates and projections. We welcome feedback on the planned approach we have outlined to respond to the OSR review and more widely on our statistics and methods. Please provide feedback to us at [pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk). Sign up to the ONS migration and population statistics [mailing list here](#) to receive the latest updates and the Migration and population statistics newsletter.

**Rich Pereira** is the head of the Centre for Ageing and Demography. You can follow Rich on Twitter for the latest in population statistics news [@RichPereira\\_ONS](#).

#### Contact us

We would welcome any comments on any of our products. Please email us at [pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk) with any feedback you may have.

You have received this message because you have subscribed to the ONS migration and population statistics mailing list. You can manage your preferences or unsubscribe at any time using the links at the foot of this email. Our stakeholder privacy notice is viewable [here](#).

5. **Other Contacts - CLIP etc** James to provide us with a list of other contacts that we'll need to e-mail on 29<sup>th</sup> July to be advised. 28<sup>th</sup> July - James will provide us with the other contact details. 29 July all other contacts provided by James e-mailed as requested.

Outputs team to advise if they would like SET to email any additional contacts requiring custom briefing or notification of the publication.

Examples: key stakeholders, critics, data suppliers/producers, collaborators/consultees, people who have had pre-release access, working group or committee members (eg CLIP, GSS Groups, UKPTAB, etc).

*SET: send these from the MPSD.Stakeholders mailbox.*

6. **Tweets - James**, [redacted] to liaise with [redacted] 28<sup>th</sup> July [redacted] has liaised with Nigel/Rich re the tweets that are to be sent out on 29<sup>th</sup> July.

Outputs team to provide SET with finalised tweets at least 24 hours before scheduled release, ensuring they have been seen and approved by all relevant parties.

Detail required by SET:

- account to be used (Jay/Rich)
- order, timings, type of tweets
- links, pictures, attachments

*SET: send a copy of the [tweet template](#) to the outputs team for completion.*

7. **Lines to take - James**, [redacted] to provide them to us on 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> July. 29 July – Lines to take added to master lines to take document under Population Estimates and Projections

Outputs team to provide a link to the lines to take / Q&A document.

*SET: on publication day of, email the link to SET & add to relevant section in [Master lines to take document](#).*

8. **Email around division – Yes - 29 July - Done**

SET will circulate the email around MSD and PSD unless the outputs team would prefer to do it themselves.

*SET: forward GovDelivery message from the MPSD.Stakeholders mailbox to DL\_MSD and DL\_PSD.*

9. **Jiscmail – Yes - 29 July - Done**

SET will post on JiscMail to draw attention to the release.

JiscMail is a national academic mailing list service. Announcement lists can be used to cascade information, news and updates to subscribers who have an interest in migration, population, or official statistics.

*SET: forward GovDelivery message from MPSD.Stakeholders mailbox to [migration-stats@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:migration-stats@jiscmail.ac.uk) and/or [official-statistics@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:official-statistics@jiscmail.ac.uk)*



10. **POPGROUP – Yes - 29 July - Done**

SET will post to POPGROUP to draw attention to the release.

POPGROUP is a community that use demographic software for population and household projections.

*SET: forward GovDelivery message from MPSD.Stakeholders mailbox to [popgroup@listserv.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:popgroup@listserv.manchester.ac.uk)*

11. **StatsUserNet – Yes - 29 July - Done**

SET will post to StatsUserNet to draw attention to the release.

Unless alternative wording is provided, the GovDelivery email text will be used.

*SET: post to Population & Society and Statistics Noticeboard.*

12. **Yammer – Yes - 29 July - Done**

SET will post on Yammer to draw attention to the release.

Unless alternative wording is provided, the GovDelivery email text will be used.

*SET: post to PPP, PPA and Population Statistics groups.*

13. **Parliamentary Unit – Yes**

Some parliamentary groups and committees may be interested in certain statistics ([examples here](#)).

If you think this applies to this release, SET will contact the parliamentary unit to bring it to their attention.

*SET: email [Parliamentary.Unit@ons.gov.uk](mailto:Parliamentary.Unit@ons.gov.uk) to advise this release may be of interest.*

*28th July – to e-mail Parli Unit to let them know that the release is happening tomorrow. - Done*

14. **Press Briefing – No**

Outputs team to confirm if a press briefing is being held/provided.

15. **Management Briefing - Yes - Liz/Jonathan/Rich**

Outputs team to confirm if a senior management briefing is being provided.

EMAIL 18 ATTACHMENT (A) END

EMAIL 18 ATTACHMENT (B) START

Twitter account	Order	Scheduled time of tweet (if applicable)	Tweet type (select from dropdown)	Tweet content (insert ONS tweet if re-tweeting)	Tweet character length (280 max)	Picture / image reference	Link to (eg Article)
-----------------	-------	--	--------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------	---------------------------	-------------------------

@RichPereira_ONS	1		Thread start	<p>Today we have released a report on our future plans to progress our research on population estimates and projections. These plans will enable us to meet the recommendations of the recent OSR review of our current work. Click this link to find out more [link]</p>	258	Report	<a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcon">https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcon</a>
@RichPereira_ONS	2		Threaded tweet  (reply to previous tweet)	<p>We have also published an informative blog which details our priority areas for population estimates and projections and how we intend to move forward to meet the needs of our users. For further information, click here [link]</p>	225	Blog	<a href="https://blo">https://blo</a>

EMAIL 18 ATTACHMENT (B) END

EMAIL 19 START

**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 27 April 2021 13:51  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: OSR population estimates and projections review to be published on 10th May

Hi [REDACTED],

Update from OSR below.

Best wishes

James

**From:** [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) <[regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 27 April 2021 11:27  
**To:** [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk)  
**Subject:** OSR population estimates and projections review to be published on 10th May

Dear All,

Following the update below on our [review of the population projections and estimates](#) produced by the Office for National Statistics, we can confirm that we plan to publish our report on Monday 10th May, after the pre-election period has ended.

We look forward to sharing our findings with you.

Thanks,

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (OSR project team)

**From:** Park, Neil  
**Sent:** 23 March 2021 14:32  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: OSR update on population estimates and projections review

FYI

The OSR Coventry review has been delayed a bit. This is not the end of the world!

**From:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 23 March 2021 14:26  
**To:** McKeown, Liz <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Athow, Jonathan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Briggs, Rebecca <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Lindop, Jay <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: OSR update on population estimates and projections review

Hi all

We will need to build the release of this into our comms plans. Now looking like a month delay.

When I spoke to OSR a week or so ago they thought the outcome would be in the form of a letter to ONS rather than a full report.

**Rich Pereira** | Deputy Director, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) Public Policy Analysis

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@RichPereira](https://twitter.com/RichPereira) [ONS](#)

**From:** [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) <[regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 23 March 2021 14:08  
**To:** [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk)  
**Subject:** OSR update on population estimates and projections review

Dear All,

We are writing to you as someone who has directly contributed to/expressed an interest in our [review of the population projections and estimates](#) produced by the Office for National Statistics, to provide an update on the progress of our review.

There has been a lot of interest in the review which has resulted in us receiving more submissions than we had anticipated. The breadth of evidence has been extremely helpful for our research and we are grateful for all the contributions to date. Whilst our public commitment is to publish our findings in Spring 2021, we had hoped to publish our initial conclusions by the end of March. However, we have decided to delay publication until the end of April so that we can run our findings through our Non-Executive Directors before publication. We hope that in delaying the publication, we are better able to do the findings justice and provide recommendations which will enhance the public good of these statistics.

We hope this update does not cause any inconveniences. Please do get in contact if you have any questions.

Thanks,

■■■■ and ■■■■ (OSR project team)

EMAIL 19 END

EMAIL 20 START

**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 07 December 2020 08:49  
**To:** ■■■■ <■■■■@statistics.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR letter to be published tomorrow

Thanks ■■■■

Best wishes

James

**From:** ■■■■ <■■■■@statistics.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 03 December 2020 15:09  
**To:** Robards, James <■■■■@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR letter to be published tomorrow

Hi James,

The letter is now live

<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/correspondence/ed-humpherson-response-to-sir-andrew-watson-population-projections-and-mid-year-population-estimates-for-coventry/>

Kind regards,

■■■■

■■■■ | Office for Statistics Regulation

■■■■ | [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) | Website: [Office for Statistics Regulation](https://www.statistics.gov.uk)

UK Statistics Authority | Awdurdod Ystadegau'r Deyrnas Unedig | [@StatsRegulation](#)

You can access the interactive **Code of Practice for Statistics** [here](#).

### Important - Privacy Policy

We take great care to protect your personal information. To reflect changes to data protection law (GDPR), we have updated our [Privacy Policy](#) and would encourage you to take a moment to read it. Our Privacy Policy explains how we handle and protect your personal information, your legal rights and who to contact if you have any questions about how your personal information is being used.

**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 03 December 2020 10:24  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR letter to be published tomorrow

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for letting me know.

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 03 December 2020 10:18  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR letter to be published tomorrow

Hi James,

It looks like publication is now going to be 2pm this afternoon so I'll let you know when it's live.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

EMAIL 20 END

EMAIL 21 START

**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 07 December 2020 09:15  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** OSR letter of Thursday

Morning all,

I'm sharing the letter sent from OSR to [REDACTED] (CPRE) and ONS on Thursday afternoon (last week): [https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/correspondence/ed-humpherson-response-to-\[REDACTED\]population-projections-and-mid-year-population-estimates-for-coventry/](https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/correspondence/ed-humpherson-response-to-[REDACTED]population-projections-and-mid-year-population-estimates-for-coventry/)

As discussed in our team meeting on Thursday, the last time Rich and I spoke with them, OSR and UKSA were still agreeing the nature of the review. I'll share more information when I have it. Let me know if you have any questions about this.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 21 END

EMAIL 22 START

**From:** Dormon, Oliver <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Sent:** 21 June 2021 13:02

**To:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** RE: OSR follow on actions

Brill thanks

Oli

**From:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Sent:** 21 June 2021 13:01

**To:** Dormon, Oliver <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** RE: OSR follow on actions

Hi Oli,

Yes, that's right; not all of the actions sit with us and nor do we have the resource to respond on all of them.

That would be great – I'll suggest 30mins to speak later in the week so I can run you through what we have.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Dormon, Oliver <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Sent:** 21 June 2021 12:39

**To:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** OSR follow on actions

We discussed this briefly last week, and if I remember correctly, you are working on the response to OSR report on Pop Estimates/Projections, but are doing the planning rather than specifically the work yourselves.

When you have a draft of this it would be great if you can share with me, so I can get a feel for the kind of things we are planning, and what support / resource my team can supply for this and the timings.

I want to make sure PSRU are well placed to assist, but obviously don't want to duplicate work that other teams are doing !

**Oliver Dormon (He/His)** | Principal Research Officer, Population Statistics Research Unit

[Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa  
Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 22 END

EMAIL 23 START

**From:** ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 27 July 2021 19:00  
**To:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Robards, James <██████████@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Clarification from ██████████ ██████████ re "assumptions being rolled forwards"

Hi Nigel,

We spoke about this today and that James had sought clarification on this. It had been ██████████  
██████████ not ██████████ ██████████ that he wrote to. Here is the response that ██████████ sent us, below.

Thanks

██████████  
**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 07 July 2021 13:42  
**To:** ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@newcastle.ac.uk>  
**Cc:** ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: OSR final recommendations

Dear ██████████

To answer your questions at the end – yes, you have highlighted the correct passage and yes,  
your answer is helpful.

Thank you for taking the time to respond in detail and for covering the issues and questions you  
think we should be considering.

Best wishes,

James

**From:** ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@newcastle.ac.uk>  
**Sent:** 07 July 2021 11:48  
**To:** Robards, James <██████████@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: OSR final recommendations

Dear James (and ██████████) Thanks for yours. I have dug out my copy of the OSR's report and assume that you  
are referring to paras 2.5 and 2.6.

On that basis, I am pretty sure that OSR are referring primarily to the estimates. Obviously, with projections  
being based on data on past trends, any error in the latter is going to be 'carried forward' (I prefer that  
term here) into the projections.

I see OSR mentions the idea that past trends might not reflect current behaviour. This is certainly a live  
topic currently with the pandemic, but normally this is not an issue - possibly more so if the 'past trend' is a  
simple average of the rates of the last few years rather than a 'trend line' fitted to the last few years or  
where the more recent years in the base series are weighted more than the earlier ones. But normally the

dominant element of a recent internal migration trend is just part of one business cycle, so an average (preferably over a full business cycle like 10 years) is preferable.

At the same time, for the SNPP, there is the issue of what some have called 'circular projections'. By this is meant the possibility that there has been a shortish-term phenomenon boosting or holding back net migration volume for an individual local area. For example, an area may have undertaken a big urban extension over the past few years but, once that is complete and people have moved into the new housing, that is the end of the rapid-growth period, so it would be a mistake to factor that rate of growth into the projections for the next 25 years.

This is where consultation with local representatives is obviously important, and I have no knowledge about how ONS undertakes this process and what outcome would arise. If a place like Stevenage or Harlow has undergone a programmed expansion that has just been completed, will the local authority be able to inform you of that fact and, if so, are you in a position to revise your projection for that place to allow for this? Or is the projection process entirely mechanistic, leaving the planning implications up to the local authority to sort out with MHCLG and its planning inspectors?

The problem with the latter approach is that projections can become self-fulfilling prophecies. If the projection builds in a continuously high rate of population growth, then it is very likely that MHCLG will compel the local planning authority to prepare for that level of growth. And given that there is so much pent-up demand in many parts of the country, that housing is going to be occupied, helped by the fact that adjacent districts that have managed to resist the temptation to build recently will have their zero net internal migration experience of recent years carried forward as 'assumptions' of little new housing need.

Have I answered the right question?! Is my answer helpful? Hope so. All best wishes. [REDACTED]

---

**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 07 July 2021 10:29  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@newcastle.ac.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** OSR final recommendations

⚠ External sender. Take care when opening links or attachments. Do not provide your login details.

Dear [REDACTED]

I was wondering if you have any thoughts on a point which OSR wrote into their final recommendations. One of these was on the impact of 'assumptions being rolled forwards'. We don't roll the assumptions forwards from one round of projections to another and I wondered if this is about the MYEs instead in some way. We did consider reusing the 2018-based assumptions for 2020-based but decided against that for many reasons so I can't think about this idea of rolled forwards in relation to projections assumptions. Perhaps I am misunderstanding this and what 'assumptions rolled forwards' are in this context! Thanks.

With best wishes,  
James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | @ONS

EMAIL 23 END





I am emailing as you have an interest or involvement in the ONS response to the OSR review of population estimates and projections.

To enable further review of the accompanying letter, we now plan to publish the article, letter and blog at 9:30 on Thursday 29 July (please note that this is unannounced).

If you have any further questions then please don't hesitate to contact me.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 24 END

EMAIL 25 START

**From:** ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@Statistics.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 29 July 2021 10:37

**To:** Robards, James <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@Statistics.gov.uk>; ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@statistics.gov.uk>; ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@Statistics.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Pereira, Rich <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: ONS response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Ok great – I've signed up so looking forward to it. I might look in calendars to set up a call for us next week to talk through the letter and hopefully by then I'll have a steer from Ed on how he wants to handle the response.

Thanks,

██████████

██████████ ██████████ | [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) | [UK Statistics Authority](#)  
██████████ | ██████████ [statistics.gov.uk](#)

<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/> | [@StatsRegulation](#) | [OSR LinkedIn](#)

**From:** Robards, James <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 29 July 2021 10:26

**To:** ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@Statistics.gov.uk>; ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@Statistics.gov.uk>; ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@statistics.gov.uk>; ██████████ ██████████ <██████████@Statistics.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Pereira, Rich <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: ONS response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi ██████████

Joining details are being sent to those who have made an Eventbrite registration. Have you registered?

Thank you for the information re. CPRE – do let us know if it is helpful to speak.

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 29 July 2021 10:20  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: ONS response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Thanks James – great to see the package of outputs together. Can I just check for the event today, will there be a link sent round for how to join the call or is it all done through Eventbrite?

Also to just make you aware, we received another letter from [REDACTED] (Coventry) yesterday regarding the findings of our review and how ONS has engaged with Coventry since publication. Ed is on leave this week but I will prepare briefing for him to look at when he's back for how we might want to respond and I'll keep you in the loop about what we might say and when.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] | Office for Statistics Regulation | UK Statistics Authority  
[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk

<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/> | [@StatsRegulation](#) | [OSR LinkedIn](#)

**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 29 July 2021 09:38  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** ONS response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Morning all,

I'm sending links to what we have published this morning:

Letter

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/news/statementsandletters/jonathanathowtoedhumphersonosrreviewofpopulationestimatesandprojections>

Article

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/articles/futureplansforresearchonpopulationestimatesandprojections/2021-07-29>

Blog

<https://blog.ons.gov.uk/2021/07/29/ensuring-our-population-statistics-meet-the-needs-of-everyone>

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us. Look forward to speaking soon.

With best wishes

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 25 END

EMAIL 26 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 20 July 2021 12:45

**To:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: OSR feedback meeting planning template

Hi all,

Thank you for the session yesterday.

Nigel advised yesterday that he would like to:

- only run one event.
- move out the timescales for this to allow more time between publication and the event. So we do not now need to send invitations tomorrow.

I am working to update the document which you shared with me and put the necessary content in there.

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 19 July 2021 14:52

**To:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** OSR feedback meeting planning template

Hi James

Please find attached the [template for the meeting on 29 July](#) we discussed this morning. Please add to the document if you think of anything else.

Hopefully you have permission to see it if not please can you ask [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] tomorrow as they are our sharepoint leads

Thanks

Kind regards.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] - Stakeholder Engagement Team|Centre for Ageing and Demography|Centre for International Migration|Public Policy Analysis|Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol |Working day Monday-Thursday 8.00-2.00

[REDACTED] [jpop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:jpop.info@ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 26 END

EMAIL 26 ATTACHMENT START

**Planning online events timeline – OSR feedback meeting 29 July 2021**

When	What	Who	Progress
	<b>Meeting</b>		
	<p><b>Title:</b> ONS future plans for research on population estimates and projections: feedback and discussion</p> <p><b>Date:</b> Thursday 29 July 13:00-14:00</p> <p><b>Agenda:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome and introduction</li> <li>2. Presentation on future plans for research on population estimates and projections</li> <li>3. Questions and answers</li> </ol> <p><a href="#">LINK TO SLIDES (SEE EMAIL 15 ATTACHMENT)</a></p> <p><b>Eventbrite text:</b>  <b>Future plans for research on population estimates and projections</b>  <b>ONS Centre for Ageing and Demography</b>  <b>About this event</b>  On Thursday 29 July the ONS Centre for Ageing and Demography will be publishing future plans for population estimates and projections and responding to the OSR review of population estimates and projections. To give a fuller briefing on these plans, take questions and receive feedback register to join this online session at 1pm on Thursday 29 July.  We will be using slido to take questions at the event and in advance – please use the sli.do code #817580.  Should you wish to contact us please email <a href="mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk">pop.info@ons.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p><b>Email text:</b>  Dear population statistics user,  On Thursday 29 July we will be publishing our future plans for population estimates and projections and responding to the OSR review of population estimates and projections. In our publication, letter and accompanying blog we will explain our future plans and invite feedback on our plans. We will subsequently provide updates on our progress to meet OSR's recommendations between now and May 2022 and we will publish a timeline of planned work with our next update. Our transformation work continues to evolve and there will be further updates in the future.  To give a fuller briefing on these plans, take questions and receive feedback we are also arranging an online session at 1pm on Thursday 29 July. To register for this and receive information on how to join please use</p>	<p>JR</p> <p>JR</p> <p>JR</p> <p>Slides to be approved by Rich / Nigel</p>	

	<p>our Eventbrite page. Should you wish to contact us about this please email <a href="mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk">pop.info@ons.gov.uk</a>. We recognise that many people are unavailable at this time of year and so may be unable to attend the online session, but we are open to feedback and questions at any time, so please feel free to email us if you would like to provide feedback.</p> <p>Invitees to be from these SET lists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Household Projections</li> <li>- Population Estimates, Small Area</li> <li>- Population Projections, National</li> <li>- Population Estimates, Mid-Year</li> <li>- Population Projections, Subnational</li> </ul> <p><b>SET help:</b>  Set up meeting invite  Set up an Eventbrite page for the meeting  Email to attendees including Eventbrite link  SET help at the meeting - run slide deck  Email to be sent out with Eventbrite link  Slido link to be set up</p>		
	Set up meeting Teams link <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite is set to allow direct entrance to meeting to avoid participants waiting in the lobby.</li> </ul>	SET	
	Produce an Eventbrite document for event	SET	
	Produce a slido code if required	SET	
	Send out Eventbrite document	SET	
	<b>Planning</b>		
	Book a rehearsal time for presenters and admin team	James	
	Send out invites to conference	SET	
	Draft conference/speakers guidance - to send with confirmation/reminder email		
	Lines to take	Projections/PEU	
	Check and chase invites, send reminder to groups – to promote the event	SET	
	Finalise numbers and attendees list Prepare any further paperwork for conference	SET	
	Confirm numbers and check all ok with booking	SET	
	<b>Conference</b>		
	<p><b>Admin team required to:</b>  Who will chair the session?  Monitor ONS team WhatsApp group (if required)  Monitor the MPSD mailbox  Let attendees join the meeting if they are in the virtual waiting room</p> <p>Events not to be recorded</p> <p>Remind/advise attendees to turn cameras/microphones off</p> <p>Drive the slides  List attendees who are at each session  Notes/minutes</p>	<p>Nigel/Chris  N/A  Yes  Set up meeting so no waiting in lobby</p> <p>Start of the meeting</p> <p>SET  SET  Projections  Chris</p>	

	<p>Note down and questions in conversation pane - when would the chair like these to be asked questions?</p> <p>Inform speaker of any hands up – when would</p> <p>Mute anyone that is being noisy/or once they have asked their question if they forget to mute themselves</p>	<p>End of the presentation Chris/Nigel to do this</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	
	<p>Record questions from participants</p>		
	<p>People asking for slides after the event</p>	<p>██████████ <a href="mailto:██████████@oxford.gov.uk">oxford.gov.uk</a></p>	

EMAIL 26 ATTACHMENT END

EMAIL 27 START

**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 19 May 2021 11:07  
**To:** Barton, Susan <██████████@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** ONS lines on OSR report

Hi Susan,

Our document with the OSR recommendations, lines and planned response is at:

[https://officenationalstatistics.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PopStatsProjections/\\_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B99CC40B3-3FE2-4A81-9C3C-E48BC2D81F9D%7D&file=OSR%20review%20-%20ONS%20responses%20to%20OSR%20recommendations%20on%20estimates%20and%20projections.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true](https://officenationalstatistics.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PopStatsProjections/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B99CC40B3-3FE2-4A81-9C3C-E48BC2D81F9D%7D&file=OSR%20review%20-%20ONS%20responses%20to%20OSR%20recommendations%20on%20estimates%20and%20projections.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true) **(SEE: EMAIL 6 ATTACHMENT)**

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 27 END

EMAIL 28 START

**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 26 July 2021 10:20  
**To:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** ONS future plans for population estimates and projections

Hi Nigel,

Updated (following advice from Maggie) text below, should this one come from Rich or do you want to send on to ██████ and ██████ with your details?

Best wishes

James

-----

Hi [REDACTED]

Ahead of our planned publication on Thursday 29 July we would like to write back to the original signatories of the CPRE letter of November 2020 and those who contributed to your review to let them know that we will be publishing on Thursday.

Please can you extend the following, as you did around the time of the mid-year estimates to both lists.

Best wishes

James

-----

Dear all,

I am writing to let you know that on Thursday 29 July we will be publishing our future plans for population estimates and projections and responding to the OSR review of population estimates and projections. In our publication, letter and accompanying blog we will explain our future plans and invite user feedback. We will update users on our progress to meet OSR recommendations between now and May 2022 and we will publish a timeline of planned work with our next update. Our transformation work continues to evolve and there will be further updates in the future.

To give a fuller briefing of these plans, take questions and receive feedback we are also arranging an online session at 1pm on Thursday 29 July. To register for this and receive information on how to join please use our Eventbrite page. Should you wish to contact us about this please email [pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk).

With best wishes,  
James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 28 END

EMAIL 29 START

**From:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 28 May 2021 12:00

**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Note after call with Katy Nicholls (Stat HoP office) re. OSR review

Great, thanks James. It would be great to see a "best practice" example of a response to an OSR review in ONS!

Thanks,

Nigel



Nigel Henretty | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics

| [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

**From:** Robards, James <[ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Sent:** 28 May 2021 11:40

**To:** <[ons.gov.uk](#)>; Henretty, Nigel <[ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** Note after call with Katy Nicholls (Stat HoP office) re. OSR review

Hi Nigel,

I spoke with Katy Nicholls (Stat HoP office) earlier - Katy asked about the OSR review and our response – the main thing to feedback is that the office are able to provide us with some support and feedback for the OSR review and our response – at present they are looking at the response being prepared by another part of the office. I think this is one to come back to when we have confirmed our next steps.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

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EMAIL 29 END

EMAIL 30 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 12 July 2021 17:33

**To:** <[ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** Next steps with OSR review piece

Hi

As discussed on Thursday next week, I'm sending an update on where we have reached with this.

Summary of discussion at the 'All things group with Jonathan and Liz:

- Jonathan wants us to organise an event – this will be passed on to SET to organise. No further action needed. I have requested a meeting with Jay, Chris Stickney, Susan Barton and Kerry.
- Jonathan, Liz and Jay will read the article tomorrow (Tuesday).
- Comment from about the tone being slightly tentative in places and if we can make any actions more tangible and outline any key milestones. I'm not sure if there are too many opportunities to do this and my view is that we have discounted doing this but please can you read it critically using this feedback.

Updates against each of the following:

1. **Article** – no comments yet. Next steps:
  - o see what comments are made on Tuesday.
  - o please can you:

- (1) read the current draft with reference to the comment from Becca Briggs (as I outlined above). Suggest to copy our current document and make any edits separately.
  - (2) draft emails to send this out to those who we plan to send it on to next (Grade 7s) and
  - (3) if no comments from SCS (Liz, Jonathan et al.) tomorrow then please email on with a deadline of later in the week (as per the plan).
2. **Letter** – handed over to SET. I will check in with them on Wednesday.
  3. **Blog** – handed over to [REDACTED] to consider drafting. [REDACTED] is going to read the draft article tomorrow and then I am speaking with him first thing on Wednesday.

For 2 and 3 please can you check on the general request template which has been mentioned by Maggie in an email chain I have – will send that on in a moment.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Thanks.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 30 END

EMAIL 31 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 18 June 2021 14:02

**To:** MSDPSD.Stakeholders <[MPSD.Stakeholders@ons.gov.uk](mailto:MPSD.Stakeholders@ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** New publication - end of July - Office for National Statistics response to the Office for Statistics Regulation review of population estimates and projections produced by the ONS

Hi SET team,

To make you aware, [REDACTED] and I are working on a publication for the very end of July to meet the OSR requirement to respond to their review of ONS population estimates and projections. This is now in the PSD delivery plan. We are negotiating with the coordination team and will be seeking a slot at the outputs group to enable us to get this on the calendar.

Working title is: Office for National Statistics response to the Office for Statistics Regulation review of population estimates and projections produced by the ONS

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 31 END

EMAIL 32 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 13 July 2021 20:56

**To:** Cobb, Pamela <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** FW: Nat Stat blog

Hi Pamela,

I found the below helpful in thinking about doing a blog although have since asked [REDACTED] and Maggie Morgan to write the whole thing using the draft article as a guide.

Re. my original question about how this gets uploaded – I think it is a general request but not completely sure – can let you know later on when we are done.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 07 July 2021 08:53

**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Nat Stat blog

Hi both. Good idea! [REDACTED] has been very helpful on the blog front over the past few months. I'm sure he can point to who can help if it isn't him.

Here are a few thoughts:

- \* Worth pencilling in a date and begin to float that to other teams. I have a coordination and change working group this afternoon so can check in with other G6s to see what other publications are around that time too. When are you thinking of publishing?
- \* Check in well ahead with [REDACTED] to see if he can facilitate a final check and publish etc (or ask him who can help)
- \* Think of your distribution list for comments – if too many people, you will be juggling lots of comments. If not enough, you may miss obvious points. If you are worried of a lot of amends to the blog, you might want to bullet out your key points first so editors can see the thread you are trying to lay out and then have the blog drafted underneath that.
- \* 600-800 words is what [REDACTED] recommends. The last blog we did was 1200+ and was too heavy. That said it still seemed to land well.
- \* I find you can be more creative and loose with your words than on an ONS publication – a real chance to tell a story.
- \* They discourage the use of charts (but we broke that rule in April and the world didn't end)
- \* Share the draft with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and SET team to consider messaging (i.e. twitter and any emails to share the blog).

Best wishes

Chris

---

**Chris Stickney** | Assistant Deputy Director of the Centre for International Migration (Migration Analysis and Engagement) | Public Policy Analysis directorate |

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](https://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](https://twitter.com/ONS)

**From:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 07 July 2021 08:38

**To:** Stickney, Chris <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** ██████████ <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Nat Stat blog

Hi Chris,

██████████ and I are looking ahead to our publication in response to the OSR review (of population estimates and projections). As part of this we plan to put out a Nat Stat blog. Just wondering who the best contacts are on (1) guidance on the format and (2) putting it up and making it happen.

Thanks. With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](https://www.ons.gov.uk/centres-for-ageing-and-demography)

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EMAIL 32 END

EMAIL 33 START

**From:** Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 08 June 2021 07:55

**To:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>; ██████████ <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>; Smallwood, Steve <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>; Park, Neil <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: More coventry

Thanks James – very good points. ██████████ – might be worth a quick chat about approach?

Thanks

**Rich Pereira** | Deputy Director, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](https://www.ons.gov.uk/centres-for-ageing-and-demography) Public Policy Analysis

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](https://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@RichPereira\\_ONS](https://twitter.com/RichPereira_ONS)

**From:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 07 June 2021 16:53

**To:** ██████████ <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>; Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>; Smallwood, Steve <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>; Park, Neil <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: More coventry

Hi all,

Linking something else in here – we need to consider the statement we will publish on not producing 2020-based SNPPs and household projections.

For some this will get twisted into being an outcome of the OSR review rather than timing (relating to underlying uncertainty (in MYEs since 2011), the pandemic and integration of 2021 Census data). Anything we can do to minimise that is positive. The good news is that we stated this proposal in the 2018-based projections and will use that as our starter in messaging but it is a risk we need to consider and work with, hence raising it now.

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 07 June 2021 08:56

**To:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Smallwood, Steve <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: More coventry

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Has there been much further pick up? I do think, when we go back to OSR, we should perhaps consider how we want to pitch that, comms wise? Is there any desire to be quite bold in our approach, set out our stall in a press release, which gets sent to the likes of the Cov Telegraph? Something to consider, perhaps?

EMAIL 33 END

EMAIL 34 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 23 July 2021 17:10

**To:** [REDACTED]@gov.wales; [REDACTED]@gov.wales; [REDACTED]@nrscotland.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@nrscotland.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@nisra.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@nisra.gov.uk

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Monday 26 July: ONS response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi everyone,

For the letter (to be published alongside the article and blog) to receive further review at the beginning of next week, the (unannounced) publication date for these materials is now Thursday 29 July at 9:30.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 20 July 2021 11:30

**To:** [REDACTED]@gov.wales; [REDACTED]@gov.wales; [REDACTED]@nrscotland.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@nrscotland.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@nisra.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@nisra.gov.uk

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Monday 26 July: ONS response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi everyone,

I confused the date in my original email; I was referring to Monday 26 July.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 20 July 2021 11:24

**To:** [REDACTED] [gov.wales](mailto:[REDACTED]@gov.wales); [REDACTED] [gov.wales](mailto:[REDACTED]@gov.wales); [REDACTED] [nrscotland.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@nrscotland.gov.uk);

[REDACTED] [nrscotland.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@nrscotland.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [nisra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@nisra.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [nisra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@nisra.gov.uk)

**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Monday 27 July: ONS response to OSR review of population estimates and projections

Hi everyone,

On Monday 27 July we are planning to publish an article, blog and letter in response to the [OSR Review of population estimates and projections produced by the Office for National Statistics](#). The article (titled 'Future plans for research on population estimates and projections') outlines ONS plans which will meet the recommendations made in the OSR review. This has not been preannounced and all material is currently draft and progressing through internal review and sign off – so this information on our plans is not for wider sharing and only for your information and planning should you need to respond to stakeholder questions or queries in relation to the OSR review / our response.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this please do not hesitate to contact me on the telephone number below.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

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EMAIL 34 END

EMAIL 35 START

**From:** Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 07 July 2021 13:46

**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Letter back to OSR from Jonathan Athow

Looks like I've found the location for the letter – I'm thinking maybe the media team are involved in this drafting too so I've pinged an email to [REDACTED] and copied you in.

Best wishes

*Susan*

**Susan Barton** | Head of Stakeholder Engagement Team

[Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | [Centre for International Migration](#)

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**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 07 July 2021 10:36  
**To:** Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Letter back to OSR from Jonathan Athow

Hi Susan,

To clarify – we are drafting the publication which ONS will publish at the end of the month (in response to the OSR review).

Would be helpful if you can dig around re. process for the letter though.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 07 July 2021 09:51  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Letter back to OSR from Jonathan Athow

Hello James

I don't know about the publication side of the OSR review but I'll dig around and see what I can find.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Would be good to know the comms plan in advance so that we can ensure that any support we give is planned in.

Best wishes

*Susan*

**Susan Barton** | Head of Stakeholder Engagement Team

[Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | [Centre for International Migration](#)

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**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 07 July 2021 08:42  
**To:** Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Letter back to OSR from Jonathan Athow

Hi Susan,

With regard to the OSR review we are planning the response, have a first draft and a publication date in the calendar (unannounced) for 9.30 on Monday 26 July.

#### Letter

Alongside the response we need to write a letter from Jonathan Athow back to Ed Humpherson. Do you know where these letters get published and are you able to help with drafting one? Who receives the letters and publishes them on the ONS website? Is any of the draft material which we started on (writing back to WM et al.) of any help for this?

#### Comms

To mention that we're also starting to look at the Comms needed around this at the moment.

Thanks.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

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EMAIL 35 END

EMAIL 36 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 29 July 2021 09:40

**To:** Pop Info <[pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Future plans for research on population estimates and projections: TEST

Thank you ██████ – I have reviewed this and am very satisfied.

Please do send this out.

Best wishes

James

**From:** Pop Info <[pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 29 July 2021 09:38

**To:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** FW: Future plans for research on population estimates and projections: TEST

Hi James,

Please could you take a look at this Test version of the GOV Delivery. Please let me know when you're happy with it, and I'll get it sent out.

Regards,

██████████

---

██████████ | Stakeholder Engagement Team



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**From:** Office for National Statistics <[ONS@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:ONS@public.govdelivery.com)>

**Sent:** 29 July 2021 09:35

**To:** Pop Info <[pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Future plans for research on population estimates and projections: TEST

[View as a webpage](#)



## Future plans for research on population estimates and projections

29 July 2021

Today we have published '[Future plans for research on population estimates and projections](#)'. This includes our planned responses to the recommendations from the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) review of population estimates and projections. You can find out more in the summary below and in the accompanying [blog](#) written today by Rich Pereira.

### Future plans for research on population estimates and projections

Our [future plans](#) provides a high-level overview of our planned integration of Census 2021 data into estimates and projections and our planned responses to the OSR review of population estimates and projections.

We welcome feedback on the planned approach we have outlined to respond to the OSR review and more widely on our statistics and methods. Please provide feedback to us at [pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk).

Sign up to the ONS migration and population statistics [mailing list here](#) to receive the latest updates and the Migration and population statistics newsletter.

.....

**Rich Pereira** is the head of the Centre for Ageing and Demography. You can follow Rich on Twitter for the latest in population statistics news [@RichPereira\\_ONS](#).

#### Contact us

We would welcome any comments on any of our products. Please email us at [pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk) with any feedback you may have.

.....

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EMAIL 36 END

EMAIL 37 START

**From:** Gadsdon, Kerry <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 29 July 2021 10:15  
**To:** Bragaglia, Fleur <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Leonard, Sophie <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: Future plans for research on population estimates and projections

Hi Sophie and Fleur

As mentioned this week.

Here is the link to the publication today. **(SEE BULLETIN IN EMAIL 36)**

It contains some commitments from a methodology and transformation perspective.

We would welcome the change to work with you on these, regarding timelines, commitments log/reporting and general planning of the work programme.

I am coming from the angle of our new residency in the same division 😊

Thanks so much

Kerry

EMAIL 37 END

EMAIL 38 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 29 July 2021 10:28

**To:** [REDACTED] [gov.wales](mailto:[REDACTED].gov.wales); [REDACTED] [gov.wales](mailto:[REDACTED].gov.wales); [REDACTED] [nirsra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].nirsra.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [nirsra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].nirsra.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [nirsra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].nirsra.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [nrscotland.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].nrscotland.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [nrscotland.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].nrscotland.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [nrscotland.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].nrscotland.gov.uk)

**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[\[REDACTED\].ons.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** FW: Future plans for research on population estimates and projections

Morning all,

I am sending details (below) of the ONS response to the [OSR Review of population estimates and projections](#). We have outlined planned work including that which will address the recommendations. As we progress the work we will publish further updates and keep in touch. Thank you to those of you have been in contact with us about this already.

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

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EMAIL 38 END

EMAIL 39 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 29 July 2021 08:39

**To:** Morgan, Maggie <[\[REDACTED\].@ons.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].@ons.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\].Statistics.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].Statistics.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[\[REDACTED\].ons.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED].ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** For publication today - OSR Review of population estimates and projections

Hi Maggie, [REDACTED]

Please find attached the letter from Jonathan Athow to Ed Humpherson – for publication 9:30 today. [\(published online here\)](#)

With best wishes,

James

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

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EMAIL 39 END

EMAIL 40 START

**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 12 July 2021 09:35  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: email to James and Liz

Hi [REDACTED]

I'm not sure I responded to this one – thanks for drafting this, I just changed some of the dates and details before sending.

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 08 July 2021 17:51  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: email to James and Liz

Email to Jonathan Athow and Liz McClaren

Dear Jonathan and Liz,

We have drafted a [response](#) to the recent OSR [review of population estimates and projections](#) and we would be grateful for your comments please. We have an unannounced publication date of Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July. As time is quite tight, we'd be grateful if you could feed back any thoughts please by the end of next Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July.

Please make any changes to the document via track changes. I have given you editor access but please let both me and [REDACTED] know if you have difficulties accessing the document and we will resolve it (as I am not in the office until next Tuesday).

Many thanks

[REDACTED] [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) |  
Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

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EMAIL 40 END

EMAIL 41 START

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 20 July 2021 11:14  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Draft email text as a starter

Thanks James.

[REDACTED]

**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 20 July 2021 11:13  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Draft email text as a starter

Today we have published our future plans for research on population estimates and projections. These plans include our planned responses to the recommendations from the OSR review of population estimates and projections. You can find out more in the summary below or in this [blog](#) written today by ???.

## Future plans for research on population estimates and projections

We have published our future plans, which provide a high level overview of our planned integration of Census 2021 data into estimates and projections and our specific responses to the OSR review of population estimates and projections. We continue to welcome feedback on the planned approach we have outlined to respond to the OSR review and on our statistics and methods. Please provide feedback to us at [pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk).

Sign up to the ONS migration and population statistics mailing list here to receive the latest updates and the Population Statistics newsletter.

.....

**Dr James Robards** | Head of Population and Household Projections, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#)

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[Redacted] | [Redacted] [ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | @ONS

EMAIL 41 END

EMAIL 42 START

**From:** Robards, James

**Sent:** 28 May 2021 11:16

**To:** [Redacted] <[Redacted][statistics.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Henretty, Nigel <[Redacted][ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Discuss SNPPs and HHPs

Hi [Redacted]

[Redacted]

On the OSR review, we have been looking at the OSR review recommendations in detail, asked a couple of questions to [Redacted] and [Redacted] (yesterday) and are working on developing our proposed response which we plan to discuss with [Redacted] and team in due course.

Best wishes

James

EMAIL 42 END

EMAIL 43 START

**From:** [Redacted] <[Redacted][ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 13 July 2021 17:33

**To:** Stickney, Chris <[Redacted][ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Robards, James <[Redacted][ons.gov.uk](mailto:ons.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** FW: comments on OSR article

Hi Chris,

Sorry, just checked and I've referred to the stakeholder engagement event in Recommendation 7, not 'next steps'.

[Redacted]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 July 2021 17:30  
**To:** Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: comments on OSR article

Hi Chris,

I've tried to reflect the comments received so far and the plan was for the article to be circulated around Grade 7s and Grade 6s (including you) tonight for comment. However, I need James to check over what I've done and I'm sure he will be better placed to add some more specifics. [REDACTED] I'll be sending it to him shortly and he will hopefully finalise it tomorrow morning and send it out then - we want comments back by cop Friday.

I have referred to the stakeholder engagement session in the article in next steps, as Jay mentioned it (she said webinar but I'm assuming this is what she meant). I'll add a drafting comment to say that we need to expand on this before publication.

Thanks for your offer of help. [REDACTED] James may take you up on your offer

Thanks again

[REDACTED]  
**From:** Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 13 July 2021 17:11  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Lindop, Jay <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: comments on OSR article

Hi [REDACTED]

Thank you. Do you know when you will have an updated draft done by? I think the main point coming from the feedback was to try and be more tangible on the actions you are taking from the OSR review. Also let me know if you want me to help with any of the feedback.

James Robards was going to speak to [REDACTED] about Jay, myself, him and Susan planning a stakeholder engagement session – not only would it be helpful to get that planned, but we can then talk about it in the article.

Best wishes  
Chris

---

**Chris Stickney** | Assistant Deputy Director of the Centre for International Migration (Migration Analysis and Engagement) | Public Policy Analysis directorate |

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](https://twitter.com/ONS)

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 13 July 2021 14:15  
**To:** Lindop, Jay <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** comments on OSR article

Hi Jay and Chris,

Many thanks for your comments on the OSR article. I'm working through them together with comments from Becca and will discuss with James when he's back in the office tomorrow.

Kind regards

██████████

██████████ ██████████ ██████████ [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) |  
Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#)

Please note: My working days are Tuesday and Thursday.

EMAIL 43 END

EMAIL 44 START

**From:** Robards, James  
**Sent:** 14 April 2021 12:27  
**To:** Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>; Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>  
**Subject:** RE: Addition to article

Good line – suggest to put that in right at the end.

**From:** Pereira, Rich <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>  
**Sent:** 14 April 2021 11:59  
**To:** Henretty, Nigel <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>; Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>  
**Subject:** Addition to article

Hi both

Jay has just reminded me of the OSR review. There is some criticism in there about how open we are to discussing methods and approaches. Would it be possible to add a sentence to the end of the section 6 on next steps saying something like:

“We are always keen to receive feedback on our methods and approaches. Please contact us at [popinfo email address?] with any comments.”

**Rich Pereira** | Deputy Director, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#), Public Policy Analysis  
Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@RichPereira\\_ONS](#)

EMAIL 44 END

EMAIL 45 START

**From:** ██████████ ██████████  
**Sent:** 20 July 2021 08:42  
**To:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>  
**Subject:** RE: Comms plan and lines to take

Thanks James, yes, it's better this way. Have accepted the invitation for today.

██████████

**From:** Robards, James <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>  
**Sent:** 16 July 2021 15:30  
**To:** ██████████ ██████████ <██████████ [ons.gov.uk](#)>  
**Subject:** RE: Comms plan and lines to take

Hi ██████████

SET should have swapped these over – I asked about the plausibility of doing so and they just went ahead (so trust they are fine with it).

Best wishes

James

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 17:52  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Comms plan and lines to take

Hi James,

If the meeting doesn't get changed from Monday, here is the comms plan and lines to take that [REDACTED] has drafted.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 16:07  
**To:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

Thanks James. I hope all goes well next week with the final preparations for the publication.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

**From:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 16:06  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

Hi [REDACTED] – just to also say thank you, as [REDACTED] has said, for your input and contributions.

Have a good break.

All the best,

James

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 16:04  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

Brilliant, thanks for doing this [REDACTED] I'm sorry it came through so late in the day. Your contribution is much appreciated. We have a meeting with SET on Monday or Tuesday so we'll discuss these with them.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 16:02



To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

Hi [REDACTED]

I've had a look at what [REDACTED] sent through and incorporated some of the lines into those I've been [working on](#). (SEE: EMAIL 58 ATTACHMENT (B)) It might need a bit more working on but I think along with the lines that SET already have about the review they would probably have enough to respond to most general enquiries.

With the [comms plan](#). (SEE: EMAIL 58 ATTACHMENT (A)) I've re-included the section about the PSD letter from the previous release in red in case this is relevant this time around.

I'm going to log off shortly. I hope everything goes well next week with finishing everything off for the publication. Speak to you when I get back.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Sent: 15 July 2021 14:54

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

Hi [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has come back to us, see below. I've not had a chance to read it yet, but if there's anything obvious that you can add to the lines to take doc, then please add.

But also, please don't work beyond when you are planning to leave today. Just let me know if you're not able to do it. This isn't urgent and can be picked up by someone else fairly easily.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Sent: 15 July 2021 14:45

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Cc: Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

[REDACTED]

There's loads of stuff about Coventry and this is the best I can find:

[OSR Lines to take](#) (SEE: EMAIL 58 ATTACHMENT (B))

Rich's [letter](#) [REDACTED] to the chair of CPRE Warwickshire has some useful wording.

[REDACTED] (thanks very much) of Media has provided the following lines which they have used recently:

"We welcome the recognition in the report that the ONS is at the forefront of addressing the complex challenge of measuring the population using internationally recognised methods and sources and we recognise the need to keep these current and responsive.

"We are already progressing much work in this area. We continue to build on new methods, for example exploring the ways in which students leaving university are counted, and the established population and migration statistics transformation programme is making increased use of administrative data.

"We continue to improve our statistics and will increase focus on user engagement to promote understanding of uncertainty and the appropriate use of statistics."

- Note: Census 2021 will also provide a solid foundation for estimation going forward and 97% of households have responded so far.

Regards specific questions:

1. We've acknowledged the difficulty in measuring the population of areas with high population turnover (this includes student areas like Oxford) in several publications. The published uncertainty measures [show this quite well](#).
2. "Plans to correct" implies an error, of which we have made none. Census results are coming out next year and these will give up to date population data for small areas, as is the case every decade.

And as a follow up...

"We have always been clear about the levels of uncertainty around population estimates and projections."

This was OSR's line to an enquiry on students...

OSR's review considered the population estimates and projections independently of the specific issues that were raised to us by individual areas. We invited people to submit evidence, ran a number of interviews with experts and representatives from multiple local authorities, and carried out our own research. On the basis of the range of evidence we received, we identified that there may be a general issue of the population estimates for cities with a relatively large proportion of students in their population seeming to be inconsistent with local evidence.

Best regards,

██████████

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████████████████████

Member, Work/Life Balance Group, leading on caring issues

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 10:20  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

Brilliant, thanks [REDACTED]. Can you also cc James on your reply please. As I'm not in after today until Tuesday, I'll ask James to remind you tomorrow morning if you've not been able to reply today.

Thank you

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 10:16  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

[REDACTED]

I feel sure we have somewhere, I'll dig them out as soon as I have a free moment – if I haven't replied by tomorrow morning, remind me.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

---

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[REDACTED]

Member, Work/Life Balance Group, leading on caring issues

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2021 09:57  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: lines to take for OSR / Coventry

Hi [REDACTED]

Apologies for emailing you directly, but is someone able to help us with the query I sent to Susan on Tuesday please. We need to draft our lines to take before release of the OSR response on 26<sup>th</sup> and we wondered if SET had some lines to take for OSR / Coventry that we may be able to use.

Hope can help.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 13 July 2021 18:38

**To:** Barton, Susan <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Robards, James <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [popinfo@ons.gov.uk](mailto:popinfo@ons.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** lines to take for OSR / Coventry

Hi Susan,

You'll know that we are drafting a response to the OSR review into population estimates and projections. We want to draw up some lines to take and I wondered if you had any lines to take that you could send us that may have been written for the OSR review or for issues with Coventry. These would be useful for us to develop into lines to take for when our response is published.

I hope you can help.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) |  
Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

Please note: My working days are Tuesday and Thursday.

EMAIL 45 END

EMAIL 45 (60) ATTACHMENT START

## OSR Review

To be published: Monday 10 May

## Top Lines to Take

- ONS welcomes the findings in the report relating to the engagement with users. We are constantly looking to develop the way we work with users of our statistics.
- We use internationally recognised methods and sources as the basis for population estimates and projections but recognise the need to keep these current and responsive.
- Many of the recommendations are already underway. We have recently published articles providing earlier insights into population change. We have a population statistics transformation programme underway to make increased use of administrative data in the estimation. We have recently had a Census which will provide a really solid foundation for estimation going forward. The Census obtained a response rate of 97% of households.
- We will work with local users and central departments to promote understanding of uncertainty and appropriate use of the statistics.
- We will be considering all the recommendations and will make a fuller response in July.

## Improving methods

...investigate the root and scale of the issue associated with cities with large student populations and communicate its findings publicly, to support the appropriate use of the existing data	In addition to our existing work on identifying the most appropriate data sources to inform population estimates, we will carry out some investigations on case studies for several cities to help inform our future approach. We will work with stakeholders in local authorities to identify the areas where this exercise will be most beneficial
...integrate a more flexible and responsive approach to methodological changes in its design for admin-based population estimates, working with its external partners, so that improvements are more timely	We have provided early insights into the UK population size and age structure for the first time this year, and we will continue to share our findings as early as possible to help provide insight into the changing UK population
...collaborate with others to incorporate local insight and carry out sensitivity analysis to enhance its approach to quality assurance	We will engage with stakeholders and other producers of estimates to share best practices on quality assurance. We will also continue to investigate sensitivity analysis around the estimates to further enhance our approach to quality assurance, and to better understand and describe potential uncertainty around the estimates.

## Enhancing Communication

...be open with users about its short-term solution to bridge the gap of migration data until the administrative data alternative is fit for purpose and ready to use	We always use the best estimates of migration available. Currently, the model-based estimates of migration, published on 16 April, offer the most complete view possible of international migration, and we will continue develop our estimates using the best available data on an iterative basis.
...provide more specific guidance on interpreting the levels of uncertainty associated with the population estimates and projections, to help support the appropriate use of the statistics	In addition to the information we provide about the uses of populations estimates and projections we will further explore ways to communicate appropriate uses and limitations of the statistics, to aid understanding and reduce the risk of inappropriate use
...develop case studies of where the variant projections have been used in practice and beneficial to users, to support their use more widely	We plan to develop case studies on examples of the uses of variant projections, which will help aid users' understanding of them, and their limitations. The 2020-based interim national population projections will not include variants, but the existing 2018-based projections will still be useful in understanding different projected population scenarios, until projections after the 2021 Census results are available

## Embracing challenge

... take a more open and constructive approach to responding to user feedback, by improving its complaints procedure and viewing challenge as an opportunity to improve the statistics and outputs	We will make sure we continue to use our working relationships with local stakeholders and in the devolved administrations to identify and handle any concerns and issues regarding the quality of population estimates and projections
...collaborate with experts to frame the statistics for different audiences and scenarios	We will continue to do this through the mechanisms we already have in place such as the UK Population Theme Advisory Board and other shared events.

# Media Statement

*We use internationally recognised methods and sources as the basis for population estimates and projections and recognise the need to keep these current and responsive.*

*We are constantly looking to develop the way we work with users of our statistics and welcome the findings in the report relating to engagement, particularly at a local level and with central departments to promote understanding of uncertainty and the appropriate use of statistics.*

*We are already doing a lot of work in this area. We continue to build on new methods, for example exploring the ways in which students leaving university are counted and the established population and migration statistics transformation programme is making increased use of administrative data.*

*Census 2021 will also provide a solid foundation for estimation going forward and 97% of households have responded so far.*

EMAIL 45 ATTACHMENT END

EMAIL 46 (61) START

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 22 December 2020 15:17  
**To:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: Times newspaper enquiry  
**Importance:** High

**From:** Morgan, Maggie [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 22 December 2020 15:16  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@statistics.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: Times newspaper enquiry  
**Importance:** High

Hi all,

[REDACTED] from The Times has been back in touch. CPRE have apparently expanded their research and concluded that there are issues with population forecasts in areas other than Coventry.

His question to us is: Is the ONS reviewing any statistics other than those in Coventry and will it be working with the review by the Office for Statistics Regulation on the approach to population forecasts nationally?

Our response will be to say the OSR is undertaking a review of the population projections and population estimates produced by the ONS and how they are used.

Beyond that, our statement remains:

“We have always sought to be fully transparent and helpful in discussions around the methods we use to produce population estimates and population and household projections and will work with the Office for Statistics Regulation to ensure a thorough review.”

Happy with that approach?

Maggie

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 22 December 2020 14:59  
**To:** Morgan, Maggie [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: Times newspaper enquiry  
**Importance:** High

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@thetimes.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 22 December 2020 14:41  
**To:** Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Times newspaper enquiry

Hello,

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

Is the ONS reviewing any statistics other than those in Coventry and will it be working with the review by the Office for Statistics Regulation on the approach to population forecasts nationally?

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Reporter, The Times

On Thu, 3 Dec 2020 at 16:07, Media Relations <Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi [redacted]

Please see the ONS's response below.

ONS spokesperson:

“We have always sought to be fully transparent and helpful in discussions around the methods we use to produce population estimates and population and household projections and will work with the Office for Statistics Regulation to ensure a thorough review.”

Thanks,

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@thetimes.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 03 December 2020 15:58



To: Media Relations <[Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk](mailto:Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk)>

Subject: Times newspaper enquiry

Hi we are doing a story for tomorrow on the statistics authority launching a review into ONS population projections around Coventry in response to campaigners claiming they are implausible and driving the destruction of the greenbelt.

Do you have a response to this, the letter confirming the review is attached.

We've only just received this but it has been published online so will need a response as soon as possible.

Thanks,

██████████  
██████████████████  
██████████████████████████████

M ██████████

@ ██████████

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EMAIL 46 END

EMAIL 47 (62) START

**From:** Park, Neil  
**Sent:** 07 May 2021 09:12  
**To:** Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Henretty, Nigel sent you a message in Skype for Business

Hi Nigel,

To some extent the challenging bit from the OSR review has always been the challenging bit for MYE production. Small cities with large student populations do stretch our methods and data to the limit and we've explicitly tried to address it numerous times (3 iterations of student/graduate adjustments for internal migration, a specific international immigration stream for students, new covariates in the emigration model). Not all student areas are the same – Cambridge firmly believe we're significantly underestimating their population. This is not a one solution issue.

Number 1 on my wishlist to make MYEs better is better international emigration data. It isn't good enough and undermines much of the progress we've made with the rest of the methods over the last 10-20 years.

Thanks,

Neil

EMAIL 47 END

EMAIL 48 (63) START

**From:** Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 18 June 2021 15:17  
**To:** Park, Neil <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Updated blog

[REDACTED]  
This is looking good, thanks. Liz and Rich talked about the importance of bringing out our response to the OSR feedback. So I'll share with Nigel for his input on that. I'm also going to share with SCS colleagues now to get their views with all feedback in by Wednesday for you.

Jonathan asked Rich to think about what key things we want to get out of the 25 June releases – sort of a top 3 and Rich is going to give it some thought (not necessarily the stuff from the MYE bulletin). We may want to revisit the blog after he spells that out and also the tweets and the media note etc.

██████████ is helping organise the tweets from Rich and Jay's account. I have asked her to get in touch to introduce herself and work with you on what the ONS tweet will look like so it is all joined up.

Hope that sounds ok but please let me know if you want to follow a different approach.

Chris

---

**Chris Stickney** | Assistant Deputy Director of the Centre for International Migration (Migration Analysis and Engagement) | Public Policy Analysis directorate |

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

██████████ | ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk) | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](https://twitter.com/ONS)

**From:** Park, Neil <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 18 June 2021 14:39

**To:** ██████████ <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Updated blog

Hi both,

From my (admittedly quite narrow!) perspective this approach looks good and weaves together the story about what we've got, what we think we know and what's coming next.

On the births and deaths bit I'm still to check this through – I think the balance of births and deaths is probably still just positive having been negative in the year between 1 April 2020 and 21 March 2021 ██████████

I see my name is currently in the intro paragraph. This is ok but given the breadth of the topics, and that I have a total lack of time to spend on this, it's probably sensible for someone else to be the named/nominal author.

Thanks,

Neil

**From:** ██████████ <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 18 June 2021 12:37

**To:** Park, Neil <██████████@ons.gov.uk>; Stickney, Chris <██████████@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Updated blog

Neil/Chris – I've had a look at the blog, trying to focus more on the pop estimates and what we know now, but keeping in the stuff around transformation...

See what you think...

██████████

██████████ | **Office for National Statistics**

Office for National Statistics | Room 4300N | Segensworth Road | Titchfield | Fareham | PO15 5RR

Email: ██████████ [ons.gov.uk](mailto:██████████@ons.gov.uk) | Direct line : ██████████

EMAIL 48 END

EMAIL 48 (64) START

**From:** Aitchison, Fiona [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 June 2021 11:43  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Stickney, Chris <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Webber, Dominic <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: ABME publication 25 June

Hi [REDACTED]

The migration update being published on 25<sup>th</sup> June is largely a progress update and discussion of our plans/next steps for the next 12 months or so. I think the high-level international migration numbers feeding into the MYEs are also being published (either as part of the MYE release or potentially as an ad-hoc).

Chris & Dom are leading on this. I've copied them in so they're aware and can add anything I've missed.

Thanks,

Fiona

**Fiona Aitchison** | Principal Researcher, [Centre for International Migration](#)

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk> | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) | [@ONS](#)

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 15 June 2021 11:37  
**To:** Aitchison, Fiona [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** ABME publication 25 June

Hi Fiona,

Firstly, hope you are ok. [REDACTED]

I'm working on a response to the [OSR review](#) of estimates and projections. We have a year to action their recommendations but need to publish something next month on what we propose to do. One of the recommendations is about the continuation of plans for the future of migration data so for my background knowledge, do you know (at a very high level) what is being published on 25 June re ABMEs? I don't need any detail but it would be useful to know whether it's a progress update or actual numbers. I do go to the PMST meetings so should know this but I think I missed the most recent one.

Hope you can help. I'm pretty sure this is your area but please let me know if I've got that wrong.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk> | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) |  
Public Policy Analysis, Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk> | [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

Please note: My working days are Tuesday and Thursday.

EMAIL 48 END

EMAIL 49 (65) START

**From:** Henretty, Nigel  
**Sent:** 23 July 2021 14:02

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@communities.gov.uk>  
Subject: RE: OSR review response publication on Monday

Hi [REDACTED]

A quick update for you: The publication will now be happening on Thursday rather than Monday, to enable us to publish the article and blog at the same time as the formal response letter to Ed Humpherson at OSR.

I won't be able to share the full report with you until then, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Thanks,

Nigel

**Nigel Henretty** | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@communities.gov.uk>

Sent: 21 July 2021 17:02

To: Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: OSR review response publication on Monday

Hi Nigel,

Thanks for the heads up. Helpful to know. If you can share your response earlier, might be helpful but understand that might not be doable.

Il keep in touch next week in case anything pops up on our end as a result.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: Henretty, Nigel <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

Sent: 20 July 2021 16:20

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@communities.gov.uk>

Subject: OSR review response publication on Monday

Hi [REDACTED]

Just to let you know that we'll be publishing our response to the OSR review of population estimates and projections on Monday, with an accompanying blog. We won't be including any information about the policy uses of the household projections. The article will just contain fairly high level research we'll do to meet recommendations on understanding uncertainty, case studies of local areas where there is high population churn etc.

Hope this helps.

Thanks,

Nigel

**Nigel Henretty** | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics  
[redacted] | [redacted] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

EMAIL 49 END

EMAIL 50 (66) START

**From:** Henretty, Nigel  
**Sent:** 25 May 2021 17:10  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Morgan, Maggie <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Housing figures

Hi all,

It would be interesting to have a line from OSR on Q1. I'm fairly certain they didn't end up creating a definitive list of areas that "may have been overestimated", but it would be helpful to have that confirmed.

Thanks,

Nigel

**Nigel Henretty** | [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#) | Office for National Statistics  
[redacted] | [redacted] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@ONS](#)

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 25 May 2021 16:14  
**To:** Park, Neil <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Morgan, Maggie <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Housing figures

Thanks Neil/Rich

**From:** Park, Neil <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 25 May 2021 16:08  
**To:** Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Morgan, Maggie <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Housing figures

Hi,

I'm not sure what specifically we've said. There are a lot of times in lots of publications that we've acknowledged the difficulty in measuring the population of areas with high population turnover (this includes student areas like Oxford). The published uncertainty measures [show this quite well](#).

Neil

**From:** Pereira, Rich <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 25 May 2021 15:27  
**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Morgan, Maggie <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Henretty, Nigel <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>; Park, Neil <[redacted]@ons.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Housing figures

Thanks [REDACTED] – yes please send him the statement as we previously drafted.

On Q1 – I think its covered in what we have said before. Areas (like Oxford) with large student populations are more difficult to estimate for. Nigel/Neil, can you confirm?

On Q2 – “plans to correct” implies an error, of which we have made none. Worth pointing out that Census results are coming out next year and these will give us a good fix on population for small areas, as is the case every decade.

**Rich Pereira** | Deputy Director, [Centre for Ageing and Demography](#), Public Policy Analysis

Office for National Statistics | Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol

[REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] [ons.gov.uk](#) | [www.ons.gov.uk](#) | [@RichPereira\\_ONS](#)

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 25 May 2021 15:22

**To:** Pereira, Rich <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>; Gadsdon, Kerry <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Morgan, Maggie <[REDACTED]@ons.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Housing figures

Afternoon both,

I can send [REDACTED] our statement, but can we answer either of his specific questions (certainly Q1)?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@newsquest.co.uk>

**Sent:** 25 May 2021 14:57

**To:** Media Relations <[Media.Relations@ons.gov.uk](#)>

**Subject:** Housing figures

Hi ONS press team

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am a reporter with the Oxford Mail

I am getting in touch about the Office for Statistics Regulation’s review of your housing/ population growth predictive figures, particularly around the point on student populations in small cities

This is the review:

<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/review-of-population-estimates-and-projections-produced-by-the-office-for-national-statistics/>

I just thought you might be able to help me with the following questions:

- Is Oxford among the small cities with large student populations where ONS population growth predictions may have been overestimated?
- The ONS has said it plans to report back to the Office for Statistics Regulation in July – is there any suggestion of what it plans to correct in this report?

I also see you’ve previously provided a statement to national media about the review – if you can provide this, I’d also be grateful for it

If possible, could you please reply to my query by noon tomorrow?

Thanks – let me know if any difficulties

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]