

RESPONDENT: 2945484910 – R S Shaw
SECTOR: Unknown - Individual

Q1 - What are your views of the different census approaches described in the consultation document?

A census once a decade is a proven, well understood and reliable approach, conducting it primarily online will reduce costs, administrative effort, and resourcing issues to less than that for previous censuses (in real terms) and hence generate savings which do not seem to be reflected in the report. A census based on administrative data will require the duplication between the datasets used to be recognised and removed and since there is no common identifier used for citizens in the UK across different systems this will be extremely difficult and reduce the reliability of the results. The development and implementation costs of systems covering the entire population have to date proven to be far more complex and expensive than initial estimates and there is no reason to believe this project will be any more successful in delivering on time and within budget.

Q2 - Please specify any significant uses of population and housing statistics that we have not already identified.

Q3 - Please specify any significant additional benefits of population and housing statistics that we have not already identified.

Q4 - What would the impact be if the most detailed statistics for very small geographic areas and small population groups were no longer available? High, medium, low or no impact?

Medium

If medium or high, please give further information.

The lack of such information will make the provision of local services and housing more difficult to "get right"

Q5 - What would the additional benefit be if more frequent (i.e. annual) statistics about population characteristics were available for areas like local authorities and electoral wards? High, medium, low or no additional benefit?

Low

If medium or high please give further information.

Q6 - Please specify any significant uses of census information for historical research that we have not already identified.

Q7 - What advantages or disadvantages for genealogical or historical research can you see from a move to a solution based on archiving administrative data sources?

None.

Q8 - What are your views of the risks of each census approach and how they might

be managed?

The risks of a census every 10 years are well understood and can be easily managed, and result in a predictable outcome and cost. The census based on UK administrative datasets is not proven for UK datasets which are individually incomplete for this use and which vary in their accuracy and reliability, (consider for example the impact of benefit fraud on the outcome). Merging disjoint datasets and removing duplication is notoriously difficult and prone to result in unforeseen problems, reduced accuracy and reliability and escalating costs.

Q9 - Are there any other issues that you believe we should be taking into account?