

RESPONDENT: 2862143079 – Richard Sage
SECTOR: Unknown - Individual

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

The paper form does seem out of date in today's world. So it does seem to make sense to move online for most people. If including those people without online access (due not just to age, poverty, but also viruses and ISP outages on the day) requires a lot of paper, would it be simple to stick with paper. How can you test the hardware and software capacity so that the system does not become frustratingly slow on the day so that lots of people do not bother. Not have census might have been feasible if Identify Cars had happened, but without them, the Administrative Data is far too unreliable. The consultation document highlights the big issue: "Without exception, these countries have well established population registers, and all residents are legally required to keep their information up to date. This is not the case in the UK, so the available information is less accurate, and is not consistent between sources." (The German strictness on Population Register is ironic given their general worship of "privacy"!)

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.

But I am more worried about the effect on the larger numbers.

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?

No Additional Benefit

If medium or high please give further information.

Given that accuracy would be low, no significant benefit.

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?

The biggest challenge for genealogical research at the moment is having to review images rather than be able to search digital fields. Please deposit in digital format going forward, if you do not already. This applies independent of the method of collecting. However, online entry by households would probably (but not certainly) result in fewer typographical errors in transcription/OCR.

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

Administrative approach would be inaccurate because there is no compulsion or inclination to keep records accurate. Risks could only be acceptably managed by National ID card scheme, but that does not seem very likely in the next few years!

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