

RESPONDENT: 2824030463 – Ben Saunders
SECTOR: Unknown - Individual

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

I'd prefer a primary census. What has come to light is that a lot of the assumptions made from admin data turn out to be incorrect when compared with census data. The population assumptions for Norwich/Leeds were far too high and far too low in Manchester when compared with the census. If you don't have the decade by decade census you will miss these things.

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

n/a

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

n/a

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?

High

If medium or high, please give further information.

Devil is in the detail.

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?

Medium

If medium or high please give further information.

Trends can happen quite quickly. For example in central Manchester there has been a big impact due to student tuition fees coming in. This data would make these big changes more obvious.

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 unless you were using a unique identifier for each individual.

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

The main risk is that collating from a variety of sources can be politically manipulated. A periodic census is less likely to be so. I can already see that the ONS are revising the population growth of Manchester back down again (to be more like the original incorrect assumptions compared with the census) even though there is no evidence for why this should be the case.

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

You need to get a grip on people living in multiple locations (e.g. summer homes, university etc) and how do you account for it. Just asking for a snapshot on one day is too simplistic. Perhaps a permanent population and a semi permanent figure need to be pulled out in separate figures. You'd get very different figures in most big cities between 1st Sept (outside school and university time) and 1st October (uni term time) for example.