

**RESPONDENT:** 2917998518 – Susan Steward  
**SECTOR:** Unknown - Individual

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

Both are inadequate 1) I think that we overestimate the numbers of people who are on-line (and want to be). a) I don't think it is democratic to exclude citizens from the census just because they aren't online or can't be (like my mother who is in her 80s! She is fully able to complete the pen and paper census so why should someone else do it for her? It's making her dependent) I think this would be open to 'legal challenge' as it discriminates b) the pen and paper census underestimates certain groups in society - this will be even worse (I suppose those groups don't exist if they are made even more invisible?) c) I hate online surveys - at least you can write on a piece of paper when something is not understood or ambiguous (even if it isn't read). Online forms that won't let you proceed unless you've answered in a box proliferate (those for the unemployed are some of the worst - they don't even work! but nobody cares.) People solve problems not machines - this is just a way of cutting costs by getting rid of people but it's counterproductive. 2) surveys are too general - you can't do small area analysis which is problematic, even hopeless (I can't imagine life without census data). Local government is being stripped of resources anyway - if this goes ahead they won't even know who they've got living in their areas. 3) At a time when the DfE (education) is pouring money into a census 3 times a year for school children (NPDs and PLASC) it seems ironic that once citizens get to age 18 no-one cares any more who they are, where they live, what quals they've got and how they live their lives? I've worked with NPDs and they are not perfect but would we want to lose them now? Why are we losing the census?

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

I think there is more potential to use census data within the education, training and skills sector than what has been identified in these documents. I haven't got a particularly well-argued case for this but there is a mismatch between what is collected by schools on all children and young people and then the mess that occurs post 16. The UK (england?) has recently been identified as having poor basic skills by the OECD and to understand their results better we need much more finely grained analysis of Ed, training and skills amongst adults - particularly young adults. We have surveys and statistics for people who are in institutions (or training whatever, eg HEFCE but apprenticeships?? and vocational learners?? and ???) but we don't have that much data on those who aren't - they are missing and therefore invisible. Clearly there are data sources but putting everything together is really problematic + those with low quals are exactly the people you wouldn't pick up with an online census (I know because I talk to them about the problems applying for jobs when you don't read very well and everything is online). We seem not to care about adult education and skills at the moment but at least we have that section in the census about levels of ed and linking to other sectors - clearly in the future if we know nothing about these we won't have a problem will we? In the future I would like think tha I will be able to work with a range of datasets that can help me better understand education, training and skills over the lifecourse and I don't think I will be able to.

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

We have to upskill our adult population - we are lagging behind other OECD countries but we don't have the data and we will have less of it in the future. I can't see anything in the docs about adult education and skill levels - the DfE is concerned with children (even 16-18 year olds are patchy).

**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.**

I am working with different data sets for Norwich (geographically it is a nightmare) but at least I have some ward information. I cannot work with survey data - it just isn't good enough. Within this small city we have huge inequalities that I think would be hidden without detailed statistics at small neighbourhood level (LLSOA). I have used the maps produced by Norfolk County Council from the 2001 census which describe different indices of deprivation in Norfolk and therefore Norwich. I have found their analysis really useful (but it is just from the census) - I can compare deprived areas with the NPDs that I have been given access to for similar years in the mid 2000s. I can't believe that if I want to examine the effects of our present austerity measures in 15 years time I probably won't be able to do what I am doing now. I know that in many areas poverty indicators suggest that the 'advantaged' live just round the corner from the 'disadvantaged'. Norwich misses out on funding because it's too small and it's pockets are not as visible but these small pockets rival the worst of other cities - in the future we just won't know that!

**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?**

**If medium or high please give further information.**

I don't understand this question - if you are talking about targeting those areas (like Norwich above) that are not seen as problematic won't get these annual surveys anyway. You are proposing to reduce census expenditure so why are you now asking about increasing the frequency to annually? It's got to be everywhere to make sense and to be fair. 10 years is affordable but it has to have universal coverage. We can't just get data from sources that we are interested in and ignore those people and places that we're not.

**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?**

I can't!

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

1 online will exclude the old, those without computers, the non-computer literate. It's no good saying that 'there will be help' - people should be able to do things for themselves (My 80 year old mum would be furious if she felt written off or invisible and I would be too on her behalf). to do things online you have to have a computer - you can't do it on the bus (well I can't and don't want to) It will even more reduce the numbers of 'deprived' - particularly those with low level skills I just don't think these can be 'managed' 2 surveys don't cover small areas - they can't. So we are waving goodbye to small area analysis - that can't be managed either.

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

Once we lose the census it will be hard to get it back. I think 'the powers that be' are kidding themselves that these two proposals are workable alternatives but then again if people are invisible then they are not seen are they? It's all down to costs - we won't have anything left soon so what good will a surplus be without any society? Data is the only thing that holds politicians and policy

makers (whether national or local) to account - we are in danger of being uninformed and then we will have lost our democracy. Some people just don't 'count' and we are in danger of counting even more of them out.