

## Developing our Use of Administrative Data within Scotland's Census 2022

### Background

1. Scotland's Census 2022 is a complex programme of work which has at its centre a vast amount of data gathered from households across Scotland through the main census collection and the [Census Coverage Survey](#). Administrative data from across the Scottish public sector is then used to quality assure the outputs produced from the census data.

2. Scotland Census 2022, returned data from 2.3 million households which translates to close to a 90% return rate. Across Scotland the return rate did (as with all censuses) vary but in 30 of 32 Local Authorities returns exceeded our 85% KPI, with 19 of the 32 exceeding 90%. Whilst this has provided a ['solid foundation'](#) for Scotland's Census it was lower than the original design, and therefore it is necessary to make greater use of administrative data to support the delivery of high quality census outputs.

### Use of Administrative Data

3. Scotland's Census has been evolving over decades.

1991 and earlier : Census form responses the sole data used to deliver census outputs

2001 : Census form plus Census Coverage Survey used to account for non-response.

2011 : Census form (20% online and 80% via paper) plus Census Coverage Survey used to account for non-response. Administrative data used to quality assure high level aggregate outputs

2022 : Census form (90% online and 10% via paper) plus Census Coverage Survey used to account for non-response. Administrative data used to improve understanding of non-response. Administrative data used to quality assure aggregate level outputs.

4. The focus of the evolving use of administrative data for 2022 is to improve the ability to estimate who is missing from the initial census returns. As in the rest of the UK, the approach in 2001 and 2011 was to use the Census Coverage Survey to estimate who responded to both the census and coverage survey, and who was missing from one or both. This allowed the household and population data from the initial census to be adjusted to improve the estimate of the 'true' population and household numbers. Work was then done to impute returns for these missing returns.

5. The additional work being done for 2022 is to make use of some of Scotland's high quality administrative data to improve our understanding of households and populations at a local level who are missing from the initial census collection. The data is used to improve the understanding that households and populations have been missed through seeing evidence that public services have been recently accessed. There is no use and no access being made to the detail or nature of this

service use. The importance of this approach was confirmed by the [International Steering Group](#), including in their [presentation](#) to a committee of Scotland's Parliament.

### Legal Basis for sharing data

6. Access to the administrative data which will support the delivery of high quality census outputs is closely managed by Scotland's public sector organisations and is governed by clear legal constraints. Important elements of this oversight and decision making function include the [Public Benefit and Privacy Panel \(PBPP\)](#) for Health and Social Care and [Statistics](#), the production of [Data Protection Impact Assessments \(DPIA\)](#), and the production of Data Sharing Agreements (DSA).

7. The use of data be it administrative or that collected through census and the Census Coverage Survey, must be consistent with the legal basis which underpins the Registrar General's role to undertake Scotland's Census through the [Census Act](#). Data gathered, stored, analysed and processed by NRS is consistent with and enabled by the census legislation, supported by the agreement of relevant PBPPs, and described in accompanying DPIA and DSA work. This provides the basis for NRS's use which is also supported by the legal gateways and principles employed by those organisations who are sharing the data with NRS. These include specific gateways and more general enablers such as 'common law' and 'reasonably incidental'.

8. There is very clear and substantial public benefit in delivering high quality census outputs, and drawing on administrative data adds significant value and is proportionate and necessary.

### Administrative Data and its planned use

Administrative Data	Purpose
<i>Health data</i>	Support estimation and imputation work to improve understanding of missing households and populations from initial census collection
<i>Higher Education</i>	Support estimation and imputation work to improve understanding of student population in Scotland
<i>School Pupil</i>	Data in place for quality assurance.
<i>Electoral register</i>	Data in place for quality assurance and some estimation.
<i>Vital Events (Births, Deaths and Marriage)</i>	Data in place for quality assurance
<i>NHS Central Register</i>	Data in place for quality assurance
<i>Council Tax</i>	Data will support quality assurance
<i>MOD</i>	Data will support quality assurance
<i>Prison data</i>	Data in place for quality assurance
<i>Population data</i>	Data in place for quality assurance
<i>Children Social Work data and</i>	Data in place for quality assurance

<i>Care Home data</i>	
<i>Household and dwellings</i>	Data in place for quality assurance

## Questions

9. Should you have any questions about the methodology being used to deliver the high quality census outputs required by users please [email](#)

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National Records of Scotland