

Demographic Statistics Advisory Group Meeting**Date:** 26 February 2019**Time:** 2.00pm**Location:** Conference Room, Colby House, Belfast

Attendees		
Present	Dr David Marshall (Chair) Sandy Fitzpatrick Dr Tony Dignan Karly Greene Michael Gallagher Dr Esmond Birnie Dr Dermot O'Reilly Dr Ian Shuttleworth Daryll Madine Simon Hookham Aidan Campbell Christine Robinson David Ross	NISRA, Director of Census and Population Statistics NISRA, Head of Census Economic Research and Evaluation Northern Ireland Housing Executive Derry & Strabane Council University of Ulster Queen's University Belfast School of Geography, Archaeology & Paleoecology, Queen's University NI Electoral Office Equality Commission for NI Rural Community Network Belfast City Council Land and Property Services
In Attendance	William Dukelow Hugh Kerr Richard Elliott Wenda Pollock Jonathan Harvey Daniel McConville	NISRA, Census Office NISRA, Census Office NISRA, Census Office NISRA, Census Office NISRA, Census Office NISRA, Census Office
Secretary	Cathy McAllister	NISRA, Census Office
Apologies	Prof Adele Marshall Dr Catherine Millman Virginia McVea Lisa King Colin McIheney Richard Ramsey	Queens' University Public Health Agency NI Electoral Office Equality Commission for NI Global Research Director PricewaterhouseCoopers Chief Economist Northern Ireland Ulster Bank

1. Welcome and apologies

Dr Marshall welcomed members to the meeting, thanked those present for their attendance and recorded apologies for those unable to attend. Dr Marshall went on to explain the

purpose of the meeting, which was to provide members with an update on plans for the 2021 Census and to brief members on Proposals for the 2021 Census, 2021 Census Outputs Strategy and an update on Demographic Statistics.

2. Introductions

As there were a number of new faces around the table, members and those in attendance introduced themselves.

3. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed and the following update on action points was given:

Action Point Number	Action Point Detail	Action Point Update
AP1	<i>NISRA to consider online and paper 2011 versions of routed questions to see if there were differences in response distributions.</i>	<u>Completed</u> – It was found that those who completed online were actually more likely to respond 'None' when asked to state a religion than those who completed on paper. This difference was primarily due to the different demographic of those who completed online. This finding was confirmed by ONS who carried out an independent review.
AP3	<i>NISRA to pass on information to DSAG (Richard Ramsey) regarding rationale for excluding a question on second homes/holiday homes.</i>	<u>Completed</u> – Rationale sent to Richard Ramsey on 25/09/2018.
AP4	<i>DSAG members to write to David Marshall to raise any further issues in relation to 2021 Census content.</i>	<u>Completed</u> – Closed
AP5	<i>Demographic Statistics to send a letter to Council Chief Executives and Chief Planning Officers, to explain clearly the distinction between local area population projections and local area population forecasts.</i>	<u>Ongoing</u> - 26.02.19 - Councils will require separate engagement - Dr Marshall will engage DSAG members prior to having a conversation with councils.

Action Point Number	Action Point Detail	Action Point Update
AP6	<i>Census Office to recirculate presentation on 'content' from June 2017 meeting. Any comments by members should be sent to Dr Marshall by Thursday 31st May 2018.</i>	<u>Completed</u> – Closed.
AP7	<i>Members views on use of admin data in 2021 to be sent to Dr Marshall (in writing) by Thursday 31st May 2018.</i>	<u>Completed</u> – Closed

4. 2021 Census Update

Sandy Fitzpatrick delivered a presentation to members providing an update on how work towards the 2021 Census is progressing outlining the current position with Field Operations, the Address Register and Data Processing.

Points arising from this agenda item:

Karly Greene asked if the address register would be shared for use in other surveys. Dr Marshall advised that the addresses themselves can't be shared but it may be possible to share the methodology used to build the register.

There was a discussion on why the question on number of rooms in a household was removed. This information is available from LPS data and it was also found that in 2011 some people didn't actually know the number of rooms in their households. This along with the impact of the bedroom tax might have a bearing on how people might have answer this question. Taken together these were the reasons for not asking the question in the 2021 Census.

Michael Gallagher raised the issue of Brexit and how Census might be affected by people who claim to live in Northern Ireland eg for medical care, schools etc. Mr Fitzpatrick noted that there are a variety of steps taken to address this in the Census. He specifically noted the plan to have a Census Coverage Survey which will address this issue in significant part.

5. Proposals for the 2021 Census

William Dukelow delivered a presentation on the Proposals Document which was issued to DSAG members prior to the meeting.

Some queries were raised following the presentation:

How is low digital access identified? Mr Fitzpatrick noted that Ofcom provide statistics on digital access by area but it is hoped that this can be broken down further by household in the future. There is also statistics available on household interaction with the Public Service online e.g. MOT booking etc.

Who is responsible for completing the household form in HMOs? It is expected that one person in the household will take on the role of householder and complete the form. In the case of HMOs where there is no interaction between parties individuals can request individual forms.

There was discussion around some of the specific questions within the questionnaire. Dr Marshall advised that when the Proposals Document is published, Census Office may contact members of DSAG for a few testimonial lines of support for the usage of the Census material – if necessary we will be in contact.

6. 2021 Outputs Strategy

Hugh Kerr gave an update on the Outputs Strategy consultation advising that it is hoped that the final results will be published in the autumn.

Michael Gallagher advised that he has sensed a lack of understanding by Council Members around some of the detail in the strategy (around output geography) and is concerned that they have signed up to methodologies without a real understanding of the impacts. Dr Marshall indicated that NISRA will document this further and this may alleviate some misunderstandings before the final decision is made.

Action Point 1: NISRA to bring a further paper to DSAG on output geography and to publish this and send to local councils as part of finalising the Outputs Strategy.

7. Demographic Statistics

Richard Elliott provided an update on Population Statistics which included informing the group that Population Estimates for District Electoral Areas was published for the first time on 21 February. This was developed not only in response to Council requirements but also in recognition of the requirement to provide population estimates for new geographies in Northern Ireland. The methodology adopted utilised information from the 2011 Census to create the estimates – something which will be discussed with NISRA council statisticians for feedback. There are plans to engage further with Councils separately to outline detail on projections versus forecasts. AP5 above refers but Dr Marshall would like a separate conversation ahead of contacting the Councils so will write out to DSAG members – Action point updated.

Richard then advised members on the 2018-based National Population Projections which are planned for October 2019. These are completed every two years and led by ONS who are keen for DSAG to be involved in the assumption setting process. There is an expert panel scheduled for 1 April in London. ONS are happy to cover travel costs but it is also hoped that there will be dial in facilities available for those who cannot attend in person.

Action Point 2: DSAG members to advise Richard Elliott by noon Friday 1 March if they would like to engage with the expert panel meeting in London 1 April.

8. AOB and next meeting

Dr Marshall advised that NISRA are hosting the International Census Forum in September this year. The next meeting will be scheduled for September 2019.

Cathy McAllister, Secretary