



Information paper

The 2011 Census: Assessment of initial user requirements on content for England and Wales

- Housing

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1. Summary

In May 2005 ONS published a consultation document 'The 2011 Census: Initial view on content for England and Wales'. Responses were received from nearly 500 users, presenting arguments for the inclusion of around 70 topics (over 2,000 'topic responses').

Each topic was evaluated using the criteria detailed in the consultation document and a scoring system based on the criteria was used to rank the topics according to the strength of user requirement.

This paper provides a summary of the user requirements, and the scores given, for the following topics:

- Accommodation type
- Dwellings and self-contained accommodation
- Household tenure (including type of landlord)
- Number of rooms
- Number of vehicles
- Accommodation on more than one floor
- Central heating
- Bath/shower and toilet access
- Lowest floor level
- Garden access
- Internet access
- Smoke alarms
- Pet Ownership

2. Accommodation type: Total score = 80

2.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005 the topic of accommodation type was placed in category 1, meaning that ONS believed the level of user requirement was sufficient to justify the inclusion of this topic in the 2011 Census.

There were over 25 responses received commenting on the subject of accommodation type from a variety of central government, local authority and other data users.

2.2 User Need: Score=8

The consultation identified a clear requirement for this information for a range of purposes.

Several respondents suggested this information was vital to inform users of the condition of the national housing stock and also aid authorities in providing suitable housing for various population groups. Additionally, users commented that this data is used to target services such as refuse collection and recycling at a community level.

Many local authority users commented that data on accommodation type is important for calculating housing projections and analysing the housing market. Moreover, these respondents noted that this information is used to inform planning and housing policy formulation, improve resource allocation and also assess deprivation on a national and local scale.

It should be noted that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) stated that it uses information on accommodation type in their spending share allocation for the Police Force.

2.3 Small Geographies and Small Populations: Score=9

Many respondents stated that small area data on accommodation type was essential to allow detailed and appropriate housing policies to be formulated, public sector resources to be targeted effectively at local levels and also to assess localised deprivation. A strong case was made that these data are needed at small levels of geography to enable users to gain a detailed understanding of the housing stock in local areas.

2.4 Alternative Sources: Score=7

Users were generally sceptical as to the availability of alternative sources for accommodation type data. Some respondents suggested that national and local housing surveys would be able to provide this information, and it was also suggested that Land Registry Office data could be used as a substitute.

However, users were not convinced that the quality of the data obtainable from these sources would be of comparable quality to the Census, and the Greater London Authority suggested that there is "*no other source that will adequately support the annual spending in London of £670million on housing provision*".

2.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=7

Respondents demonstrated a clear need to use data on accommodation type with a range of household and basic demographic information, and particularly with those variables that relate to housing quality. Users gave evidence that this was necessary to formulate housing policies and assess housing condition in local areas.

2.6 UK Comparability: Score=9

Respondents suggested information on accommodation type is required across the UK since comparable data are needed to help users understand local variations in the housing stock, and also estimate housing supply and demand in the UK.

2.7 Continuity: Score=10

Data on accommodation type has been collected on many previous censuses in England and Wales.

2.8 Conclusion

The consultation responses made a strong case for collecting information on accommodation type from the 2011 Census. Many users cited these data as essential for informing a range of housing policies and there is evidence they are used for central and local government resource allocation. It is clear the information is required at detailed levels of geography to enable effective service provision and policy monitoring. Users expressed concerns regarding the use of an alternative source to the Census to obtain this information and respondents suggested these data are required for multivariate analysis. A strong case was made for requiring the data across the UK and information on accommodation type has been collected on many previous Censuses.

As a strong case has been made for collecting information on accommodation type from the Census, this topic remains in category 1.

3. Dwellings and self-contained accommodation: Total score = 70

3.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005 the topics of dwellings and whether or not a household's accommodation was self-contained were placed in category 1, meaning that ONS believed these data would be collected from the 2011 Census.

There were over 80 responses received commenting on the subjects of dwellings and whether or not a household's accommodation was self-contained from a variety of central government, local authority and other data users.

These topics have been combined for this report as the topics are heavily linked, and some respondents submitted consultation responses that made a case for them as one topic.

3.2 User Need: Score=7

ODPM has stated that it requires dwelling data to establish the number and distribution of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) to allow effective formulation and implementation of housing policies. There is also a need to consider the impact of how licensing of HMOs, introduced via the 2004 Housing Act, will affect housing policy.

Many local authorities suggested that their main requirement for this information is to assess overcrowding, housing demand and housing market renewal policies. There is also a strong need to compare the household count to the dwelling count and establish the distribution of vacant dwellings in small areas.

However, it should be noted that respondents suggested a large number of other reasons why dwelling information is required. DfT give an example stating that *"our research agenda increasingly recognises the interaction between transport and land use. We work with ODPM on models of housing, which require the distinction between households and dwellings."*

There is an indication from some users that dwelling information is necessary to inform the competitive bidding process from which local authorities gain public funds.

Users also recognised the need to gather information on dwellings to aid census operations.

3.3 Small Geographies and Small Populations: Score=8

Many users responded to the consultation stating that dwelling information is required at low levels of geography to inform local area strategies, service provision and enable effective localised resource allocation.

A key reason for requiring small area data given by respondents was that overcrowding and housing deprivation tends to be concentrated in small pockets. As ODPM stated *"the overall number of HMOs is small and they are not evenly distributed across the country, they tend to be concentrated in small geographies"*. There is also a need to identify which small population groups live in deprived housing.

3.4 Alternative Sources: Score=5

Many users cited council tax records as the main alternative for Census data on dwellings. However, concerns were raised about the quality of this data and also issues surrounding the obstacles that may exist before users can gain access to this data.

The NLPG (National Land and Property Gazetteer) was quoted by some respondents as a potential alternative source in the future, although this is only likely to supply univariate data.

Other sources were quoted by some respondents, but it should be noted that many respondents did not believe a suitable alternative existed for gathering comprehensive dwelling information.

3.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=7

Several users, including ODPM, have a strong need to carry out multivariate analysis with dwelling data and the majority of other household variables, particularly to assess dwellings in multiple occupancy.

3.6 UK Comparability: Score=9

It is clear from users' responses to the consultation that dwelling counts are required across the UK to allow national comparisons. Local authorities suggested that nationwide dwelling figures are necessary to inform their competitive bidding process for public funds. It is also argued that multiple occupancy and the prevalence of high-rise flats are local and national issues and therefore Census outputs on dwelling are nationally important.

3.7 Continuity: Score=10

Information on dwellings has historically been collected from the Census in England and Wales and information on households sharing accommodation has been collected since 1971.

3.8 Conclusion

The consultation responses relating to dwellings and whether a household's accommodation is self-contained identified several different uses for the data from a range of respondents. The majority of users noted that this information is particularly important for developing and implementing a number of housing policies at both a national and local level. However, it should also be noted that there was an indication this data is used to aid the allocation of resource at local levels and users also recognised the need for ONS to collect dwelling data for operational purposes.

It is clear that there is a strong need for this data to be released at small area level due to the variation that exists with overcrowding. Council Tax records have been suggested as the main potential alternative source, but it should be noted there are concerns from some users relating to the usability of this data and therefore there is no obvious and comparable alternative to the Census for dwelling data.

Users made a case for requiring this data for multivariate analysis with a number of household variables. Respondents made it clear that this information is nationally important and also that collecting this data would ensure continuity with previous Censuses.

There is evidence that a substantial user requirement exists for collecting Census data on dwellings and whether or not a household's accommodation is self-contained. Therefore, dwelling counts and information about whether or not a household's accommodation is self-contained is placed in category 1.

4. Household tenure (including type of landlord): Total score = 86

4.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005, the topic of tenure (including landlord type) was placed in category 1, meaning that ONS believed there was a clear case for including this topic in the 2011 Census.

Over 30 responses were received commenting on the subject of tenure, predominantly from local authorities. However, there was also interest from central government and other data users.

4.2 User Need: Score = 9

A range of uses of information on tenure have been identified from across the user community.

ODPM have stated that they use information on tenure for grant allocation purposes. This use was also identified by a number of local authorities. The Association of Greater Manchester authorities states that, *"grants for housing improvements will depend upon the number of non-private properties"*. Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council states that the data is required, *"to provide information about the current situation and trends in tenure that can be used to inform planning and resource allocation for housing and services."* ODPM also use the data for policy development and monitoring. They state that, *"reliable information on housing tenure is fundamental to the way ODPM analyses the census results and has a strong policy need as one of ODPM's aims is to increase home ownership"*.

A number of local authorities use data on tenure for purposes of service provision, such as housing services and refuse services. Suffolk County Council states that, *"to meet the data requirements of the Office of Deputy Prime Minister Consultation paper 'Planning for Housing Provision', LA's [local authorities] need to establish whether housing meets the needs of the whole community"*.

Data on tenure is also used for housing and land use planning. The North East Regional Information Partnership comment that, *"Regional spatial strategies help determine where properties are to be built, and in which tenures. Without comprehensive tenure data, this will not be possible"*. Housing data also forms an integral element in the local development frameworks. In addition to planning housing needs, local government respondents also use the data to estimate housing supply, produce housing stock estimates, and measure housing affordability.

Another key use of information on tenure is to support the social inclusion agenda. Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council state that this will be done by, *"providing evidence of differential access to different types of tenure in different locations for different groups of people"*. The data can also be used to tackle discrimination in relation to social housing.

4.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score = 9

Small area data is required to assess local housing needs and target housing services to areas of need. Users suggest that information would be required to Output Area or Super Output Area to achieve this.

The Greater London authority states that, *"planning for London's future development and the eradication of poverty/social exclusion requires detailed local population information. Detailed housing plans and meeting the needs of local populations are bound to fail without detailed accurate local population information"*.

4.4 Alternative Sources: Score = 8

The majority of respondents conclude that there are no suitable alternative sources to the Census, for the collection of national information on tenure.

Some data is collected by local authorities and housing organisations and limited data is available from council tax records. However, Census data is far more reliable and allows multivariate analyses at small geographic levels. There are also national housing need and house condition surveys, but they are unable to give localised information.

There are certain data sources that collect data on individual tenure types, such as the National Register of Social Housing (NROSH) and data on the social rented sector from landlords. However, these sources are unable to provide comparable data for all tenure types.

4.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score = 7

Information on tenure would be analysed with a wide range of other Census variables to achieve the uses outlined in the user need section.

Analyses with ethnicity, economic activity status, household composition, age and gender, car ownership, health, religion, number of rooms and income are all suggested by users.

4.6 UK Comparability: Score = 9

Although the major uses of these data would be at a local level, almost all users who responded to the consultation state that this information is required for the whole of the UK. Wiltshire County Council comments that, *"it is important to gather this information at the national level to observe any possible regional variations and also allow for local comparison to be undertaken"*.

The Greater London authority comment that, *"a national comparator is essential (for England and Wales) because of resource allocation formulae applied to local authorities in England and Wales by ODPM and competitive bidding for resources"*.

4.7 Continuity: Score = 9

A question on tenure has appeared on the Census since 1961.

4.8 Conclusion

The consultation responses identified a number of uses of data on tenure from the Census. The strongest need is for central and local government resource allocation and service provision. Data is required to a very low level of geography such as OA or SOA level to meet the user needs. There are limited alternative sources available, none of which can provide data down to the level of geographical detail required. There is a very clear requirement for multivariate analysis and a strong need for data at a UK level. Data on tenure has been collected in the Census since 1961.

The score that this topic receives currently keeps it in category 1, which means there is still a very clear case for including this topic in the 2011 Census.

5. Number of rooms: Total score = 76

5.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005, the topic of number of rooms was placed in category 1, meaning that ONS believed there was a clear case for including this topic in the 2011 Census.

Over 20 responses were received commenting on the subject of number of rooms, predominantly from local authorities. However, there was also interest from central government and other data users. A large number of these respondents are interested in including a question on number of bedrooms in addition to number of rooms.

5.2 User Need: Score = 8

A range of uses of information on number of rooms/bedrooms have been identified from across the user community.

The primary use of data on number of rooms for central and local government users is as an assessment of overcrowding. Users agree that linking number of rooms to number of people in the household provides the only consistent measure of overcrowding. ODPM state that living in overcrowded conditions has adverse personal and social effects as well as effects on health. Shortage of space is also seen as detrimental to children's development. A measurement of overcrowding using number of rooms can therefore be an indicator of deprivation.

ODPM state that, *"overcrowding is an issue that needs to be brought into the mainstream of housing debate and policy development"*. Local government respondents would use the data to inform policies that target inequality, social exclusion and discrimination in the housing market. ODPM have stated that they will use the data for purposes of grant allocation. The use of the data for resource allocation purposes was also identified by a number of local authorities.

Local authorities would use the data to assess local housing needs and in planning, providing and monitoring of current and future housing provision. A couple of respondents also feel that the data can provide an assessment of under-occupancy, which can help social landlords target programmes for household relocation.

5.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score = 9

Data is required at the most localised level possible to identify local areas where overcrowding is an issue and inform policies and plan services for these areas. Without small area data, housing provision may not meet the needs of local communities.

The Greater London Authority comments that, *"household composition and size differs considerably between ethnic and religious groups and rates of overcrowding differ between groups"*. The London Borough of Islington states that, *"sub-ward level data is especially important in inner city areas in identifying the information needs and provision for ethnic and religious groups"*.

5.4 Alternative Sources: Score = 5

The majority of respondents conclude that there are no suitable alternative sources to the Census, for the collection of national information on number of rooms/bedrooms.

Household surveys and housing needs and condition surveys provide some data on number of rooms, but they don't provide the detailed geographical information or detailed household characteristics necessary for meeting local needs.

The Greater London Authority states that, *"there is no other source that gives detailed information on households living at different levels of overcrowding by their ethnicity, household composition and labour market characteristics and no other source will adequately support the annual spending of £670 million on housing provision"*.

5.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score = 8

Information on number of rooms/bedrooms would be analysed with a wide range of other Census variables to achieve the uses outlined in the user need section.

Analyses with age, gender, household composition (especially households with children), ethnicity, religion, economic activity, tenure, income and disability are all suggested by users.

5.6 UK Comparability: Score = 8

Although the major uses of these data would be at a local level, almost all users who responded to the consultation state that this information is required for the whole of the UK. Wiltshire County Council comments that, *"it is important to gather this information at the national level to observe any possible regional variations and also allow for local comparison to be undertaken"*. The London Borough of Newham state that, *"Census data is used for comparing areas and having a baseline for the UK is an essential comparator"*.

5.7 Continuity: Score = 9

A question on number of rooms has appeared on the Census in England and Wales since 1871 and in the rest of the UK since 1951. A question on number of bedrooms has never appeared on the Census.

5.8 Conclusion

The consultation responses identified a number of uses of data on number of rooms/bedrooms from the Census. The primary use of data is to provide an assessment of overcrowding which is an indicator of deprivation and is used for the purposes of resource allocation and service provision. Data is required to very small geographical areas to meet these user needs. There are limited alternative sources available, none of which can provide data down to the level of geographical detail required. There is a clear requirement for multivariate analysis and a need for data at a UK level. Data on number of rooms has been collected in the Census since 1891, however number of bedrooms has not been asked on the Census before.

The score that this topic receives currently keeps it in category 1, which means there is still a clear case for including this topic in the 2011 Census. Whether the information collected is, number of rooms, number of bedrooms or possibly both, will depend on the outcome of further research and question testing.

6. Number of vehicles: Total score = 65

6.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005 the topic of number of vehicles was placed in category 2, meaning that ONS believed further work was required before a decision could be made on whether to include this topic in the 2011 census.

Over 80 responses were received commenting on the subject of number of vehicles from a variety of central government, local authority and other data users.

6.2 User Need: Score = 7

A number of potential uses of information on number of vehicles have been identified from across the user community.

A key use of data on number of vehicles across central and local government is for transport planning. ODPM require the data to understand accessibility issues, particularly in rural areas. Accessibility is also a key issue for local government authorities as it is core to local transport plans. Local government authorities use the data to inform a range of transport policies covering issues such as parking standards, transport modelling, deprivation mapping, sustainability mapping, and plans to reduce private car use. The data is also used to assess the demand for public transport and provide services to areas with low vehicle ownership and poor transport links. DfT and a number of local authorities also use the data to forecast traffic growth which is used in road building planning and is becoming increasingly important as congestion increases.

The Department for Transport (DfT) use the proportion of households without a car in the allocation of the 'integrated transport' block funding, as an indicator of demand for public transport. A number of local government users also use the data for resource allocation purposes. On the basis of number of vehicles data, money is allocated towards car parks, highways, traffic control, public transport, bus route planning, accessibility planning and road improvements.

Data on number of vehicles can be used as an indicator of deprivation or affluence. A few users also suggest that it could be used as a proxy for income.

6.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score = 9

Information on number of vehicles would be required for small geographies to establish transport inequalities between small areas and identify local needs and local deprivation. Small area data also enables users to effectively monitor and implement transport plans and policies. A representative of the ESRC comments that, "*planning of public transportation operates at the bus stop level and journey planning from the address or postcode so ward/SOA level outputs are generally too coarse*". Users suggest that data as low as Output Area (OA) or lower Super Output Area (SOA) is required.

6.4 Alternative Sources: Score = 3

Users have suggested a fairly wide range of potential alternative sources for data on number of vehicles. However, many of the sources cannot provide the small area data required.

The DVLA hold data on the number of vehicles which is available to a reasonably small geographical level. However, the data is distorted by including vehicles attached to local businesses and multivariate analyse is not possible.

Other surveys suggested include the National Travel survey, General Household survey, Family Expenditure survey and local housing surveys. However, these sources do not provide the small area data required. Other suggestions include DfT licensing statistics, and Neighbourhood Statistics data on number of vehicles per ward which could be associated with number of households per ward.

Generally, users recognise that although some alternative sources of data do exist, the Census is the only source that allows detailed cross tabulations and it provides the best geographical coverage.

6.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score = 7

Information on number of vehicles would be analysed with a wide range of other Census variables to achieve the uses outlined in the user need section.

Analyses with economic activity, travel to work, household composition, income (if collected), age, sex, ethnicity, health, tenure, NS-SEC and accommodation type are all suggested by users.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets comments that, *"mapping information against household details, employment/study patterns and mode of journey to work is used to establish whether the vehicle numbers adequately meet the transport needs of the household"*.

A number of users including the House of Commons Library suggest that cross tabulating number of vehicles by public transport users would aid travel to work outputs.

6.6 UK Comparability: Score = 6

Users have a requirement for information on number of vehicles on a consistent basis from local to national levels within the UK so that comparisons between different areas can be made. The data is vital for national and strategic traffic authorities and service providers. UK wide data is also required to inform national transport policy and accessibility assessments.

6.7 Continuity: Score = 10

Respondents agree that continuity will be maintained if a question on number of vehicles is asked in the 2011 census because it has appeared on the Census since 1971.

6.8 Conclusion

The consultation responses identified a number of uses of data on number of vehicles from the Census. The strongest need is for central and local government transport planning and policy making, particularly relating to issues of accessibility. Data is required to a very low level of geography such as OA or SOA level to meet the user needs. A range of potential alternative sources of data are available but none of them can provide data down to the level of geographical detail required. There is a very clear case for multivariate analysis and a recognised need for data at UK level. Data on number of vehicles has been collected in the Census since 1971.

The score that this topic receives currently keeps it in category 2. This means that further work will be undertaken before a final decision is made as to whether to include this topic in the 2011 Census.

7. Accommodation on more than one floor: Total score = 42

7.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005 the topic of whether a household's accommodation is on more than one floor was placed in category 3, meaning that ONS did not believe the user requirement was sufficient to justify the inclusion of this topic in the 2011 Census.

There were over 15 responses received commenting on the subject of whether a household's accommodation is on more than one floor from a variety of local authority and other data users.

7.2 User Need: Score=5

The majority of consultation responses submitted by users for this topic suggested these data are required to help assess the suitability of housing in local areas and therefore inform local housing policies. For example, Carmarthenshire County Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council believe information on whether a household's accommodation is on more than one floor would aid planning of local accommodation given the ever increasing elderly population, and inform the development of housing policies for people with impaired mobility.

Other uses were given for requiring these data. Users proposed the information could be analysed to help assess localised deprivation and also provide data on the characteristics of housing in a particular area.

Some respondents noted that this information would be useful for assisting research into the number of falls elderly people have and also that these data could be beneficial for the emergency services in their planning.

7.3 Small Geographies and Small Populations: Score=6

The consultation identified a requirement for users to be able to recognise small concentrations of deprived housing and also distinguish particular groups of the population, such as the elderly, that may have certain housing needs.

7.4 Alternative Sources: Score=3

Respondents to the consultation proposed some alternative sources that could be used to obtain information on whether a household's accommodation is on more than one floor such as Council Tax records, local housing surveys and commercial sources. It was also suggested that the Integrated Household Survey may be able to provide comparable data. However, users made clear that the quality of these sources is unlikely to be as good as the Census.

7.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=4

A moderate case was made by respondents for using this topic for multivariate analysis. It was proposed that if the information could be linked to other housing data gathered from the Census it may improve housing policy formulation.

7.6 UK Comparability: Score=2

There was not a strong case made for requiring these data across the UK. However, some respondents suggested it would be important to get a UK-wide view on housing condition and therefore this information would be required to enable comparable data to be available in different areas.

7.7 Continuity: Score=0

This information has not been collected on previous Censuses in England and Wales, but was collected in Northern Ireland in 2001.

7.8 Conclusion

Users' responses to the consultation demonstrated a modest requirement for information from the Census on whether a household's accommodation is on more than one floor. It is clear that the information would be useful for assessing housing suitability in small areas and may also help to inform planning for the emergency services. If collected, a case was made as to why small areas and specific population groups would need to be identified in Census outputs. However, users cited some alternative sources for the information, and did not make a strong case for requiring these data for multivariate analysis or needing the information across the UK. Additionally, if the 2011 Census was to collect this information it would not help to maintain continuity of questionnaire content in England and Wales.

ONS does not believe that the consultation identified a strong enough requirement to consider further the collection of information on whether a household's accommodation is on more than one floor. Consequently, this topic remains in category 3 and will not be considered for inclusion in the 2011 Census any further. However, it should be noted that NISRA (Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency), who collected this information in their 2001 Census, are still considering the case for its inclusion.

8. Central Heating: Topic score = 64

8.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005, the topic of central heating was placed in category 2, meaning that ONS believed that further work was required before a decision could be made on whether to include this topic in the 2011 Census.

There were over 60 responses received commenting on the subject of central heating from a variety of central government, local authority and other data users.

8.2 User Need: Score=6

A range of potential uses of information on central heating have been identified from across the Census user community.

Information on central heating is an important indicator in relation to the government's policies on fuel poverty. The DTI and Defra fuel poverty teams stated that *"this variable helps us in the monitoring of policies to eradicate fuel poverty. The eradication of fuel poverty is a DTI Performance Service Agreement target and underpins one of the four goals of the Energy White Paper"*.

Central heating access is also a useful indicator of basic housing standards and housing quality. Hampshire County Council stated that *"the availability of central heating is now regarded as one of the essential characteristics of a decent home, the absence of which is likely to be a good indicator of other inadequate amenities"*. Information on the numbers and types of homes without access to central heating would be used by local authorities for the development and monitoring of policies to improve housing quality.

Access to central heating is also relevant to ODPM's Decent Home Standard and to the Housing Health and Safety Rating Standard. ODPM stated that *"the latter is being introduced as the new legal minimum standard for housing and includes assessing dwellings for risks associated with excess cold"*.

The inclusion of a question on central heating in the Census would also help to identify housing deprivation. Access to central heating is used as a measure of deprivation in the 'Living Environment' domain of the index of multiple deprivation. Westminster City Council said that *"unavailability of central heating remains a significant problem, particularly where the numbers of people living in private rented dwellings is still high, and is a key indicator of housing deprivation"*. Information on housing deprivation is a critical factor in developing and prioritising neighbourhood initiatives.

Information on central heating could also be used to investigate the relationship between increased morbidity and people living in inadequately heated homes, and to model carbon dioxide emissions.

8.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score=9

Information on central heating would be required for small geographies because homes without central heating are likely to be clustered in particular geographic locations. The Anglia Support Partnership stated that *"the 2001 Census showed some geographic areas and some population groups with a greater proportion of properties with no central heating. If the data was collected at too great a geographic level, small pockets of people would be missed"*. Users suggest that information is required at Output Area level because of this.

A question on central heating would need to identify small population groups to allow the uses outlined in the User Need section of this report to be completed effectively.

8.4 Alternative Sources: Score=5

There are a number of alternative sources of central heating data that go some way to meeting user requirements, including the English House Condition Survey, local authority housing stock condition surveys, and information from landlords. However, these sources do not fully satisfy user requirements. The data are not available for a small enough level of geography and cannot be cross-classified with other Census variables. Local surveys are also likely to miss pockets where quality of housing may still be a problem.

The DTI and Defra fuel poverty teams stated that if this information is not collected in the Census then *"we will have to consider other alternatives using the English House Condition Survey. One option would be to use modelling programmes based on academic projects, linking preponderance to fuel poverty with other variables available from the Census"*.

8.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=7

Information on central heating would be analysed with most other Census variables. Analyses with other topics related to aspects of deprivation, and with income (if collected) to help in the identification of groups and areas affected by fuel poverty, are suggested by various users.

8.6 UK Comparability: Score=8

Almost all users who responded to the consultation stated that central heating information is required for the whole of the UK. This is essential for deprivation rankings and would allow the data to be analysed nationally in a consistent and comparable manner. ODPM stated that *"it is important to provide consistent and comparable information across the UK to allow developed administrations to monitor their policies relating to stock condition and fuel poverty"*.

8.7 Continuity: Score=7

Information on central heating was collected in both the 1991 and 2001 Censuses.

8.8 Conclusion

The consultation responses identified a number of different uses for data on central heating from a variety of respondents. Of these uses, informing policy development and monitoring is the most common reason that respondents cited for requiring the information.

The majority of users requested that the data should be available at small levels of geography and this should be Output Area level if all users are to be satisfied. A number of alternative sources were identified, however these do not fully satisfy user requirements. A good case was made for using central heating data for multivariate analysis, and it is clear that the information is required across the UK for consistency and comparability reasons. A question about central heating has been asked in both the 1991 and 2001 Censuses.

There is a continuing user requirement for this information at detailed levels of geography. However, the inclusion of this topic in the 2011 Census is dependent on the space available on the questionnaire and its relative priority compared with other household questions that could be included. Therefore, the topic of central heating remains in category two.

9. Bath/shower and toilet access: Total score = 56

9.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005 the topic of bath/shower and toilet access was placed in category 3, meaning that ONS did not believe the user requirement was sufficient to justify the inclusion of this topic in the 2011 Census.

There were over 65 responses received commenting on the subject of bath/shower and toilet access from a variety of central government, local authority and other data users.

9.2 User Need: Score=5

Users indicated through the consultation that this information is used for a variety of purposes relating to housing policies.

A number of respondents suggested information on bath/shower and toilet access is a useful indicator of housing quality and can also be used to help assess housing deprivation/housing suitability in local areas. This requirement was predominantly put forward by local authorities, although it should be noted that other users such as SCOPE also indicated this as their main requirement for these data.

A number of local authority respondents use this information to help target housing improvement services more effectively and suggest that whilst the national figure of households without bath/shower and toilet access might be low, those households that do not have access tend to be concentrated in small geographical areas and therefore it was argued that detailed Census data is still required.

A need from central government has also been identified. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) stated that this information is a useful indicator of housing standards and stated that it is *"relevant to the ODPM's Decent Home standard and to the Housing Health and Safety Rating Standard (HHSRS). The latter being introduced as a new legal minimum standard for housing"*.

Despite users citing uses for these data, it should be noted that 20 respondents to the consultation suggested that the usefulness of the information in 2011 would be debatable and would support the topic being dropped from the 2011 Census questionnaire.

9.3 Small Geographies and Small Populations: Score=9

Respondents made a strong case for ONS releasing this information at detailed geographical levels. It was argued households that do not have bath/shower and toilet access are concentrated in small areas, and therefore these data are required at low levels of geography to ensure differentials between communities can be identified.

9.4 Alternative Sources: Score=5

Users suggested a range of potential alternative sources that could be used including local and national housing condition surveys and studies, data held by local councils and the Integrated Household Survey. It was also suggested that other housing quality indicators could be used instead of data on bath/shower and toilet access.

However, users had concerns regarding the quality of data that would be available from these options and some respondents did not believe suitable alternative sources exist.

9.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=5

Many users suggested that the majority of household variables and also any topics related to deprivation could be used in conjunction with data on bath/shower and toilet access.

ODPM indicated that combined with other housing quality indicators this information could potentially be used for grant allocation.

9.6 UK Comparability: Score=3

Some users made a case for these data being required at a UK level, stating that geographical comparisons at low levels are necessary across the UK. Additionally, it was suggested this information is required to provide a UK-wide benchmark. However, several users did not make a strong case for requiring data on this topic for the whole of the UK.

9.7 Continuity: Score=10

This topic has been collected on many previous Censuses in England and Wales.

9.8 Conclusion

Users have made a case for the collection of data on bath/shower and toilet access within their consultation responses. It has been made clear that these data are used for assessing housing quality and therefore inform policies relating to improving housing. However, a number of respondents did not believe these data would be vital for its requirements in 2011. A strong case was made to release the data at detailed levels of geography to enable small pockets of deprivation to be identified, and despite some reservations, users suggested possible alternative sources for gathering this information. There is evidence of some requirement for multivariate analysis to be carried out with these data and respondents made a moderate case for this data being important across the UK. Collecting these data would ensure continuity with previous Censuses in England and Wales.

Whilst a case has been made to collect these data, ONS has placed the topic of bath/shower and toilet access in category 3 and will therefore not be considering the case for its inclusion in the 2011 Census further. This judgement has been made by considering the relative user need for this topic with the consultation responses received for other topics, constraints on questionnaire space and also the number of respondents that indicated that this topic was no longer considered crucial for assessing housing quality.

It should be noted that a new measure of housing quality is ideally required to replace bath shower and toilet access, so the 'additional quality of housing measure' topic has been placed in category 2 and will be considered further in the coming months. If a suitable alternative measure can be found and is included in the 2011 Census, it is possible data on this topic could, to some degree, satisfy the user requirement identified through the consultation relating to bath/shower and toilet access.

10. Lowest floor level: Topic score = 54

10.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005 the topic of lowest floor level was placed in category 3, meaning that ONS did not believe the user requirement was sufficient to justify the inclusion of this topic the in 2011 Census.

There were over 40 responses received commenting on the subject of lowest floor level from a variety of central government, local authority and other data users.

10.2 User Need: Score=6

The consultation responses suggested that the key use for this information is to aid the assessment of housing accessibility and policies relating to the suitability of housing for certain population groups. For example, The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister stated that data relating to *"lowest floor level would be useful for measuring access for disabled people"*. Many other users suggested similar reasons for requiring this information, such as informing policies concerned with how housing suitability relates to social exclusion and giving local measures of inappropriate housing.

Several local government respondents believed that information on lowest floor level informs a number of more general housing policies and is significant in aiding housing forecast assessments, particularly for public sector housing. It was also suggested that these data are used for measuring social exclusion, estimating the number of households without garden access and to meet statutory town planning obligations.

10.3 Small Geographies and Small Populations: Score=8

There was a clear requirement to release these data at detailed geographical levels. Sub-ward data was seen as important by the majority of users with some suggesting that Super Output Area level data is necessary.

This information is also needed for small population groups given that a key use of the data is to identify the suitability of housing for specific populations such as the disabled and the elderly.

10.4 Alternative Sources: Score=3

Several alternative sources for collecting this information were suggested by respondents. It was commented that the information could be gathered from localised surveys and also national housing surveys. It was also indicated that council tax records, commercial sources and the Integrated Household Survey could potentially provide this information for users of Census data.

However, it should be noted that concerns exist within the user community as to whether the quality of these data would satisfy user requirements.

10.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=4

Respondents suggested that a number of household and basic demographic variables would be used in conjunction with lowest floor level information. However, few reasons were given as to why multivariate analysis was required.

10.6 UK Comparability: Score=6

Users indicated that this information was required across the UK to allow cross border comparisons to be made and also to provide data users with nationally consistent baseline data. It was also suggested that UK comparability was important to facilitate a uniform approach for measuring social exclusion across the UK and help to inform UK-wide housing policies.

10.7 Continuity: Score=5

This information was collected from the 2001 Census in England and Wales, but had not previously been included on the Census.

10.8 Conclusion

A modest user requirement for these data exists to enable users to analyse housing suitability for certain population groups and also inform housing and social exclusion policies. There is evidence that these data are required at small geographical levels and also for small population groups. Respondents to the consultation suggested some alternative ways of gathering this information and made a moderate case for needing to perform multivariate analysis using lowest floor level data. Users indicated a requirement to be able to obtain this information at a UK level and collecting these data from the 2011 Census would provide continuity with the 2001 Census.

Despite a number of users outlining a requirement for this data, ONS does not believe that the consultation identified a strong enough requirement to further consider the collection of lowest floor level. Therefore, this data item has been classified as a category 3 topic.

This judgment has been made on the basis of the strength of the user requirement compared to other topics and considerations relating to the constraints surrounding questionnaire space in the 2011 Census. It should also be noted that the consultation identified some users who no longer considered this a useful variable to collect from the Census.

11. Garden access: Topic score = 47

11.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005, the topic of garden access was not mentioned. 14 responses were received on this topic predominantly from local authorities. A response was also received from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

11.2 User Need: Score = 5

DfES argue that, given the new legislative duties on private landlords and on the public sector with regard to accessibility, there is a case for adding questions on outside space, including garden, courtyard or terrace.

At a local government level, the user need identified is for policy development and planning purposes. The London Borough of Camden suggests that information would be used to calculate open space deficiency which is a statutory requirement in the Local Development Framework. The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham state that, *"this information is increasingly important in environmental planning; especially the potential for home composting and household access to outside amenity space"*. The London Borough of Camden supports this view, and adds that the use of the data for recycling and composting is a key audit commission performance indicator.

Access to a garden is seen as a reflection of housing quality, which can also indicate quality of life. It is suggested that families with children require outdoor space for play, drying and recreation. The London Borough of Camden comments that the data can be used to tackle discrimination against families with children.

There were a number of respondents who did not produce a response specifically on garden access but expressed an interest on using data on lowest floor level as a proxy for people without a garden.

11.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score = 7

Data on garden access is required at a local level to identify areas of need. The London Borough of Newham states that, *"it will be useful to identify areas with a need for communal outdoor space as well as households in inappropriate housing, e.g. families without access to outdoor space"*. They go on to comment that, *"local data is important in varied inner city areas"*.

11.4 Alternative Sources: Score = 3

Users identified that some information on garden access could be obtained from maps. However, this would not give any information on types of people that have access to a garden. The London Borough of Camden suggests that, *"information could be collected from surveys, but not to the level of detail required"*.

11.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score = 6

There is a requirement for multivariate analysis of garden access with a number of other Census variables. The most interest is in analyses with; age, gender, tenure, household composition, families with dependent children, economic activity, ethnicity, disability and NS-SEC.

11.6 UK Comparability: Score = 5

There is a requirement for consistent and comparable data for the whole of the UK. The main reason for this is so that local areas can be compared with other areas and national averages.

11.7 Continuity: Score = 0

A question on garden access has not appeared in any previous UK Census.

11.8 Conclusion

The consultation responses identified a number of uses of data on garden access mainly from local government users. The strongest of these needs would be for local government policy monitoring and planning. Data would be required at local levels to meet the user needs. The only alternative sources of information do not allow the multivariate analyses that users require. There is an interest in data at UK level and a question on access to a garden has never appeared on any previous Censuses.

Although there is a user requirement for this information to be collected, this requirement is limited. Therefore, the topic of garden access has been placed in category 3. This means that no question testing is being carried out for this topic and at this point in time, a question on garden access is not being considered for inclusion in the 2011 Census.

12. Internet access: Total score = 54

12.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005, the topic of Internet access was placed in category 3, meaning that ONS believed that there was insufficient evidence of user demand to justify the inclusion of this topic in the 2011 Census.

There were over 35 responses received commenting on the subject of Internet access from local government and other data users.

12.2 User Need: Score=6

A number of potential uses of information on Internet access have been identified from Census users.

The main use of this data would be to inform policy development. People's social and economic opportunities can be constrained if they do not have access to the Internet, and information on the numbers and locations of people without Internet access is needed to develop policies to deal with this. Worcestershire County Council stated that *"research suggests Internet use and availability is strongly linked to other factors such as age, income, location, and deprivation. The Census provides the ideal opportunity to examine these locally and influence relevant policies"*.

Information on Internet access could also be used as an indicator of social exclusion. Surrey County Council said that *"as more services are available by Internet, lack of access will increasingly be a cause of exclusion"*.

The inclusion of a question on Internet access in the Census could also support the delivery of effective electronic government systems under the e-Government Agenda. Local authorities are subject to government targets for e-governance, both in terms of provision and take-up of e-services. Birmingham City Council stated that *"we need to know in which parts of the city and which communities there are low percentages of access so we can a) ensure that they are offered opportunities to access the Internet if they want to and b) are not excluded from service/information provision by their lack of Internet access"*.

Information on Internet access could also be used as an indicator of housing quality, and to determine whether the Internet could be an appropriate medium for the delivery of health promotions or marketing.

12.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score=7

Information on Internet access would be required for small geographies because there is likely to be a lot of local variation in levels of access. Having information available at a low level of geography would enable local policy initiatives to be targeted effectively. Users suggest that information would be required at Super Output Area level to achieve this.

A question on Internet access would need to identify small population groups as it is likely that there are considerable differences in access between different sectors of the population. This would enable potentially socially excluded populations to be identified.

12.4 Alternative Sources: Score=4

There are a number of alternative sources of Internet access data that go some way to meeting user requirements, including a number of household surveys, such as the Expenditure and Food Survey and the General Household Survey, and modelled estimates from CACI Ltd. However, these sources do not fully satisfy

user requirements. The data are not available for a small enough level of geography and cannot be cross-classified with other Census variables. It is also difficult to establish how accurate the modelled estimates are.

Cheshire County Council stated that *"survey data are available at regional, district and sub-regional levels. However, these do not provide information on variations within districts and so do not enable public sector bodies to develop and target their policies as effectively as they otherwise could"*.

12.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=5

Information on Internet access could be analysed with a number of other Census variables.

Analyses with other variables related to social exclusion are suggested by a number of respondents.

12.6 UK Comparability: Score=8

Almost all users who responded to the consultation stated that Internet access information is required for the whole of the UK. This would support the delivery of the e-Government Agenda and would allow the data to be analysed nationally in a consistent and comparable manner.

12.7 Continuity: Score=0

A question on Internet access has not been asked in any previous Census.

12.8 Conclusion

Informing policy development was the most common reason cited by respondents for requiring information on Internet access. The majority of users requested that the data should be available at Super Output Area level if all users are to be satisfied. There are a number of alternative sources of data on Internet access, although none of these fully satisfies user requirements. There is some interest in using the information for multivariate analysis, and a strong requirement for the information to be available for the whole of the UK. A question about Internet access has not been included in the Census before.

There is a user requirement for this information to be collected. However, the likelihood of rapid change in usage, together with the time between the collection and publication of Census results, would greatly lessen the utility of any outputs. It is acknowledged by many users that the Census is not an appropriate vehicle for collecting this information. Therefore, the topic of Internet access remains in category 3.

13. Smoke alarms: Total score = 57

13.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005, the topic of smoke alarms was not mentioned. However, responses were received from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and Cumbria County Council supporting the collection of information on smoke alarms from the 2011 Census.

13.2 User Need: Score=6

Information on smoke alarm ownership would be used to target resources effectively. ODPM stated that the information would be *"an invaluable resource for the fire and rescue service in improving its targeting of areas with households at risk from fire and its consequences"*. Cumbria County Council stated that the information would enable them to *"identify those areas where we should concentrate our efforts in raising the profile of safety, and installation of smoke alarms"*.

Information on smoke alarm ownership could also help ODPM to achieve their Public Service Agreement (PSA) target 3, which is to reduce deaths from accidental dwelling fires by 20% by 2010.

13.3 Small Geographies and Populations: Score=10

Information on smoke alarms would be required for small geographies so that areas with high proportions of people without smoke alarms can be targeted. Information would be required at Output Area level to achieve this.

ODPM stated that the information is required for small areas so that *"smoke alarm ownership can be identified within Fire and Rescue Authority areas"*. Cumbria County Council stated that the information *"would be very useful at small area levels so that we can identify those areas where we should concentrate our efforts in raising the profile of safety, and installation of smoke alarms"*.

13.4 Alternative Sources: Score=6

Information on smoke alarm ownership is available from the English House Condition Survey and the Survey of English Housing. However, this information is only available at regional level.

Local surveys also collect some information on smoke alarm ownership, however, the sample sizes used are too small and the data is not available at a small enough level of geography.

13.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=3

Information on smoke alarm ownership could be analysed with other Census variables. ODPM suggested that analyses with age, disability, ethnicity, housing type, and housing tenure would enable the targeting of areas with households at risk of fire to be improved.

13.6 UK Comparability: Score=3

Although there is not a strong requirement for information on smoke alarm ownership to be available for the UK as a whole, it would be useful to help to achieve national targets for the fire service.

13.7 Continuity: Score=0

A question on smoke alarms has not been included in any previous Census.

13.8 Conclusion

Respondents suggested that information on smoke alarms would be used to target resources and to achieve ODPM's PSA target 3. The data should be

available at Output Area level if all users are to be satisfied. Alternative sources of information on smoke alarms are available, however, there are problems associated with these sources and they do not fully satisfy user requirements. There is some interest in using the information for multivariate analysis, however, there is not a strong requirement for the data to be available for the whole of the UK. No question about smoke alarms has been asked in previous UK Censuses.

Although the consultation responses identified a user requirement for information on smoke alarms, ONS does not believe that this requirement is strong enough to justify collecting this information from the 2011 Census. Consequently, the topic of smoke alarms has been classified as a category 3 topic and the collection of such information from the 2011 Census will not be considered further.

14. Pet ownership: Total score = 40

14.1 Introduction

In the ONS consultation document published in May 2005, the topic of pet ownership was not mentioned. However, three responses were received supporting the collection of information on pet ownership from the 2011 Census. Responses were received from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), Liverpool Primary Care Trust and the North West Public Health Intelligence Unit.

14.2 User Need: Score=4

The responses received about pet ownership suggest that data collected from the 2011 Census on this topic would predominantly satisfy a research requirement.

Both Liverpool Primary Care Trust and the North West Public Health Intelligence Unit indicated the data is required to benefit research into the public health benefits of owning dogs and other pets. The latter respondent also suggested the data "*would assist with planning of services relating to domestic pets*".

Additionally, the RSPCA believed that information on pet ownership would help local authorities to comply with the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 by assessing the number of dogs in a local area, and also aid research into the mental health benefits of pet ownership. This user also commented that Census data relating to pet ownership would benefit the RSPCA and veterinarians in planning the provision of boarding accommodation for animals in need.

14.3 Small Geographies and Small Populations: Score=7

Both the RSPCA and North West Public Health Intelligence Unit require this information at a local level, with the former respondent believing that the data should be released at small levels of geography due to the variances in pet ownership between communities.

14.4 Alternative Sources: Score=3

It was commented that the General Household Survey, Omnibus Survey and other local health and lifestyle surveys could collect information on pet ownership. Moreover, the RSPCA comment that the Pet Food Manufacturers Association possess data relating to this topic.

It should be noted that some concerns were expressed relating to the quality of these alternative sources.

14.5 Multivariate Analysis: Score=6

Respondents expressed a desire to link pet ownership information with health and dwelling type data from the 2011 Census. This would aid research into the relationship between pet ownership and an individual's health.

14.6 UK Comparability: Score=2

There was no clear desire to release UK-wide Census data on pet ownership. However, the RSPCA believed that their Scottish and Northern Irish equivalents would also require the information.

14.7 Continuity: Score=0

Information relating to pet ownership has not previously been collected from the Census in England and Wales.

14.8 Conclusion

The consultation identified a moderate user requirement for Census information on pet ownership. Respondents suggested that the main use for this information would be to aid research into the health benefits of individuals owning a pet. A case was made to release these data at low geographical levels, and some alternative sources for gathering this information were suggested. A requirement exists to link pet ownership data to other Census variables. However, little evidence was given to suggest that the data is required across the UK from the 2011 and the data has not been collected from a previous Census in England and Wales.

ONS does not believe that responses received from the consultation suggest there is a strong enough user requirement to gather this information from the 2011 Census. Consequently, the topic of pet ownership has been classified as a category 3 topic and ONS does not plan to further consider the collection of data on pet ownership from the 2011 Census.