

Advisory Group Paper (99)04

POPULATION DEFINITIONS FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

1. This paper outlines the conclusions that have been reached regarding the definitions and enumeration methodologies which will be used in the 2001 Census.
2. **Advisory Group members are asked to note the paper**

April 1999

POPULATION DEFINITIONS FOR THE 2001 CENSUS

Introduction

This paper outlines the conclusions that have been reached regarding the definitions and enumeration methodologies, which will be used in the 2001 Census. The decisions represent the culmination of a research project which has involved extensive consultation with users of Census data. The Census Offices are grateful for the input provided by Census users, particularly through the Census Advisory and Working Groups.

The definitions covered are:

- the main population base (residents)
- the definitions of a resident with respect to
 - people in households
 - people with more than one address
 - students and schoolchildren
 - service families and civilian married quarters
 - people in communal establishments
- the definition of a household
- the definition of a communal establishment including
 - small hotels and guesthouses
 - sheltered accommodation
 - nurses' homes and students' hostels
 - military establishments
- the information to be collected from visitors (people at an address on Census night but who usually live elsewhere)
- the definition of a dwelling
- the information to be collected at accommodation not used as a main residence
- the information to be collected at accommodation that is vacant at the time of the Census
- persons sleeping rough

This paper does not cover the derivation and definitions of output variables such as household/family composition. This will be part of the consultation on the statistical output from the Census.

The Main Population Base

The 2001 Census will be conducted on a resident basis. That is, the statistics will relate to where persons usually live as opposed to where they are on Census night. Information will be collected from the census form completed at the home address. It is intended that households from which no form is returned will be estimated and included in the final counts.

Household Residents

A household resident will be any person who usually lives at the address; or who has no other usual address.

The enumeration of persons with more than one address will be consistent with that implemented in the 1991 Census:

For persons with more than one address (e.g. Armed Forces personnel, persons who work away from home and other persons who have two or more addresses) the usual address will be where the person spends the majority of his/her time, unless they are married, cohabiting or have dependent children at another address. In the latter instance, the usual address will be where the person's 'family' resides in order to maintain household and family composition.

Students and Schoolchildren

In the 1991 Census

Students and schoolchildren were enumerated at their home address. This was not consistent with the mid-year population estimates and created problems for persons completing Census forms on behalf of children over 18. Evaluation after the 1991 Census found that parents of higher education students often did not know what, if any, economic activities their children were undertaking.

In the 1997 Census Test:

Students and schoolchildren were enumerated as resident at their term-time address, in line with the population estimates. At their vacation address (if different) basic demographic data was collected (name, age, sex, marital status and relationship).

The endorsed enumeration methodology for the 2001 Census is that:

Students and schoolchildren will be enumerated as resident at their term-time address. At their vacation address (if different) basic demographic data will be collected (name, age, sex, marital status and relationship).

Service Families and Civilian Married Quarters

The enumeration of service families and civilians living in married quarters will be consistent with that implemented in the 1991 Census.

Service families or civilians, living in married quarters as part of a military establishment will be enumerated as private households whether the quarters are located within or outside the boundaries of the establishment.

The 'Household' Definition

Research since the 1991 Census has indicated that the definition of a household applied in the 1991 Census may not have been the most appropriate. Various alternatives have been tested. In most cases these involved minor modifications but in 1998 a more radical alternative was tested based on the following definition of a household:

One person living on their own with their own kitchen or cooking facilities

or

A group of people (not necessarily related) sharing a kitchen or cooking facilities.

This was tested alongside the definition used in the 1991 Census (see below) so the two could be compared. The 1991 household definition was:

One person living alone

or

A group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping - that is, sharing at least one meal a day or sharing a living room or sitting room.

Although this was a relatively small-scale test based on approximately 1,700 households results indicated that:

- Overall the public's perceptions of a household may not be in line with the 1991 household definition;
- Although the numbers were very small the 1998 household definition was observed to improve the coverage of individuals in households;
- There was very little indication that a change in the household definition would dramatically change the number of households; and
- The identification of households in multi-occupied buildings remained problematic (Jones, 1998).

The results of the test were set out in Advisory Group Paper 98(12), available from the Census Offices or the ONS Web Site (www.ons.gov.uk), and support the findings from research at the time of, and since, the 1991 Census. The household definition used in the 1991 Census and applied elsewhere is not the most acceptable. This is particularly so for households of unrelated adults.

However, there was little in the way of strong quantifiable evidence from this test to suggest an effect on the number of households and individuals counted.

It was accordingly decided that the 2001 Census should adopt the same definition as for the 1991 Census, namely that a *household* is defined as:

One person living alone

Or

A group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping – sharing at least one meal a day or sharing a living room or sitting room.

Communal Establishments

In general, communal establishments share the following characteristics:

- they are non-private dwellings or units of accommodation;
- they are used for a specific purpose;
- they accommodate a particular group of the population for example prisoners, the sick, persons on holiday and persons in education.

The 1991 Census identified just under 56,000 communal establishments containing just over 833,000 residents in Great Britain. The majority of the establishments and residents were found in the medical and care sectors.

Communal Establishment Residents

The 1991 Census

In the 1991 Census a communal establishment resident was defined as any person who has spent six months or more in the establishment.

The disadvantage with this approach was that any person who had just moved into the establishment and intended to live there for the majority of the forthcoming year was technically excluded from the resident count. For example, elderly persons who had just moved into a residential home, nursing home or sheltered accommodation would not have been counted as residents.

The 1997 Census Test

To overcome the shortcomings of the 1991 approach the communal establishment usual resident definition was changed in the 1997 Census Test to:

- Any person who has been living, or intends to live, in the establishment for six months or more; or
- Who is a UK resident visiting the establishment but who does not have a usual address elsewhere in the UK; or
- Who is a foreign visitor who intends to live in the UK for 6 months or more and currently has no other usual address in the UK.

The reference to 'UK' and 'foreign' led to some confusion so the wording of the definition has been amended for the 2001 Census to:

The basic household resident definition will apply but where clarification is needed a resident will be any person who has been living, or intends to live, in the establishment for six months or more.

Further, people visiting the establishment but who do not have a usual address elsewhere will also be classified as a resident.

The Enumeration of Absent Residents in Communal Establishments

In 1991 absent residents in communal establishments were not left Census forms for completion on their return. To rectify this small omission, the endorsed enumeration methodology for the 2001 Census is that:

Absent usual residents will be left a Census form for statutory completion on their return to the establishment.

The Definition of a Communal Establishment

In the 1991 Census and the 1997 Census Test:

The definition of a communal establishment for the 1991 Census and the 1997 Census Test was:

an establishment in which some form of communal catering was provided.

The disadvantage of this definition was that the design and structure of certain types of establishment (e.g. nurses' homes, student halls of residence, care in the community homes) have changed from places where meals and catering facilities are shared by all residents, to places where kitchen facilities are shared in small units within the establishment.

In the 1991 Census and the 1997 Census Test this disadvantage was overcome by listing the problem or 'grey' areas in the Enumerator Instruction Manual and directing Enumerators to classify all such cases as communal establishments. Recent work has focused on minimising these problems and providing a more appropriate definition for communal establishments while maintaining overall comparability with the types of establishment identified in the 1991 Census.

In the 2001 Census:

For the 2001 Census a communal establishment will be defined as '*providing managed residential accommodation*'.

The specification of 'managed' will be:

Full-time or part-time supervision of residential accommodation.

From a Census operational perspective this will be interpreted as:

The availability of someone in charge to take responsibility for the Census Listing and Individual Forms.

In most cases (e.g. prisons, large hospitals, hotels) communal establishments can be easily identified. However, difficulties can arise with small hotels, guest houses, sheltered accommodation, nurses' homes and student hostels. Separate consideration has been given to these special cases.

Small Hotels and Guest Houses:

In the 1991 Census:

The minimum size for defining small hotels and guest houses was ten rooms. However, those that contained fewer than ten rooms were classified as communal establishments if there were present on Census night any resident staff other than the proprietor and his/her family or five or more guests.

The use of rooms in the 1991 specification was often problematic as it raised questions as to what constitutes a room. Further, the total number of rooms does not accurately reflect the size of the establishment, as there may be a substantial number of total rooms but only a small number of rooms that are for guest use.

In the 1997 Census Test:

The number of guestrooms was used as a deciding factor in defining small hotels and guest houses as communal establishments. An establishment, with less than ten guestrooms, was only treated as a communal establishment if there was a resident member of staff, other than the owner/manager and his/her family on Test night.

In the 2001 Census:

Since the 1997 Census Test, further research has been undertaken to look at how the 2001 Census would identify small guest houses as communal establishments. It was generally agreed that the use of total rooms was inadequate but that the use of guestrooms was an improvement. This agreement, together with the fact that for the first time the 2001 Census will pre-list communal establishments for enumerators resulted in the endorsement of the following definition:

Small hotels and guest houses will be enumerated as communal establishments if they have the capacity to have 10 or more guests, excluding the owner/manager and his/her family.

Sheltered Accommodation

In the 2001 Census:

The enumeration of sheltered accommodation will be consistent with that implemented in the 1991 Census.

The endorsed enumeration methodology is that:

Sheltered housing will be treated as a communal establishment if less than half the residents possess their own facilities for cooking. If half or more possess their own facilities for cooking (regardless of use) the whole establishment will be treated as separate households.

Nurses' Homes and Students' Hostels

In the 1991 Census:

Nurses' homes and students' hostels with self-catering facilities were enumerated as communal establishments if there was someone in charge to take responsibility for issuing the Census forms. Otherwise, each person, or group of persons sharing meals or accommodation, was treated as a separate household.

In the 2001 Census:

The endorsed enumeration methodology for the 2001 Census is that:

The general definition of a communal establishment has been changed. Indeed it now reflects the approach taken with nurses' homes and students' hostels in 1991.

Visitors

The collection of information from visitors (people staying at an address on Census night who usually live elsewhere).

In the 1991 Census:

Visitors to an address on Census night were required to complete a Census form in full at this address as well as their usual address.

The disadvantage of such an approach was that it unnecessarily increased the burden on the public as the information was not used extensively. Also it may have led to an undercount of

usual residents as some visitors may have felt that they had satisfied their legal obligation by completing a Census form at the address they were visiting and consequently failed to complete a Census form on returning to their usual address.

In the 2001 Census:

The approach to be adopted in the 2001 Census is that:

Name and usual address will be collected from visitors in households and name only from visitors in communal establishments. The information will only be collected to help householders and managers of communal establishments to distinguish residents and visitors. It is not intended that counts of visitors will be provided in statistics.

The Enumeration of Visitor Only Households

As in the 1991 Census, all addresses where someone is living at the time of the Census will be given a form to complete. However, with the switch to a resident base, households containing only visitors – such as holiday or second homes occupied on Census night – will only be required to provide the names and addresses of everyone present on Census night together with information about the accommodation.

The Definition of a Dwelling

In the 1991 Census:

Dwellings were defined as:

'structurally separate accommodation'.

This was determined primarily by considering the type of accommodation including supplementary details on separate or shared access to multi-occupied properties. More specifically, these criteria were applied to produce a more detailed classification of dwellings including:

- Unshared dwellings - purpose built;
- Unshared dwellings – converted;
- Unshared dwellings – not self-contained;
- Shared dwellings – not self-contained.

In the 2001 Census:

A dwelling will be defined as:

'a self-contained unit of accommodation'.

Information on dwellings will be derived from details on type of accommodation and self-containment. In view of the difficulties experienced by enumerators in 1991, separate and shared entrances will not be used to differentiate properties in 2001. The loss of information on separate or shared entrances will mean that any accommodation which has its own entrance but is not self-contained will not be defined as a dwelling. Although this represents a change from the procedures adopted in 1991, the overall effect on the count of unshared and shared dwellings will be negligible. Results from the 1997 Census Test indicated that it would affect 0.07% of all dwellings with residents.

Count of Dwellings

There is a stated requirement for a count of dwellings (self-contained units of accommodation) from the 2001 Census. In view of the drawbacks associated with traditional methods of linking households to buildings using field based procedures, an alternative process based solution has been proposed for the 2001 Census. This will involve selecting households which are not self-contained and linking them with any other non-self-contained households at the same address. Such an automated processing based approach should provide a more consistent and accurate method of deriving a count of dwellings. Despite these methodological changes, the underlying definition of a dwelling will remain largely the same as in 1991. The only change will be the exclusion of the separate entrance criterion.

Absent Households Vacant and Other Accommodation

Enumerators will complete dummy forms for absent households, vacant accommodation second homes and holiday accommodation.

Absent Households

In the 1991 Census enumerators were asked to estimate the number of residents and to provide basic information about the type of accommodation and number of rooms. In view of operational difficulties associated with the derivation of a count of rooms this information will not be collected in 2001. However, enumerators will be expected to provide an estimate of usual residents, information on type of accommodation, self-containment and lowest floor level.

Vacant Accommodation

In 1991 enumerators were instructed to treat any residential accommodation as vacant if the property was new but not yet occupied, the accommodation was being converted or improved and was not yet occupied or the property was unoccupied for some other reason.

Following consultation it has been agreed that procedures for the 2001 Census should be simplified. As a result there will be one category for all types of vacant accommodation. Basic information on the type of accommodation, self-containment and lowest floor level will be collected.

Accommodation Not Used as a Main Residence

The 1991 enumeration procedures made provision for the identification of both second homes and holiday accommodation. Second residences included company flats, holiday houses and weekend cottages in permanent buildings, which were known to be the second residences of people who had a more permanent address elsewhere and which were unoccupied on Census night. Accommodation in permanent buildings which were let to different occupiers for holidays, for example self-catering holiday flats, were defined as holiday accommodation if they were unoccupied on Census night.

In view of the problems associated with the identification and classification of second homes and holiday accommodation and the limitations of the data collected in 1991, the proposal to adopt a single category for second homes and holiday accommodation in the 2001 Census has been agreed. Basic information on type of accommodation, self-containment and lowest floor level will be collected.

Persons Sleeping Rough

While mainstream census operations are capable of dealing with the 'relatively homeless' that is, those living in inadequate housing or in various forms of temporary accommodation such as refuges, hostels and boarding houses, special procedures will be needed to deal with those identified as 'absolutely homeless' that is 'persons sleeping rough'. The adoption of a resident base for the 2001 Census means that anyone found to be sleeping rough who does not have anywhere else to live will be counted. In view of the risks associated with double counting and the difficulty of verifying returns using standard coverage checks, it would seem best to limit the count to a fixed time period, that is Census night. Such a snapshot will not provide a comprehensive record of everyone in an area with a history of sleeping rough.

Many of the field and operational procedures adopted in 1991 will be applicable in 2001 including arrangements relating to the identification and enumeration of those living at designated sites and the provision enabling someone else to complete a Census form on behalf of a rough sleeper. It is anticipated that 'persons sleeping rough' will be required to complete all the questions on a standard 'Individual' form.