

# 2011: getting it all together

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*DUG Conference, 2 October 2008*



## Overview

- *Remember I'm a long-time supporter of the census!*
- Some reflections on 2001
- Where have we got to since then?
- Implications of TsC "Counting the Population"
- Getting it all together for 2011 (and a quick trip to Belgium...)
- Future challenges: for debate



## Some reflections on 2001

- *Not a review of the entire census*
- Overall, a successful census
- Operational challenges (address listing, gaining entry, foot and mouth, mail-back)
- Overall cost £254m
- High coverage but local failures (Westminster, Manchester)
- Data from 2003...



## Where have we got to since then?

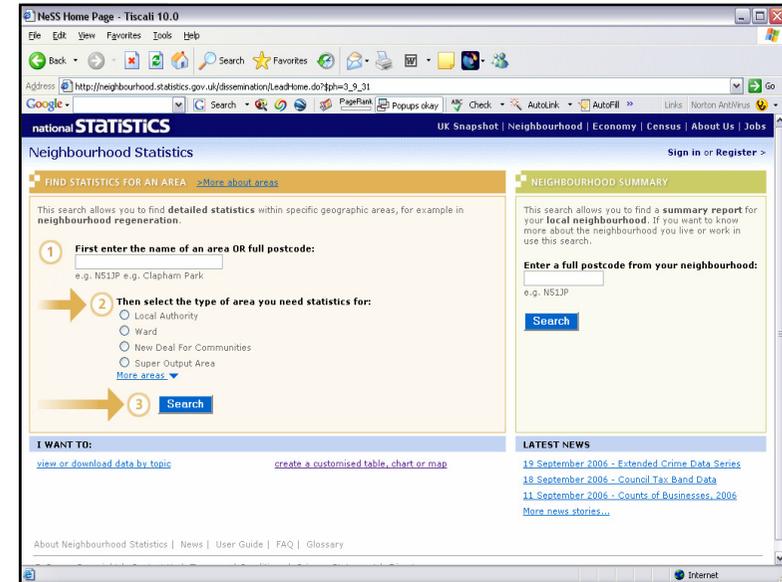
- Resolving the Westminsters and Manchesters
- Neighbourhood Statistics, small area MYEs, ID2004, ID2007
- International retreat from censuses
- "Counting the Population"
- Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007





## Resolving the Westminster and Manchesters...

- And 13 other local authorities
- Enumeration failures too great for imputation methods
- Recourse to administrative lists, especially council tax registers to resolve differences
- Acknowledgement of address listing and household structures at heart of response difficulties



NeSS Home Page - Tiscali 10.0

Address: http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadHome.do?sp=3\_9\_31

national STATISTICS

Neighbourhood Statistics

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**FIND STATISTICS FOR AN AREA** [More about areas](#)

This search allows you to find detailed statistics within specific geographic areas, for example in neighbourhood regeneration.

1 First enter the name of an area OR full postcode:  
e.g. NS1JP e.g. Clapham Park

2 Then select the type of area you need statistics for:  
 Local Authority  
 Ward  
 New Deal For Communities  
 Super Output Area  
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3 Search

**NEIGHBOURHOOD SUMMARY**

This search allows you to find a summary report for your local neighbourhood. If you want to know more about the neighbourhood you live or work in use this search.

Enter a full postcode from your neighbourhood:  
e.g. NS1JP

Search

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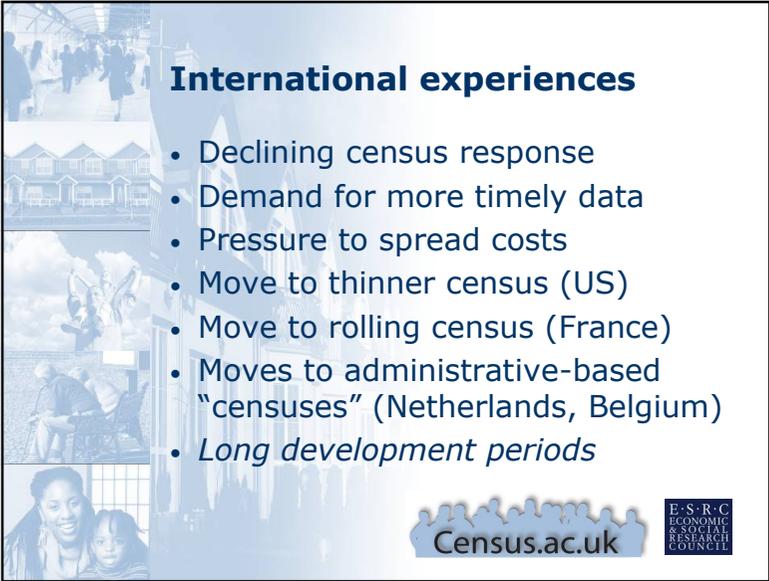
## Neighbourhood Statistics

- Neighbourhood Statistics Services, initially due to renewal strategy
- Became a principal census dissemination channel
- Updated administrative data from multiple departments
- Aggregate-level integration using common NeSS geography built on OAs/LSOAs/MSOAs



## Small area population estimates, ID2004, ID2007...

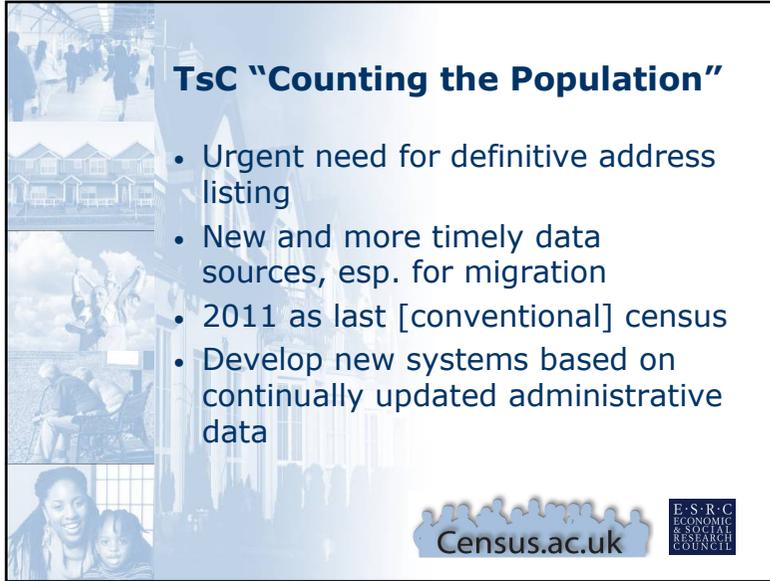
- LSOA-level MYEs from census, patient, child, older persons lists, and demographic modelling
- ID2004, ID2007 drawing together record-level data from multiple sources inc. DWP, aggregated to common LSOA geography, hence comparable 2004-7



## International experiences

- Declining census response
- Demand for more timely data
- Pressure to spread costs
- Move to thinner census (US)
- Move to rolling census (France)
- Moves to administrative-based "censuses" (Netherlands, Belgium)
- *Long development periods*

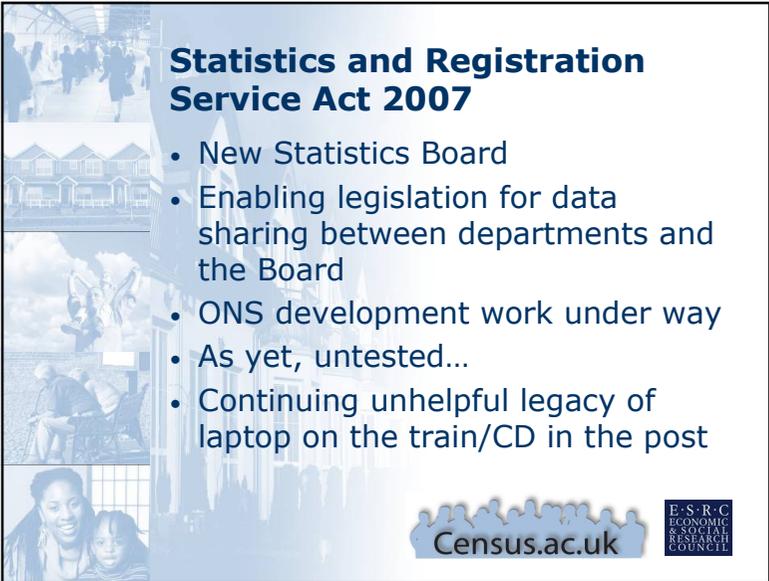
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## TsC "Counting the Population"

- Urgent need for definitive address listing
- New and more timely data sources, esp. for migration
- 2011 as last [conventional] census
- Develop new systems based on continually updated administrative data

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## Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007

- New Statistics Board
- Enabling legislation for data sharing between departments and the Board
- ONS development work under way
- As yet, untested...
- Continuing unhelpful legacy of laptop on the train/CD in the post

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## Getting it all together for 2011

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## 2011 census planning

- Broadly conventional census, with internet completion channel
- Mail-out and mail-back
- Flexible enumeration effort focused on most difficult areas
- Extended imputation methodology
- Stability of 2001 OA geography
- Overall cost ~£500m
- Importance of address listing...

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## Can we get it all together by 2011?

- If there is no subsequent census, 2011 needs to be *very good*
- We need to be able to benchmark as many sources as possible against 2011:
  - (1) validate, (2) build alternative
- ONS needs to match records and compare all available options

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### A quick trip to Belgium...

- Conventional censuses 1846-1991
- National population register 1985-
- 1991 conventional census, based on register
- non-response, high cost over short period, wait for data
- "The days of classic censuses in Belgium are long gone" General socio-economic survey 2001

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### Four principal lists...

- Education
- Housing (90-95% accurate?)
- Social security inc. employment, economic activity
- Business register
- Temporary linkage uniquely for purpose of "census" based on register number
- 5% survey at same time (2011)

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### So what does the administrative system look like?

```

    graph TD
      Surveys[Surveys] --> Education[Education]
      Surveys --> SocialSecurity[Social security]
      Education --> Housing[Housing]
      SocialSecurity --> BusinessRegister[Business register]
      Housing <--> BusinessRegister
      subgraph RegisterNumbers [Register numbers]
        Housing
        BusinessRegister
      end
  
```

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### See how long does it all take?

- Foundation datasets in place
- Technical options considered
- Debate over acceptability
- Legal pathways established
- Implementation and validation
- Users need reliable data in the meantime

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## What are the fundamental administrative elements?

Persons

Common identifiers

Properties

Businesses

Belgium, Denmark, Finland...

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## What exists in the UK?

Census, NHSCR, DWP, PLASC, DVLA, IPS

e-Borders  
APS, IPS, etc...

NHS, Nino, TOID...

Census, Council tax, NLPG, PAF/MMAL2

Inter-departmental business register

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## Future challenges: for debate 1

- Is this all inevitable? [Probably]
- If so, we need urgent acceleration through that lengthy process
- We need a detailed plan in order to have the debate
- Can it be done without a person ID?
- Can it be done before 2021?

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## Future challenges: for debate 2

- We need a truly reliable baseline: 2011 might be the only chance
- Need to capture and keep safe all the 2011 data
- What data might go in from the business sector?
- What about going *beyond* this – daytime populations, mobile populations, other?

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