



UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN

AREA STATISTICS MEETING

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Censuses: A Great History

- ‘Modern’ censuses since 1801
- Increasing trajectory in quality and, importantly, variety of use since then
- 2011 the best ever!!

Initial Motivation

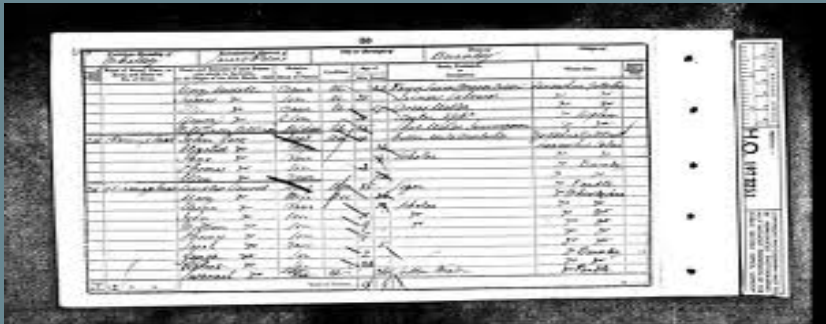
- Rickman (1798) 12 reasons
 - 'the intimate knowledge of any country must form the rational basis of legislation and diplomacy'
 - 'an industrious population is the basic power and resource of any nation, and therefore its size needs to be known'
 - 'the number of men who were required for conscription to the militia in different areas should reflect the area's population'
 - 'there were defence reasons for wanting to know the number of seamen'
 - 'the need to plan the production of corn and thus to know the number of people who had to be fed'
 - 'a census would indicate the Government's intention to promote the public good' and
 - 'the life insurance industry would be stimulated by the results.'

ONS 2010

- Targeting investment where it is most needed
- Planning for provision of services to match local need
- Policy making and monitoring
- **Academic** and Market Research

This Consultation

- Welcome



- Technology, Open Data, Demand present opportunities

BUT

- In a climate of fiscal austerity

Some examples of reasons for local level data I. Ethnicity

- Ethnicity needs a high degree of granularity
- Both definition and spatial variability
- Eg a) Newly accession countries; b) chain migration



II Health variability is local and cause differential

Torry

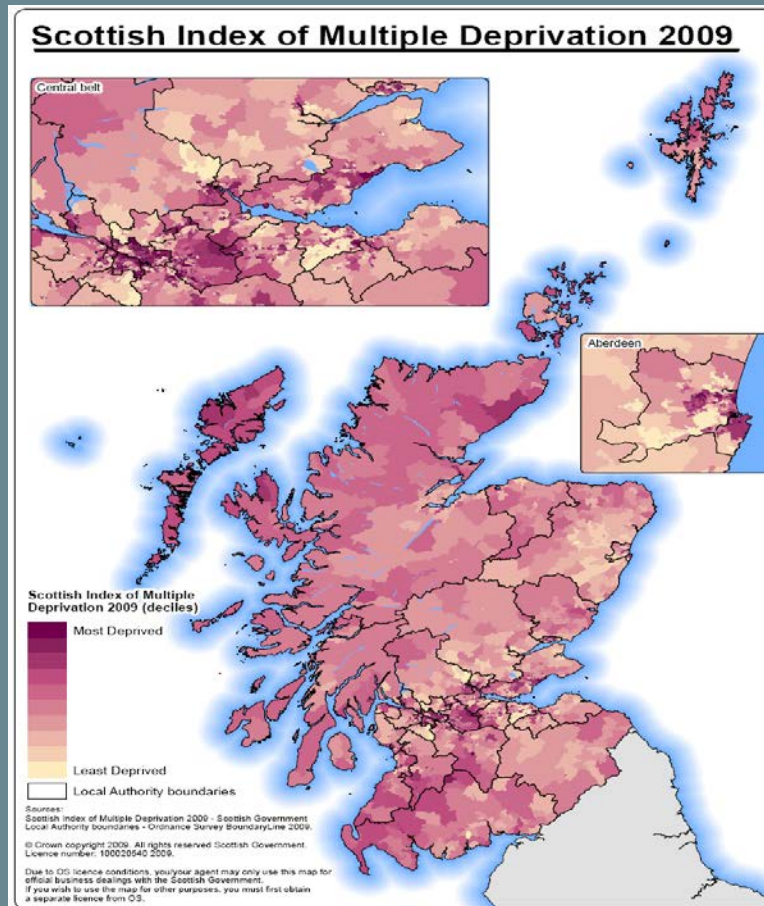


Bieldside





III Disadvantage is local → Policy needs to be local



IV. Education

- Informed schools policy needs rich local data

Admin Updated Online Census

- Natural development of last two hundred years
- Discussion thus far around standard face to face with an online option cf 2011/Canada

BUT

- By 2021 a true online census more than possible

Admin Updated Online Census

- Development of address lists and, by 2021, increasing online presence and knowledge
- Major publicity would be needed
- Could need very limited fieldwork
- Regular updates which could include simple attributes could be organised to be very timely
- Highest accuracy for local inter censal population estimates (comment imputed from results of Simpson et al, 1996)
- (Could well be) Cheapest and most granular

Survey Updated Admin Census I.

- Data clearly based on what can be collected by administrative sources – a return to 1801?
- Coverage – unclear on many questions particularly around household structure and migration
- Challenges of survey non-response – likely to be higher in areas of most need could be alleviated by sophisticated non-response imputation but at price of timeliness

Survey Updated Admin Census II.

- Update to LA based estimates – presumably could get rich data
- Loss of local data would likely have huge impact in many policy areas
- (Could well be) more expensive option, less timely updates, less granular

Could well be?

- Need urgent and clear research programme, analysis and engagement