

## Response ID ANON-TX5D-M5FX-5

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### About you

Are you answering this questionnaire on behalf of an organisation or as an individual?

Organisation

Please tell us a bit about you.

Name of your organisation (if applicable):

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

Name:

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What sector do you work in? This will assist us in monitoring the range of users the consultation has reached.

Other (please specify – text box)

Other sector:

Learned Society and Professional Body

May we contact you to discuss your response to this consultation? This may be to follow up any specific points that we need to clarify.

Yes

May we contact you in future about the Census Transformation Programme and the 2021 Census? This may be to inform you of further consultations, to provide updated information about the Census Transformation Programme, or to provide a link to the results of this consultation.

Yes

To support transparency in our decision making process, responses to this consultation will be made public. This will include the name of the responding organisation or individual. Please confirm that you are content for your name to be published. We will not publish personal contact details. Please be aware that any information provided in response to this consultation could be made publicly available if requested under a Freedom of Information request.

Yes, I consent to my name being published with my response

### Introduction and 2021 Census design context

Please confirm you have read and understood this important background information.

Yes, I have read and understood the information on this page.

### Topic: Output and enumeration bases

Was there enough flexibility in the output bases available from the 2011 Census?

Not Answered

If no, which output bases were missing?:

Please describe the impact on you/your work of not having information on those output bases.

Impact on you/your work of not having information on those output bases:

### Topic: Basic demographics and household composition

1a Do you currently use 2011 Census information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition?

Yes

**1b If yes, what do you currently use information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition for? Select all that apply.**

Research requirement

**Enter response in the following field:**

**1c How do you currently use information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition? For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

Geographers make extensive use of basic demographic indicators such as age and sex for a wide range of GIS and mapping applications. There is extensive use of aggregate statistics down to the smallest output areas. The ability to define study-specific small areas is key to relating census aggregate data to non-census data sources, including information about the physical environment, to previous censuses, and for employability calculations such as accessibility modelling.

Geographers also employ ONS census postcode directories to permit weighted allocation of population counts to non-standard geographical units. The development of flood risk models provides an illustration of the essential nature of small area statistics. Because areas prone to flooding are highly localised, reflecting watercourses and local terrain, the exposure of populations to flood hazards must be modelled at a very high geographical resolution. It is therefore essential to use demographic data and population characteristics for the smallest possible areas that can be integrated with physical flood mapping.

**2a To what extent do you agree with ONS's initial view on whether the following Basic Demographics and Household Composition sub-topics are collected in the 2021 Census?**

**Age:**

Agree

**Sex:**

Agree

**Marital or legal partnership status :**

Not Answered

**Household and family relationships:**

Not Answered

**2b Please indicate the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition in the 2021 Census.**

**Age:**

Not Answered

**Sex:**

Not Answered

**Marital or legal partnership status :**

Not Answered

**Household and family relationships :**

Not Answered

**2c If you indicated high or medium impact please describe the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the sub-topic in the 2021 Census. It's really important that you tell us about the impact as this will form an important part of our evaluation. For example:**

If you are commenting on more than one Basic Demographics and Household Composition sub-topic, please use a paragraph per sub-topic, beginning each paragraph with the sub-topic name, in the field below.:

**3a At what geographical level do you currently use information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition? Select all that apply.**

Output area, Super output area, Ward, Local authority, Regional, National

**3b If you need information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition for small geographies please describe how you use it. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

Geographers are frequently concerned to estimate population characteristics for small areas which relate to the physical environment or to policy areas which are unrelated to census geography. Census outputs at the smallest output area level are essential if the best estimates are to be made of population statistics for these non-standard geographical units. Extensive use is made of ONS census postcode directories in order to make the most appropriate assignments between non-standard areas.

**4 If you need information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition for small population groups please describe how you use it and the impact on you/your organisation if it were not available.**

Enter response in the following field:

**5a How important is UK comparability for information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition?**

Not Answered

**5b Please describe how your use of information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition requires UK comparability. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**6a Which England and Wales censuses have you compared the 2011 Census Basic Demographics and Household Composition data with?**

**6b Please describe how you have used comparisons from previous censuses for Basic Demographics and Household Composition. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**7a To what extent do you need to use information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition with information about other census topics?**

Frequently with a wide range of other topics

**7b Please describe how you use information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition with information about other census topics.**

Enter response in the following field:

The basic demographic data is a core requirement in combination with every other census topic and many non-census sources, particularly in order to establish age- and sex-specific prevalence and exposure rates in the general population and in sub-groups.

**7c Please list the other topics that you need to use information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition with.**

Enter response in the following field:

**8a Do alternative (non-census) sources of information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition meet your current requirements?**

Not Answered

**8b Please tell us about the alternative sources of information about Basic Demographics and Household Composition that you use. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

### **Topic: Housing**

**1a Do you currently use 2011 Census information about Housing?**

Yes

**1b If yes, what do you currently use information about Housing for? Select all that apply.**

Research requirement

Enter response in the following field:

**1c How do you currently use information about Housing? For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

Census housing, ethnicity, employment and travel to work data are central to the evidence needed to understand current and potential future needs.

With continued population growth and the failure of housing supply to keep up with demand, housing remains a major policy concern. Local Authorities rely heavily on small area housing and population characteristics data from the census in order to deliver effective housing policies. Across both planning and management, housing is a field in which realisation of national objectives is critically dependent on having small area data.

The census provides the only detailed combination of information about population characteristics and housing stock, including dwelling types and tenure patterns for the smallest geographical areas. Without this data the local authority would be unable to have a clear understanding of the characteristics and needs of

communities at the very local level which enables the most effective targeting of scarce resources.

**2a To what extent do you agree with ONS's initial view on whether the following Housing sub-topics are collected in the 2021 Census?**

**Type and self-containment of accommodation:**

Not Answered

**Tenure and landlord (if renting):**

Not Answered

**Number of rooms:**

Disagree

**Number of bedrooms:**

Not Answered

**Type of central heating:**

Not Answered

**Cars or vans:**

Not Answered

**2b Please indicate the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Housing sub-topics in the 2021 Census.**

**Type and self-containment of accommodation:**

Not Answered

**Tenure and landlord (if renting):**

Not Answered

**Number of rooms:**

High

**Number of bedrooms:**

Not Answered

**Type of central heating:**

Not Answered

**Cars or vans:**

Not Answered

**2c If you indicated high or medium impact please describe the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Housing sub-topics in the 2021 Census. It's really important that you tell us about the impact as this will form an important part of our evaluation. For example:**

Number of rooms

**If you are commenting on more than one housing sub-topic, please use a paragraph per sub-topic, beginning each paragraph with the sub-topic name, in the field below.:**

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data are not yet comprehensive in their coverage of the dwelling stock. These data are therefore unlikely to provide an adequate alternative to the comprehensive coverage achieved by the Census.

**3a At what geographical level do you currently use information about Housing? Select all that apply.**

Output area, Super output area, Ward, Local authority, Regional, National

**3b If you need information about Housing for small geographies please describe how you use it. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

Geographers are frequently concerned to estimate population characteristics for small areas which relate to the physical environment or to policy areas which are unrelated to census geography. Census outputs at the smallest output area level are essential if the best estimates are to be made of population statistics for these non-standard geographical units. Housing is a key topic in this context, due to its very close relationship to the basic settlement distribution and presence of residential populations.

**4 If you need information about Housing for small population groups please describe how you use it and the impact on you/your organisation if it were not available.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**5a How important is UK comparability for information about Housing?**

Not Answered

**5b Please describe how your use of information about Housing requires UK comparability. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**6a Which England and Wales censuses have you compared the 2011 Census Housing data with?**

**6b Please describe how you have used comparisons from previous censuses for Housing. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**7a To what extent do you need to use information about Housing with information about other census topics?**

Not Answered

**7b Please describe how you use information about Housing with information about other census topics.**

Enter response in the following field:

**7c Please list the other topics that you need to use information about Housing with.**

Enter response in the following field:

**8a Do alternative (non-census) sources of information about Housing meet your current requirements?**

Not Answered

**8b Please tell us about the alternative sources of information about Housing that you use. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**Topic: Ethnicity and National Identity**

**1a Do you currently use 2011 Census information about Ethnicity and National Identity?**

Yes

**1b If yes, what do you currently use information about Ethnicity and National Identity for? Select all that apply.**

Research requirement

Enter response in the following field:

**1c How do you currently use information about Ethnicity and National Identity? For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

The census data allow changes in ethnic and religious make-up of populations to be monitored. This informs research on ethnic and religious segregation and integration as well as the planning of culturally appropriate services.

The detailed census characteristics of deprivation and ethnicity were utilised, at the smallest geographical levels, in a study funded by Public Health England and the Medical Research Council, and undertaken by Imperial College and King's College London. The study, which would not have been possible without this small area data, compared data on day-and night-time aircraft noise with hospital admissions and mortality rates among a population of 3.6 million people living near Heathrow airport. Small area data were fundamental to this study as environmental factors such as noise clearly do not conform to administrative boundaries.

Allowing for the effects of ethnicity and deprivation on health, the study found the risks of hospital admissions and deaths from stroke, heart disease and circulatory disease to be higher in areas with high levels of aircraft noise. These findings have been included in a Department of Transport consultation on night flight restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted (November 2013). The study was published in the British Medical Journal:

Hansell, A.L., Blangiardo, M., Fortunato, L., Floud, S., de Hoogh, K., Fecht, D. et.al. (2013) Aircraft noise and cardiovascular disease near Heathrow airport in London: small area study. British Medical Journal, 347: f5432.

**2a To what extent do you agree with ONS's initial view on whether Ethnicity and National Identity is collected in the 2021 Census?**

**Ethnic group:**

Agree

**National identity:**

Agree

**2b Please indicate the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about Ethnicity and National Identity in the 2021 Census.**

**Ethnic group:**

High

**National identity:**

High

**2c If you indicated high or medium impact please describe the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Ethnicity and National Identity sub-topic(s) in the 2021 Census. It's really important that you tell us about the impact as this will form an important part of our evaluation. For example:**

Ethnic group, National identity

**If you are commenting on more than one sub-topic, please use a paragraph per sub-topic, beginning each paragraph with the sub-topic name, in the field below.:**

**Ethnicity:** This topic is one of several in relation to which geographers express great frustration when changes to topic definition or questions prevent consistent analysis over time. We would therefore urge high priority be given to maintaining the ability to match 2021 Census categories with 2011 and previous censuses.

**National identity:** It is vitally important that there is consistency between the four countries of the UK in the way in which information about national identity is collected. Geographers are concerned with UK-wide analysis and with comparative studies between the separate nations of the UK. The ONS must make decisions on data collection in close consultation with counterparts in Scotland and Northern Ireland to ensure that topic selection results in useable data products.

**3a At what geographical level do you currently use information about Ethnicity and National Identity? Select all that apply.**

Output area, Super output area, Ward, Local authority, Regional, National

**3b If you need information about Ethnicity and National Identity for small geographies please describe how you use it. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

Ethnicity is a key dimension of local social variations and often varies over the smallest geographical scales within urban areas. The census is a unique source of detailed small area ethnicity information and is key to understanding of community segregation/integration and also the construction of ethnically standardised local denominator populations.

**4 If you need information about Ethnicity and National Identity for small population groups please describe how you use it and the impact on you/your organisation if it were not available.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**5a How important is UK comparability for information about Ethnicity and National Identity?**

Not Answered

**5b Please describe how your use of information about Ethnicity and National Identity requires UK comparability. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**6a Which England and Wales censuses have you compared the 2011 Census Ethnicity and National Identity data with?**

**6b Please describe how you have used comparisons from previous censuses for Ethnicity and National Identity. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**7a To what extent do you need to use information about Ethnicity and National Identity with information about other census topics?**

Not Answered

**7b Please describe how you use information about Ethnicity and National Identity with information about other census topics.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**7c Please list the other topics that you need to use information about Ethnicity and National Identity with.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**8a Do alternative (non-census) sources of information about Ethnicity and National Identity meet your current requirements?**

Not Answered

**8b Please tell us about the alternative sources of information about Ethnicity and National Identity that you use. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**Topic: Migration and citizenship**

**1a Do you currently use 2011 Census information about Migration and Citizenship?**

Yes

**1b If yes, what do you currently use information about Migration and Citizenship for? Select all that apply.**

Research requirement

Enter response in the following field:

**1c How do you currently use information about Migration and Citizenship? For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

Migration topics are of central interest to geographers and of enormous current policy relevance. Without a rich range of census datasets on these topics many policy challenges are unanswerable. The Census is unique in its high coverage and ability to relate these topics to ethnicity and employment characteristics, for example.

**2a To what extent do you agree with ONS's initial view on whether the following Migration and Citizenship sub-topics are collected in the 2021 Census?**

**Long-term international migration:**

Agree

**Short-term international migration:**

Agree

**Internal migration:**

Agree

**2b Please indicate the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Migration and Citizenship sub-topics in the 2021 Census.**

**Long-term international migration:**

High

**Short-term international migration:**

High

**Internal migration:**

High

**2c If you indicated high or medium impact please describe the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Migration and Citizenship sub-topics in the 2021 Census. It's really important that you tell us about the impact as this will form an important part of our evaluation. For example:**

Long-term international migration, Short-term international migration, Internal migration

**If you are commenting on more than one Migration and Citizenship sub-topic, please use a paragraph per sub-topic, beginning each paragraph with the sub-topic name, in the field below.:**

The small area double-geography datasets relating to migration are key to the ability to analyse migration patterns and at present, no alternative source delivers the combination of fine geographical detail and attribute characteristics that can be delivered by this census topic. The demand for small geographies is especially relevant to the interaction datasets, where the smallest available spatial units are needed for analysis and aggregation.

**3a At what geographical level do you currently use information about Migration and Citizenship? Select all that apply.**

Output area, Super output area, Ward, Local authority, Regional, National

**3b If you need information about Migration and Citizenship for small geographies please describe how you use it. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**4 If you need information about Migration and Citizenship for small population groups please describe how you use it and the impact on you/your organisation if it were not available.**

Enter response in the following field:

**5a How important is UK comparability for information about Migration and Citizenship?**

Not Answered

**5b Please describe how your use of information about Migration and Citizenship requires UK comparability. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**6a Which England and Wales censuses have you compared the 2011 Census Migration and Citizenship data with?**

**6b Please describe how you have used comparisons from previous censuses for Migration and Citizenship. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**7a To what extent do you need to use information about Migration and Citizenship with information about other census topics?**

Not Answered

**7b Please describe how you use information about Migration and Citizenship with information about other census topics.**

Enter response in the following field:

**7c Please list the other topics that you need to use information about Migration and Citizenship with.**

Enter response in the following field:

**8a Do alternative (non-census) sources of information about Migration and Citizenship meet your current requirements?**

Not Answered

**8b Please tell us about the alternative sources of information about Migration and Citizenship that you use. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**Topic: Health**

**1a Do you currently use 2011 Census information about Health?**

Yes

**1b If yes, what do you currently use information about Health for? Select all that apply.**

Research requirement

Enter response in the following field:

**1c How do you currently use information about Health? For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

Information about population, health, employment and jobs, education and skills and groups of people with specific needs will help to describe the 'baseline environment' as required by any sustainability appraisal.

An example of a specific use of Census data on health is in modelling the risks to communities from flooding. Flooding presents a very pressing threat to human life and property in the UK, with an increase in the incidence of major floods in recent years. Flood risk models, such as those developed by HR Wallingford and others, help to inform flood risk assessments which capture the severity of the hazard and sources of flooding at a site. The Wallingford models combine representation of the physical behaviour of floodwater with the representation of the characteristics and behaviour of different population sub-groups. Data on the different vulnerabilities of population groups, such as the elderly and those suffering from long-term limiting illnesses, is incorporated into models to enable estimates of the ease of evacuating the public in the event of a flooding emergency. Ultimately the impact of such models is to save lives and manage the response to emergency situations as effectively as possible.

**2a To what extent do you agree with ONS's initial view on whether the following Health sub-topics are collected in the 2021 Census?**

**General health:**

Agree

**Long-term health problem or disability:**

Disagree

**2b Please indicate the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Health sub-topics in the 2021 Census.**



**General health:**

High

**Long-term health problem or disability:**

High

**2c If you indicated high or medium impact please describe the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Health sub-topics in the 2021 Census. It's really important that you tell us about the impact as this will form an important part of our evaluation. For example:**

If you are commenting on more than one Health sub-topic, please use a paragraph per sub-topic, beginning each paragraph with the sub-topic name, in the field below.:

**3a At what geographical level do you currently use information about Health? Select all that apply.**

Output area, Super output area, Ward, Local authority, Regional, National

**3b If you need information about Health for small geographies please describe how you use it. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**4 If you need information about Health for small population groups please describe how you use it and the impact on you/your organisation if it were not available.**

Enter response in the following field:

**5a How important is UK comparability for information about Health?**

Not Answered

**5b Please describe how your use of information about Health requires UK comparability. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**6a Which England and Wales censuses have you compared the 2011 Census Health data with?**

**6b Please describe how you have used comparisons from previous censuses for Health. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**7a To what extent do you need to use information about Health with information about other census topics?**

Not Answered

**7b Please describe how you use information about Health with information about other census topics.**

Enter response in the following field:

**7c Please list the other topics that you need to use information about Health with.**

Enter response in the following field:

**8a Do alternative (non-census) sources of information about Health meet your current requirements?**

Not Answered

**8b Please tell us about the alternative sources of information about Health that you use. For example:**

Enter response in the following field:

**Topic: Labour market and socio-economic classifications**

**1a Do you currently use 2011 Census information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications?**

Yes

**1b If yes, what do you currently use information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications for? Select all that apply.**

Research requirement

Enter response in the following field:

**1c How do you currently use information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications? For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

It is critical for the Census data to include average household size, age structure and economic activity to ensure that the spatial variation in the occupancy of houses at different times of day can be captured. For example, the National Population Database (NPD) developed by the Health and Safety Laboratory incorporates population characteristics for the smallest possible areas, collected from the census. This data is attached, along with other statistics from government datasets, to map locations provided by the Ordnance Survey. Amongst other uses, the NPD has been used to aid the HSE in the provision of advice on land use around major hazard sites. The small area data on household size, age structure and economic activity, for example, is crucial to the model, so as not to under- or over -estimate the potential populations at risk from some form of hazard.

There has been a very positive response from the geographical community to the creation of 2011 Workplace Zones and the increased workplace population tables afforded by this alternative aggregation. The report of the 2015 Government Statistical Service Geography User Forum notes: 'Workplace Zones are one of the best outputs from the Census and excellent for local economic analysis'.

**2a To what extent do you agree with ONS's initial view on whether the following Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications sub-topics are collected in the 2021 Census?**

**Economic activity:**

Agree

**Occupation:**

Agree

**National Statistics socio-economic classification (NS-SeC):**

Agree

**Industry:**

Neither agree nor disagree

**Supervisory status:**

Disagree

**Year last worked:**

Disagree

**Volunteering and unpaid work:**

Neither agree nor disagree

**2b Please indicate the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications sub-topics in the 2021 Census.**

**Economic activity:**

High

**Occupation:**

High

**National Statistics socio-economic classification (NS-SeC):**

High

**Industry:**

High

**Supervisory status:**

High

**Year last worked:**

High

**Volunteering and unpaid work:**

High

**2c If you indicated high or medium impact please describe the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications sub-topics in the 2021 Census. It's really important that you tell us about the impact as this will form an important part of our evaluation. For example:**

Supervisory status, Year last worked

**If you are commenting on more than one Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications sub-topic, please use a paragraph per sub-topic, beginning each paragraph with the sub-topic name, in the field below.:**

It is of great frustration to the users of Census data when changes to topic definition or questions prevent consistent analysis over time.

Supervisory Status: We disagree with the proposal that 'Supervisory Status' will no longer be collected. It is a major concern if the changes that are made in the 2021 Census impact on the ability to interpret or compare the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC). The NS-SEC is widely used in its own right but also used in other data products, taking a lead from the Census. Specialist user consultation is required before any decision is made to abandon topics involved in the calculation of NS-SEC.

Year last worked: As above, we disagree with the proposal that 'Year last worked' will no longer be collected. It is a major concern if the changes that are made in the 2021 Census impact on the ability to interpret or compare the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC). The NS-SEC is widely used in its own right but also used in other data products, taking a lead from the Census. Specialist user consultation is required before any decision is made to abandon topics involved in the calculation of NS-SEC.

**3a At what geographical level do you currently use information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications? Select all that apply.**

Output area, Super output area, Ward, Local authority, Regional, National, Other

**3b If you need information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications for small geographies please describe how you use it. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

The spatial distribution of place of work is very different to that of residence and small area representations of workplace geography are particularly important to the understanding of local economic activity. Geographers are starting to exploit the new 2011 geography of workplace zones but also make extensive use of derived higher level geographies such as travel to work areas. Again, spatial flexibility is a key consideration which is only possible when small area data are available in the first place.

**4 If you need information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications for small population groups please describe how you use it and the impact on you/your organisation if it were not available.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**5a How important is UK comparability for information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications?**

Not Answered

**5b Please describe how your use of information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications requires UK comparability. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**6a Which England and Wales censuses have you compared the 2011 Census Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications data with?**

**6b Please describe how you have used comparisons from previous censuses for Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**7a To what extent do you need to use information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications with information about other census topics?**

Not Answered

**7b Please describe how you use information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications with information about other census topics.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**7c Please list the other topics that you need to use information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications with.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**8a Do alternative (non-census) sources of information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications meet your current requirements?**

Not Answered

**8b Please tell us about the alternative sources of information about Labour Market and Socio-economic Classifications that you use. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

## Topic: Travel

### 1a Do you currently use 2011 Census information about Travel?

Yes

### 1b If yes, what do you currently use information about Travel for? Select all that apply.

Research requirement

Enter response in the following field:

### 1c How do you currently use information about Travel? For example:

Enter response in the following field:

The small area double-geography datasets relating to travel to work are key to the ability to analyse daily travel patterns and demarcate travel to work areas, widely used in labour market research and policy applications.

Much specialist analysis in support of policy on commuting and migration would be impossible without the robust data covering all small areas that is provided by the census. There are no effective alternatives to the census data on local flows of commuting or migration.

Geographers have been frustrated by inconsistency in production of travel to work data between UK census agencies which lead to incomplete data about cross-border flows.

### 2a To what extent do you agree with ONS's initial view on whether the following Travel sub-topics are collected in the 2021 Census?

Method of transport to place of work:

Agree

Address of place of work:

Agree

Address of place of study:

Neither agree nor disagree

### 2b Please indicate the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Travel sub-topics in the 2021 Census.

Method of transport to place of work:

Not Answered

Address of place of work:

Not Answered

Address of place of study:

Not Answered

### 2c If you indicated high or medium impact please describe the impact on you/your work if ONS did not collect information about the following Travel sub-topics in the 2021 Census. It's really important that you tell us about the impact as this will form an important part of our evaluation. For example:

Address of place of study

If you are commenting on more than one Travel sub-topic, please use a paragraph per sub-topic, beginning each paragraph with the sub-topic name, in the field below.:

There was inconsistency between the use of travel to work (only) data in England and Wales and work/study in Scotland and Northern Ireland in the 2011 Census, which has been an obstacle to UK-wide analysis.

We agree that the present question used in Scotland and Northern Ireland makes it difficult to accurately record information on travel to work and study, whereas the England and Wales question on travel to work is a more limited, but more reliable, question. Travel to place of study remains a very major aspect of daily travel, an important element of transport demand and of policy importance. However,

An alternative source of data should be explored for travel to place of study, rather than use a compromised question.

### 3a At what geographical level do you currently use information about Travel? Select all that apply.

Output area, Super output area, Ward, Local authority, Regional, National

### 3b If you need information about Travel for small geographies please describe how you use it. For example:

**Enter response in the following field:**

The greatest proportion of travel to work and education is over small geographical distances. The recording of small area geographies is essential in order to permit analysis of the full travel pattern and understand the detailed relationship with the transportation network for research and planning.

**4 If you need information about Travel for small population groups please describe how you use it and the impact on you/your organisation if it were not available.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**5a How important is UK comparability for information about Travel?**

Not Answered

**5b Please describe how your use of information about Travel requires UK comparability. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**6a Which England and Wales censuses have you compared the 2011 Census Travel data with?**

**6b Please describe how you have used comparisons from previous censuses for Travel. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**7a To what extent do you need to use information about Travel with information about other census topics?**

Not Answered

**7b Please describe how you use information about Travel with information about other census topics.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**7c Please list the other topics that you need to use information about Travel with.**

**Enter response in the following field:**

**8a Do alternative (non-census) sources of information about Travel meet your current requirements?**

Not Answered

**8b Please tell us about the alternative sources of information about Travel that you use. For example:**

**Enter response in the following field:**

## **Additional information**

**1 Do you have any further comments relevant to this consultation?**

**Please add your comments below:**

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) is not a direct user of data from the Census but represents, as world-leading Learned Society and professional body, a significant community of geographical researchers and practitioners that do so; we are therefore responding on their behalf. We have not responded in detail regarding each individual sub-topic but have made more general points in many places that reflect our community's views. Members of our community will have submitted their own responses to this consultation, with greater detail about how they make use of census data in their own research.

Census data is essential to the education and research undertaken by many geographers. Small area data are crucial to activities in environment, policy, cultural, health and commercial sectors. The strength of these data lies in their flexibility to answer society's important questions – to accurately assess when people will be affected by an emergency or to target a policy that will meet the needs of a particularly disadvantaged group.

In 2014, the Society published a collection of case-studies detailing the importance of small area statistics: 'Small area data – looking towards a 2021 census'. Further information elaborating on the examples we have given in our response to this consultation, along with many other case-studies illustrating the immense value of these data-sets, is available in the booklet: <http://bit.ly/1J7eZhK>.

## **User satisfaction**

**Overall, how satisfied were you with the ONS's online consultation service today?**

Very satisfied

**Please tell us if there are any specific areas for improvement, or if you have any other comments.:**