
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation

Sandra Tudor
Head of Profession for Statistics
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
[by email]

19 July 2018

Dear Sandra

CHANGES TO STATUTORY HOMELESSNESS IN ENGLAND STATISTICS

Thank you for your letter from 26 June, in which you explain your plans to change the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) statutory homelessness statistics, following the introduction of the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act in April. You asked me to consider whether the statutory homelessness statistics should continue to be designated as National Statistics, given the step change in data requirements for local authorities and your concerns about quality.

I agree with your judgement: the National Statistics designation should be removed. Once you are assured about data quality following the transition, we will consider the case for reinstating the designation. In considering your level of assurance, you should use our Quality Assurance of Administrative Data guidance¹, both to inform your judgement of data quality, and to develop guidance for local authorities and users.

I agree with your plans to release the new case-level statistics as experimental statistics and to engage with a range of users when developing the new outputs. This will help to ensure that the value of the new data is fully realised.

I am also grateful for the continued engagement of MHCLG statisticians following our assessment in November 2015² and particularly welcome the efforts the team have made to present statutory homelessness statistics in the broader homelessness context. I also welcome your update on the work to further improve MHCLG's rough sleeping statistics. I look forward to receiving further updates from you on your work to improve homelessness statistics over the coming months.

When you are assured about the quality of the data, it would make sense for us to review the statutory homelessness and rough sleeping statistics together. This will allow us to consider the coherence of the newly developed suite of homelessness statistics.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation

¹ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/osr/systemic-reviews/administrative-data-and-official-statistics/>

² <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/statistics-on-homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-in-england-department-for-communities-and-local-government/>