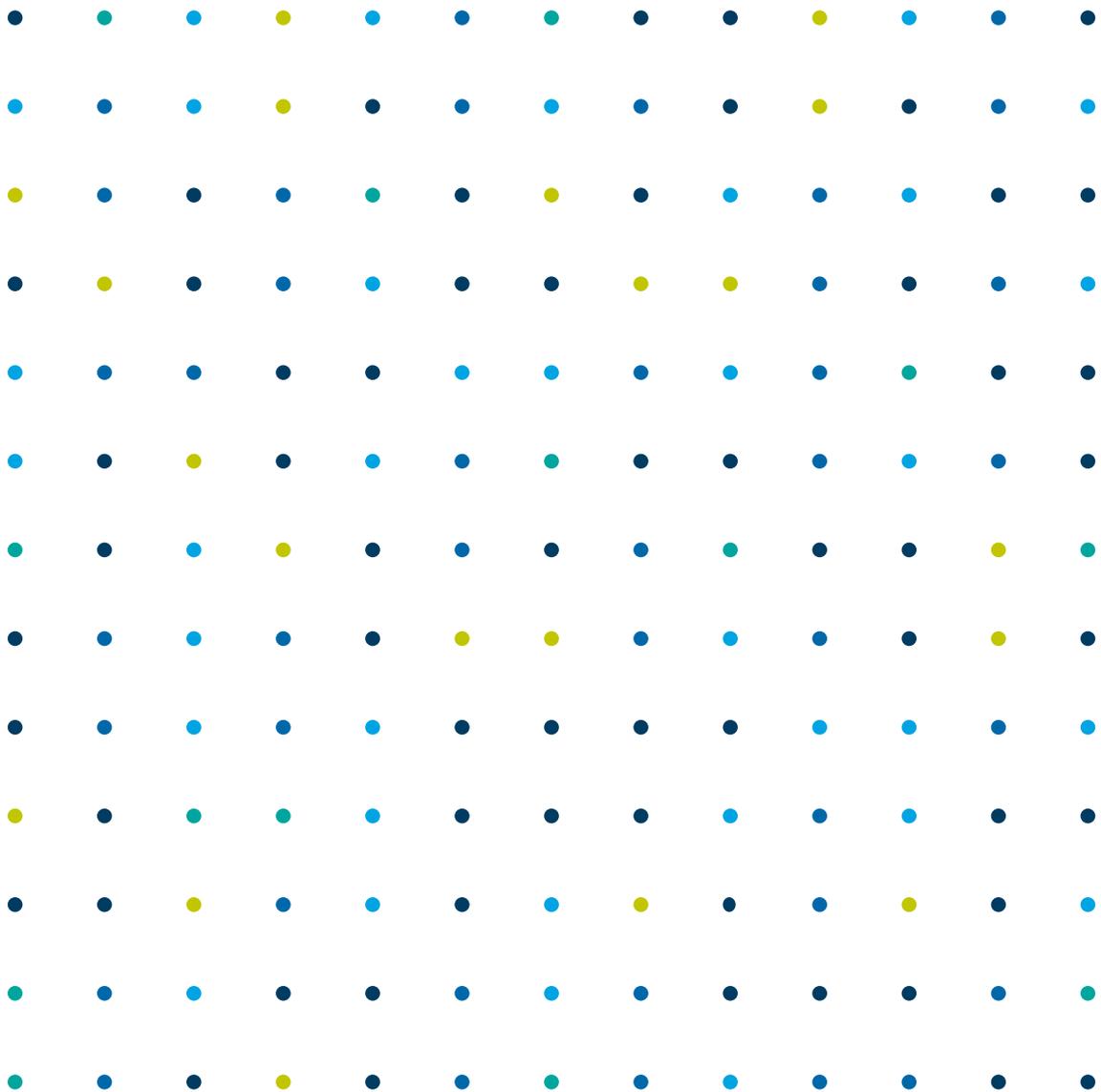


Annual report and accounts

2023/24



UK Statistics Authority

Annual report and accounts 2023-2024

For the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Annual Report presented to Parliament pursuant to section 27(2) of the *Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007*

Accounts presented to the House of Commons pursuant to section 6(4) of the *Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000*

Accounts presented to the House of Lords by command of His Majesty

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Note

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Contents

Introduction	1	01
Chair's foreword	2	
Chief Executive's report	4	

Performance	7	02
Purposes and activity	10	
Overview	13	
Performance analysis	16	
Summary of performance by strategic objective	17	
Key deliverables	21	
Key performance indicators (KPIs)	36	
Resources and organisation	41	
Corporate responsibility	43	

Accountability report	57	03
Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities	58	
Governance statement	59	
Summary financial information	79	
Remuneration report	85	
Staff report	96	
Parliamentary Accountability Report	107	
The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons	114	

Accounts	123	04
Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	124	
Statement of Financial Position	125	
Statement of Cash Flows	126	
Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity	127	

Notes to the Accounts

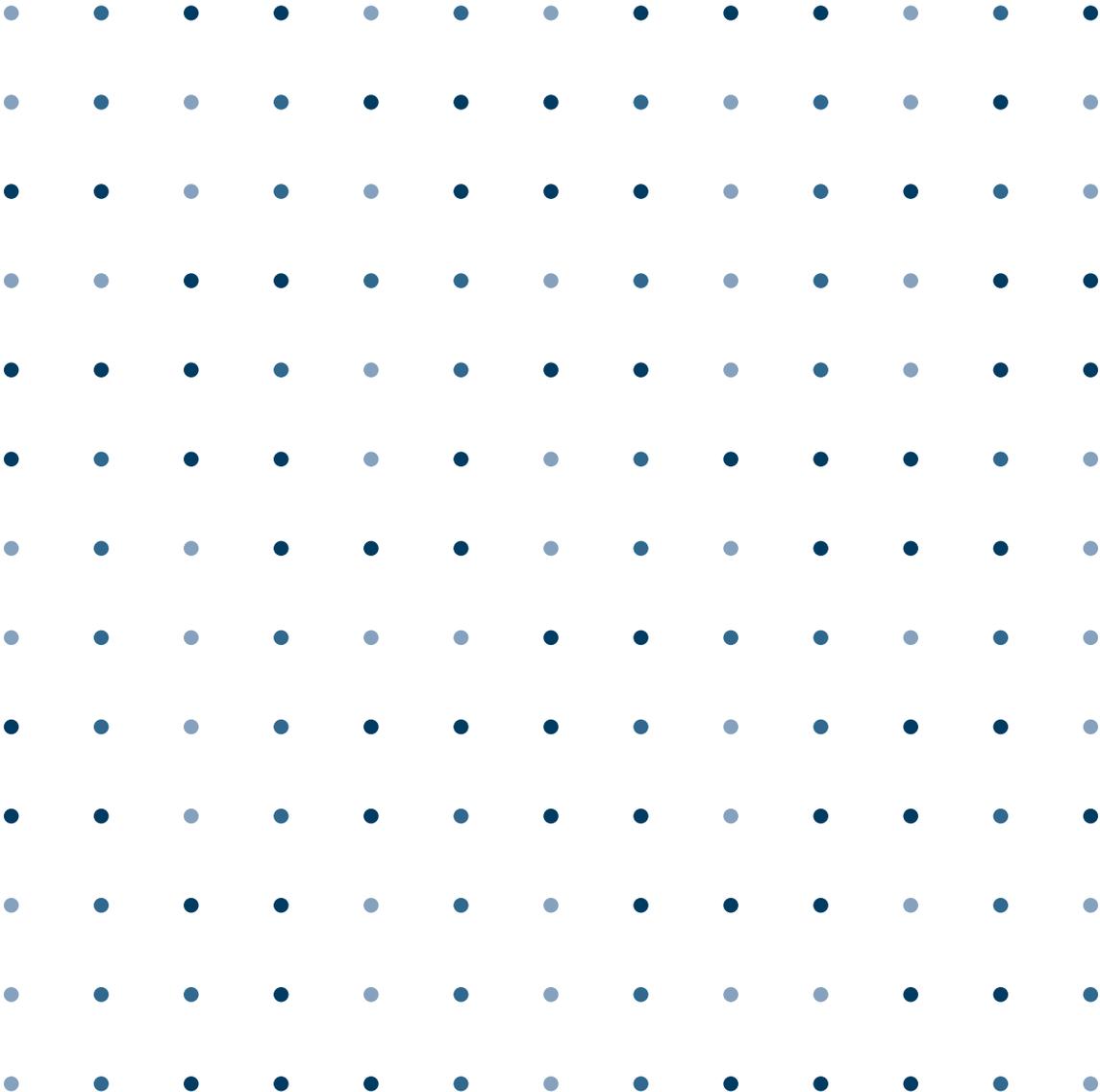
128 04

1. Statement of Accounting Policies and Accounting Convention	128
2. Segmental Information of Expenditure and Income	138
3. Staff Numbers and related Costs	140
4. Programme costs	141
5. Income	142
6. Property, plant and equipment	143
7. Intangible Fixed Assets	144
8. Trade Receivables and Other Assets	150
9. Cash and Cash Equivalents	151
10. Trade Payables and Other Current Liabilities	151
11. Provisions for Liabilities and Charges	152
12. Capital Commitments	153
13. Leases	154
14. Other Financial Commitments	157
15. Contingent Liabilities	157
16. Related Party Transactions	157
17. Events Arising after the Reporting Date	157
18. Date of Authorisation of the Accounts	157

Office for Statistics Regulation Annual Report 2023/24

159

Foreword	160
Our vision	161
Our story of 2023/24 in numbers	164
Our performance	167
Our capability as a regulator	177



Chair's foreword

This is our Annual Report and Accounts for the year 2023/24. This was a year, like those before it, when there was sustained pressure on the statistical system but, once again, colleagues at every level adapted and persevered to deliver and promote the proper use of statistics for the public good. The appetite for high quality insights derived from high quality statistics grows ever stronger.

Capturing the evolution of society and the economy is never straightforward and the impact of the Covid pandemic has continued to pose challenges. It has accelerated the longstanding decline in the response rates for face-to-face household surveys, including those we rely on most to understand developments in the labour market. And it has resulted in large changes in the size and composition of economic activity, complicating the production and communication of the National Accounts.

Meanwhile, financial pressures across the public sector have required the Office for National Statistics to prioritise its outputs and adopt new approaches to some of its most important work. Similar efforts have been required by statistical producers across Whitehall and the devolved administrations. Supporting colleagues through this change has not been the work of a moment – our experience shows it is necessary to be radical and ambitious to remain sustainable and inclusive.

In this testing environment, harnessing and exploiting existing administrative data has remained a key focus, including in the ONS's recent consultation on the future of population and migration statistics. To make the most of administrative data we need better sharing and linking across government and more effective ways to make the fruits of that accessible. One important milestone was the granting of data processor accreditation to the Integrated Data Service in September 2023. But there is more to be done and the National Statistician is right to shine a spotlight on the partnerships that give us the chance to do the most impactful work. We cannot do it alone.

The Office for Statistics Regulation has had a highly productive year, supporting and promoting the virtues of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value that underpin the Code of Practice for Statistics. Its campaign for Intelligent Transparency in the production and communication of official statistics has been increasingly successful and widely recognised, to the benefit of users of all kinds who want to understand the evidence base for government decisions and the full picture behind statistical



claims made by those in public office. It has taken up user concerns around statistical outputs without fear or favour, drawing on external expertise when useful and necessary. The OSR will soon consult on how to update the Code for the first time since 2018 to reflect changing user needs and the evolving statistical environment.

The Board of the Authority continues to offer support and constructive challenge to the ONS, the OSR and the rest of the statistical system. In July we said goodbye to my Deputy Chair Sian Jones and non-executive director Nora Nanayakkara. Both have been wonderful colleagues and have made a huge contribution since joining in 2016. So too has Rob Bumpstead, who departed as Chief of Staff in April, having spent 28 years helping shape the organisation. I wish them all the best in their future endeavours. I look forward to welcoming new non-executive directors later this year.

In March 2024, the Authority welcomed the publication of an independent review of the statistical system undertaken by Professor Denise Lievesley, a world-renowned expert in official statistics. I extend my thanks to Denise for her detailed work and careful consultation with different kinds of users, our international counterparts, and other stakeholders in addition to colleagues at the Authority. We warmly welcome her conclusions and will publish a detailed formal response later this summer.

One of Denise’s recommendations was the calling of a Statistical Assembly, bringing together a wide range of producers, users and other stakeholders to discuss how the system can best deliver for the public good. We are delighted to be taking this forward in partnership with the Royal Statistical Society and I hope that everyone with an interest in what the system can achieve will engage with it. It will help inform the priorities of the ONS and other statistical producers across government, as well as the refreshing of our five-year strategy, *Statistics for the Public Good*.

Let me conclude by offering my personal thanks to everyone working across the statistical system, producing, analysing and communicating a huge range of outputs that inform the public, policy makers and other decision makers. One of the great pleasures of chairing the Authority is to meet week-by-week with colleagues in the ONS, OSR, government departments, public bodies and the devolved administrations and constantly to be inspired by the integrity, dedication and professionalism that they bring to the task – statisticians working for the public good.



Sir Robert Chote
Chair, UK Statistics Authority
July 2024

Chief Executive's report

I am happy to present the UK Statistics Authority's Annual Report and Accounts for the financial year ending in March 2024. This document meets our statutory obligations, providing transparency and accountability for the use of public resource. However, it crucially gives us an opportunity to reflect on the past 12 months focusing on the achievements and challenges of the organisation during that period. Overall, we continue to make substantial progress against our radical, ambitious, inclusive and sustainable strategic aims despite a challenging financial situation. This has ensured we focus and prioritise our activities on the most essential work in a sustainable and efficient manner. This has though meant in some areas, we have not achieved everything we had originally intended.

Public confidence in Official Statistics continues to enjoy a strong reputation, with the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) finding that 87% of respondents trusting the ONS and 85% trusting the statistics we produce. This was despite trust falling in other state institutions during the same period. Within this, we have also continued to play a crucial role in informing Government and the public on priority policy topics, including the continuing impacts of cost of living pressures, migration, economic growth, employment and insight into conflicts across the world. In doing so, we have continued to utilise novel data sources, collaborating with those in government and beyond to enable evidence-based decisions.

A central part of this collaboration has been the development of our shared partnership with the Joint Data and Analysis Centre (JDAC) in Cabinet Office. This has focused on providing urgent insight for key emerging government priorities especially in times of crisis. This has led to the establishment of a permanent surge team of analysts within the ONS which can flexibly move into the National Situation Centre as required. The domestic and international implications of conflict in the Middle East have been a central focus, working with novel shipping data to explore economic impacts. We have also been focused on ensuring the best data and analysis informs national security work.

Following our record 97% response rate to the 2021 Census, we have continued to successfully release insights on various topics over the past year. For example, for the first time we have published the labour market status of veterans, working with the Office for Veteran Affairs, as



well as statistics on the centenarian population in England and Wales, partnering with Age UK. These releases have been enhanced by new interactive tools that enable comparisons across the population for several variables such as health, education, and employment, allowing non-technical users for the first time to extract insights from multivariate Census data previously held in spreadsheets. The release of our Explore Subnational beta statistics service has complemented this, allowing users to compare up to three local authorities on key indicators, such as pay and life expectancy, against the UK average.

One of the most significant achievements of the past year has been our progress towards publishing our recommendation on the Future of Population and Migration Statistics (FPMS). This has involved a series of engagement events with academics, ministers, government departments and wider users as we iterate our approach. As we work towards publication later this year, work continues now on securing the remaining data flows required to realise our vision of an administrative based census. Data sharing has also been a key focus of Professor Denise Lievesley's review of the UKSA which was published in March 2024. We are now carefully and proactively considering her recommendations and will respond to these in detail after the conclusion of the pre-election period.

Our economic statistics transformation continues at pace, working towards the inclusion of new retailer scanner data in our price statistics from March 2025 – this will see us using over 30 million price points each month digitally. Since March 2024, we have been already using real-time data from private rental prices at a more detailed geographic level and 300,000 second hand car prices directly from Auto Trader. However, the labour market has presented more significant challenges over the past year. We, alongside several other National Statistics Institutes globally, have experienced falling response rates especially among younger individuals. This led to a challenging situation where we had to withdraw the Labour Market Survey for two months whilst we used administrative data in its place. There has since been a significant investment in boosting the response rate and sample, leading to its reintroduction and continued improvement. Focus remains on enhancing the quality of the LFS whilst ensuring that the Transformed Labour Market Survey (TLFS) is as effective and innovative as a replacement.

We have also focused on driving improvements in how we communicate uncertainty in our statistics during the last year. The need for this work was reinforced by our communication of revised GDP figures in September 2023 which received negative publicity despite the statistics being accurate. We have focused on improving our external communications with additional media briefings, webinars, innovative pre-recorded video content, refreshed social media and a new partnership with the Science Media Centre. This was successfully used for our November 2023 migration releases with significant

positive feedback. Combined with an ongoing focus on quality, this sets us up well to continue ensuring that our data, statistics and analysis inform our users in the most effective way.

Having successfully achieved accreditation under the Digital Economy Act (DEA), the Integrated Data Service (IDS) has been pivoted in the past year to focus on delivery, utilising its position as the first cloud native trusted research environment accredited under the Act. Datasets, users, and projects are now continuing to grow and the first research output has now been produced. The challenges with data sharing across government has limited progress in some areas but as we work to make greater use of administrative data, we are working closely with government to ensure there is strong leadership to unblock cultural, system and technological barriers. The formal transition from the Secure Research Service (SRS) to the IDS for users will now be slightly delayed whilst we focus on meeting the needs of government analysts on that platform.

Given our constrained financial environment, we have been resolutely focused on prioritising to focus on our core output priorities, with a new business plan for 2024/25 already published. This has been combined with ongoing efficiencies and savings made through streamlining outputs, revised commercial approaches, automation, and reducing the costs of corporate services. The retention of key skillsets among our people within this context continues to be a focus for which the additional cost of living payments provided a welcome boost. Broader morale in the ONS has inevitably also been affected to a degree by the changes to Civil Service hybrid working expectations, including a successful ballot by the PCS Union in favour of strike action.

It is privilege to highlight some of the incredible work across the ONS and the wider UK Statistical Authority, supporting our mission to deliver statistics for the public good. In the context of resource constraint, we must be sustainable and efficient whilst continuing to be creative in finding ways to be ambitious, inclusive and radical. As we look ahead to the next financial year, our priorities will undoubtedly involve effective engagement with government and ministers, delivering on survey transformation, continuing to improve economic statistics, progressing the FPMS recommendation, further delivery of the IDS to support data linkage and analysis across government, and implementing the recommendations of the Lievesley Review.

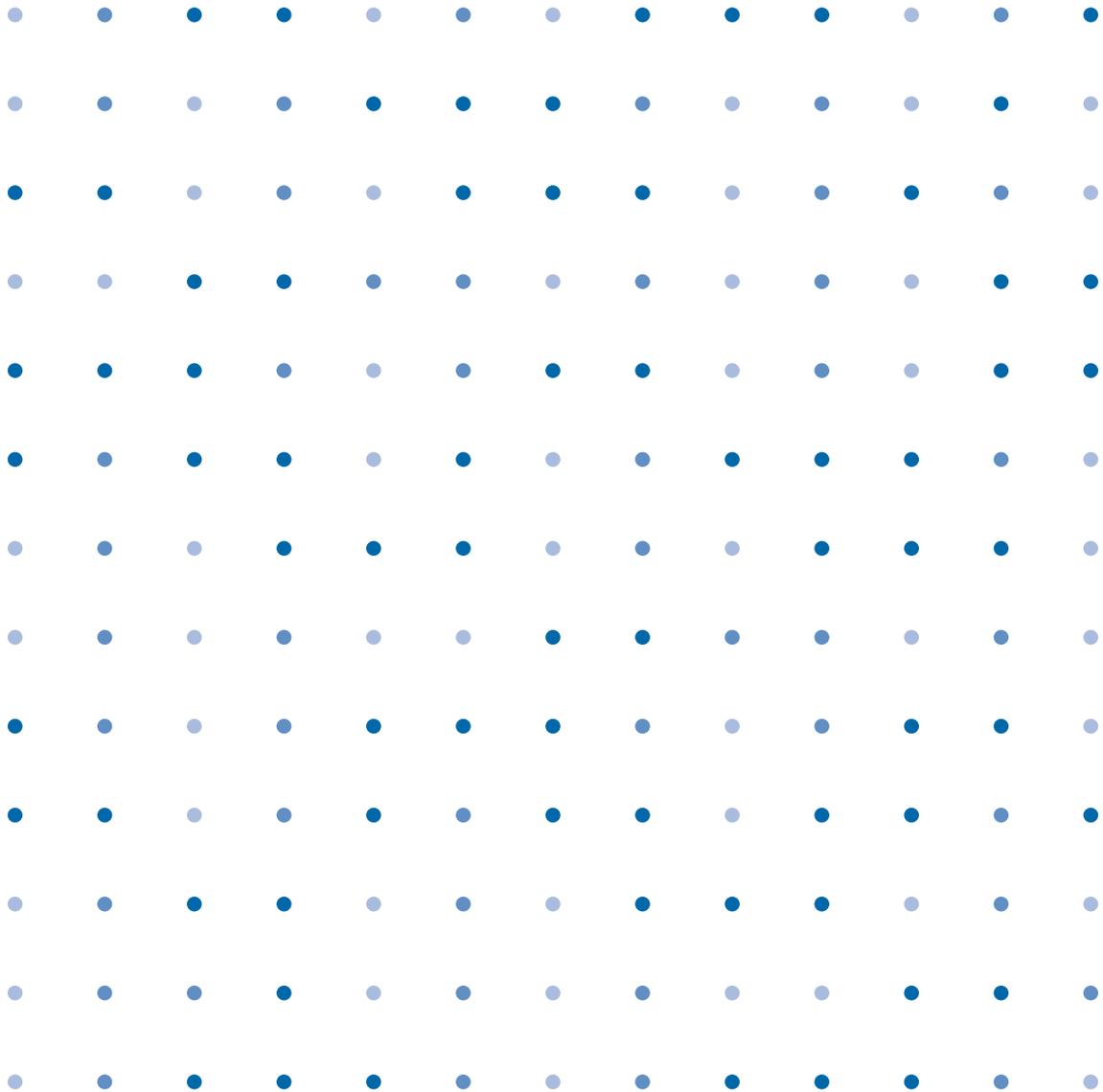


Professor Sir Ian Diamond

National Statistician

UK Statistics Authority

July 2024



85%

Public confidence
in official statistics

861

Statistical releases
from ONS in 2023/24

158,422

National print stories
informed by ONS and its
statistical outputs

9.3 Million

ONS website sessions
in 2023/24

Inflation

Most searched for
statistical theme
on ONS website

2,152,786

Number of views of our core
statistical output areas
(Health, Population, Migration,
Prices, GDP and Employment)

355,788

Number of website
sessions viewing
Census maps

115

Number of datasets
in Integrated Data Service
(IDS) beta

125

Number of users
in IDS beta

143,000

Number of field interviews
completed Face to Face and
Telephone Operations

64%

Staff engagement score
in 2023/24

239,465 hours

Hours of training delivered
by Data Science Campus
faculty team

133

Parliamentary questions
answered

826

Freedom of information
requests answered

1,437,789

Online data collection
responses received
(excluding the 2021 Census)

95.4%

Percentage of ONS
colleagues **not based in**
our London office



Purposes and activity

Statutory framework

The Statistics Board, operating as the UK Statistics Authority (the Authority) was established under the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (the Act) and on 1 April 2008 formally assumed its powers. The Authority is an independent statutory body. It operates at arm's length from government as a non-ministerial department and reports directly to the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The work of the Authority is further defined under the secondary legislation made under the Act by the UK Parliament or devolved legislatures.

Statutory objective

The Authority has a statutory objective of promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that 'serve the public good'. The public good includes:

- informing the public about social and economic matters
- assisting in the development and evaluation of public policy
- regulating quality and publicly challenging the misuse of statistics

Official statistics are for the benefit of society and the economy as a whole; not only in government policy making and the evaluation of government performance, but also informing the direction of economic and commercial activities. Statistics provide valuable data and evidence for analysts, researchers, public and voluntary bodies, enabling the public to hold to account all organisations that spend public money, and informing wider public debate. The Authority is committed to official statistics enabling sound policy, decisions and providing a firm evidence base for decision-making both inside and outside of government.

Statistics for the Public Good

On 16 July 2020, the Authority launched its strategy for the UK official statistics system for the five years 2020 to 2025. The strategy can be found in full on the Authority's website ¹. The collective mission of our official statistics system is:

High quality data and analysis to **inform** the UK, **improve** lives and **build** the future.

¹ <https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/statistics-for-the-public-good/>

Functions

The Statistics for the Public Good strategy covers the principal elements of the UK official statistics system for which the Authority has oversight. The Authority provides professional oversight of the Government Statistical Service (GSS), and has exclusive responsibility for its two executive arms, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). The National Statistician also leads the cross-government Analysis Function.

The Government Statistical Service (GSS)

The GSS is a UK network, spread across a whole range of public bodies, including the devolved administrations and UK government departments which produces and analyses statistics. It includes professional statisticians, data scientists, geographers, researchers, economists, analysts, operational delivery staff, IT specialists and other supporting roles. The GSS is also a part of the cross-government Analysis Function, which has built a community of analysts of various professional backgrounds working to provide the evidence base for understanding the biggest challenges of the day. Both the Analysis Function and the GSS are also led by the National Statistician.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS)

The ONS is the Authority's statistical production function and is part of the GSS. Led by the National Statistician, the ONS is the UK's internationally recognised National Statistical Institute and largest producer of official statistics. The ONS produces data, statistics and analysis on a range of key economic, social and demographic topics.

Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR)

The OSR is the Authority's independent statutory regulator. Led by the Director General for Regulation, OSR ensures that statistics are produced and disseminated in the public good and aims to increase public confidence in the trustworthiness, quality and value of statistics produced by governments. OSR also reports publicly on system-wide issues and on the way statistics are being used, celebrating when the standards are upheld and challenging publicly when they are not.

The legislation which established the UK Statistics Authority requires strict separation of the functions of production and regulation, where those involved in the production of statistics are not involved in the assessment of statistics against the Code. The Director General for Regulation reports directly to the Chair of the Authority and produces a separate annual performance report. More detail about OSR, including its approach, its governance and an assessment of its effectiveness is set out in the [Annex](#) to this document.

Overview

The UKSA strategy

The UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) strategy - [Statistics for the Public Good](#)² – sets the direction for the UK official statistics system with its overarching mission to deliver:

High quality data and analysis to **inform** the UK, **improve** lives and **build** for the future

The strategy describes four strategic drivers that underpin the mission statement – UKSA must be:

Radical in taking opportunities to innovate and collaborate, using data for the public good

Ambitious in setting out to answer the critical research questions the public needs the Government to answer, and informing the decisions that citizens, businesses and civil society take

Inclusive in its approach to workforce, talent management, and the design of data, statistics and analysis

Sustainable in delivering a unique service in a way which delivers value for money with lasting benefits and minimises impact on the environment, all through partnership and collaboration

The UKSA strategy is supported by business plans produced by each constituent part of the statistical system.

² <https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/UKSA-2020-1.png>

The ONS strategic business plan

The [ONS strategic business plan](https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ONS-Business-Plan-2020.pdf), originally published alongside the UKSA strategy in July 2020³, and subsequently updated annually, sets out how ONS will contribute towards delivery of the UKSA strategy. The Strategic Business Plan summarises our responses to external challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of living challenge, the continuing war in Ukraine and conflict in the Middle East plus our outputs to inform on issues such as net-zero, levelling up economic opportunity across the country, social mobility, and an ageing population.

The Strategic Business Plan details how the ONS will deliver in line with the four Strategic Drivers - Radical, Ambitious, Sustainable and Inclusive - as set out in the UKSA strategy, working in partnership with the GSS, data providers and the analytical and research community.

The 2023/24 version of the Strategic Business Plan also set out the structure through which we deliver against our commitments. It presented the eight Strategic Objectives supported by delivery tiers made up of our Accountability Framework Objectives (AFOs) and our four transformation programmes:

- Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP)
- Integrated Data Services Programme (IDSP)
- Ambitious, Radical and Inclusive Economic Statistics (ARIES)
- Corporate Services Improvement Programme (CSIP)

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the structure showing the alignment from the Strategic Drivers through to delivery.



³ <https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ONS-Business-Plan-2020.pdf>

Figure 1: ONS strategic business plan taxonomy, 2023/24

Strategic drivers	Radical	Ambitious	Sustainable	Inclusive
Strategic objectives	SO1 - Priority analysis	SO3 - Quality national statistics	SO5 - Future tools	SO7 - Accessible outputs
	SO2 - Priority data	SO4 - Transformed economic and social statistics	SO6 - Sustainable business model	SO8 - One ONS culture
Organisational outcomes	SO1 - More responsive approach to user needs on priority issues	SO3 - Better quality statistical outputs	SO5 - Improved internal systems and reduced technical debt	SO7 - Increased accessibility of outputs resulting in more public engagement
	SO2 - Improved user access to analytical tools and critical data	SO4 - Improved economic and social statistics production processes	SO6 - A more efficient, effective and sustainable organisation	SO8 - A more diverse and inclusive organisation
Delivery	Accountability framework objectives			

Statement about the use of Government Functional Standards

The National Statistician leads the Analysis Function which supports a 16,000 strong community of analysts. The work of the Analysis Function is overseen by the Analysis Function Board (AFB) and the Departmental Directors of Analysis (DDANs), who represent Departments and our wider stakeholders. An Analysis Function People Board subcommittee has also been established in recent years to further strengthen the delivery of people specific priorities.

This governance structure ensures the Function addresses cross-cutting challenges, drawing on the strengths of the analytical professions, and ensures a consistent approach to delivering expert analytical advice across government.

The Analysis Function also plays a key role in delivering the Cabinet Office's and Ministers' civil service reform agenda. Over the next three years, the ONS plan for the Analysis Function will support integrated, informed decision-making and efficient service delivery by putting world class analysis in the hands of decision makers. A Functional approach is needed for analysis to pool knowledge, skills and techniques and to ensure that government analysts apply common standards and approaches when this is the right thing to do.

We have made strong progress on delivering the Analysis Function strategy, collaborating closely across government to support the analyst community in delivering better outcomes for the public. The Analysis Function continues to score the highest of any function across all seven dimensions of the annual Functional Quality Survey, which is testament to the significant contribution that analysts across government make in supporting decision making, driving innovation and delivering efficiencies.

In addition to the Analysis Function, the ONS aligns to other functional standards such as Finance, Project Delivery, Human Resources, Communications, Property, Digital, Data and Technology, Security, Commercial, Internal Audit and Counter Fraud, as per the Dear Accounting Office (DAO) Letter dated 30/09/2021. The Letter sets out that all central government departments and their arm's length bodies should have a plan in place by March 2022 to comply with each functional standard in a way that meets its business needs and priorities.

OSR business plan

OSR also published its Business Plan in May 2023. This set out the independent role, governance, vision, and priority outcomes and activities for OSR. Performance against the OSR business plan for 2023/24 is set out in the [Annex](#) to this document.

Performance analysis

We have continued to make significant progress against our radical, ambitious, inclusive and sustainable drivers during 2023/24 – the fourth year of our five-year strategy. We have achieved a great deal, as set out in more detail below, while maintaining our commitment to a sustainable business model.

Throughout 2023/24, we utilised our learning from our response to the Covid-19 pandemic, adapting agile and flexible approaches to respond to urgent issues of the day. We continued to demonstrate our crucial role in informing Government and the public on priority topics including the continuing impacts from the

pandemic, inflation, migration, economic growth, employment, and conflicts across the globe. This was alongside delivering our change programmes and our regular quality outputs.

The ONS continued to work alongside and as an integral part of the GSS, collaborating with key stakeholders during development of the Integrated Data Service, in our response to analytical demand on key topics, and in the continuous improvement of our statistics. This approach to delivery will continue to be a key element to achieving the UKSA strategy as we enter its final year.

The Spending Review 2021 (SR21) exercise provided funding certainty for the period 2022/23 to 2024/25. However, we continued to operate in an increasingly constrained financial environment driven primarily by the impacts of inflation. This led to a 2023/24 business planning round heavily focussed on our core priorities and the development of the ONS Efficiency and Savings Plan (ESP) designed to release savings for reinvestment into our core strategic priorities and meet our increased costs.

The following sections provide an overall summary assessment of performance against our strategic objectives and key milestones for 2023/24 as set out in our 2023/24 Strategic Business Plan. We also provide a more detailed narrative highlighting the key achievements in the period by each strategic driver and Strategic Objective (SO) on pages 25-33.

Summary of Performance by Strategic Objective

The Strategic Objectives were developed as part of the ONS's initial Strategic Business Plan published in July 2020. They have been reviewed annually and as a result have been iterated and rationalised to maintain relevance to current and expected future operational context, and to support clarity of accountability. Each Strategic Objective contributes to all four Strategic Drivers, with the strongest association shown in the table below.

Performance against the Strategic Objective is monitored monthly through internal governance using the mapping of the underpinning Accountability Framework Objectives (AFOs) to each Strategic Objective as a mechanism to track progress and flag issues. The illustrations below provide an assessment of the status of each of the eight Strategic Objectives in March 2024.



1



Priority analysis

Main strategic contribution: Radical

% of AFO complete: 87%

To provide engaging and timely analysis on the UK's most important economic, social and environmental issues.

2



Priority data

Main strategic contribution: Radical

% of AFO complete: 87%

To enable innovative data use and cross-government analysis through a range of critical data from targeted sources.

3



Quality national statistics

Main strategic contribution: Ambitious

% of AFO complete: 87%

To deliver high quality core National Statistics and drive a culture of continuous improvement.

4



Transformed economic and social statistics

Main strategic contribution: Ambitious

% of AFO complete: 85%

To transform our systems for economic and social statistics to provide more sustainable, timely and flexible insights to inform the UK.

5



Future tools

Main strategic contribution: Sustainable

% of AFO complete: 85%

To support output priorities using innovative technology and policies that actively manage and control the organisation's technical debt.

6



Sustainable business model

Main strategic contribution: Sustainable

% of AFO complete: 88%

To deliver the UKSA strategy using our skills and resources in the most efficient, effective and sustainable way.

7



Accessible outputs

Main strategic contribution: Inclusive

% of AFO complete: 89%

To engage the public in the UK's most important statistics and analysis, in the most inclusive and innovative way.

8

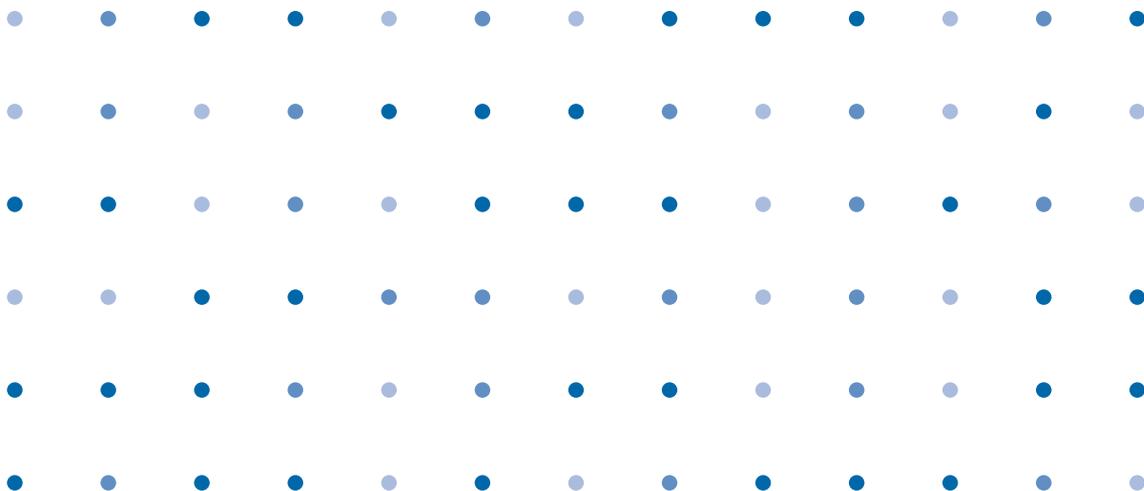


One ONS culture

Main strategic contribution: Inclusive

% of AFO complete: 85%

To engage our colleagues to continue to work towards an inclusive organisation and culture, reflecting the society we serve.



Key deliverables

Our 2023/24 Strategic Business Plan also set out a high-level timeline of our key milestones for the year. The below shows the status of these milestones in March 2024.

Quarter 1 (April - June 2023)

Milestone: Improve the measurement of inflation through using rail fares transaction data

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publish Census 2021 analysis on important equality topics including ethnicity, national identity, sexual orientation, and gender identity

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publish the Annual Review of the Inclusive Data Taskforce Implementation Plan

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Achieve Digital Economy Act accreditation for Integrated Data Service as a Trusted Research Environment

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publication on the knowledge and use of Artificial Intelligence

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publish international migration estimates in May, which include improved methods, further breakdowns and the inclusion of asylum seekers

Status: **Completed**

Quarter 2 (July - September 2023)

Milestone: Produce first analysis of Visa data on the geography and timing of spending trends

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publish findings of Wave 3 Ukraine Humanitarian Response Survey

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publish Impact of increased Cost of Living on adults across Great Britain

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Launch of new National Wellbeing dashboard and recommendation report as part of ambition to move Beyond GDP (Gross Domestic Product)

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publish first release of Birth Statistics and lay before Parliament

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Deliver mid-term review of UK Statistics Authority Strategy

Status: **Completed**

Quarter 3 (October - December 2023)

Milestone: Publish 23/24 quarterly England and Wales crime estimates, alongside focused analytical articles on topics including Domestic Abuse

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publish Annual 2021 Gross Value Added data at Lower layer Super Output Areas, Data Zone and Super Output Areas

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Measure and publish UK Economy through the Annual Blue Book and Pink Book

Status: **Completed**

Quarter 4 (January - March 2024)

Milestone: Use new data and data collection methods to improve Labour Market estimates

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: 1500 active users on the Integrated Data Service

Status: Re-planned in line with refreshed business case

Milestone: Develop and release of experimental data on distributional household income and consumption

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Develop survey on child abuse and safeguarding procedure

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Produce Retail Price Index statistics meeting legal obligations

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Improve the measurement of inflation through using rent and used cars data

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Publish 23/24 quarterly England and Wales crime estimates, alongside focused analytical articles on topics including Homicide

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: The National Statistician makes his recommendation on future Population statistics to Parliament

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Deliver £3.9m savings and efficiencies across the ONS Survey Portfolio in 23/24

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Deliver the Wellbeing Hub as part of the ONS Wellbeing Plan - focusing on workplace, mental, physical, social and financial wellbeing and providing clear and easy access to support for employees and line manager

Status: **Completed**

Milestone: Deliver the GSS International Strategy, taking a leading role in key international statistical forums and multilateral organisations

Status: **Completed**

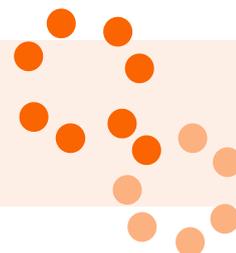
Milestone: Increase the number of strategic country partnerships to eight through our world leading International Development Programme

Status: **Completed**

Overall performance narrative by strategic objective

Radical

Cross cutting analysis and integrated data



Strategic objective 1 – Priority analysis

A key strategic objective which is intrinsically linked to our mission as an organisation is to provide time-critical analysis and statistics on priority economic, social and environmental issues. We have developed our capacity to respond at pace, using our relationships across government and with other partners to provide the data and analysis needed to aid decision makers – whatever the question. Central to the achievement of this objective is the need to develop and maintain the necessary structures, capability and capacity to deliver.

Our Analytical Hub continues to work in tandem with our Data Science Campus and cross-Government partners including the Cabinet Office Joint Data and Analysis Centre to aid in our response to urgent priorities. During the year we responded quickly to provide data and insights across a range of socio-economic themes detailed below.

The ONS continues to respond to emerging and priority topics that the public and government face. We continued to support investigations for those over 50 years old who are leaving the labour force, with further analysis using Census data considering the characteristics of those unemployed. We continued to produce insights into the impact of the cost of living in the UK, including qualitative surveys on specific groups, such as students.

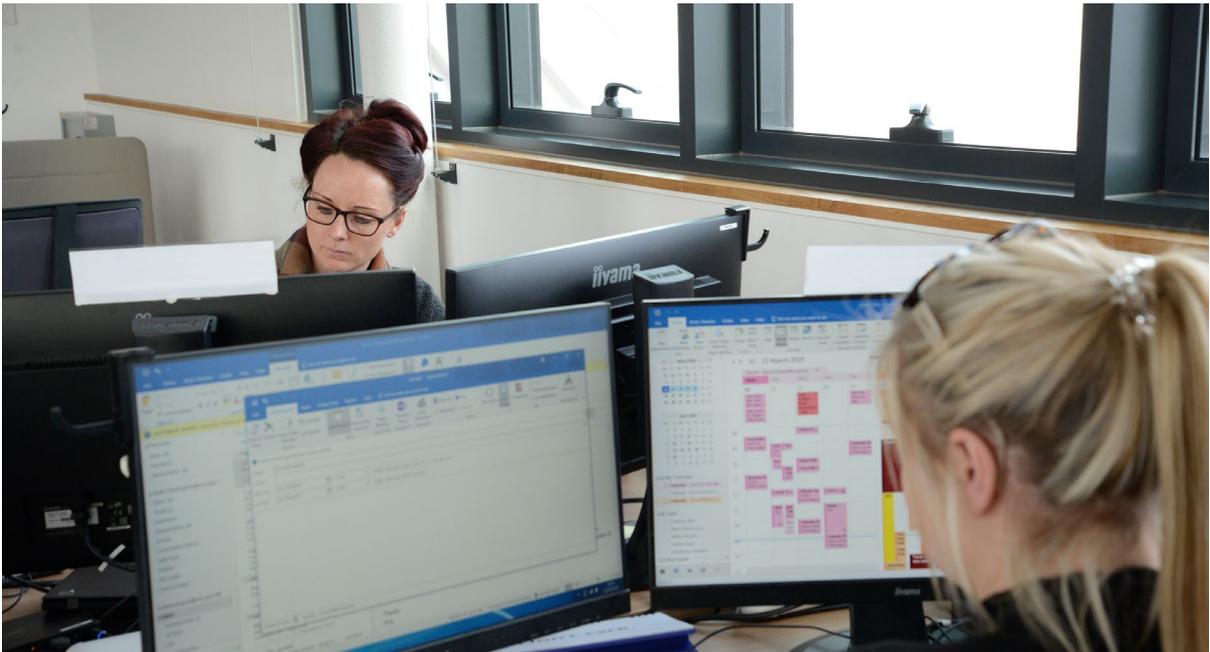
At the turn of the year, working with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Home Office, we published the results from our Ukrainian Humanitarian Survey, focusing on barriers to work, professions, the private rented sector and independent living. This provided data to inform government work in a range of areas including jobs and careers support, English language classes, access to housing, and support payments to sponsors. The Analytical Hub's survey work on the humanitarian response won the Government Social Research award and the Analysis in Government impact award in 2024, with judges praising the speed, impact and inclusive nature of the analysis. The third wave of our survey of those entering the UK was published in July 2023 and our latest release surveying sponsors of those hosting Ukrainian refugees was published in October 2023.

We provided support to central government on the potential domestic and international implications of the conflict in the Middle East. This includes the Data Science Campus producing analysis on shipping and using open-source data to explore sentiments in the region and beyond. We responded to several commissions including rapid-turnaround Census figures to support the Home Office’s community cohesion work and Cabinet Office analysis of the domestic social and political implications. Separately, eight ONS analysts have joined the new Crisis Surge Team within the National Situation Centre in the Cabinet Office. They will be available to be loaned at short notice during major incidents and crises to support government’s analytical response, and will gain experience of crisis operations, allowing them to apply this to rapid response work in the ONS.

The ONS published its first insights into public awareness, opinions, and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), ahead of the UK’s Global Summit on AI Safety. Results have been extensively used across government, filling a critical evidence gap in our knowledge of key emerging technologies.

Strategic objective 2 – Priority data

Significant progress was made to move the Integrated Data Service (IDS) into service at a BETA maturity phase. In September 2023, IDS received Digital Economy Act (2017) accreditation for data provision, making IDS the first cloud-native trusted research environment to be accredited for data provision under the legislation and opening the opportunity to scale. The IDS will grow at pace over the remainder of the Programme with a pipeline of additional and transformational capability, data, projects, and users as well as improved and accredited data integration and cross-sector collaboration enabled through cloud technologies that will drive significant uptake.



The total number of users, datasets and relevant projects within the IDS has increased and currently stands at 125 cumulative users, 104 datasets (of which 14 are indexed for rapid data linkage) and 20 projects respectively. Analytical projects included improving timely access to health data, working with National Health Service (NHS) England on linked health data, engaging the Chief Coroner to obtain toxicology data for drug-related deaths, and improving timeliness of our maternity data in response to ministerial priorities at Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC). Several projects also explored the use of linked data, such as on health drivers of inactivity and inequalities in accident and emergency department attendance.

The first research report based on analysis in IDS has recently been produced by the ONS in partnership with Administrative Data Research (ADR) Wales and Welsh Government, to explore differences between estimates of Welsh language ability in Census 2021 and household surveys. This is in line with the Welsh Language Strategy, Cymraeg 2050.

We have identified options for accessing the Advanced Passenger Information data from Home Office so that we can assess its ability to replace the International Passenger Survey data in migration estimates for British Nationals.

In January 2024, the Data Science Campus launched the International Data Masterclass, an open online course aimed at building data skills in leaders in global governments and the public sector. Launch events took place in Rwanda and Ghana with wider user roll-out planned in collaboration with the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Statistics Division.

Ambitious

Inclusive, quality, coherence, accessibility and timeliness of our core statistics



Strategic objective 3 – Quality national statistics

In November, we published a suite of population and international migration releases which discussed the main drivers for migration to the UK, explained the reasons why we update our estimates of international migration and why we are transforming the population and migration statistical system. We went on to explain more around how we are refining and improving methods to produce admin-based population estimates in our latest published research article update. We have now requested an assessment of admin-based population estimates from the OSR with a view to the outputs becoming accredited official statistics.

The UK Statistics Authority, on the advice of the National Statistician, will make a recommendation to HM Government on the future of population and migration statistics, early in 2024/25. This follows a public consultation that ran from June 2023 to October 2023 and will detail how the ONS should produce statistics about population and migration in England and Wales in the future, based on user need. An analysis of the consultation responses will be published alongside the recommendation.

In April 2023, ONS experts attended the United Nations meeting for the Group of Experts on National Accounts, leading sessions on the impact of migration on the National Accounts, the use of real-time indicators, and the impact of high inflation.

In October 2023, the ONS hosted the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Conference of European Statisticians Bureau. The Bureau directs statistical work across the UNECE region and beyond, identifying upcoming opportunities and potential challenges. The ONS presented work on alternative or 'supplementary' population bases as well as data ethics and social acceptability.

In February 2024, we published improved research and development statistics following an end-to-end survey transformation. The changes included a ten-fold increase in the sample, online data collection, more detailed information being collected and new methods and processing systems. A webinar was held on release day with over 160 people attending to hear about the work and the new insights from the data.

Our most recent statistics on bullying and online experiences of children were published in March 2024, alongside two other articles: 'Crime in England and Wales: Victims Characteristics', and our explainer narrative 'Crime Trends in England and Wales and how we measure them'. As part of this series of releases, we also announced an internal review of the dissemination and communication of ONS crime statistics.

Strategic objective 4 – Transformed economic and social statistics

As part of plans to make the ONS's crime statistics more inclusive, December 2023 saw the publication of a report exploring how to better incorporate data on crimes against care home residents; this is part of our work on victimisation of the non-household population. It focussed on what sources of administrative data are currently available and whether the Crime Survey for England and Wales should be extended to cover care homes.

The Blue and Pink Books were successfully published in October 2023, with improved estimates of education-related travel exports and the latest data and improved methods for measuring the UK economy. Ahead of this in September, the ONS published Quarterly National Accounts, Sector Accounts, Balance of Payments and related releases, incorporating important developments and improvements to sources, methods, data production systems and outputs. We have used new methods which have focused initially on a small number of multi-

national enterprises, aimed at better accounting for these globalisation impacts. We have introduced improved methods and data sources to estimate trade in services' travel deflators. We have also improved the classification of non-profit institutions serving households and improved measurement of the higher education sector.

The Public Service Productivity Review (commissioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Spring 2023) delivered its first milestone with new experimental baselines for long-term growth estimates, and 'nowcasts' for 2021/22 published in November 2023. The ONS launched the Time Use Survey for Public Sector workers in January 2024, capturing detail on administrative burden placed on key workers, the results of which informed the Spring Budget 2024.

In December 2023, the ONS published the first quarterly publication of the Household Costs Indices (HCIs) looking at households' experience of inflation. This was launched alongside webinar sessions to showcase and support user understanding of these statistics. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many welcoming this work and highlighting the importance of these statistics.

As part of our Beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) programme of work, our UK Measures of National Well-being were updated (the first after our major review) with a total of 58 measures giving a comprehensive understanding of how the nation feels.

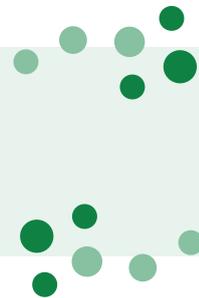
We delivered some key milestones from the Ambitious, Radical, Inclusive Economic Statistics (ARIES) Programme including publishing transformed rents statistics as a standalone regular monthly publication in March 2024 which were then included into headline measures of consumer price inflation. The new statistics provide a greater level of granularity in rental price statistics, including local authority estimates, and estimates by property type and number of bedrooms.



We also incorporated new second-hand car statistics, improving both the quality and granularity of these estimates, and moving a large proportion of monthly processing for consumer price statistics from legacy platforms to the cloud.

Sustainable

Building a sustainable and efficient business model



Strategic objective 5 – Future tools

We continue to put users at the heart of everything that we do so they can find, understand, and explore our data and insight to make decisions at a national, local and individual level. We are committed to ensuring our statistics and analysis are clear, concise and can be easily understood and used by our broad range of audiences.

We have continued to build on the success of our award-winning Census products, implementing innovative interactive tools to support dissemination of Census data and maximise the use of data for the public good. An example was the use of the “create a custom dataset” tool which was used to help brief ministers on the characteristics of the Sudanese-born population in response to conflict in Sudan. There has also been positive user feedback to our “create a population group profile” tool that allows users to see how a selected population group compares to the whole population of England and Wales across a variety of measures including health, education and employment.

A shopping prices comparison tool was launched in May 2023 to help people see how the average prices of hundreds of individual shopping items are changing. The tool had more than 650,000 views in the first few days and was embedded in the BBC website after widespread media coverage.

The ONS used a local statistics explorer in April 2023, working in partnership with DLUHC, to allow users to explore data on their local area and compare with other areas.

Applying valuable lessons from the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS), which resulted in over two million completed questionnaires and 2.9 million samples, the ONS re-utilised its online platform to deliver the Winter COVID-19 Infection Study in partnership with the UK Health Security Agency. The study achieved an 80 per cent response rate from 130,000 participants. The results have raised awareness of COVID-19 infection levels, informed public health messaging, and have enabled understanding of winter pressures and their potential impact on the NHS.

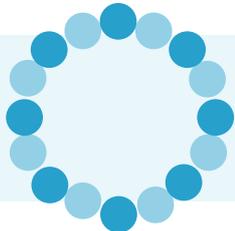
To further embed the legacy from the CIS we have initiated a Pandemic Preparedness Toolkit project (funded by the Wellcome Trust), working with international partners to develop a toolkit for National Statistics Institutes and associated Health Agencies to support effective health surveillance programmes, ensuring they have impact with policy makers and wider stakeholders. Nepal, Malawi and Argentina accepted our invitation to become project partners and draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) were sent to the National Statistics Office (NSOs) of each country. The project is working across these countries and with a global network of stakeholders to build on the ONS's successes and lessons learned during the covid pandemic; including tools and methods for data collection, analysis, data science, statistical leadership and cross-boundary collaboration for health development.

Strategic objective 6 – Sustainable business model

The ONS achieved its £16.8m efficiency and cost reduction target in 2023/24, as set out in the ONS Efficiencies and Savings Plan (ESP). Our ESP is based on our submission to HM Treasury in response to the Efficiencies and Savings Review announced in November 2022. Measures contributing to meeting this target included streamlining our outputs, automation, revising our commercial approaches, and reducing our corporate services costs. Our ESP workstreams have delivered quality improvements and have helped mitigate risks, while releasing savings for reinvestment into our core strategic priorities.

As part of our approach to managing within a reduced funding environment and the impacts of inflation, we are relying increasingly on internal deployment of our existing staff – using the skills and capabilities we have in a more flexible way to deliver key priorities. Overall, we reduced our Full Time Equivalent staffing levels by 460 in 2023/24. An increased focus on deployment has led to broader development of and agility within our workforce. We do continue to recruit externally where required, for example, to fill roles requiring scarce or critical skills.

Inclusive
Building inclusivity into everything we do



Strategic objective 7 – Accessible Outputs

We have made improvements to the external communications of our statistical outputs, with additional media briefing sessions, webinars and new innovative pre-recorded video content which gained traction across our social media channels.

Communications and Digital Publishing's new 'voices' content approach brought to life Census 2021 statistics on the centenarian population in England and

Wales. Through partnering with Age UK, we were able to speak to centenarians who shared their stories alongside the statistics in our article, achieving positive media reactions.

We launched a new interactive tool in October 2023 that allowed users to see how a selected population group compares to the whole population of England and Wales across a variety of measures including health, education and employment. It was the first tool that allowed non-technical users to extract insights from multivariate Census 2021 data, previously only available in spreadsheet form. Social media engagement and customer feedback were incredibly positive.

In March 2024, we launched the Beta for our Explore Subnational Statistics service which allowed users to find, visualise, compare and download subnational data easily. Our first output on short term lets, through our partnership with AirBnB, Expedia and Bookings.com, will be published shortly.

Our statistics and data literacy collaboration with BBC and Micro:bit Education Foundation has continued to develop with the launch of the Playground Survey project for primary school children. We have also contributed articles about data science and statistics which are being published on the BBC Teach website.

Strategic objective 8 – One ONS culture

A mid-term review of the UKSA strategy evaluated what our existing drivers meant in 2023 and looked ahead at challenges for the coming period, suggesting a focus on themes such as effective communication of statistics; improving awareness of statistics; improving statistical literacy in partnership with others; and the emerging role of both automation and artificial intelligence within the statistical and analytical system.

In June 2023, it was announced that the UK Statistics Authority (including the Office for National Statistics and



Office for Statistics Regulation) would be subject to an independent review (carried out by Professor Denise Lievesley CBE) as part of the Cabinet Office's Public Bodies Review programme. The Review centred around the themes of efficacy, governance, accountability and efficiency and was conducted following a public call for evidence and conversations with Authority colleagues, users and producers of official statistics across the statistical system and beyond. The Review was published alongside the Government's response on 12 March 2024 and contained a number of recommendations for the Authority and for the Government based on its findings. On the day of its publication, UK Statistics Authority Chair, Sir Robert Chote, released a statement welcoming the report, in particular the recommendations on data sharing, improving social survey response rates, and user engagement. We look forward to implementing those relevant to ONS.

We were awarded a further three years of official accreditation as a Disability Confident Leader recognising our inclusive approach towards colleagues with disabilities, inclusive practices in recruitment and inclusive working environment.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) People Management Awards 2023 shortlisted the ONS in the Best Flexible Working Initiative category, recognising our hard work and colleague-centred approach to being an inclusive organisation with a great working environment. The ONS were highly commended at the CIPD Awards Wales in the category of 'Best Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Initiative'. This commendation recognised the incredible work on the development and embedding of the Inclusion, Culture and Wellbeing Dashboard, as well as the roll out of our team learning Inclusive Interactive Experience; all of which aim to further our UKSA strategic principle of 'Inclusive'.

Furthermore, the ONS was recognised by the Civil Service Commissioner as highly commended for its recruitment processes, recognising the effectiveness of our processes and candidate experience for the second consecutive year.

ONS was short-listed for two awards at the recent Government Project Delivery Awards. The Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP) team won the Project Delivery Award, and a second nomination was received for "Advancing the Project Delivery Profession".

Summary

The above sections shine a small light on our performance during 2023/24, the fourth year of our five-year strategy. We have continued to strike the right balance between delivering and improving our core outputs, building foundations for our future and responding to priority demands to inform government policy and UK society. We have been able to do this by continuing to be agile, flexible and collaborative, reallocating resources to our highest priorities through robust business planning and building sustainability by exceeding our 2023/24 Efficiencies and Savings Plan target.

Challenges and external impacts

This section highlights our response to some of the challenges and external factors we have faced in order to continue delivering against the radical, ambitious, inclusive, and sustainable drivers set out in the UKSA strategy.

Staff retention and industrial action

Our People Plan clearly sets out the importance of our colleagues to the delivery of our strategy and business plan. The challenge to attract and retain critical skillsets continues to be a priority for ONS and others across government, with national labour market supply issues, in particular for the Government Digital and Data profession, but also analytical and project delivery disciplines. To address these challenges, we have established more innovative, flexible resourcing models and an approach to growing our own talent during the period to ensure we can continue to deliver our ambitions.

The impacts of inflation both on the organisation and all of our people individually has presented further challenge. To try to alleviate the impacts we have continued to provide support to our staff through our wellbeing hub that includes financial and mental health support, guidance and contacts. In addition, we were swift to ensure processing of the cost-of-living support payment to all colleagues, alongside securing additional discount offerings through our partnership with EdenRed.

Planned industrial action has impacted us during 2023/24. Our business continuity plans have been pivotal in ensuring that the impacts on our operations and delivery against our ambition was limited.

Data Sharing Complexities

The recent Lievesley Review concluded that the UKSA's efficacy is hampered by the systemic and cultural barriers to responsible data sharing between government departments making two recommendations on this subject. Firstly, that the centre of government, led by Cabinet Office, HM Treasury and No. 10 actively work to resolve the systemic, often cultural, barriers to data sharing between departments. Secondly, that the ONS takes action to ensure that the purpose, scope and requirements of the Integrated Data Service (IDS) are clearly communicated and that the needs and concerns of departmental data owners are sufficiently understood.

Data sharing is a complex area, which the Central Digital and Data Office holds policy responsibility for. ONS, as the lead delivery partner for the IDS, covers many aspects of implementation alongside managing an administrative data portfolio of over 2,000 datasets for ONS analysts and over 120 datasets for external researchers, including many cross-government linked assets. ONS is continuing to work towards an administrative data-based census, and the breadth and depth of the use of administrative data, as an alternative or complementary to surveys,

is now a critical operating dependency. Unlike direct data collection via surveys, administrative or alternative data supplies are not owned by ONS meaning that there is a key dependency on the provision of ONS outputs by external parties like other government departments and data suppliers.

Public Perception

The ONS has been publicly challenged during the year on a number of important topics where our statistics are of high interest or where they inform topical debate, such as GDP estimates, gender identity statistics and excess deaths statistics. The challenges faced have highlighted the need for ONS to clearly explain, to the widest possible audiences, the inherent uncertainty in statistical estimates and the need for periodic revision, alongside guidance for their use, whilst at the same time underlining the reliability and impartiality of our statistical outputs.

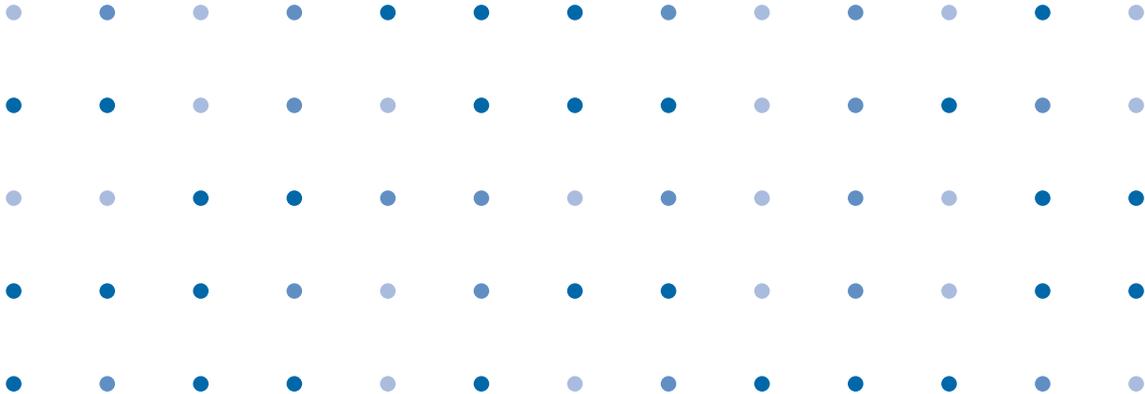
Response Rates

Falling response rates for social surveys, which is an international trend, have presented an ongoing challenge this year with our Labour Force Survey particularly impacted. We remain committed to clearly and transparently communicating the uncertainties in our labour market statistics while work progresses to increase response rates and transition to our transformed survey.

Financial Challenges

Achieving our financial objectives for the period has meant that we have needed to focus our resources on our highest priority activities. Managing within this constrained environment has meant that we have not achieved everything that we had originally intended to achieve as set out in the overall performance summary sections of this document.

Our ongoing risks are described in the Governance Statement on [pages 59-78](#).



Key performance indicators (KPIs)

The Key performance indicators (KPIs) are disaggregated by Strategic Driver and complement the progress reporting against our strategic objectives (as set out above) through our internal governance. Our performance against the KPIs for 2023/24 is set out below.

Radical

Indicator: Business survey response rates

Target: n/a

Performance (2023-2024): Monthly Business Survey (MBS): **72.3%**
Monthly Wages and Salary Survey (MWS): **83.7%**
Annual Business Survey (ABS): **75.1%**
Survey of Research and Development Carried out in the UK: **78.2%**

Performance (2022-2023): MBS: **67.7%**
MWS: **83%**

Monthly responses are monitored to reflect the level of engagement with our key business surveys. We are yet to establish a target level for this KPI. MBS (Monthly Business Survey), MWS (Monthly Wages and Salary Survey), ABS (Annual Business Survey) and Survey of Research and Development Carried Out in the United Kingdom figures are from the end of February 2024. ABS and Survey of Research and Development Carried Out in the United Kingdom response rates are cumulative and we don't have a February 2023 value to compare with from last year.

Indicator: Social survey response rates

Target: n/a

Performance (2023-2024): Labour Force Survey (LFS) Wave (W) 1: **33%**
LFS W2+: **34%**
Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) W1: **38.8%**
TLFS W2+: **17.2%**
Wealth and Assets Survey (WAS) W1: **15%**
WAS W2+: **39%**
Living Costs and Food Survey (LCF) W1: **29%**
Family Resources Survey (FRS) W1: **22%**
Survey on Living Conditions (SLC) W1: **19%**
SLC W2+: **62%**

Performance (2022-2023): LFS W1: 28%
LFS W2+: 32%
TLFS W1: 37.9%
TLFS W2+: 18.6%
WAS W1: 18%
WAS W2+: 41%
LCF W1: 25%
FRS W1: 30%
SLC W1: 26%
SLC W2+: 54%

Monthly responses are monitored to reflect the level of engagement with our key social surveys. We are yet to establish a target level for this KPI. The figures are from the end of February 2024. FRS (Family Resources Survey), LFS (Labour Force Survey), TLFS (Transformed Labour Force Survey), LCF (Living Costs and Food Survey) and WAS (Wealth and Assets Survey) figures are from the end of February 2024. SLC (Survey on Living Conditions) figure is from the end of January 2024 as the survey was paused. 2022/23 figures are from the end of February 2023.

Indicator: Data acquisition priorities

Target: n/a

Performance (2023-2024): 47% were rated green 'on track' and 10% were complete in the quarter ending 31 March 2024

Performance (2022-2023): 35% were rated green 'on track' and 27% were complete in the quarter ending 31 March 2023

This KPI was established to provide an indication of how we are performing against a key enabler for this strategic driver. No target has been set for this KPI currently.

Indicator: Media coverage

Target: n/a

Performance (2023-2024): 158,422 media mentions in the year ending 31 March 2024 and 12% of these featured an ONS spokesperson

Performance (2022-2023): 196,803 media mentions in the year ending 31 March 2023 and 13% of these featured an ONS spokesperson

This figure shows the total mentions of ONS and its outputs in the media landscape. Percentage shows what proportion of these mentions featured a comment from an ONS spokesperson. There is no target set for media coverage. The measurement of this indicator has changed since last year as the new data

supplier is capped at 4000 mentions limited to all National & Regional Press and all Major News/Current affairs magazines either online or in print. Therefore, is not comparable to data from 2022-23. Note the media coverage metrics for this period (March 2024) have been affected by a two- week outage at our monitoring supplier. Normal service has now been restored so figures are expected to go back between 3.5k – 3.9k as seen in previous months.

Ambitious

Indicator: Major errors

Target: 0

Performance (2023-2024): 6 major errors reported between April 2023 and March 2024

Performance (2022-2023): 6 major errors reported between April 2022 and March 2023

Major errors help to measure the quality of our outputs. The errors reported represent less than one per cent of our total statistical releases in the period. For context these errors are defined as those which, for example, could affect an important aspect of a release, or lead a user to misinterpret the statistics. All errors were swiftly corrected and communicated to users.

Indicator: Statistical concerns escalated to the OSR & National Statistician

Target: 0

Performance (2023-2024): 6 statistical concerns that required escalation between April 2023 and March 2024

Performance (2022-2023): 4 statistical concerns that required escalation between April 2022 and March 2023

Statistical Concerns refers to 'Reporting concerns under the code of practice'. The deputy Head of Profession will decide if a concern needs to be escalated to the Office for Statistics Regulation and the National Statistician.

Inclusive

Indicator: ONS staff diversity - ethnicity

Target: By 2025 – 8.7% of ONS staff are from an ethnic minority

Performance (2023-2024): As of March 2024: 9.7% of ONS staff are from an ethnic minority

Performance (2022-2023): As of March 2023: **9.4%** of ONS staff are from an ethnic minority

Figures on ethnicity are calculated using data from declarations from ONS staff. The straight-line trend to our 2024 target gives us a target of 8.7% in March 2024 - 1 percentage point lower than the current figure. The 8.7% target will be maintained for 2024/25.

Indicator: ONS staff diversity - sex

Target: By 2025 - **50%** of staff at each grade (**48%** for SCS), and **50%** of staff overall are female

Performance (2023-2024): As of March 2024: **56%** of ONS staff are female; at least **50%** of staff at all grades, except for SCS (**45%**), are female

Performance (2022-2023): As of March 2023: **56%** of ONS staff are female; at least **50%** of staff at all grades, except for Grade 6 (**49.6%**) and SCS (**42%**), are female

Figures on sex are calculated using data from declarations from ONS staff. SCS female representation target was lowered to **45%** for 2023/24 and **48%** for 2024/25. Grade 6 female representation was rounded from **49.8%** to **50%**.

Indicator: Inclusive data commitments

Target: n/a

Performance (2023-2024): **79%** of commitments are either Green 'On Track' or Completed as of 31 March 2024

Performance (2022-2023): **76%** of commitments are either Green 'On Track' or Completed as of 31 March 2023

This KPI shows the progress of ONS and the wider Government Statistical Service to deliver on key commitments to improve the inclusivity of the UK statistical system. 2023-24 figure was rounded from **78.6%** to **79%**.

Sustainable

Indicator: Greening government commitments

Target: Achieve **7 of 7** targets

Performance (2023-2024): Achieved **6 of 7** targets. We failed to achieve the 'International Flights' target.

Performance (2022-2023): Achieved **6 of 7** targets. We failed to achieve the 'International Flights' target.

Data detailed in this report cover the period April 2023 to March 2024. The seven targets are direct building emissions-tCO₂e, paper purchased, water consumption, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, waste produced, international flights and domestic flights.

Indicator: ONS staff levels

Target: 5000 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Performance (2023-2024): 5049 FTE as of 31 March 2024. Staff decreased by 460 FTE compared to 2022/23.

Performance (2022-2023): 5509 FTE as of 31 March 2023
Staff increased by 245 FTE compared to 2021/22

Staff decreases relate to the 'recruitment freeze' policy in place for 2023/24.

Indicator: ONS financial position

Target: Remain within key control totals

Performance (2023-2024): All financial control total targets met

Performance (2022-2023): All financial control total targets met

See Statement of Parliamentary Supply on pages 107-112.

Looking Ahead

Our strategic objectives have been replaced by five Priority Outcomes for 2024-2025 to further align ONS business planning with best practice across government departments. The Outcomes are presented in the 2024/25 Strategic Business Plan and ensure we can deliver our statutory functions, have the greatest impact for users while also enabling us to drive forward our radical and ambitious approaches to modernise how we work.

To ensure that our Strategy remained relevant, we held a mid-term Strategy Review involving key stakeholders and consultation across the statistical system. The outcome has helped drive our future priorities and planning.

Our 2024/25 Key Milestones can be found in our [2024/25 Strategic Business Plan](https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/2024-25-strategic-business-plan/pages/4/)⁴. They contribute to delivery of our priority outcomes and will require ongoing engagement across wider government for delivery, for example in relation to data sharing.

⁴ <https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/2024-25-strategic-business-plan/pages/4/>

Resources and organisation

Financial management

We complied with all HM Treasury expenditure control approvals processes and managed the standard annual fiscal events within the required timescales. Moreover, we successfully managed within our financial control totals as set by Parliament for 2023/24.

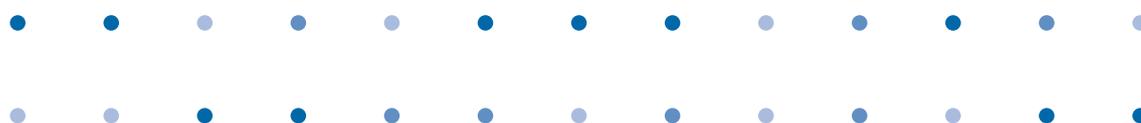
Spending Review 2021 (SR21) provided us with a multi-year settlement over the three financial years 2022/23 through to 2024/25. The settlement provides funding certainty and supports the ongoing delivery of our strategy through a continuation of core funding plus specific programme funding allocations.

Whilst we have funding certainty, the overall level of funding received during 2023/24 reduced compared with 2022/23. This combined with a significant increase in costs driven by high inflation has led to a sharp focus on prioritisation, cost control and delivery of our Efficiency Savings Plan (ESP) to live within our budgets this year. The impact has been most pronounced across our core funding where budgets have remained unchanged throughout the SR21 period.

As part of our 2023/24 financial planning processes, we needed to re-distribute circa £25m from lower to higher order priority activities. Our Efficiency Savings Plan delivered efficiencies and cost savings of £17.8m in 2023/24 exceeding our target of £16.8m. As part of our cost control measures, we reduced our overall FTE by 460 and reduced non-salaries expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure from 37% in 2022/23 to 29% in 2023/24. Delivery of our Efficiency Savings Plan (ESP) was critical to enable us to free up the necessary financial bandwidth to meet our increased costs – particularly relating to salaries which included a circa 5.5% average pay award and one-off non-consolidated payment of £1,500 per FTE in year.

To enable cash expenditure ahead of the passage of the 2023/24 Supplementary Estimate the Authority obtained a £28.5m contingent fund advance. This was repaid in full when Royal Assent was granted on 2023/24 Supplementary Estimate in March 2024.

The Office for Statistics Regulation's (OSR's) budget forms part of the Authority's wider accounts and whilst it is not disclosed separately in this report, defined parameters are applied in internal reporting. The OSR budget for 2023/24 was £3.37m.



Financial outcome

Our total net resource expenditure increased from £352.4m in 2022/23 to £362.9m in 2023/24. This figure is net of income but includes ring-fenced resource expenditure (depreciation). The commensurate budget for 2023/24 with which to compare was £372m. The increase year on year is due largely to additional funding approved by HM Treasury for expenditure on Future Population Migration Statistics and Public Sector Productivity Statistics.

Taking the position gross of income receipts our resource expenditure figures decreased from £576.9m in 2022/23 to £397.5m in 2023/24. This decrease relates to the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS) ending with a much smaller Winter COVID-19 Infection Study being funded by UK Health Security Agency. Our income has significantly decreased as a result from £224.6m in 2022/23 to £34.6m in 2023/24 due to the CIS funding coming to an end.

Our total net capital expenditure decreased from £35.7m in 2022/23 to £23.4m in 2023/24. The commensurate budget for 2023/24 with which to compare was £23.8m. Our capital expenditure is made up of £9.9m investment in development of assets, with £13.5m of expenditure classified as capital expenditure under the European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA10). The latter is not classified as capital expenditure under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The overall decrease in capital expenditure is due to high IFRS 16 capitalised costs in 2022/23 with the fit-out costs related to the relocation of the London office. There were no major leases entered into in 2023/24.

Further information on our financial outturn is provided in the Financial Summary section on [pages 79-80](#) and in our Accounts in [chapter 4](#).

People capability

The Authority's approach to people capability centres around mitigating against the risk that the Authority is unable to develop, deploy and retain individuals with critical skills. Throughout 2023/2024, the Authority has looked to mature its skills development approach to ultimately ensure the Authority has the right skills in the right place at the right time as well as building critical skills for a sustainable future.

In 2022, the Authority launched Skills that Count; an organisation wide strategy that highlights the shift from a strong, formal learning delivery focus to a more strategic skills development approach. This was further matured throughout the 2023/24 financial year to develop an 'agile capacity and capability' programme of work that reframes our current offer, with a stronger focus on developing and deploying critical skills to deliver against the Authority's priority statistical outputs. Its aim is to take a more agile, informed and efficient approach to the way we develop and deploy talent in the organisation. The work is organised into three distinct workstreams:

- a) **Workstream 1:** We will capture the skills our people have to make more informed decisions about how we deploy talent and focus capability building.
- b) **Workstream 2:** We will encourage an agile approach to learning that aligns with critical skills gaps to enable fluid movement of talent to the right place at the right time
- c) **Workstream 3:** We will ensure we are building an efficient and sustainable deployment and skills offer to enable movement to the highest priority roles.

Delivery against this programme of work will continue throughout the next financial year and will shift our focus to a much more agile approach to strategic skills development in the organisation.

To continue to secure our future, the UKSA continues to invest in entry talent pipelines with a particular focus on internally retaining and reskilling for skills that are critical to delivery of statistical outputs. We continue to engage with Fast Stream, apprenticeships and government-wide Life Chances schemes, and in particular during 24/25 we will look to use apprenticeships to build internal capability across critical skill areas.

We also continue to build and mature our capability approach for the Government Analysis Function, with a particular focus in the last year on developing analytical literacy across the non-analyst population as part of the Cabinet Secretary's 'One Big Thing' push to upskill all Civil Servants in data and analysis skills. Other achievements in the cross-government delivery space include the launch of the function's first development programme for underrepresented groups and a dedicated resourcing hub to enable more fluid movement of analysts to government priorities.

Corporate responsibility

Anti-corruption and anti-bribery measures

The Authority is committed to upholding high standards of honesty and integrity in all its activities and continues to work on its commitments regarding counter-fraud, bribery and corruption. All staff are required to act with honesty, integrity and to safeguard the public resources they are responsible for, with mandatory training (provided by Civil Service Learning) on counter fraud, bribery, and corruption. The Authority operates a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, with all cases of irregularity investigated and dealt with appropriately.

The Authority's Counter Fraud Team maintains a Fraud, Bribery and Corruption policy available to all staff via the internal intranet. The policy establishes clear expectations in terms of roles and responsibilities and what processes they need to follow to report any concerns regarding fraud, bribery, and corruption. The

Counter Fraud Team have developed a Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy to support the Authority in minimising fraud, bribery, and corruption over the next five years. The team undertakes a fraud risk assessment, involving fraud workshops and training sessions, to identify where the Authority may be susceptible to fraud and to ensure proportionate controls are in place.

The Counter Fraud Team also carries out an assessment against the Government Functional Standards – GovS 013: Counter Fraud. These assessments are reviewed bi-annually and contribute to the counter fraud workplan and supports the identification of proactive fraud work led by the Counter Fraud Officer, such as targeted training and in-depth reviews. Counter fraud reports are provided at least twice a year to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The Counter Fraud Team has not identified any material fraud for the period.

All senior leaders in the organisation – interpreted here as members of the Senior Civil Service – are required to sign a declaration of interests and confirm a statement on related parties. In addition, procurement staff will complete a conflict-of-interest declaration for major procurements (Gold and Silver contracts). All employees must declare all relevant outside interests.

An ongoing register is maintained of all hospitality and gifts offered to Authority staff. All staff are made aware of the civil service rules and the internal policy around acceptance of hospitality or gifts including the requirement to declare any offer. This register was presented to the Authority's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in June 2024 to demonstrate adherence to the policy

Other information in the public interest

Responding to members of the public

There have been zero complaints in 2023/24 (2022/23 zero) about the Authority raised via the Parliamentary Ombudsmen.

Whistleblowing arrangements

It is important the Authority's work environment offers a safe, inclusive, and supportive place to work; where everyone feels comfortable to speak up if they experience or witness anything that concerns them at work. The Authority's Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern policy provides assurance on the visibility, accessibility and understanding of the approach to 'speaking up' and is a core element of the Authority's Speak Up Framework. The Speak Up Framework enables navigation between the Resolution Policy for concerns related to inappropriate behaviour and unfair treatment, and the Whistleblowing policy for concerns related to breaches of the Civil Service Code, suspected illegal activity, or fraud. Several communication and engagement events take place throughout the year to maintain awareness of the Framework, including the annual 'Speak Up' week in the autumn, championed by a senior leader and consisting of all colleague communications and the provision of learning interventions.

Respect for human rights

UKSA fully complies with the Human Rights Act 1998.

The realisation of human rights correlates with the availability of sound official statistics. Statisticians play a critical role in supporting evidence-based policy and measuring civil, economic, political, and social rights. In accordance with internationally accepted standards, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the dissemination of relevant information is essential to meet peoples' right to information and delivering on related entitlements to trustworthy statistics. Upholding rights, such as the rights to privacy and to be registered as well as the rights of statisticians themselves is vital to ensure robustness and independence in official statistical systems.

The Authority recognises these challenges and has established a clear Statement of Principles to ensure that we:

- exercise our statutory responsibilities in a fair, proportionate and accountable way, with due regard for principles of privacy and appropriate degrees of internal and external scrutiny;
- work in a collaborative, transparent and fair manner with data suppliers, civil society, and the public, responding to any concerns or opportunities as they arise; and
- reinforce our full accountability to the UK Parliament and the devolved legislatures in exercising our statutory responsibilities.

Researchers, statisticians and data scientists should demonstrate compliance with the UK Statistics Authority's ethical principles through use of the Ethics Self-Assessment Tool and/or consultation with the National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee. The UK Statistics Authority's Centre for Applied Data Ethics was established in February 2021 with the aim of being a world leader in the field of applied data ethics. The Centre has developed an ethics self-assessment tool that enables staff to quickly assess their use of data against the UKSA's ethical principles and identify and mitigate ethical risk.

The Authority also recognises the ways in which internationally accepted and domestic legislation provide further effects to the human rights, protections, and freedoms guaranteed to its workforce. The Authority is committed to upholding the key human rights that intersect with the employment relationship through workplace policies and practices developed in collaboration with its workforce and official consultation channels to maintain the principles of dignity, fairness, respect, and equality. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of colleagues' voluntarily-disclosed personal information, as per General Data Protection Regulation principles
- ensuring colleagues are aware of their right to join one of our formally recognised unions

- underpinning our work with the commitments outlined in our Inclusion and Diversity Plan that extend over the Authority's remit as an employer and leader within the statistics profession within government
- identifying and overcoming perceived biases and disadvantages through the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment where required.

As an employer, our inclusion and diversity plan, recruitment practices, and wider employment policies all fully comply with the Human Rights Act. Inclusion is a strategic priority for the Authority, and further information on our policies and practice in this space can be found in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion section.

Sustainable development

It is the policy of the UK Statistics Authority (including the Office for National Statistics, its Executive Office) to conduct its operations in a manner that reflects a commitment to the protection of the environment, embeds the principles and priorities of the Government's sustainable development strategy and complies with environmental laws and regulations.

Our Sustainable Development Policy states this will be met by:

- achieving continual improvement in environmental performance;
- considering the environmental impact of our operations and prevent pollution and reduce carbon emissions;
- aiming to meet the targets (KPIs) established by the Greening Government Commitments;
- meeting all environmental legislative requirements; and
- complying with sustainable reporting requirements.

Environmental performance

The Government's Greening Commitments (GGC) have challenged us to reduce the environmental impact of our estate and operations. This section and the table below present our progress against these KPIs and targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, such as carbon and waste, on a yearly basis with the goal of net zero by 2050. Please note the current GGC period is 2021 to 2025, with our baseline period set from 2017/2018.

There was a change to flight data requirements in 2022-23, from number of flights to kilometres travelled on international flights. To ensure accurate comparison, we have converted the baseline figure into kilometres to allow tracking through the period.

Summary for 2023-24

Annual performance - 2023-24	Whole estate								
	GHG emissions	Direct building emissions	Waste			Water	Paper purchased	Domestic flights	International flights
	tCO2e	tCO2e	Total tonnes	% sent to landfill	% waste recycled	Total m3	Reams A4 equivalent	tCO2e	km travelled
Baseline 2017-18	4,878	605	359	4.30%	69.20%	15,037	34,860	100	2,308,438
% reduction target 2023-24	38%	43%	15%	5%	70%	8%	50%	30%	reduction
Target against baseline	3,024	344.85	305.15	5%	70%	13,834	17,430	70	reduction
FY 2023-24	1,722	67	144	0%	61%	11,421	10,265	25	3,180,960
% reduction	65%	89%	60%	0%	61%	24%	71%	75%	-38%

The table above shows that in the year 2023/24 the Authority failed to meet its targets on waste recycled, and international flights.

In relation to our international flights, ONS was successful in receiving its own Official development assistance (ODA) funding for the first time as part of SR21; this saw its funding increase with a primary objective of increasing the number of countries ONS supports with statistical capacity building and modernisation. The expansion of the programme has therefore resulted in the increase in the amount of travel that the business undertakes to support development activity. Over the next few years we expect to see the amount of travel to increase further. This would be for two reasons:

- ONS International Development Project has successfully secured additional funding of 5.4 million over the next 5 years to support a £200 million FCDO programme on demography and sexual reproductive health. This will see ONS working in other countries.
- ONS's leadership has set out their ambitious vision for an expanded international development project and that any future SR bid should reflect this ambition. Were such a future ambitious bid being successful, this would likely also result in an increase in ONS international travel.

Our recycling rates are lower than predicted, which is wholly because we send a large proportion (39%) of our waste to be converted to energy, which does not have a reporting section currently in the GGC reports, this is reflected in the

0% to Landfill but only 61% Recycled. A new waste segregation process is being implemented in line with Welsh legislation and will support to further reduce waste and increase recycling in line with our targets.

Reduce our emissions

The Authority has been tasked with reducing its overall emissions by 38% and direct emissions by 43%, as part of the GGC commitments.

The forecast for 2023/24 is showing a 65% reduction in GHG Emissions and a 90% reduction in Direct Building Emissions. This trend can be attributed to reducing the size of our estate and sustainability investments carried out in recent years.

The GGC also challenges the Authority to reduce domestic flights by 30% against the new baseline figures from 2017/2018. The Authority has a travel policy which mandates that the cheapest method of transport should be employed for any journey, which could encourage domestic air travel between the Southeast, Northeast and Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, the 2023/24 period is forecast to show a marked decrease in domestic flights, tracking well ahead of target. This has largely been attributed to greater accountability and approvals of domestic flights. In reference to international flights, there is an increase in travel overseas due to a large expansion in the international division within ONS.

Improve our waste management

All information communication technology (ICT) equipment is disposed of via an established contract which helps ensure that all redundant ICT equipment is re-used or recycled responsibly.

The Authority is forecast to successfully reduce its overall waste by 59% against the baseline figures which target a reduction of 15%. The Authority is also forecast to reduce paper use by 69% which improves again on previous year's figures.

Water Use

In 2023/2024, water consumption is forecast to reduce by 22% against the baseline, exceeding the target of 8%. Despite seeing an increase in the number of colleagues attending each of our sites compared to last year, we continue to see further reductions largely due to investing in rectifying leaks across our water mains and distribution networks.

Sustainable procurement

The Authority's standard Terms and Conditions requires all suppliers to comply with our Sustainable Development Policy, which includes, but is not limited to, the conservation of energy, water, wood, paper and other resources, a reduction in waste, the phasing out of the use of ozone depleting substances and the minimisation of the release of greenhouse gases, volatile organic compounds and other substances damaging to health and the environment.

Building on changes to procurement policy, the Authority has been able to fully embrace social value within a tender, placing it as a significant, mandated element of any evaluation. Key to the success of the implementation of social value is the ongoing work with our supply base to develop specifications and requirements that have sustainability at their heart.

The Authority extensively uses Public Sector Framework arrangements collaboratively managed by government organisations such as the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) and the Government Digital Services' (GDS). The CCS and GDS frameworks aim to encourage small and medium sized enterprises and local businesses to bid for work with support available to them if required. The Authority continues to support the engagement of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across our contract base.

The requirements of the Government Buying Standards (GBS) are issued to the Commercial Services team on a quarterly basis via the Commercial Update, which is a comprehensive review of all Procurement news and legislation. The quarterly updates also provide information from across the Commercial Team such as data from the Cabinet Office approved Commercial Pipeline as these assist the Team in reviewing opportunities that may be of interest to smaller or local business, ensuring appropriate timetables and market engagement are utilised.

Food and catering

All contractors are required to adhere to our Sustainable Development Policy, but Covid Secure arrangements have impacted this with the re-introduction of packaging that had previously been eradicated from the service. Over the past year we have worked with the catering providers to eradicate single use plastics where possible, as the controls in place during the pandemic have been removed from the Authority offices.

Sustainable construction

The Authority's refurbishment and construction works are designed and built with the objective of improving the performance of the estate, and in so doing contribute to the achievement of Greening Government Commitments targets. For example, this has included the installation of LED sensor light fittings as standard, low flow taps and carpets with recycled backing. All contractors are required to complete a sustainability questionnaire used as part of the tender process and are required to source materials in line with the GBS.

Our Evolving the Workplace programme has reused existing furniture where possible, and any surplus has been given to community organisations and charities with any residual items planned for sustainable recycling through specialist providers.

Biodiversity

The Authority complies with The Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Section 6 on Biodiversity. It does not have any responsibility for Sites of Special Scientific Interest but takes such action as it can to promote, conserve and enhance biodiversity for example by specification of environmentally friendly measures in its ground's maintenance contract.

Climate change adaptation

The Authority's Sustainable Development Action Plan considers the long-term implications of its operations in relation to climate change. This Action Plan is updated yearly and assesses any risks of climate change, how the estate may require necessary adaptation, is robust in the face of changing weather, extreme events and sea level rises from climate change. Business Continuity uses scenario-based exercises to plan for events including any potential effects of extreme weather on our estate.

Sustainable governance and decision making

Our Sustainable Development Policy and Action Plan are embedded within our overall governance and decision making. Since 2021, when our Environmental Champions' Group was initiated (EnSus), many improvement projects have been identified, elevated and presented to senior management for approval.

Rural proofing

Our estate is not positioned in rural areas, nor do the estate's operational policies affect rural areas.

Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure Statement

ONS has reported on climate-related financial disclosures consistent with HM Treasury's TCFD-aligned disclosure application guidance which interprets and adapts the framework for the UK public sector. ONS has complied with the TCFD recommendations and recommendations disclosures around:

- Governance
- Metrics and targets

This is in line with the central governments TCFD-aligned disclosure implementation timetable. ONS plans to make disclosures for Strategy, Risk Management and Metrics and Targets disclosures (a) and (c) in future reporting periods in line with the central government implementation timetable.

In 2015 the FSB established the TCFD to develop recommendations for more effective climate-related disclosures to promote more informed decisions and, in turn, enable stakeholders to understand better the concentrations of carbon-related assets and exposures to climate-related risks.

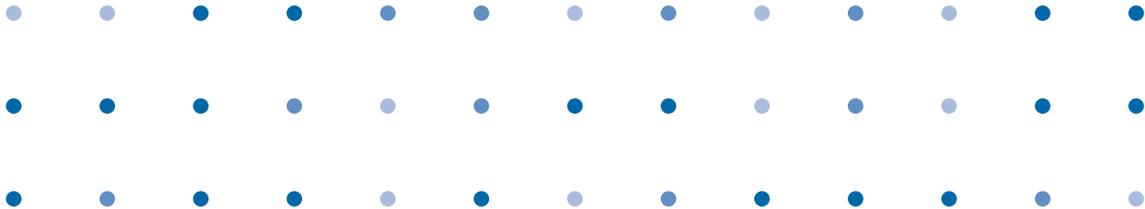
Recommendations published by the Task Force in 2017 proposed:

- four widely adoptable recommendations across four thematic areas (Governance, Strategy, Risk Management, and Metrics and Targets)
- eleven recommended disclosures structured around the thematic areas, representing the core elements of the organisation’s operations. The disclosures are intended to interlink and inform each other
- general and sector-specific guidance for applying the framework
- seven key principles for effective disclosure:
 - relevant
 - specific and complete
 - clear, balanced, and understandable
 - consistent over time
 - comparable across the sector, industry, or portfolio
 - reliable, verifiable, and objective
 - timely

The TCFD recommendations have been adopted by a range of organisations in the private sector and this document will demonstrate the adoption as part of the public sector adoption as part of global best practice.

Reporting Process

An Integrated Performance Report is provided to the Portfolio and Investment Committee (a subcommittee of the Executive Committee) for each of its meetings, which includes performance tracking of our GGCs. In terms of strategic risks there are no strategic risks relating to sustainability and environment including climate change.

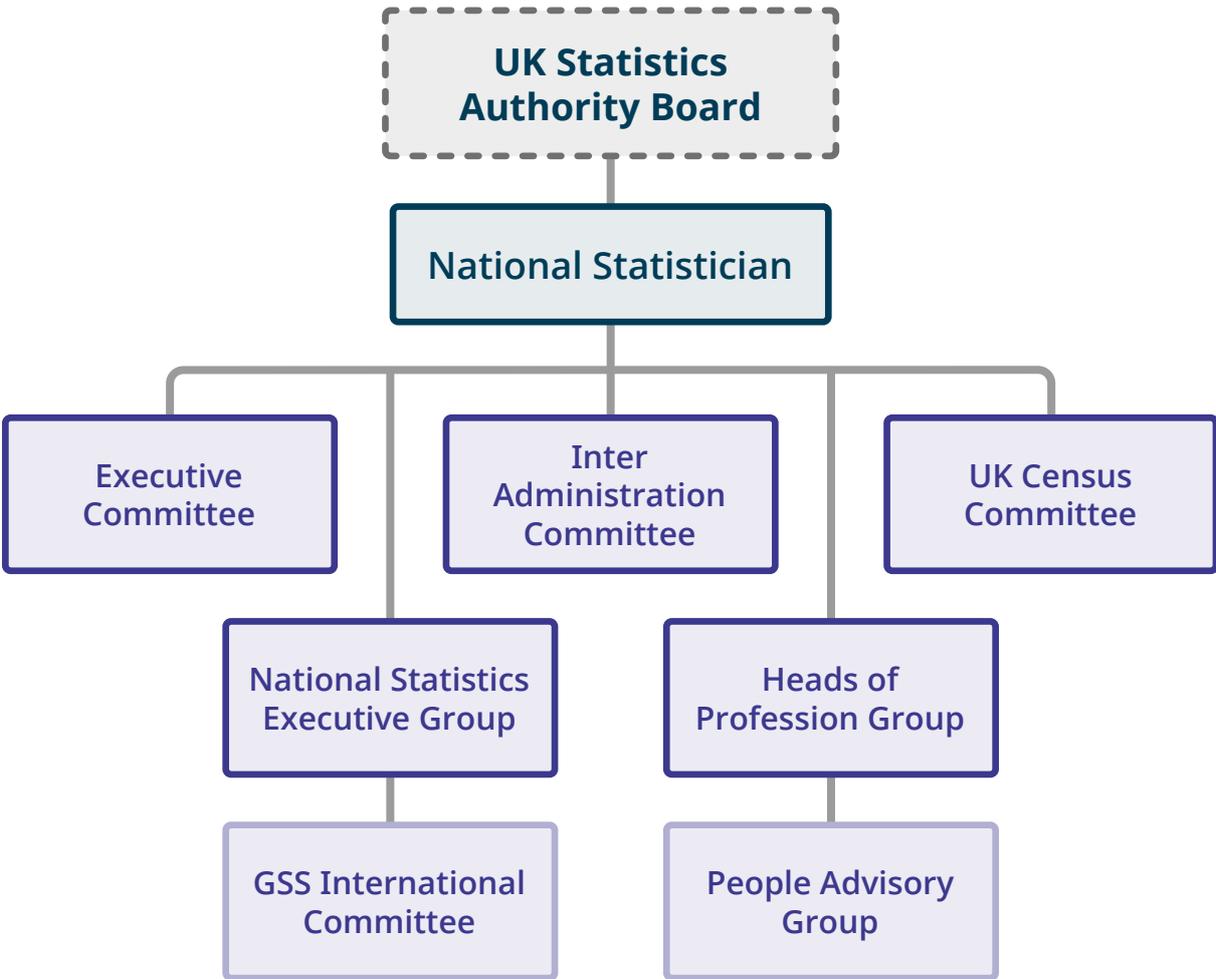


Reporting Structure

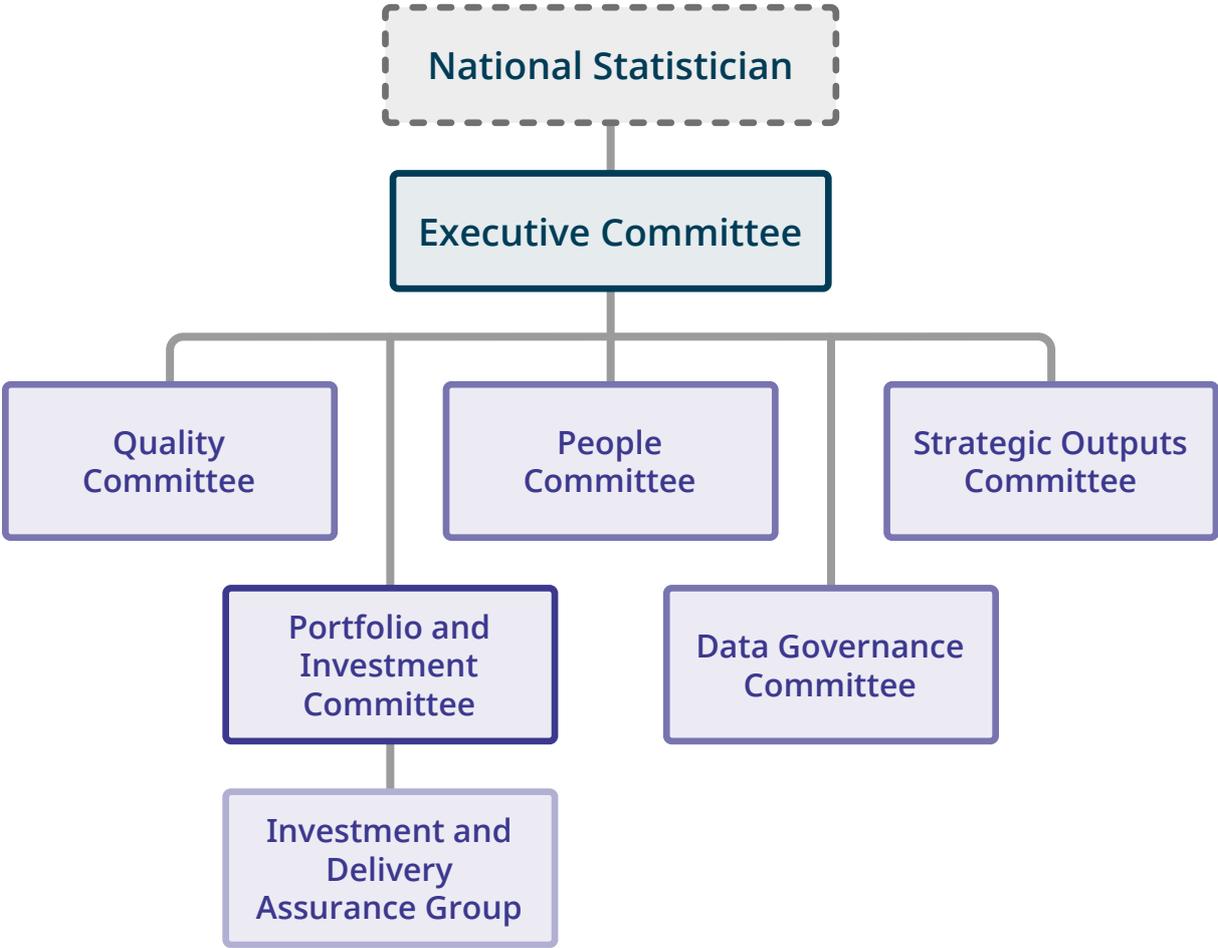
Authority Board sub-committees



National Statistician



Executive Committee



National Statistician’s statutory committees



Rapid response groups



The UKSA Sustainable Development Policy, one of the main supporting documents is reviewed and signed off annually and contains the following:

'It is the policy of the UK Statistics Authority (including the Office for National Statistics, its Executive Office) to conduct its operations in a manner that reflects a commitment to the protection of the environment, embeds the principles and priorities of the Government's sustainable development strategy and complies with environmental laws and regulations.'

The UK Statistics Authority will:

- Achieve continual improvement in environmental performance.
- Consider the environmental impact of our operations and prevent pollution and reduce carbon emissions wherever possible.
- Aim to meet or exceed the targets established by the Greening Government Commitments, incorporating the UK's NetZero 2050 target.
- Meet all environmental legislative requirements.
- Comply with sustainable reporting requirements.

Our objectives are to:

- Reduce carbon emissions from fuel consumption by our buildings.
- Reduce carbon emissions from business operations, such as travel and paper use.
- Reduce water consumption.
- Reduce, reuse, or recycle all waste.
- Incorporate sustainable development elements into our purchasing and contract management strategies; for example, consideration of life cycle, end-of-life and appropriate disposal of products and goods.
- Incorporate ISO14001 principles across the ONS (Office for National Statistics) Estate.
- Meet the guidance requirements set out under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Action 2016 Part 1 on Biodiversity.
- Encourage volunteering opportunities within the local community.

Implementation

The UK Statistics Authority will meet these aims and objectives by the means set out in our Sustainable Development Action Plan.

Sustainable Development Action Plan

The Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) has been created to support the Authority's Sustainable Development Policy by identifying the actions that the Authority needs to take to comply with Policy and providing a means for

tracking the actions. Central Government expects an SDAP from all departments and their executive agencies. This is to ensure that the strategic actions of the organisation intend to integrate Sustainable Development (SD) into its decision-making and everyday operations are recorded. The Authority maintains a SDAP which is reviewed yearly.



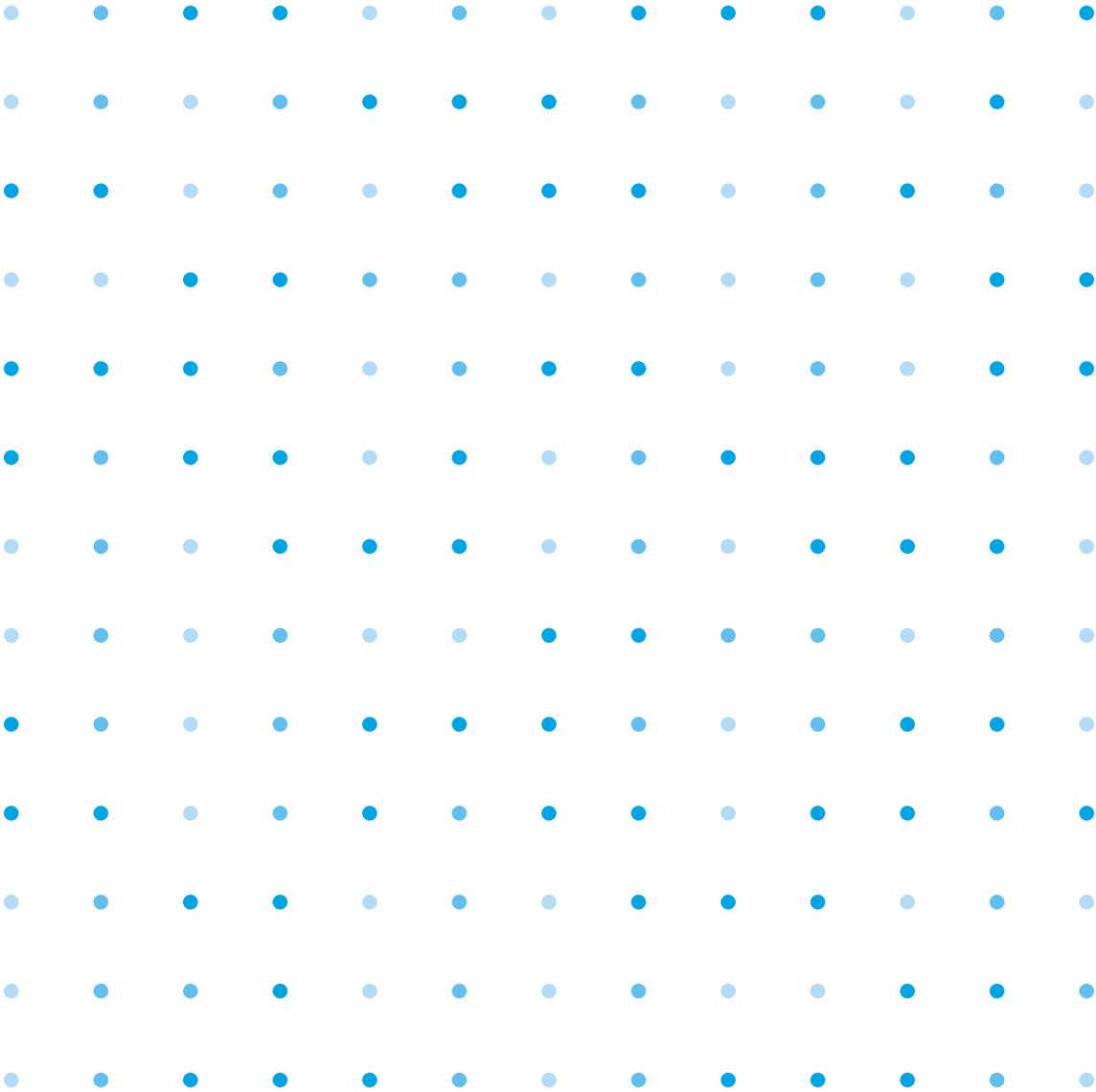
Professor Sir Ian Diamond

National Statistician

UK Statistics Authority

12 July 2024

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Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, HM Treasury has directed the Authority to prepare for each financial year resource accounts detailing the resources acquired, held or disposed of during the year and the use of resources by the Authority during the year.

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Authority and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

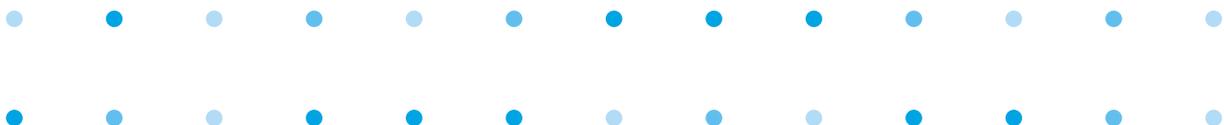
In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

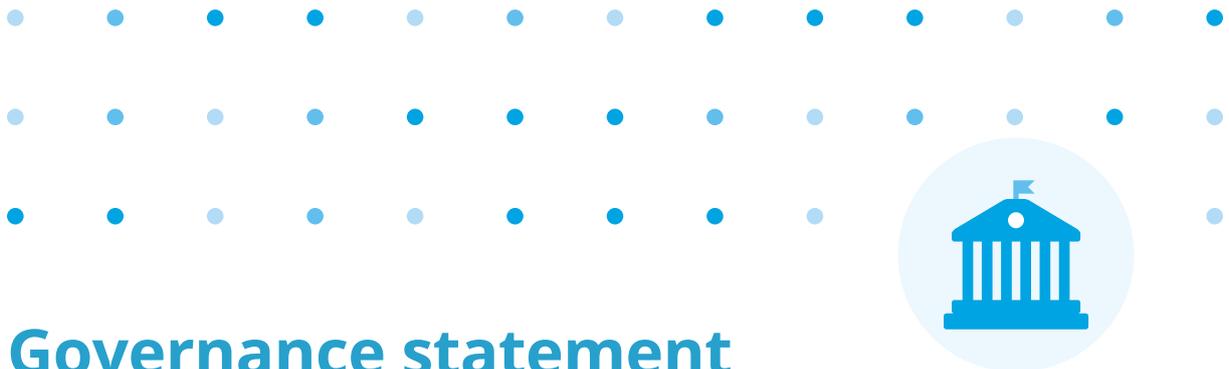
- observe the Accounts Direction issued by HM Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts;
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis;
- confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

HM Treasury has appointed the Permanent Secretary of the Authority as Accounting Officer of the Authority.

The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Authority's assets, are set out in Managing Public Money published by the HM Treasury.

As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Authority's auditors are aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.





Governance statement

Responsibilities

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining effective governance and a sound system of internal control to support the achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and objectives. As part of this role I safeguard the public funds and assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me. I confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and I take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable. This statement sets out the key challenges faced by the UK Statistics Authority (the Authority), the issues which have arisen, the remaining risks, and the system of control to manage these risks. Our Governance Statement supports the description of our performance provided in the Annual Report (Chapter 2) which sets out our strategy and the progress we have made towards delivery.

In line with commitments made by the Authority to the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, I delegated accounting officer responsibilities to Mr Ed Humpherson for the OSR budget, from 1 June 2020. The appointment was made at my discretion under the terms of Managing Public Money policy, whereby accounting officer responsibilities for defined parts of the department's business can be delegated by the principal Accounting Officer. The position carries with it the responsibility for ensuring that resources approved by the UK Statistics Authority Board for the Office for Statistics Regulation are used for the purposes intended.

Compliance with the Corporate Governance Code

I have assessed the Authority's compliance with the Corporate Governance in the Central Government Departments' Code of Good Practice 2017. The code focuses on governance arrangements for ministerial departments and there are elements, such as ministerial chairmanship of the Board (Section 1.1), which are not directly relevant to the Authority due to our statutory framework and status as a non-ministerial department. However, in all other areas we comply with the principles of the code. There are no other instances of non-compliance.

Role of the Authority Board during 2023/24

The UK Statistics Authority Board (Authority Board) has the statutory objective of promoting and safeguarding the production and publication of official statistics that 'serve the public good'. In accordance with the 2007 Act, the Authority Board is comprised of a majority of non-executive directors (including a Chair) appointed through open competition, and three executive members, as set out in the 2023/24 Governance and Committees of the Board table.

The post of Chair of the UK Statistics Authority is a Crown appointment. Sir Robert Chote was appointed by the late Queen Elizabeth following an open competition and subject to a pre-appointment hearing by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee and a formal debate on the floor of the House of Commons. Sir Robert took up his post on 1 June 2022 and his term of appointment is for a five-year term.

Governance and Committees of the Authority Board during 2023/24

During 2023/24 sub-committees, which supported the Authority Board in its work and reported to it met as follows:

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Chaired by Nora Nanayakkara⁵ / Dr Jacob Abboud and met six times.

Purpose: To support the Authority Board and the Authority's Accounting Office in their responsibilities for risk management, control and governance.

Regulation Committee

Chaired by Sir Robert Chote⁶ / Penny Young and met seven times.

Purpose: To oversee the programme of assessment of sets of official statistics against the Code of Practice plus other work related to assessment and regulation.

⁵ Nora Nanayakkara was Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee until 30 June 2023. Dr Jacob Abboud took on the role of Interim Chair in September 2023.

⁶ Sir Robert Chote was interim Chair of the Regulation Committee until 30 April 2023. Penny Young took on the role of Chair in May 2023.

Remuneration Committee

Chaired by Sir Robert Chote and met twice.

Purpose: To determine 2022/23 performance bonuses for the members of the Senior Civil Service employed by the Authority and to consider other staff pay issues.

Topics covered by each committee

Authority Board

Strategy and Business planning, Strategic Risk Profile and Risk Appetite, Integrated Data Service Programme, Economic Statistics transformation (including the Labour Force Survey, Transformation of the Labour Force Survey and legacy transformation), Consultation on the Future of Population and Migration Statistics, Gender Identity, Scotland Census 2022, National Statistics Designation Review, People, Retail Prices Index, Excess Mortality methodology, Independent Review of the Authority by Professor Denise Lievesley, Government Statistical Service Vision and Strategic Delivery Plan, Annual Review of Effectiveness.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Annual Report and Account, Business planning, Risk and Assurance (including risk management and assurance mapping), Internal Audit Programme 2023/24, Internal Audit Action Tracking 2023/24, Internal Audit Draft Plan 2024/25, Corporate Governance Assurance, External Audit, Finances, Fraud, Whistleblowing, Data Protection Annual Update, Office for Statistics Regulation annual update, Risk Deep Dives for Legacy transformation and Statistical Quality, Annual Review of Committee Effectiveness.

Regulation Committee

Annual Business Plan and Regulatory Programme, State of the Statistical System Report, Annual Review of Casework, National Statistics Designation Review, OSR Maturity Model, Risk Management, Horizon Scanning, National Statistics Designation of Scotland's Census, Data Linkage, Sex and Gender Identity Guidance, Programme of work on Economic Statistics including Producer Price Indices and Profitability of UK Companies, ONS Transformation of the Labour Force Survey and the Future of Population and Migration Statistics, Annual Review of Committee Effectiveness.

Remuneration Committee

Senior Civil Service performance moderation (base pay and non-consolidated performance related award).

Attendance at the Authority Board and its sub-committees

Members	Authority Board	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	Regulation Committee	Remuneration Committee
Non-executive members				
Sir Robert Chote Chair	10/10		7/7	2/2
Sian Jones Deputy Chair	8/10	5/6		1/2
Dr Jacob Abboud	7/10	5/6		
Professor Sir John Aston	8/8	5/6		
Mr Richard Dobbs	2/2		2/2	
Nora Nanayakkara	7/10	1/2		
Professor Dame Carol Propper	6/10		6/7	
Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter	10/10		6/7	
Penny Young	10/10		7/7	
Executive members				
Professor Sir Ian Diamond Chief Executive and National Statistician	10/10	5/6		2/2
Ed Humpherson Director General for Regulation	9/10		7/7	
Sam Beckett Deputy Chief Executive and Second Permanent Secretary	2/2			
Alison Pritchard ⁷ Director General for Data Capability	5/8			

⁷ Alison Pritchard appointed as Executive Member of the Authority Board in June 2023.

Board effectiveness review

This year's board effectiveness review was overseen by the Chair of the Authority Board. A survey was undertaken that sought members' views on:

- processes for agreeing business plans
- adequacy of information provided to the Board, to allow it to monitor performance and progress
- board composition and culture
- support for members
- areas of focus for the coming year

The outcome of the survey was discussed at the board meeting in July 2023.

The responses indicated sustained improvement in the operation of the Board over the last year. The Chair continued to provide an open and supportive culture to allow an inclusive open and challenging environment for discussion. The Board considered strategic issues focusing on the delivery of the Strategy, Statistics for the Public Good, including progress of delivery of the Integrated Data Service Programme, the transformation of economic statistics and the Future of Population and Migration Statistics.

Members indicated that in the coming year, areas of focus would include the Integrated Data Service, transformation of economic statistics through the ARIES Programme, Strategic Risks, delivery of the ONS and OSR Business Plans and effective management of the Authority's budget.

Assurance over the quality of information

The Authority Board recognised the need to ensure it receives sound advice and information to enable informed decisions to be made.

The Secretariat works with teams to ensure the information provided is of a good quality, with a template used for committee papers, structured to ensure risks and resource implications are highlighted and to ensure sufficient engagement and challenge during discussions.

The structure and information contained in regular agenda items are reviewed annually as part of the board effectiveness review.

An Integrated Performance and Finance Report is provided to the Authority Board in each meeting to aid decision making and the Strategic Risk framework has been discussed throughout 2023/24. Overall, the Authority Board has been content with the quality of the data it has been provided with during the year.

Executive Committees during 2023/24

The National Statistician, Professor Sir Ian Diamond, chairs the National Statistics Executive Group (NSEG) and the Executive Committee⁸.

The role of the Executive Committee is to support the National Statistician in the exercise of my functions and as Chief Executive and Accounting Officer of the Office for National Statistics to set the strategic direction and achieve the collective mission and objectives of ONS.

The role of NSEG is to support the National Statistician in the exercise of their function as the Head of the Government Statistics Service (GSS) and Analysis Function, so as to achieve the collective mission and strategic objectives of the official statistics system.

NSEG met on four occasions and the Executive Committee met on twenty-one occasions during 2023/24.

The role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is to support the Authority Board and Authority's Accounting Officer in my responsibilities for risk management, control and governance. The Committee concentrates its assurance role on the extent of the risks to which the realisation of the Authority's strategic aims and objectives is exposed. Regular reports are provided to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at each meeting in key areas including Finance, Risk and Assurance, Internal Audit and External Audit.

Management of risk

Financial year 2023/24 saw continued maturity in relation to the oversight, challenge and accountability of the Authority's risk and assurance approach. Colleagues took an active role in relation to risk management and assurance, and of the organisation's appetite for risk, leading to more challenging and mature leadership conversations both within and beyond the Governance Framework leading to better informed decision making. The ONS (Office for National Statistics) Risk Management and Assurance framework has been established with the Orange Book five key principles at its core.

Risk management approach and strategic risk framework

The Risk and Assurance Framework provides our mechanism for the identification, analysis, and management of risk across the ONS and is aligned to the Orange

⁸ The Executive Committee was set up as part of the executive governance framework following a review in March 2023 by the Director of Finance Planning and Performance. The first meeting was held in May 2023.

Book, drawing on Risk Management best practice and tailored to ways of working within the ONS. It also ensures we can provide assurance that risks to the delivery of the Authority's Strategy are being managed within risk appetite.

The Authority Board has ultimate accountability for risk management, with responsibility for agreeing our Strategic Risk profile and the associated risk appetite. Updates on the Strategic Risk profile are provided to the Board on a bi-annual basis.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee has responsibility for advising the Board on the effectiveness of governance, risk management and the system of internal control. Updates are provided to each ARAC (Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee) on the evolving Strategic Risk profile, as well as other relevant risk and assurance activities. ARAC provides scrutiny over the management of the strategic risks to satisfy itself that major risks are identified that mitigation strategies and appropriate levels of assurance are in place, and regularly challenge and hold the Risk and Assurance team and Strategic Risk Owners to account.

Executive accountability for risk management resides with the National Statistician (the Accounting Officer), with executive oversight residing with the Executive Committee (ExCo) and its sub-committees. Each strategic risk is owned by a member of the senior leadership team and is overseen by a relevant ExCo sub-committee where in-depth analysis of each risk is scrutinised to assure their management. There is a clear escalation route from the sub-committees to ExCo to provide additional challenge and assurance. ExCo receives regular updates on the Strategic Risk profile to ensure visibility and scrutiny of the full strategic risk profile and the interlinkages between the risks, as well as more in-depth analysis of the emerging risk environment, enabling ExCo to embed risk at the heart of decision making. Risk owners are accountable for providing their updates to the relevant sub committees with the Risk and Assurance team providing independent assessment of progress.

The Authority operates a 'Three Lines of Defence' model to distinguish the different executive responsibilities for risk and assurance:

1. First line

Owns and manages risk including implementation of controls and have primary responsibility for establishing effective governance and control frameworks. Undertaken by our senior leaders and Directors.

2. Second Line

Functions that set risk and assurance policy and frameworks to enable risk and compliance to be managed in the first line. They provide independent (of management chain) oversight and constructive challenge, advice, and review of the first line to support the management of risks and achievement of objectives.

3. Third line

Provides assurance to the Accounting Officer, ARAC and the Authority Board that risk management and controls are appropriate and effective through independently and objectively evaluating internal controls, risk management and governance processes. This is undertaken by Internal Audit. For programmes on the Government Major Projects Portfolio, third line assurance is also provided by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

Additional independent assurance is provided by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR), the independent regulatory arm of the UK Statistics Authority.

The Authority's risk and assurance team have undertaken a review of the organisations risk management practices against the requirements of the Orange Book's five principles which noted compliance with four of the five key principles (Governance and leadership; Integration; Collaboration and Best Information; and Risk Management Process). The Continual Improvement principle is partially met.

New ways of working, tools and governance have been introduced in the last few years and are therefore in their infancy so this result was anticipated and some of the actions identified to move to a fully 'met' position are; utilising assurance outputs more explicitly to inform potential changes to controls; a more formalised approach to continuous improvement for example by gaining feedback from a wider audience on the maturity of risk management, an action plan of improvements which will be implemented over the coming 12-18 months and gaining a more informed view of what good looks via continued engagement with the Risk Centre of Excellence.

UK Statistics Authority strategic risks

The Strategic Risk profile (see below) demonstrates the most significant risks to the successful delivery of the UKSA (UK Statistics Authority) Strategy and its statutory objectives, owned by the UKSA senior leadership. The profile is agreed by the Authority Board on an annual basis, with reference to the UKSA Strategy, the ONS Business Plan and the external environment. There have been no newly identified risks during 2023/24: however there have been adjustments to the current risk profile to reflect the changing risk environment. All strategic risks are overseen by, and their management assured by ExCo Sub-Committees.

UK Statistics Authority strategic risks summary

Independence, trustworthiness, and impact

The risk that, particularly in the heightened political environment leading to an election, the statutory independence of the UK Statistics Authority is, or is perceived to be, compromised by political interests or commercial relationships, and/or the trust in the UKSA is eroded.

Mitigations include – regular engagement with Parliament and responding to public enquiries; intervening when statistics are misused; fair and open recruitment processes for the Authority Chair, National Statistician and Non-Executive Directors; safeguards to ensure funding does not compromise independence and clear separation of roles within the Authority (e.g., the role of OSR).

Ensuring our statistics and analysis keep pace with changing priorities

The risk that the UKSA is not able to pivot, focus and commit to providing timely and relevant data on the most important questions of the day with agility and pace and/or does not maintain a culture of continuous improvement across the entirety of its outputs. The UKSA fails to continue to meet the demands and needs of our varied users. There is also the risk UKSA do not take opportunities to collaborate on analysis across Government, devolved regions, local authorities, data providers and data users.

Mitigations include – cross ONS and GSS (Government Statistical Service) horizon scanning; engagement and partnership work with Centre of Government; understanding of local government needs and how ONS can support; Analytical framework which sets out ONS agreement on priorities; monitor public and business perceptions of ONS outputs.

Delivery of strategic ambition

The risk that the UKSA is unable to ensure that appropriate investment and/or resource is allocated to the key activities that impact on the strategy, and/or is unable to respond with agility to new/emerging priorities.

Mitigations include – forecasting and budget setting informing delegation letters; ongoing monthly monitoring of the financial position in year; Efficiencies Framework to continually identify efficiencies; demand, prioritisation and resource management continually understand capacity to deliver; commercial strategy and stakeholder engagement with HM treasury.

Quality statistics

The risk that the quality (and/or perception of quality) of UKSA outputs diminishes, as well as the ability to appropriately communicate changes to quality.

Mitigations include – the Statistical Quality Maturity Model (SQMM) to assess process, methods, and systems in output areas; divisional Quality Improvement Plans; lessons learned & targeted improvements; Quality reviews; Statistical design governance to ensure accuracy from the outset; Quality Champion network.

Security

There is an increased risk of an accidental information loss and/or a successful cyber or physical attack resulting in service disruption and/or a data breach.

Mitigations include – a suite of physical, technical, data, information management, people, and process security controls; protective monitoring capabilities; risk-based compliance and audit activity; business continuity framework maintaining

high level of resilience and security training and internal awareness campaigns to raise awareness and to reinforce behavioural expectations.

Our people

The risk that the UKSA is unable to develop, deploy and retain individuals with critical skills and is unable to retain a diverse and inclusive pool of talent. When recruitment is required externally, the UKSA is unable to attract critical skills.

Mitigation includes – strategic resourcing framework which includes prioritisation led deployment; wellbeing plan; skills strategy; inclusion and diversity (I&D) plan including mandatory I&D goals and training, targeted leadership programs; a suite of retention controls and; Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) pay framework, all contributing to building an agile, sustainable, and diverse workforce.

Our communications

The risk that the quality of UKSA communications is poor and uncoordinated. Communications are not open, accessible, coherent, and timely. There is a risk that the UKSA is not seen as transparent, data is misunderstood or misused, and the organisation is unable to respond with agility.

Mitigation includes – consistent and coherent approach to engaging with users; approvals policy to assure outputs; contingency plans for sharing outputs, social media policy.

Inclusivity in our statistics and analysis

The risk that the UKSA's presentation of society is not inclusive and reflective of all aspects of the UK's rapidly changing economy, demographics, and policy priorities.

Mitigation includes – addressing the recommendations of the Inclusive Data Taskforce; establishment of cross-GSS sub-committee on Inclusive Data to support GSS analysis.

Ability to transform and accurately measure population and migration

The risk that the UKSA fails to: i. accurately produce its core population and migration statistics offering and/or does not deliver the transformation required for it to be fit for the future and to meet user needs; and ii. fails to provide a credible evidence base for the acceptance of the National Statistician's Recommendation by Parliament.

Mitigation includes – the creation and implementation of a roadmap for establishing and delivering a robust set of evidence required to support the 2023 Recommendation, publication of the outcomes of the 2023 Recommendation Consultation, Public consultation to understand user needs; delivery of the Future of Population Migration and Social Statistics outline business case; ensuring the supply of Administrative Data to support the transformation of population and migration statistics.

Data access and usability

The risk that the UKSA may be unable to influence both public and private sectors in delivering transformative data sharing arrangements. Such arrangements are crucial to i) support UKSA's role of facilitating increased sharing and linkage of data for research purposes that benefit the public good; and ii) support the UKSA in obtaining regular and sustainable access to administrative data that is useable and of sufficient quality.

Mitigation includes – DGO gateway process for effective data acquisition; effective account management of key data stakeholders to ensure relationships are nurtured: central oversight and assurance over data acquisition; Long term investment in improvements.

Technological resilience

There is a risk that the UKSA technology estate (inc. third party suppliers, software, systems, services, and platforms) is unreliable, obsolescent, unaffordable, or no longer supported.

Mitigation includes – adherence of the Technology Code of Practice, Architecture Principles and Digital Service Standards; ongoing programme of upgrades and patching across the ONS IT estate; Implementation of the strategic roadmap that identifies the reduction in reliance on Legacy systems, continuous improvement of the IT disaster recovery capability.

Data and security management

The overall security of our systems, in particular our key data management environment, the Data Access Platform (DAP), remains vitally important. Throughout 2023/24 we focused on supporting the future resilience and security of DAP, looking towards a major platform update. During this period we have continued to support the security and data assurance of the Integrated Data Service (IDS) during beta development phases and supported plans for integration of new data and users as part of service consolidation with legacy services. Transforming the security of DAP and IDS using modern techniques and technology supports the Authority and wider Government transformation of statistics, and our ongoing success in operating these.

Over the past three years the Security and Information Strategy – Evolving A Resilient ONS 2021 – 2023 has delivered its key objectives of developing an effective Security and Information Security Framework. The new strategy People, Partnership and Innovation focuses on the coming years where ONS will do more with data, we will develop new systems and adopt new technology in pursuit of cutting-edge analytics and innovative statistical outputs. Our security and information management capabilities must evolve in response.

As our digital presence grows and data partnerships diversify, a more federated ecosystem emerges. Protecting data, regardless of location, is crucial. In this

decentralized setting, our people are our strongest asset. We will cultivate a culture based on empowered people equipping colleagues with the knowledge and threat awareness to keep safe. We will embed a mindset where secure decisions making is instinctive.

More data sharing and more collaboration depends on building more trust with our partners and the public. By showcasing our professionalism, sharing our expertise, and demonstrating value in everything we do, we will build trusted partnerships across ONS, government and beyond.

Our ambition drives our appetite for innovation. As an organisation we value experimentation. We will enable innovation. Through our advice and assurance, we will guide people to exploit technology and experiment securely. We will expand our security operations capability to provide a safety net in case something goes wrong. We will work with data and technology teams across ONS to embed secure by design and secure digital development practices.

Over the last year we have built resilient behaviours through new and improved security training. We updated our security policy to highlight behavioural expectations. We established a new business partnering service to support and guide colleagues in implementing policy and managing risks.

Organisational supply chains have been identified as a significant channel to exploit vulnerabilities, we have strengthened the ONS supply chain management framework and security assurance, working in partnership with commercial teams.

We have made significant enhancements to the security risk management plan, which has educated stakeholders in security risks and early opportunities to mitigate risks to within appetite. The level of Management Information to empower risk owners has really shone through. Risk management information is seen as an exemplar across ONS.

We are heavily focused on driving migrations of data holdings from legacy IT systems to ONS enterprise solutions that offer much greater security and data governance.

Cyber, policy, people, process testing has been the order of the year through a significant number of channels such as Cyber and physical site penetration testing, incident management plan testing and business continuity testing across ONS. Additional to this has been the external assurance auditing through specialist bodies such as the Information Security Forum (ISF) and the Government Assurance independent audit held in January 2024 that identified that 'ONS has demonstrated a commendable level of maturity in the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF), for the Data Access Platform system'.

Our support to the Digital Economy Act continues through the security assessment of potential data processors under Act and Code of Practice. Maintaining high levels of security protection for public data used in research is a key requirement for the Authority. Our experts have assessed organisations

for accreditation this year to ensure strong security controls are in place to host and process data, with the Research Accreditation Panel making a determination on the formal accreditation. In addition, several annual assessments have been performed on accredited organisations to ensure that their security environment remains strong, with appropriate improvements being implemented.

Public confidence and support for the provision of data is critical, including the acceptability of legislation such as the Digital Economy Act. We recognise that a data or cyber breach in the management of data could impact this significantly. To support our approach to managing these areas, we have made significant investment in protective technology, monitoring services and vulnerability testing together with staff training and development. This has included extensive engagement with the National Cyber Security Centre and with key Government department security teams. Enhanced security training is now a mandatory requirement for all staff, with substantial effort being put into behavioural security to provide staff with the awareness needed so they play a stronger part in the defence of the Authority.

Information management

Significant levels of confidential data are collected and acquired in the use of official statistics, and staff in some parts of the Authority have access to a range of business and personal data to produce high quality, accurate statistics. Information management and confidentiality therefore remain critical considerations for the Authority, and the recognised, strong cultural understanding that information must be handled lawfully, accurately and securely, supported by strong legal, technological, and business processes persists.

Compliance with information legislation continues to be a core priority, and activities that support the management of documents and records throughout their lifecycle have been developed and matured. There has been a focus on moving off legacy storage systems and onto a more modern platforms and associated policies and guidance have been revised to support compliance and accountability.

Technical enhancements have been made to the Information Asset Register, to further improve metadata collection, accuracy, and transparency to support the Authority's use of data and the production of statistics and research.

I am required to report any significant breaches relating to personal data to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). There have been no such incidents during 2023/2024.

Developments in the control environment

Maintaining and improving an effective system of internal controls and governance within the Authority remains a key priority. The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to an acceptable level and within our

agreed risk appetite, rather than to eliminate all risk. A strong internal control environment facilitates the Authority's effective and efficient operation. Additionally, an effective system of internal control helps us to ensure the quality of both internal and external reporting. It also serves to ensure compliance with applicable law and regulations, as well as our internal policies.

During 2023/24 there were significant improvements to the internal control environment. These include:

- An improvement in maturity and accountability of strategic risk owners with regular updates provided to key governance forums in relation to their risks, driving increased ownership and enabling the Risk and Assurance team to take a more independent second line role.
- An improved risk management tool, supporting the move from multiple sources of risk data to one system of risk control, with enhanced and insightful reporting.
- Enhancements in controls following the delivery of additional targeted second line assurance reviews undertaken by the Risk and Assurance team to respond to assurance gaps. This led to five in depth reviews in the following areas: Efficiencies; Quality; Line Manager Capability; Risk Management and Expenses.
- A particular focus on the overarching UKSA Risk 'Independence, trustworthiness and Impact' to make certain that the risk encapsulated an accurate view of the risk faced and suitable controls in place which reflect the extensive activities in place to manage this risk.
- The formation of the Executive Committee (ExCo) which places the Strategic Objectives and Strategic Risks at the core of their Terms of Reference to provide robust oversight and challenge. ExCo has placed risk at the heart of its decision making, ensuring visibility of the wider strategic risk profile and the interlinkages with clear escalation routes from its sub-committees.
- The continued maturity of the governance framework with risk underpinning conversations across our committees. This alongside the consideration of horizon scanning and proximity of risks have supported our business planning processes, driving informed decision making, and ensuring continuous improvements across the organisation and more horizontal working.
- A particular focus on risks related to statistical quality, communications, and legacy technology. In all cases to identify the controls required, ensure they are operating effectively, monitoring key metrics to identify areas where additional mitigations are required to manage risks within appetite and avoid issues.
- Significant improvements in our business planning process, placing risk at its core to support the Authority in balancing ambition and resource management with the funding available, whilst ensuring the Authority continues to be a trusted provider of quality statistics.

These developments have provided organisational stability to manage the ongoing and changing demands placed upon us and ensure we continue to

understand risks to delivery of our strategy and objectives. We will continue to focus in this area to maintain the confidence and integrity of our internal control framework.

The Risk and Assurance Team undertook the annual corporate governance assurance statement (CGAS) against core areas of internal control, including people; risk; governance; security; statistical quality; portfolio management; commercial and finance management. The process continues to mature with improvements this year such as providing management information (MI) to inform responses upfront in order to assist Directors in providing fair and validated self assessments. Responses were reviewed for adequacy by subject matter experts and the outcomes of the exercise broadly confirmed a positive position of the control environment. Directors have received a summary for their area detailing their positive outcomes and areas for improvement with suggested actions for the next 12 months where applicable.

Cabinet Office Controls

The Authority is required to comply with the Cabinet Office spend controls process, which is designed to help organisations reduce unnecessary spend and encourage cross-government collaboration. Central government organisations, including departments and the bodies they sponsor must obtain Cabinet Office approval when they want to spend money on specified activities. Cabinet Office spend controls are part of the wider government financial delegations and approvals process and are an important part of the mandate of the government functions. The Cabinet Office operates the spend controls on behalf of HM Treasury.

The spend controls apply to commercial contracts, general grants, and individually specified types of transactions. The spend categories and associated control thresholds which are most applicable to the Authority are:

- Commercial: All future commercial spend activity, framework agreements or material changes to services worth £20 million or more.
- Digital and Technology: Digital and technology spend over £1 million, or any spend on cases involving Crypt-Key.
- Facilities Management: All contracts over £500,000.
- Contingent Labour: All Contingent Labour contracts with day rates of £1,000 or more, excluding agency fees and recoverable VAT.

The Authority's outsourced contract for the Crime Survey for England and Wales was due to expire in March 2024 and the process of reviewing arrangements to outsource the service from April 2024 onwards commenced in June 2022. During this period, market engagement took place and the feedback received led to the service specification being developed and an Invitation to Tender (ITT) being issued in June 2023. Prior to the ITT being issued, Cabinet Office approved the

Outline Business Case in May 2023 as part of the prescribed Commercial spend control process for agreements valued at £20 million or more.

Only one bid was received in response to the ITT being issued. Consequently, two actions were taken forward by the Authority in September 2023: a feasibility review into bringing the service “in-house”; and post-tender clarification discussions with the sole bidder. These actions concluded in October 2023 with the recommendation to continue the outsourcing arrangement under improved terms obtained through the post-tender clarification process. Preparation of the Full Business Case (FBC) could now proceed, and the Authority’s Portfolio and Investment Committee approved the FBC which was then submitted to Cabinet Office in January 2024.

However, to ensure uninterrupted provision of data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales from April 2024 onwards, preparatory work lasting six months had to be commissioned in October 2023. The supplier agreed to commence this work “at risk” based on a Letter of Intent issued to them, limited to the costs of the preparatory work not exceeding £0.5m and subject to agreement to award the full contract.

In February 2024, the Cabinet Office rejected the FBC (with conditions which have subsequently been met) but stated that the Authority was not precluded from awarding the contract. The FBC was rejected for not following due process on the grounds of two definitions of retrospective action being breached – where the results of the evaluation have been communicated to bidders and where spend has been incurred or committed. This was on the basis that engagement with the sole bidder through the Letter of Intent issued in October 2023 effectively notified the sole bidder of the outcome of the evaluation before a decision from the Cabinet Office on the FBC and therefore rendered the approval request retrospective.

Whilst the Authority acknowledges this decision and accepts that due process was not followed in this situation, it should be noted that the Cabinet Office deemed the FBC a good commercial case which would have been approved if not submitted retrospectively. All other aspects of the prescribed procurement process were adhered to. Cabinet Office also recognised that the breach is not a common occurrence for the Authority, and there were no sanctions imposed that would impact spend control thresholds for the Authority’s future business cases.

The Authority, despite significant market engagement, received only one bid for this contract which presented a unique set of circumstances and issues. The post-tender clarifications with the sole bidder achieved significantly improved commercial terms and greater value for money through cost reductions for the Exchequer. The impact of not issuing the Letter of Intent in October 2023 presented an intolerable risk in terms of interruption to survey operations from April 2024 and the consequential impact that would have on the production of national crime statistics.

Following the Cabinet Office decision on the FBC in February 2024, the Authority faced a choice of whether to award the significantly improved contract despite the relatively minor procedural irregularity, or to run a fresh procurement exercise that would likely to lead to a two-year gap in national crime statistics. The Authority considered the balance between meeting value for money requirements and ensuring continuity of service for national crime statistics, with technical regularity requirements. As the Cabinet Office had confirmed that the Authority was not precluded from awarding the contract, despite its judgement of procedural irregularity, the Authority decided to favour value for money and continuity of national crime statistics by awarding the contract (valued at £42.8m over 5 years) in April 2024.

In response to the spend controls breach and to mitigate against recurrence, the Authority's Commercial Services Division engaged with Cabinet Office, who provided spend control refresher training, and the introduction of monthly engagement sessions to discuss the Authority's procurement pipeline. The timeline for commencing complex procurements has also been amended and brought forward to ensure contingency exists within future schedules to mitigate against unforeseen delays.

Assurances from Internal Audit

The Internal Audit function provides the National Statistician and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee with a clearer view on any emerging risks. The internal audit programme is closely linked to the key risks of the Authority. Arrangements are in place to ensure that the National Statistician is made aware of any significant issues which indicate that key risks are not being effectively managed. The Internal Audit service complies with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

Opinion of the Head of Internal Audit

The role of internal audit is to provide management and ARAC members with an objective assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal control, risk management and governance arrangements. Internal Audit is an integral component of the Authority's assurance cycle and can help to inform and update the organisation's risk profile.

My annual opinion recognises the wider control and operating environment within the Authority, the level and extent of change, and the way in which the organisation is managing and responding to its key risks. The opinion I provide reflects the status of the risk, control and governance environment at the date of this report and reflects the evidence available.

I conclude that overall, the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) has maintained sound systems of governance, internal control and risk management. But there is scope for improvement, and this is reflected in my overall level of assurance which is Moderate.

When formulating my opinion, I have reflected upon results of the Internal Audit programme of reviews, progress by management in implementing agreed actions to address controls gaps, the status of strategic risks, and the outputs of first and second-line assurance providers.

Risk Management

Following a trajectory of continuous improvement in recent years, two strategic risks are currently operating out of appetite, SR3 on Quality Statistics and SR6 on Our Communications. We may take comfort from strong focus both at Executive and Non-Executive level on remediations throughout the year, alongside steady progress tracked across the agreed paths to green.

Risk Champions are being upskilled to continuously improve operational risk management within both Programmes and Directorates, while the cross-functional Assurance Group has proven a useful vehicle for discussion, cross fertilisation of ideas, and coordination of assurance activities across the Office.

Corporate Assurance & Governance

We are pleased to note that no major control weaknesses have been identified via the revised Corporate Governance Assurance Statements or via fraud risk assessments.

We are satisfied that revisions to committee structures and management arrangements have been beneficial, particularly the introduction of an Executive Forum (Exco) as a vehicle for timely operational decisions.

Internal Audit Assurance Programme Results

Turning to our own programme of work, we highlight good practice across UKSA from our work on financial controls, and in meeting efficiency targets on expenditure and headcount, evidencing sound controls both strategic and operational levels, albeit we note aspects of commercial management require improvement.

On technology and security controls, our reviews of Cloud Technology, Data Governance, the Integrated Data System (IDS), and the Transformation Prices Programme all exhibited moderate controls assurance.

Reflecting upon progress made in-year, we are pleased to note that longstanding issues related to use of shared drives have largely been addressed. We also note that while issues pertaining to Legacy systems persist, this remains a key area of focus for management who continue to refine and implement remediation plans, which have to date prevented risks moving beyond agreed tolerances.

Areas for Improvement

Notwithstanding this good practice, there are two areas where our work highlighted the need for improvements:

Firstly, looking at Operations, we raised issues with Quality Statistics, focussing on opportunities to improve Errors management, and in how the Data Science Campus articulates and gauges the impact of its deliverables against targets.

Secondly, under Project & Programme (PPM), we raised issues on the PPM function's assurance and oversight over the programme as a whole, and, in the Transformation of Business Surveys Programme, in programme planning, and in progress. We also noted challenges in acquiring key data sets from other Government Departments to facilitate progress in implementing the Integrated Data System (IDS) Programme.

Trend / Direction of Travel

The Authority, alongside the rest of government, continues to operate in a tight fiscal environment while moving through a transformative change programme. Looking ahead, aligning resources and skills to revised business priorities will be a key focus for FY 23/24. We shall plan our assignments through a lens of quality and efficiency to provide timely assurance that this focus on priorities is embedded throughout UKSA activities in FY 24-25.

When formulating my Opinion, I have recognised that Management have already taken steps to address many of the issues raised to bring the control framework back in line with good practice, with steady progress in addressing agreed management actions.

Resourcing and Performance

During FY 23/24, following initiatives to rebuild the Audit Team and bring skills inhouse, while maintaining strength and depth via our co sourced Partner EY, I am pleased to report 100% completion of planned assignments, while our customer satisfaction scores remain steady throughout. I consulted and informed the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee about all proposed changes to the audit plan, taking account of changes in the risk landscape arising in year.

Scope and Limitations of the Annual Audit Opinion

There are no limitations on the scope of my opinion.

Opinion of the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Based on the work of the Committee during the year and the assurance work carried out by the External and Internal Auditors, it is my opinion that the Authority's governance and control framework is generally effective.

The Committee accepts the overall moderate opinion from the Head of Internal Audit. The effective management of the year-end position was achieved as a result of the commitment by the Accounting Officer alongside the Finance and Senior Leadership Teams to mitigate the financial risk of over expenditure at year end.

The developments in risk and assurance were underpinned by the executive governance framework, which has a critical role in the oversight, challenge and cross-organisational management of risk. The introduction of an Executive Committee this year has further strengthened the governance framework.

This is the fourth year of a moderate opinion from the Head of Internal Audit, which builds upon the successes achieved over the last three years in the areas below. This year has seen sustained improvements with continued development this year in the following areas:

- Strengthening Risk and Oversight Functions
- Developing the culture of ownership and accountability
- Strengthening Governance

The Committee will want assurance in the coming year that delivery of the plans mitigate legacy and website risks within the timeframe to avoid any further delays or intolerable risk exposure.

The Committee will also want to see a strengthening in the first line of defence with improvement needed in such areas as quality, risk and contract management.

Overall conclusion

In conclusion, the UK Statistics Authority's approach to governance, risk management and control is generally effective (with systems in place for 2023/24 and up to the point of approval). We have developed our approach across each of these areas during the year and I am pleased that this progress has been reflected in the assurance work that has been delivered through the year.

During 2024/25 we will continue to embed the improvements in our approach and focus on further developing our assurance activities to match the ambitions we have for the organisation and ensure that we keep pace with these activities.



Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Accounting Officer

12 July 2024

Summary financial information

Key Financial Outturns

The key financial outturns for 2023/24 are shown below:

Resources	2023/24 Estimate £'000	2023/24 Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Departmental Expenditure Limit – Resource	373,571	360,897	12,674

The Authority has utilised 96% of its Resource funds throughout the year in progressing its strategic and operational objectives. The above figures include both ring-fenced and non-ring-fenced resources. Within this, the Authority utilised:

- 99% of its non-ring-fenced Resource funding; and
- 74% of its ring-fenced funding (Depreciation and Amortisation).

Departmental Expenditure Limit – Capital

	2023/24 Estimate £'000	2023/24 Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Capital	23,827	23,379	448

The Authority has been able to utilise 98% of its Capital funds throughout the year using this funding to continue to transform our IT systems, capitalise research where appropriate in the context of ESA10, and to ensure our estate reflects our hybrid working requirements.

Depreciation and Amortisation

	2023/24 Estimate £'000	2023/24 Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Depreciation	13,139	9,735	3,404
Amortisation	5,378	3,978	1,400
Total	18,517	13,713	4,804

The Authority has robust financial controls in place for asset management and we have been able to plan effectively for the utilisation of our assets. During the year we have continued to review our assets which verified the continued useful economic life.

Annually Managed Expenditure

	2023/24 Estimate £'000	2023/24 Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Annually Managed Expenditure – Resource	1,600	(2,006)	3,606

The Annually Managed Expenditure saving is attributed to a reduction in the level of provisions created during the period compared to that anticipated during the Estimate process.

The Authority had planned to create provisions which did not materialise at year end. These included a potential voluntary exit scheme which was not needed due to a successful redeployment policy and levels of resource staff attrition and also contractual disputes not concluded within the year end period. Further details on the movements within Provisions can be found in note 11 of the Accounts chapter.

Included within the resource expenditure are staff costs which are analysed in the staff report. This shows the number of full-time equivalent staff (FTEs) and their costs, which include wages, social security and pension costs. Employees are Civil Servants to whom the conditions of the Superannuation Acts of 1965 and 1972 and subsequent amendments apply.

The Remuneration Report ([pages 85-95](#)) provides further information on the relevant schemes.

To support compliance with IAS24 Related Party Disclosures, all executive directors, non-executive directors and deputy directors are required to complete declarations that they have not entered into agreements or undertaken any material transactions with a related party during the year. Further information is in Note 16 of the accounts.

The accounts of the Authority are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General and his Certificate and Report to the House of Commons is presented in the Annual Accounts on [pages 114-121](#).

The financial statements are audited in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) issued by the Accounting Practices Board, and in accordance with the Government Resource and Accounts Act 2000.

Notional Audit fees charged in the accounts amount to £137,000 (2022/23 £129,000).

Core tables

	2019/20 Outturn £'000	2020/21 Outturn £'000	2021/22 Outturn £'000	2022/23 Outturn £'000	2023/24 Outturn £'000	2024/25 Forecast £'000
Resource DEL						
Programme expenditure	307,999	458,851	448,889	352,376	362,903	389,479
Total resource DEL <i>Of which:</i>	307,999	458,851	448,889	352,376	362,903	389,479
Staff costs ¹	188,809	252,780	298,541	263,164	278,447	271,620
Purchases	135,652	602,696	592,702	301,594	105,356	125,248
Income	(30,311)	(408,204)	(453,190)	(224,528)	(34,613)	(26,100)
Depreciation ²	7,576	7,603	5,606	6,983	9,735	13,279
Amortisation	6,273	3,976	5,230	5,163	3,978	5,432
Resource AME						
Provisions	(787)	10,221	5,382	5,837	(967)	2,300
Utilised provisions	(1,078)	(250)	(11,217)	(9,765)	(1,039)	-
Total resource AME <i>Of which:</i>	(1,865)	9,971	(5,835)	(3,928)	(2,006)	2,300
Take up of provisions	2,348	10,791	5,435	5,984	158	2,300
Release of provisions	(3,135)	(570)	(53)	(147)	(1,125)	-
Utilisation of Provisions	(1,078)	(250)	(11,217)	(9,765)	(1,039)	-
Total resource budget <i>Of which:</i>	306,134	468,822	443,054	348,448	360,897	391,779
Depreciation and Amortisation ²	13,849	11,579	10,836	12,146	13,713	18,711
Capital DEL						
Programme expenditure	6,835	12,525	25,278	35,678	23,379	22,097
Total capital DEL <i>Of which:</i>	6,835	12,525	25,278	35,678	23,379	22,097
Purchase of assets	6,835	13,177	25,401	35,678	23,379	22,097
Capital Grants Received	-	(652)	(123)	-	-	-
Capital AME	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total capital budget	6,835	12,525	25,278	35,678	23,379	22,097
Total departmental spending ³ <i>Of which:</i>	299,120	469,768	457,496	371,981	370,563	395,165
Total DEL	300,985	459,797	463,331	375,909	372,569	392,865
Total AME	(1,865)	9,971	(5,835)	(3,928)	(2,006)	2,300

Notes

1. £13,509,000 of staff costs in 2023/24 associated with research and development have been analysed as capital expenditure in the Core Tables in accordance with European System of Accounts 2010 Assets and Liabilities (ESA10).
2. Includes impairments.
3. Total departmental spending is the sum of the resource, AME and the capital budget excluding depreciation. Similarly total DEL is the sum of resource and capital DEL less depreciation. AME covers the cost of provisions.

The Statistics Board Total departmental spending, 2019/20 to 2024/25

Carrying values	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 Forecast £'000
Assets of which:						
Non-current assets	50	52	96	84	72	72
Current assets	24,723	132,310	90,260	53,958	27,172	25,000
Intangible assets:						
Software licences	1,892	1,570	3,562	8,005	5,742	8,532
In-house development and applications under construction	9,646	10,006	7,311	8,375	12,833	8,928
Tangible assets:						
Property plant and equipment	47,190	46,820	15,141	47,064	41,103	49,385
	83,501	190,758	116,370	117,486	86,922	91,917
Current liabilities	(46,212)	(163,265)	(93,576)	(76,784)	(47,822)	(44,000)
Non-current liabilities	(2,556)	(2,390)	(511)	(27,826)	(23,269)	(22,000)
Capital employed	34,733	25,103	22,283	12,876	15,831	25,917

Note

Capital employed is a measure of the value of the assets that add to the Authority's ability to support its future business activities. It represents the Authority's investment in its continuing operation. The significant increase in the Authority's current assets and liabilities in 2021/22 and 2020/21 is attributed to receivables and payables relating to the delivery of the Covid Infection Survey. The increase in non-current liabilities and Property plant and equipment in 2022/23 relates to adoption of IFRS16 Leases.

Prompt payment target

The Authority is committed to both the Chartered Institute of Credit Management and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's prompt payment code. The policy sets out that all invoices should be paid in accordance with contractual conditions.

Where no conditions exist, payment will be made within 30 working days of the receipt of goods or services, or the presentation of a valid invoice, whichever is the later. We made payments in accordance with this policy in 96% of transactions for the year ended 31 March 2024 (92% in 2022/23). The performance is measured in accordance with HM Treasury guidelines.

In addition to the 30 days target we endeavour to pay small and medium sized enterprises within five days. We achieved payment in accordance with this policy in 88% of transactions for the year, (82% in 2022/23) compared to a target of 80%.

Directors' report

The requirements of the Directors' report are covered by the following:

The Statistics Board, operating as The UK Statistics Authority is a non-ministerial department, operating at arm's length from Government and reporting directly to Parliament and the devolved legislatures. The Cabinet Office retains residual ministerial responsibilities for the UK Statistics Authority.

The composition of the Authority Board and its sub-committees is set out in the Governance Statement ([pages 59-78](#)).

The Executive Directors of the UK Statistics Authority are set out in the Remuneration Report ([pages 85-95](#)).

The Authority maintains a Register of Interests of its Board members. The Register of Interests is maintained on the UK Statistics Authority website at: <https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/the-authority-board/>

It is updated at least annually. The onus is on individual members of the Authority to determine other interests that should be disclosed and to make known to the Chair and Secretariat any subsequent changes in those interests. At the start of every meeting of the Authority Board, members will be asked to declare any interests in the business on the agenda. Members should similarly make an interest know should it arise during the business of the meeting.

Personal data related incidents are described in the Governance Statement ([page 71](#)).

Other disclosures are promulgated by HM Treasury through Public Expenditure System papers.

Financial reporting to Parliament

This report forms part of the annual reporting process to Parliament. Further, and as part of the reporting process the Authority also prepares estimates of its expenditure with the Main Estimate in the early part of the financial year, and the Supplementary Estimate normally published in February. Details can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-main-estimates>

Engagement and transparency

The Authority believes that transparency is a key condition and driver for the delivery of our services. As a publicly funded organisation, we have a duty to our stakeholders to be transparent about our business operations and outcome.

To provide transparency across its operations the Authority published information which is regularly updated on its own website and /or the UKSA website.

This includes:

- expenses and hospitality received by board members and senior directors
- organisation charts
- details of senior and junior posts and senior staff salaries
- details of payments to suppliers each month over £25,000
- monthly prompt payment information
- exception reporting

The Authority has a central email enquiry point, authority.enquiries@statistics.gov.uk. Enquiry handling is managed by the Secretariat. There is also a central telephone enquiry line **0845 604 1857**.

The Authority operates transparently and openly. It publishes the minutes and papers of its meetings, and correspondence regarding issues of public concern and information about other aspects of its work on its website www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk.

Contractual arrangements

The Authority works across circa 250 3rd party agreements to deliver its business. All contracts are tiered using a segregation tool that follows Government Commercial Operating Standards (GCOS) best practice and this allows the Authority to determine the level of engagement to successfully deliver the required contractual outcomes.

It categorises contracts into 3 tiers: Gold; Silver; and Bronze, where Gold receives the highest level of input and scrutiny from commercial contract managers, as they are considered key to delivering our operational goals. It also maps to a risk vs complexity matrix so that contract management techniques are applied most effectively.

Supplier performance is reviewed in accordance with Government Procurement Guidelines including monthly reviews to strategically monitor the financial stability of the business, Key Performance Indicators, and to share lessons learned to improve delivery across the whole portfolio. Social value continues to be key in evaluating 3rd parties and our focus on social value produces contracts that have additional benefits for the local communities they serve. For example, producing a more inclusive and accessible recruitment procedure to improve opportunities for groups in under-represented areas.

Commercial Services has recently resized and re-structured to deliver value and efficiency through a dedicated Sourcing team and separate Category teams. The role of Contract Management is carried out by the Category teams who also act in a partnering capacity to the business to capture the future contract requirements, as they become due for renewal/re-tender.

Remuneration report

The remuneration report is presented in accordance with Civil Service Employer Pension Notice guidance.

Service contracts

The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 requires Civil Service appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The Recruitment Principles published by the Civil Service Commission specify the circumstances when appointments may be made otherwise.

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commission can be found at www.civilservicecommission.org.uk

Remuneration policy

The Remuneration Committee concluded the pay arrangements for the UK Statistics Authority's Senior Civil Servants. The committee's membership is set out in the Governance Statement.

The UK Statistics Authority Senior Civil Service (SCS) salary arrangements follow the guidance set out by the Cabinet Office in response to the Senior Salaries Review Body. SCS pay consists of two elements: a consolidated increase to base pay and a non-consolidated bonus payment. Both elements are performance-related and determined by an individual's performance in the previous appraisal year.

The remuneration for the National Statistician is not agreed by the Authority's Remuneration Committee but is determined independently.

Remuneration (including salary) and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Executive and Non-Executive Directors of the UK Statistics Authority and the Office for National Statistics.

Remuneration of Executive Directors for the UK Statistics Authority and the Office for National Statistics, 2023/24 and 2022/23 (audited)

Senior directors Name and title	2023/24 Salary £'000	2022/23 Salary £'000	2022/23 Pension benefits £'000	2023/24 Total £'000	2022/23 Total £'000
Professor Sir Ian Diamond National Statistician Statistics Authority Fixed-term contract 22 Oct 2019 to 31 Mar 2028	175-180	165-170	71	175-180	235-240
Ms Sam Beckett Second Permanent Secretary and Deputy Chief Executive Statistics Authority to 30 May 2023	25-30 (FYE 150-155)	150-155	4	25-30	155-160
Alison Pritchard Deputy National Statistician for Data Capability	115-120 (FYE 145-150) + bonus 10-15	125-130 + bonus 10-15	5	125-130	145-150
Michael Keoghan Deputy National Statistician for Economic, Social & Environmental Statistics	145-150 + bonus 10-15	135-140 + bonus 0-5	24	155-160	165-170
Ed Humpherson Director General for Regulation	160-165	155-160	-34	160-165	120-125
Peter Benton Deputy National Statistician Special Projects	65-70 (FYE 130-135)	110-115 (FYE 125-130)	104	65-70	215-220
Simon Sandford-Taylor Director Digital Services and Technology	100-105 + bonus 5-10	95-100 + bonus 0-5	19	110-115	115-120
Jennet Woolford Director of Public Policy Analysis	100-105 + bonus 0-5	95-100 + bonus 0-5	93	100-105	185-190
Sarah Moore Director Communications and Digital Publishing from 7 June 2023	75-80 (FYE 95-100) + bonus 5-10	-	-	85-90	-
Kate Davies Interim Director Business Surveys from 5 January 2024	20-25 (FYE 95-100) + bonus 0-5	-	-	20-25	-
Sarah Henry Director Methodology & Quality	105-110 + bonus 0-5	100-105	40	110-115	140-145
Emma Rourke Director Health Analysis and Pandemic Insights to 30 June 2022 Deputy National Statistician for Health, Population & Methods from 1 July 2022	140-145 (FYE 145-150) + bonus 10-15	100-105 (FYE 115-120) + bonus 10-15 Taxable expenses 0-5	39	150-155	150-155
Owen Brace Director Communications and Digital Publishing to 30 June 2023	25-30 (FYE 105-110)	100-105	39	25-30	135-140

Senior directors Name and title	2023/24 Salary £'000	2022/23 Salary £'000	2022/23 Pension benefits £'000	2023/24 Total £'000	2022/23 Total £'000
Thomas Taylor Director Finance, Planning and Performance from 13 February 2023	140-145 + bonus 5-10	15-20 (FYE 130-135)	-1	145-150	15-20
Elizabeth McKeown Director Economic Statistics, Production & Analysis	100-105 + bonus 0-5	95-100 + bonus 0-5	8	105-110	105-110
Philippa Bonay Director for Operations, and People & Business Services	130-135 (FYE 140-145) + bonus 15-20	110-115 + bonus 10-15	44	150-155	165-170
Grant Fitzner Director Macroeconomic & Environment Statistics and Analysis	115-120 + bonus 0-5	110-115	49	115-120	160-165
Darren Morgan Director Economic Statistics Production & Analysis to 30 January 2024	85-90 (FYE 100-105) + bonus 10-15	95-100 + bonus 10-15	-28	95-100	80-85
Alex Lambert Director Social Surveys	100-105 + bonus 10-15	90-95 (FYE 95-100) + bonus 5-10	-2	110-115	100-105
Fiona James Director Data Growth and Operations	100-105 + bonus 5-10	95-100	64	110-115	155-160
Khondker Rahman Director Data Science Campus from 19 Sep 2022	105-110 + bonus 0-5	50-55 (FYE 100-105)	-13	105-110	40-45
Ruth Studley Director Census & Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP) Enablement Directorate from 25 July 2022	100-105 + bonus 5-10	65-70 (FYE 95-100) + bonus 5-10	24	105-110	95-100
Jason Yaxley Director Integrated Data Services Programme from 1 Sep 2022	100-105	55-60 (FYE 95-100)	71	100-105	125-130
Jason Zawadzki Director Economic Statistics Change from 12 Sep 2022	110-115 + bonus 5-10	60-65 (FYE 105-110)	-	115-120	60-65

Notes

Accrued pension benefits for directors are not included in this table for 2023/24 due to an exceptional delay in the calculation of these figures following the application of the public service pensions remedy

The value of pension benefits accrued during 2022/23 is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increase excludes increases due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a transfer of pension rights.

Where a member of the Board served for only a part of a year, the full year equivalent (FYE) figure is also shown in brackets.

No directors had significant interests that would have influenced their decision making.

Salary

Non-Executive Directors are paid a fee, plus expenses, and have no pension entitlement.

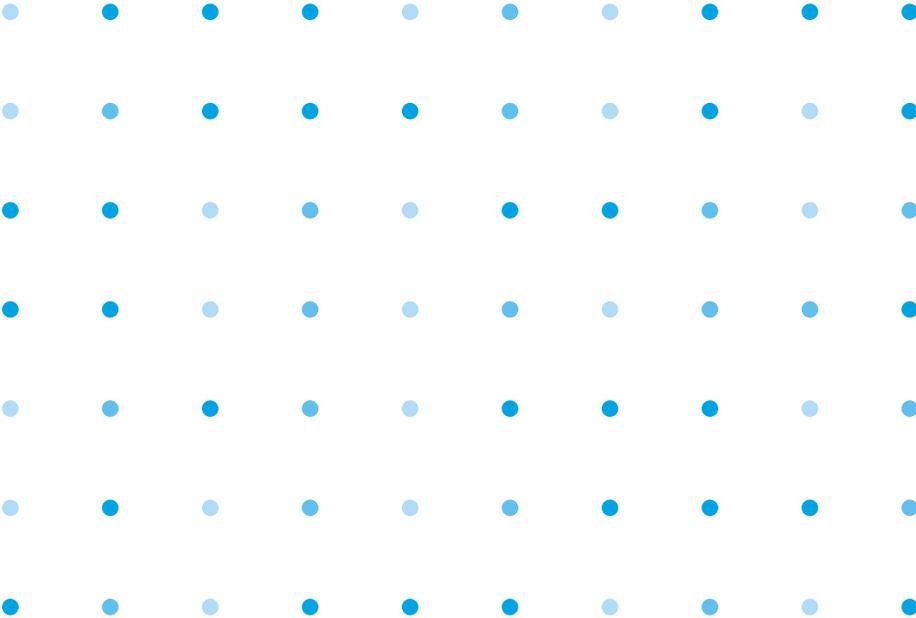
'Salary' includes gross salary; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation. This report is based on accrued payments made by the Department and thus recorded in these accounts.

Benefits in kind

None of the above received benefits in kind.

Bonus payments

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Bonus payments are reported in the financial year that payments are made, but can fall within one of two categories. In-year bonuses recognising performance in the financial year they were paid and annual bonuses, which recognise performance in the previous financial year.



Remuneration of Non-Executive Directors of the UK Statistics Authority 2023/24 and 2022/23 (audited)

Senior directors Name and title	2023/24 Salary £'000	2022/23 Salary £'000
Sir Robert Chote Chair of UK Statistics Authority Fixed contract From 1 June 2022 to 31 May 2027	70-75	55-60 (FYE 70-75)
Ms Sian Jones Deputy Chair Fixed Contract From 12 December 2018 to 1 July 2024	30-35	30-35
Mr Richard Dobbs Non-Executive Director Fixed Contract From 27 May 2020 to 26 May 2023	0-5 (FYE 15-20)	15-20
Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter Non-Executive Director Fixed Contract From 27 May 2020 to 26 May 2026	15-20	15-20
Ms Nora Nanayakkara Non-Executive Director Fixed Contract From 1 July 2016 to 1 July 2024	15-20	15-20
Professor John Aston Non-Executive Director Fixed Contract From 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024	15-20	15-20
Dr Jacob Abboud Non-Executive Director Fixed Contract From 13 February 2023 to 12 February 2027	15-20	0-5 (FYE 15-20)
Professor Dame Carol Propper Non-Executive Director Fixed Contract From 13 February 2023 to 12 February 2027	15-20	0-5 (FYE 15-20)
Penny Young Non-Executive Director Fixed Contract From 13 February 2023 to 12 February 2027	15-20	0-5 (FYE 15-20)
Dr Julia Mundy Independent Member Fixed Contract From 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2024	0-5	0-5
Tim Watkinson Independent Member Fixed Contract From 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2024	0-5	0-5

Fair pay (audited)

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the lower quartile, median and upper quartile remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

	2023/24			2022/23		
	25th percentile pay ratio	Median pay ratio	75th percentile pay ratio	25th percentile pay ratio	Median pay ratio	75th percentile pay ratio
Salary component	25,954	32,975	42,950	24,836	31,661	40,282
Total pay and benefits	26,104	33,275	43,100	24,836	31,811	40,432
Pay ratio	6.80:1.00	5.33:1.00	4.12:1.00	6.74:1.00	5.27:1.00	4.14:1.00

The mid-point banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Authority in the financial year 2023/24 was £177,500 (2022/23: £167,500). This was 5.33 times (2022/23: 5.27 times) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £33,275 (2022/23: £31,811). There were no significant changes in pay ratios between 2022/23 and 2023/24, due to the remuneration of the highest-paid director and the Authority's workforce increasing at a similar rate during 2023/24.

No employees received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director in either 2023/24 or 2022/23. The lowest staff remuneration in 2023/24 was £22,082 (2022/23: £20,148).

Percentage change in total salary and bonuses for the highest paid director and the staff average (audited)

	2023/24		2022/23	
	Total salary and allowances	Bonus payments	Total salary and allowances	Bonus payments
Staff average	5.8%	(15.4) %	4.7%	(6.6) %
Highest paid director	6.0%	0%	3.1%	(100) %

The percentage change from previous financial year in respect of the highest paid director is based on the mid-point of their banded total salary and bonus payments. The percentage change in the staff average figures, is calculated as total salary and bonus payments in the period, divided by the FTE number of employees (excluding the highest paid director).

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The Authority implemented the August 2023 pay award in 2023/24 which increased the average staff remuneration.

Pension benefits (audited)

The following table identifies pension benefits for Executive Directors of the UK Statistics Authority and the Office for National Statistics.

Details of the Civil Service Pensions Scheme can be found on [pages 93-95](#).

Senior Directors Name and title	Cash equivalent transfer value at 31 March 2023 £'000
Professor Sir Ian Diamond National Statistician Statistics Authority Fixed-term contract 22 Oct 2019 to 31 Mar 2028	0
Ms Sam Beckett Second Permanent Secretary and Deputy Chief Executive Statistics Authority to 30 May 2023	1,369
Alison Pritchard Deputy National Statistician for Data Capability	796
Michael Keoghan Deputy National Statistician for Economic, Social & Environmental Statistics	838
Ed Humpherson Director General for Regulation	1,350
Peter Benton Deputy National Statistician Special Projects	918
Simon Sandford-Taylor Director Digital Services and Technology	462
Jennet Woolford Director of Public Policy Analysis	562
Sarah Moore Director Communications and Digital Publishing from 7 June 2023	-
Kate Davies Interim Director Business Surveys from 5 January 2024	-
Sarah Henry Director Methodology & Quality	190
Emma Rourke Director Health Analysis and Pandemic Insights to 30 June 2022 Deputy National Statistician for Health, Population & Methods from 1 July 2022	141

Senior Directors Name and title	Cash equivalent transfer value at 31 March 2023 £'000
Owen Brace Director Communications and Digital Publishing to 30 June 2023	276
Thomas Taylor Director Finance, Planning and Performance from 13 February 2023	994
Elizabeth McKeown Director Economic Statistics, Production & Analysis	458
Philippa Bonay Director for Operations, and People & Business Services	283
Grant Fitzner Director Macroeconomic & Environment Statistics and Analysis	182
Darren Morgan Director Economic Statistics Production & Analysis to 30 January 2024	776
Alex Lambert Director Social Surveys	479
Fiona James Director Data Growth and Operations	332
Khondker Rahman Director Data Science Campus from 19 Sep 2022	857
Ruth Studley Director Census & Data Collection Transformation Programme (CDCTP) Enablement Directorate from 25 July 2022	622
Jason Yaxley Director Integrated Data Services Programme from 1 Sep 2022	791
Jason Zawadzki Director Economic Statistics Change from 12 Sep 2022	0

Note

Accrued pension benefits for directors are not included in this table for 2023/24 due to an exceptional delay in the calculation of these figures following the application of the [public service pensions remedy](#)⁹

Any members affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy were reported in the 2015 scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 in 2022/23.

The posts held by the non-executive Directors of the UK Statistics Authority are non-pensionable.

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-the-public-service-pension-remedy-affects-your-pension>

Civil Service pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. Before 1 April 2015, the only scheme was the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS), which is divided into a few different sections – classic, premium, and classic plus provide benefits on a final salary basis, whilst nuvos provides benefits on a career average basis. From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or alpha, which provides benefits on a career average basis. All newly appointed civil servants, and the majority of those already in service, joined the new scheme.

The PCSPS and alpha are unfunded statutory schemes. Employees and employers make contributions (employee contributions range between 4.6% and 8.05%, depending on salary). The balance of the cost of benefits in payment is met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions in payment are increased annually in line with the Pensions Increase legislation. Instead of the defined benefit arrangements, employees may opt for a defined contribution pension with an employer contribution, the partnership pension account.

In alpha, pension builds up at a rate of 2.32% of pensionable earnings each year, and the total amount accrued is adjusted annually in line with a rate set by HM Treasury. Members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004. All members who switched to alpha from the PCSPS had their PCSPS benefits ‘banked’, with those with earlier benefits in one of the final salary sections of the PCSPS having those benefits based on their final salary when they leave alpha.

The accrued pensions shown in this report are the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach normal pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over normal pension age. Normal pension age is 60 for members of classic, premium, and classic plus, 65 for members of nuvos, and the higher of 65 or State Pension Age for members of alpha. The pension figures in this report show pension earned in PCSPS or alpha – as appropriate. Where a member has benefits in both the PCSPS and alpha, the figures show the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes but note that the constituent parts of that pension may be payable from different ages.

When the Government introduced new public service pension schemes in 2015, there were transitional arrangements which treated existing scheme members differently based on their age. Older members of the PCSPS remained in that scheme, rather than moving to alpha. In 2018, the Court of Appeal found that the transitional arrangements in the public service pension schemes unlawfully discriminated against younger members.

As a result, steps are being taken to remedy those 2015 reforms, making the pension scheme provisions fair to all members. The [public service pensions remedy](#)¹⁰ is made up of two parts. The first part closed the PCSPS on 31 March 2022, with all active members becoming members of alpha from 1 April 2022. The second part removes the age discrimination for the remedy period, between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, by moving the membership of eligible members during this period back into the PCSPS on 1 October 2023. This is known as “rollback”.

The partnership pension account is an occupational defined contribution pension arrangement which is part of the Legal & General Mastertrust. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member). The employee does not have to contribute but, where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer’s basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk

Cash equivalent transfer values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member’s accrued benefits and any contingent spouse’s pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are worked out in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

¹⁰ www.gov.uk/government/collections/how-the-public-service-pension-remedy-affects-your-pension

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Board member and senior official off-payroll engagements

The following table identifies off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or, Senior officials with significant financial responsibility, between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

	2023/24 Number of engagements
Number of off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or, senior officials with significant financial responsibility, during the financial year.	-
Total number of individuals off-payroll that have been deemed "board members, and/or, senior officials with significant financial responsibility", during the financial year.	-

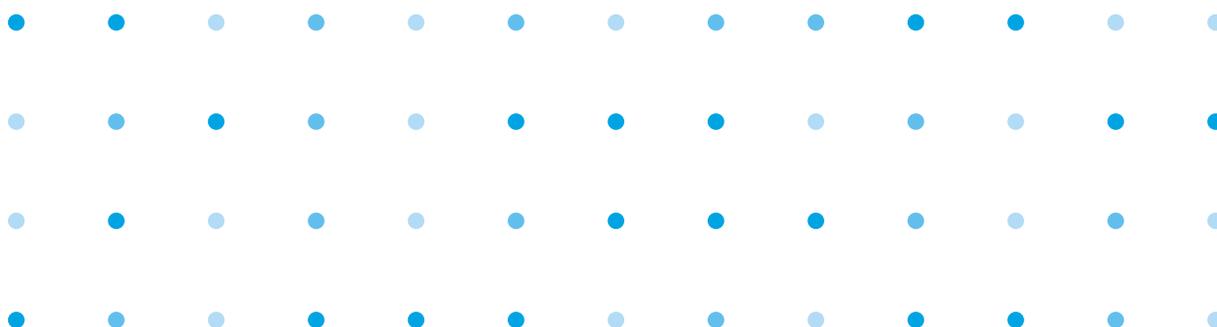
Other information

Compensation for loss of office (audited)

No Director received compensation for loss of office during 2023/24.

Payments to past directors (audited)

No payments were made to past directors other than in respect of employment or other contractual service for the company other than as a director.



Staff report

Staffing structure

Staff numbers (audited)

	2023/24 Total FTE	Permanently employed FTE	Others FTE	2022/23 Total FTE
Objective statistical services	5,328	5,067	261	5,363

Note

Statistical Staff numbers are calculated using the average number of staff on the payroll each month rather than at year end.

Staff costs (audited)

	2023/24 Total £'000	Permanently employed Staff £'000	Others £'000	2022/23 Total £'000
Statistical services staff costs	214,682	213,058	1,624	201,334
Social security costs	21,860	21,860	-	20,340
Other pension costs	54,365	54,365	-	51,853
Tax and levies	1,048	1,048	-	963
Total	291,955	290,331	1,624	274,490
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(316)	(316)	-	(316)
Total net costs	291,639	290,015	1,624	274,174

Notes

Statistical Services staff costs include £13,509,000 of research and development costs which are analysed as capital expenditure in the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply.

The 2023/24 salary figure reflect a net yearly credit of £826k of accrued holiday/flexi pay, and PRP of £247k. In addition to the £291,639k reported net costs, £1,485k of salary costs were capitalised as capital expenditure (£739k 2022/23) and not included in the operating costs statement

Capitalised staff costs (audited)

	2023/24 Cost £'000	FTE	2022/23 Cost £'000	FTE
Platform Delivery (IDSP)	942	13	496	18
Core Service Design and Architecture (IDSP)	435	16	234	12
Data Management and SBR	108	4	9	1
Total	1,485	33	739	31

Staff numbers as at 31 March 2024 (audited)

Contract type	2023/24 Headcount	FTE	2022/23 Headcount	FTE
Permanent employment contract	5,388	4,872	5,707	5,170
Fixed term employment contract	201	174	421	335
Paid secondment or loan in	3	3	4	4
Total	5,592	5,049	6,132	5,509

Staff loaned as at 31 March 2024

Grade	2023/24 <12 months	>12 months	Total	2022/23 Total
SCS Pay Band 2 (Director)	1	-	1	0
Grade 6	1	-	1	1
Grade 7	4	-	4	1
SEO	7	-	7	1
HEO	5	-	5	0
Total	18	-	18	3

Staff hosted as at 31 March 2024

Grade	2023/24 <12 months	>12 months	Total	2022/23 Total
Grade 6	-	1	1	1
Grade 7	-	-	-	1
SEO	-	1	1	-
EO	1	-	1	-
Total	1	2	3	2

Staff turnover

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
Civil Service Turnover	10%	12%	10%
Departmental Turnover	16%	16%	14%

Note

Civil Service Turnover captures staff leaving the Civil Service from the Authority. Departmental Turnover captures both staff leaving the Civil Service from the Authority and staff leaving the Authority but staying within the Civil Service. Turnover percentages are calculated as the number of leavers within that period divided by the average number of staff in post over the period. Staff turnover percentages in 2021/22 have been revised from those previously published due to a transposition error.

Contingent workers as at 31 March 2024

Contingent worker type	2023/24 Headcount	2022/23 Headcount
Agency worker	68	99
Contractor	33	86
Consultant	17	19
Service worker	209	163
Total	327	367

Staff composition as at 31 March 2024

Grade	Headcount		FTE	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
AA/AO	714	504	502.2	367.2
EO	436	271	396.3	255.5
HEO	666	535	626.4	524.6
SEO	671	549	632.7	540.6
Grade 7	489	433	463.4	425.9
Grade 6	112	113	105.1	111.2
SCS Pay Band 1 (Deputy Director)	29	37	28.8	36.5
SCS Pay Band 2 (Director)	9	8	9.0	8.0
SCS Pay Band 3 (Director General)	2	3	1.8	2.5
Permanent Secretary	0	1	0	1.0
Total	3,128	2,454	2,765.7	2,273.0

Note

10 employees (10.0 FTE) have no data recorded under gender on our system and are not included in the Staff Composition table above. Full Headcount figure is 5,592 and FTE 5,048.7.

Number of Senior Civil Service staff by SCS pay band (average for the year)

SCS Pay Band	2023/24		2022/23	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
SCS Pay Band 1 (Deputy Director)	70	69	65	65
SCS Pay Band 2 (Director)	16	16	14	14
SCS Pay Band 3 (Director General)	5	4	5	5
Second Permanent Secretary	-	-	1	1
Permanent Secretary	1	1	1	1
Total	92	90	86	86

Off payroll engagements

The following table identifies all off-payroll engagements as at 31 March 2024 for more than £245 per day for a period longer than six months.

	Number of existing engagements as at 31st March 2024
Number of existing engagements as of 31 March 2024	27
<i>Of which:</i>	
Number that have existed for less than one year at the time of reporting	3
Number that have existed between one – two years at the time of reporting	11
Number that have existed between two – three years at the time of reporting	4
Number that have existed between three – four years at the time of reporting	3
Number that have existed for four years or more at the time of reporting	6

The following table details the total number of off-payroll engagements in excess of £245 per day for a period longer than six months (between the 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024).

	Number 2023/24
Number of new engagements, or those that reached six months in duration, between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	71
<i>Of which:</i>	
Number assessed as inside the scope of IR35	56
Number assessed as outside the scope of IR35	15
Number engaged directly (via PSC contracted to department) and are on the departmental payroll	-
Number of engagements reassessed for consistency/assurance purposes during the year.	-
Number of engagements that saw a change to IR35 status following the consistency review	-

Sickness absence

Average working days lost during 2023/24, for our workforce excluding Interviewers, was 6.9 (was 6.9 in 2022/23), and for the workforce as a whole, was 8.2 (was 8.4 in 2022/23).

The methodology used for our external reporting of sickness absence has excluded our Interviewer workforce because of differing terms and conditions of employment. The figure of 6.9 is in line with our external reporting, and the figure of 8.2 reflects the whole workforce.

Reporting compensations for employee departures (audited)

Exit package cost band	Total number of compulsory redundancies agreed within the year		Total number of other departures agreed within the year		Total value of exit packages agreed within the year by cost band £'000	
	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
< £10,000	-	-	3	1	14.5	3.9
£10,000 – £25,000	-	-	0	6	0	106.2
£25,000 – £50,000	-	-	0	0	0	0
£50,000 – £100,000	-	-	1	6	51.8	419.2
Total number of exit packages by type (total cost)	-	-	4	13	66.3	529.3

During the financial year 2023/24 we released one individual through Voluntary Exit. The offer of exit, and last day of service took place in 2023/24 therefore costs are attributed to financial year 2023/24. We also had 3 efficiency departures where there is a cost to the Authority of £14.5k.

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provision of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, a statutory scheme under the Superannuation Act 1972. Exit costs are accounted for in full for the year of departure. Where the department has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the department and not the Civil Service pension scheme.

Ill-health retirement costs are met by the Pension Scheme and are not included in the table.

Employee matters

Employment, training and support for people with disabilities

The Authority is committed to being an equal opportunities employer. As part of this commitment, the Authority gives full and fair consideration to the employment, training, support and progression of colleagues with a disability/long-term health condition.

The Authority applies the Recruitment Principles of the Civil Service Commission, appointing candidates on merit through fair and open competition.

Recruitment and selection training is provided to all interviewers. In 2023, The Authority retained its Level 3 Disability Confident Leader status, the highest-level of accreditation, demonstrating its commitment to offer an interview to those who declare a disability/long-term health condition and meet the minimum selection criteria.

The Authority's policies require that managers must consider and, where reasonable, implement workplace adjustments to enable a colleague with a disability/long-term health condition to attend work and carry out their role

effectively. Such adjustments are recorded on a Workplace Adjustments Passport and are kept under regular review. There is an active disABILITY Diversity Network, supported by senior champions, focused on removing any barriers within the workplace, and celebrating key disability awareness days throughout the year across the organisation.

The Authority promotes several cross-government talent schemes that seek to attract colleagues with disabilities, as well as those from other underrepresented groups. These include the Future Leaders Scheme (FLS) and Senior Leaders Scheme (SLS). The bespoke Disability Empowers Leadership Talent scheme, also known as DELTA, is available to anyone with a disability/long-term health condition who gains a place on the cross-government FLS. Internally we also offer a specific development route called disABILITY into Leadership, focused on supporting the career development of colleagues with disabilities. In addition, our learning offer supports working with those who are neurodivergent. Our learning interventions meet all legal requirement accessibility requirements.

Monitoring spending on consultancy and temporary staff

Professional services external resources can generally be split into two broad categories. Temporary staff includes temporary workers and specialist contractors who are used to cover business-as-usual or service delivery activities within the Authority. Consultancy includes staff who provide objective advice relating to strategy, structure, management or operations of the Authority and may include the identification of options with recommendations.

Expenditure on consultancy decreased from £16.5m in 2022-23 to £10.3m in 2023-24 and expenditure on contractors decreased from £18.5m in 2022-23 to £4.1m in 2023-24.

Spend on consultancy and the need for temporary staff is largely dependent on the nature of projects being undertaken and the expertise required. The lack of demand on this type of role (for example Covid Infection Survey and Census) was the primary contributor to a decrease in temporary staff costs this year.

Workplace health, safety and welfare

All activities required under the Health and Safety (H&S) framework of governance, risk management and control for the Authority were completed during this period. Our workplace H&S performance is audited and reviewed on an annual basis and reported to the Departmental H&S Committee and the People Committee. The Authority has published an up-to-date H&S Policy, which has been amended as necessary to ensure it remains current with legislation and takes account of organisational changes. All necessary risk assessments, inspections, maintenance, cleaning and testing regimes were in place.

During this period, the Authority has further embedded new H&S management arrangements that directly support hybrid working. This includes the physical

testing of a new emergency evacuation procedure which aligns with the Government Property Agency standard. To promote and support ergonomic working best practice, the Authority has published an updated workplace guide that informs colleagues how to work safely with display screen equipment and how they can take advantage of the different workspaces available to them at Authority offices.

We approach wellbeing as an underlying priority that wraps around our People Survey and engagement activity, and our wider management approach. The 2023 People Survey saw a range of responses in this area, with some areas maintaining positive responses and others reducing. Our overall Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationship, Meaning and Accomplishment (PERMA) score, a holistic measure of positive wellbeing, reduced by two percentage points, but remained high at 71%. Our Proxy Stress Index score saw a three percentage point increase to 31%.

Our wellbeing offer is wide-ranging and dynamic across the organisation, based on the principles of being proactive, empowering and flexible, with a focus on five wellbeing pillars: Workplace, Mental, Physical, Social, and Financial. During 2023 we enhanced our offer with further development of our Menopause Ambassadors, created a new cadre of Macmillan trained Cancer in the Workplace trainers, and offered a new suite of resources to support colleagues with change. 2024 will see work to improve accessibility and understanding of our current resources, as well as an ongoing focus on mental health and wellbeing.

Equality, diversity and inclusion overview

Our strategic purpose is to create 'Statistics for the Public Good'. To do so, it is vital that we continue to build a working environment in which equality and inclusion are instinctive, with a workforce that reflects the public it serves.

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 remains a core tenet, as we align policies, processes, and infrastructure to its principles. Our Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) play a key role in helping us ensure that inclusion is hardwired into all our practices. Further information on our commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duty is available on the Authority's website.

'Inclusion' is also a central pillar of our People Plan, which is reflected in our Strategy and Strategic Business Plan. Our ambition is to drive an inclusive culture in which everyone feels valued, that they belong, and have an equal opportunity to contribute to the organisation's purpose.

Our more detailed Inclusion Plan outlines our intention to:

- build a coordinated approach to Inclusion and Diversity across the organisation
- hardwire Inclusion and Diversity into everything we do

- build representation of underrepresented groups and support their career progression
- continue to build the Authority's reputation as an inclusive employer
- improve and develop our evidence base.

This plan was launched in November 2020, and we have made significant progress to date; notably in the development of our evidence base, strengthening our governance and coordination, and being recognised for our practices by external benchmarking experts. More information about recognition in this space can be found within the benchmarking and collaborating section below.

Equality, diversity and inclusion infrastructure

Governance

Our Inclusion & Diversity Steering Group (IDSG) leads on evaluating new initiatives, and progress against existing commitments and issues. The Group consists of colleagues from across our employee diversity networks and other key stakeholders. IDSG reports to our People Committee (PC), the governance body responsible for people matters, and over the past year, the relationship between IDSG and PC has been further strengthened to ensure that governance scrutiny is focused on the most important issues. PC is attended by key senior leaders, chaired by one of our Deputy National Statisticians, and includes non-executive colleagues to represent diverse viewpoints from across the organisation.

Diversity networks

Our employee diversity networks continue to add essential value and insight to our inclusion agenda and play a key role in supporting the organisation to improve our processes and policies. Each recognised diversity network is led by a team of colleagues who volunteer their own time to undertake dedicated roles, and a sponsor from the senior leadership cadre.

The networks also play an active role in raising awareness and creating a learning environment around inclusion. This includes but is not limited to: arranging expert guest panels; sharing blogs on their experiences; identifying and sharing best practice; raising awareness around key events; and linking with other government departments' networks.

Benchmarking and collaborating

In line with the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2022-2025) guidance, the Authority continues to identify opportunities to engage with independent, external organisations. This helps us to ensure that our policies and practices are robust and in line with leading industry standards by participating in objective benchmarking exercises and benefitting from expert support and advice.

The Authority has been highly commended for innovation in recruitment by the Commissioners' Mark of Excellence in 2023 for the second consecutive year. This award is given to those HR teams across Government who can demonstrate how they have introduced innovative and different ways to attract new pools of candidates for UK Civil Service roles.

The Authority also maintained its Disability Confident Leader status for a further three years, with feedback celebrating and acknowledging efforts in continuing to challenge behaviours and attitudes, promote inclusion through our Networks, and report on disability, mental health, and wellbeing. CIPD Wales also presented the Authority with a Highly Commended Award for our work on inclusion.

The Authority was also awarded Highly Commended in the Analysis in Government Awards for its work on improving its inclusion and diversity evidence base through the development of the Inclusion, Culture, and Wellbeing dashboard, and for its revised process to underpinning Senior Civil Servants' performance appraisal process with inclusion.

In addition, the Authority published a review on its Inclusive Data Taskforce that spotlights over 200 initiatives underway across the UK statistical system to support and embrace inclusivity, a core principle of our strategy.'

We continue to identify opportunities for more collaboration and shared initiatives with the Cabinet Office and other government departments, and to work with other expert organisations such as Business in the Community to improve our inclusive practices.

Measuring progress

Workforce diversity data is monitored at both business and organisational level, with progress measured on a regular basis via an interactive dashboard. Declaration rates are steadily increasing, and colleagues are regularly encouraged to contribute the information to build a stronger evidence base from which to drive our interventions.

In addition to our workforce demographic data, progress is measured through a combination of sources including new people dashboards, insights from our employee diversity networks, listening groups, internal targeted pulse surveys and the annual Civil Service People Survey. The Inclusion, Culture, and Wellbeing dashboard remains a valuable tool through which the Authority can move beyond traditional methods of monitoring diversity to meaningfully measuring inclusion and hold senior leaders accountable for their progress.

The People Survey provides an overall score for Inclusion and Fair Treatment, for which the Authority has maintained a high score of 84% in 2023.

With the publication of the revised Civil Service Inclusion & Diversity strategy, we continue to closely align our approach to measuring and evaluating our success with the wider Civil Service set of standards.

Workforce diversity data and progress against targets as at 31 March 2024

Whilst all employees in the Authority are strongly encouraged to make a positive declaration within each of these diversity measures there is no obligation to do so. The percentage of employees who have declared is 88.9%. The following data is collated from those who have made a declaration.

UK Statistics Authority (all grades)	Mar-24	Mar-23	Mar-22
Females	56.0%	56.4%	57.2%
Ethnic minority groups	9.7%	9.4%	7.9%
Employees with disabilities	22.3%	16.9%	16.7%
LBGO*	7.9%	7.3%	5.9%

*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and 'Other'

Senior Civil Service Measures (SCS)	Mar-24	Mar-23	Mar-22
Females in SCS Pay Band 2	52.9%	40.0%	45.0%
All SCS			
Female	44.9%	41.9%	42.0%
Ethnic minority groups	6.3%	5.9%	4.2%
Employees with disabilities	16.7%	14.7%	13.8%

Feeder grade measures	Mar-24	Mar-23	Mar-22
Grade 6			
Female	49.8%	49.6%	42.7%
Ethnic minority groups	4.1%	2.4%	3.6%
Employees with disability	11.3%	8.6%	9.5%
Grade 7			
Female	53.0%	52.9%	52.3%
Ethnic minority groups	8.3%	8.8%	7.3%
Employees with disability	16.5%	11.8%	12.1%

The Authority has a long-term ambition to be representative of the society we serve. We benchmark our ethnic minority representation against the representation for the 'travel to work' area for our main locations. Our ethnic minority representation of 9.7% surpassing the benchmark which stands at 8.7%. We are proud to have maintained Gender parity at Grade 6, with a 50% split with rounding (49.8% and 50.2%) across female and male. This means we have maintained at least 50% female representation at our feeder grades to SCS as well as across our managerial and administrative grades. We are pleased with our increased female representation at our SCS grades, which has risen

from 41.9% to 44.9%, and the positive impact this has on our aspiration to achieve total Gender parity (although we are aware that changes to this smaller population can have a disproportionate impact on distribution).

Trade union facility time

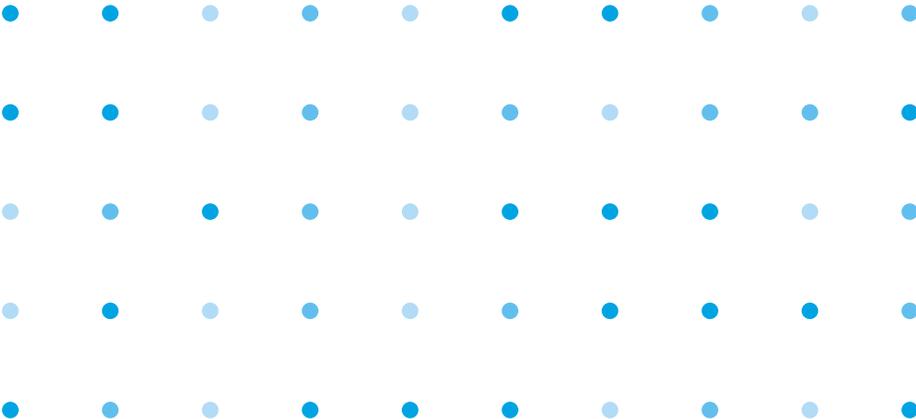
Organisations are required to publish trade union facility time data. Trade union facility time is a legal entitlement and is allocated by the Authority. Total time spent on union activities should equate to no more than 0.1% of the total pay bill and no-one should spend more than 50% of their time on such activities.

The total number of employees who were trade union representatives during the year was 46.

Percentage of time	2023/24 Number of employees	2022/23 Number of employees	2021/22 Number of employees	2020/21 Number of employees
0%	-	-	-	-
1-50%	46	53	50	49
51%-99%	-	-	-	-
100%	-	-	-	-

The cost to the Authority of trade union facility time represents 0.04% of the pay bill of £291,955,000 (2022/23 0.04% of the pay bill £274,490,000).

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours is 0%.



Parliamentary Accountability Report

Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply

In addition to the primary statements prepared under IFRS, the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRM) requires the Authority to prepare a Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply (SOPS) and supporting notes.

The SOPS and related notes are subject to audit, as detailed in the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons.

The SOPS is a key accountability statement that shows, in detail, how an entity has spent against their Supply Estimate. Supply is the monetary provision (for resource and capital purposes) and cash (drawn primarily from the Consolidated fund), that Parliament gives statutory authority for entities to utilise. The Estimate details supply and is voted on by Parliament at the start of the financial year.

Should an entity exceed the limits set by their Supply Estimate, called control limits, their accounts will receive a qualified opinion.

The format of the SOPS mirrors the Supply Estimates, published on gov.uk, to enable comparability between what Parliament approves and the final outturn.

The SOPS contain a summary table, detailing performance against the control limits that Parliament have voted on, cash spent (budgets are compiled on an accruals basis and so outturn won't exactly tie to cash spent) and administration.

The supporting notes detail the following: Outturn by Estimate line, providing a more detailed breakdown (note 1); a reconciliation of outturn to net operating expenditure in the SOCNE, to tie the SOPS to the financial statements (note 2); a reconciliation of outturn to net cash requirement (note 3); and, an analysis of income payable to the Consolidated Fund (note 4).

The SOPS and Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different to, IFRS. An understanding of the budgeting framework and an explanation of key terms is provided on page 41, in the financial review section of the performance report. Further information on the Public Spending Framework and the 6 reasons why budgeting rules are different to IFRS can also be found in chapter 1 of the Consolidated Budgeting Guidance, available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

The SOPS provides a detailed view of financial performance, in a form that is voted on and recognised by Parliament. The financial review, in the Performance Report, provides a summarised discussion of outturn against estimate and functions as an introduction to the SOPS disclosures.

Summary tables (audited)

Summary table 2023-24, all figures presented in £000's

Type of Spend	SoPS Note	Outturn			Estimate			Outturn vs Estimate, saving/(excess)		Prior Year Outturn Total 2022-23
		Voted	Non-Voted	Total	Voted	Non-Voted	Total	Voted	Total	
Departmental Expenditure Limit										
Resource	1.1	362,903	-	362,903	371,971	-	371,971	9,068	9,068	352,376
Capital	1.2	23,379	-	23,379	23,827	-	23,827	448	448	35,678
Total		386,282	-	386,282	395,798	-	395,798	9,516	9,516	388,054
Annually Managed Expenditure										
Resource	1.1	(2,006)	-	(2,006)	1,600	-	1,600	3,606	3,606	(3,928)
Capital	1.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		(2,006)	-	(2,006)	1,600	-	1,600	3,606	3,606	(3,928)
Total Budget										
Total Resource	1.1	360,897	-	360,897	373,571	-	373,571	12,674	12,674	348,448
Total Capital	1.2	23,379	-	23,379	23,827	-	23,827	448	448	35,678
Total Budget Expenditure		384,276	-	384,276	397,398	-	397,398	13,122	13,122	384,126
Non - Budget Expenditure	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Budget and Non Budget		384,276	-	384,276	397,398	-	397,398	13,122	13,122	384,126

Note

Figures in the areas outlined in thick line cover the voted control limits voted by Parliament. Refer to the Supply Estimates guidance manual, available on gov.uk, for detail on the control limits voted by Parliament.

Net Cash Requirement 2023/24 (audited)

All figures presented in £000's

Item	SoPS Note	Outturn	Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate, saving/(excess)	Prior Year Outturn Total 2022-23
Net Cash requirement	3	377,138	382,281	5,143	352,540

Notes

Although not a separate voted limit, any breach of the administration budget will also result in an excess vote. The Authority's net expenditure is classed as programme costs. There are no administration costs. Explanations of variances between estimates and outturn are given in the Management Commentary on [pages 79-80](#).

The notes on [pages 109-112](#) form part of these accounts.

Notes to the parliamentary supply, 2023/24 (£000's) (audited)

SOPS 1 – Outturn detail by Estimate Line

For the period ending 31 March 2024. All figures presented in £000's.

SOPS 1.1 Analysis of resource outturn by estimate line

Type of Spend	Outturn				Estimate			Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)	Prior Year Outturn Total 2022-23
	Programme		Net	Total	Total	Virements	Total inc Virements		
Gross	Income								
Spending in Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)									
Voted expenditure									
A. Programme Expenditure	397,516	(34,613)	362,903	362,903	371,971	-	371,971	9,068	352,375
Total voted DEL	397,516	(34,613)	362,903	362,903	371,971	-	371,971	9,068	352,375
Total spending in DEL	397,516	(34,613)	362,903	362,903	371,971	-	371,971	9,068	352,375
Spending in Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)									
Voted expenditure									
Provisions	(2,006)	-	(2,006)	(2,006)	1,600	-	1,600	3,606	(3,928)
Total voted AME	(2,006)	-	(2,006)	(2,006)	1,600	-	1,600	3,606	(3,928)
Total spending in AME	(2,006)	-	(2,006)	(2,006)	1,600	-	1,600	3,606	(3,928)
Total resource	395,510	(34,613)	360,897	360,897	373,571	-	373,571	12,674	348,448

Note

The programme costs within the annually managed expenditure reflect the utilisation of provisions and impairments charged to Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)

SOPS 1.2 Analysis of capital outturn by estimate line

All figures presented in £000's.

Type of spend (Capital)	Outturn			Estimate			Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)	Prior Year Outturn Total 2021-22
	Gross	Income	Net total	Total	Virements	Total inc virements		
Spending in Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL)								
Voted expenditure								
A. Programme Expenditure	23,379	-	23,379	23,827	-	23,827	448	35,678
Total voted DEL	23,379	-	23,379	23,827	-	23,827	448	35,678
Total spending in DEL	23,379	-	23,379	23,827	-	23,827	448	35,678
Spending in Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)								
Voted expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total voted AME	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total spending in AME	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total capital	23,379	-	23,379	23,827	-	23,827	448	35,678

Note

The total Estimate columns include virements. Virements are the reallocation of provision in the Estimates that do not require parliamentary authority (because Parliament does not vote to that level of detail and delegates to HM Treasury). Further information on virements is provided in the Supply Estimates Manual, available on gov.uk. The outturn vs estimate column is based on the total including virements. The estimate total before virements have been made is included so that users can tie the estimate back to the Estimates laid before Parliament.



SOPS 2 – Reconciliation of outturn to net operating expenditure

All figures presented in £000's.

Item	Reference	Outturn Total	Prior Year Outturn Total 2022-23
Total resource outturn	SOPS 1.1	360,897	348,448
Add			
Expenditure which meets the European Statement of Accounts 2015 definition of research and development: Staff Costs (permanent)		13,509	11,326
Capital Grants Expense		178	3,724
Less			
Capital Grants Received		-	-
Total		13,687	15,050
Net operating expenditure in Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	SOCNE	374,584	363,498

Note

As noted in the introduction to the SoPS above, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different from, IFRS. Therefore, this reconciliation bridges the resource outturn to net operating expenditure, linking the SoPS to the financial statements. Capital grants received and capital grants expense are budgeted for as CDEL, but accounted for as income and expenditure on the face of the SOCNE, and therefore function as reconciling items between Resource and Net Operating Expenditure. £178k (£3,724 in 22/23) of capital grants expense relate to the transfer of the Authority's capitalised property developments, which were transferred off balance sheet to the GPA.

SOPS 3 – Reconciliation of net resource outturn to net cash requirement

For the period ending 31 March 2024. All figures presented in £000's.

Item	Reference	Outturn Total	Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)
Total Resource outturn	SOPS 1.1	360,897	378,571	17,674
Total Capital outturn	SOPS 1.2	23,379	23,827	448
Adjustments to remove non-cash items:				
Depreciation and amortisation	4	(13,713)	(18,517)	(4,804)
New provisions and adjustments to previous provisions	4	967	(1,600)	(2,567)
Other non-cash items	4	(147)	-	147
Adjustments to reflect movements in working balances:				
Increase/(decrease) in receivables	9	(11,770)	-	11,770
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	11	11,903	-	(11,903)
Increase/(decrease) in other financial liabilities	14	4,582	-	(4,582)
Other movements in working capital not reflected in operating costs		1	-	(1)
Use of provisions	12	1,039	-	(1,039)
Total		(7,138)	(20,117)	(12,979)
Net cash requirement		377,138	382,281	5,143

Note

As noted in the introduction to the SOPS above, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, not on a cash basis. Therefore, this reconciliation bridges the resource and capital outturn to the net cash requirement.

SoPS 4 Amounts of income to the consolidated fund**SoPS 4.1 Analysis of income payable to the consolidated fund**

There is no income payable to the consolidated fund.

SoPS 4.2 Consolidated fund income

The Authority does not collect income as an agent of the consolidated fund.

Parliamentary Accountability Disclosure

Special payment and losses (audited)

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	Number	2023/24 £'000	Number	2022/23 £'000
Ex-gratia claims	39	5	23	3

There are no individual cases of special payments or losses over £300,000 (2022/23: No cases) which need separate disclosure as required by Managing Public Money.

Fees and charges

The Authority is not subject to statutory fees and charges.

Regularity of Expenditure (audited)

The Authority incurred irregular expenditure of £481,000 during 2023/24, for further details please refer to the Cabinet Office Controls disclosure in the Governance Statement on [pages 73-75](#).

Remote contingent liabilities

None identified.

Disclosure of information to the auditors

The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer include confirming that as far as he is aware there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware and that he has taken steps he ought to have taken to make himself aware of any relevant audit information, and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.



Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Accounting Officer

12 July 2024

The Certificate of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Statistics Board (operating as the UK Statistics Authority) for the year ended 31 March 2024 under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

The financial statements comprise the UK Statistics Authority's

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2024;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended; and the related notes including the significant accounting policies.
- The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the UK Statistics Authority's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and its net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and HM Treasury directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects:

- the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals for the year ended 31 March 2024 and shows that those totals have not been exceeded; and
- the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2022). My

responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2019. I am independent of the UK Statistics Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the UK Statistics Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the UK Statistics Authority's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate. The going concern basis of accounting for the UK Statistics Authority is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate and report thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000;
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the UK Statistics Authority and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance and Accountability Reports.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the UK Statistics Authority or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;
- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the UK Statistics Authority from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000;
- preparing the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000; and
- assessing the UK Statistics Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the UK Statistics Authority will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the UK Statistics Authority's accounting policies and performance incentives.
- inquired of management, the UK Statistics Authority's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the UK Statistics Authority's policies and procedures on:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the UK Statistics Authority's controls relating to the UK Statistics Authority's compliance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, Managing Public Money and the Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Act 2023;
- inquired of management, the UK Statistics Authority's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
 - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
 - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud,
- discussed with the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the UK Statistics Authority for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals, complex transactions and bias in management estimates. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of the UK Statistics Authority's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the UK Statistics Authority operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the UK Statistics Authority. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, Managing Public Money, Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Act 2023 and employment law.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board; and internal audit reports; and
- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain appropriate evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals and that those totals have not been exceeded. The voted Parliamentary control totals are Departmental Expenditure Limits (Resource and Capital), Annually Managed Expenditure (Resource and Capital), Non-Budget (Resource) and Net Cash Requirement.

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Gareth Davies

Comptroller and Auditor General

National Audit Office

17 July 2024

157-197 Buckingham Palace Road

Victoria

London

SW1W 9SP

The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons

1. As a central government body, the UK Statistics Authority is required to comply with the Cabinet Office Spending Controls. These state that, 'all central government organisations, including departments and the bodies they sponsor, must obtain approval from the Cabinet Office when they want to spend money on specified activities'. The specified activities include commercial spend on all contracts with a value greater than £20 million.
2. I draw attention to the disclosures that the UK Statistics Authority has made on [pages 73-75](#) of the Annual Report. This explains the circumstances which led to the UK Statistics Authority entering into a contract to conduct the Crime Survey for England and Wales without receiving approval under the Cabinet Office Spending Controls. As disclosed on [pages 73-75](#) The UK Statistics Authority has incurred expenditure of £0.5 million in preparation for this contract in 2023-24 and the total anticipated spend is £42.8 million excluding VAT over the period of the contract.
3. As approval of this contract has not been received under the Cabinet Office Spending Controls, I have concluded that any expenditure incurred on the contract would be irregular. However, given that the UK Statistics Authority has not incurred material expenditure under the contract in 2023-24, I have not modified my regularity opinion in this respect. There is a significant risk that I am required to modify my regularity opinion in a future year if a cumulatively material level of irregular expenditure is reflected in the financial statements.

Gareth Davies

Comptroller and Auditor General

National Audit Office

17 July 2024

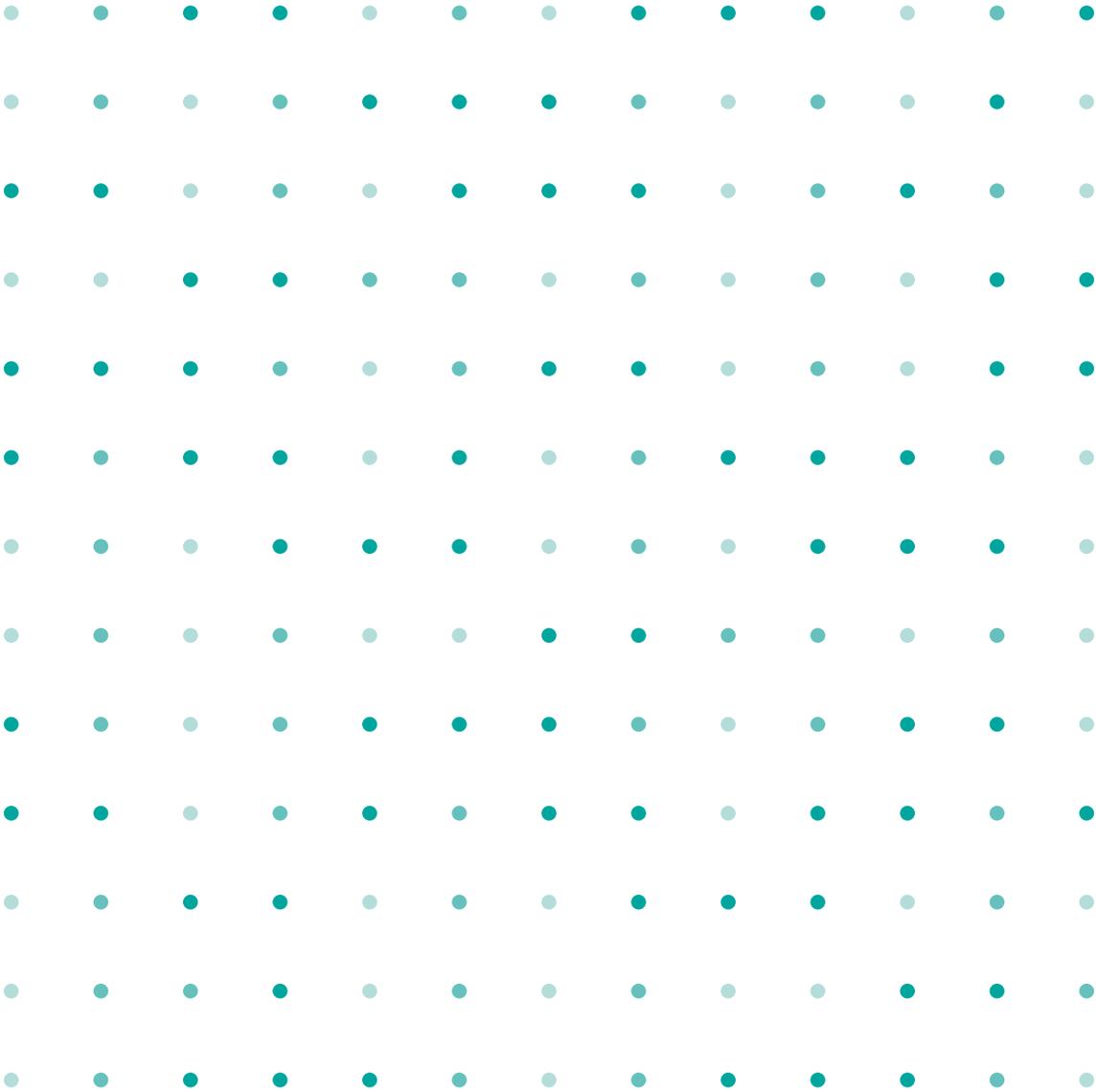
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Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

This account summarises the expenditure and income generated and consumed on an accruals basis. It also includes other comprehensive income and expenditure, which include changes to the values of non-current assets and other financial instruments that cannot yet be recognised as income or expenditure.

For the Year to 31 March 2024

	Note	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Revenue from contracts with customers	5	(25,496)	(218,120)
Other operating income	5	(9,117)	(6,408)
Total operating income		(34,613)	(224,528)
Staff costs	3	291,955	274,490
Purchase of goods and services	4	103,871	291,414
Depreciation and impairment charges	4	13,713	12,146
Provision expense	4	(967)	5,837
Other operating expenditure	4	325	3,920
Total operating expenditure		408,897	587,807
Net operating expenditure		374,284	363,279
Finance Expense	4	300	219
Net expenditure for the year		374,584	363,498
Other comprehensive net expenditure			
Net (gain)/loss on revaluation of property, plant and equipment		99	(854)
Net (gain)/loss on revaluation of intangible assets		(363)	(622)
Comprehensive net expenditure for the year		374,320	362,022

Note

The notes on [pages 128-157](#) form part of these accounts.

Statement of Financial Position

This statement presents the financial position of the department. It comprises three main components: assets owned or controlled; liabilities owed to other bodies; and equity, the remaining value of the entity.

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	6	13,525	13,629
Right of Use assets	13	27,578	33,435
Intangible assets	7	18,575	16,380
Financial assets		72	84
Total non-current assets		59,750	63,528
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	8	4,769	14,863
Other current assets	8	17,280	18,944
Cash and cash equivalents	9	5,123	20,151
Total current assets		27,172	53,958
Total assets		86,922	117,486
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	10	(42,976)	(69,985)
Provisions	11	(1,336)	(3,401)
Lease liabilities	13	(3,510)	(3,398)
Total current liabilities		(47,822)	(76,784)
Total assets less current liabilities		39,100	40,702
Non-current liabilities:			
Provisions	11	(261)	(202)
Lease liabilities	13	(23,008)	(27,624)
Total non-current liabilities		(23,269)	(27,826)
Assets less liabilities		15,831	12,876
Taxpayers' equity and other reserves:			
General Fund		12,390	9,205
Revaluation Reserve		3,441	3,671
Total equity		15,831	12,876

Note

The notes on [pages 128-157](#) form part of these accounts.



Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Accounting Officer, UK Statistics Authority

12 July 2024

Statement of Cash Flows

The Statement of Cash Flows shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the department during the reporting period. The statement shows how the department generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of service costs and the extent to which these operations are funded by way of income from the recipients of services provided by the department. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash inflows and outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the departments' future public service delivery.

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	Note	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net operating expenditure		(374,284)	(363,498)
Adjustment for non-cash transactions	4	13,071	9,400
Decrease/(Increase) in trade and other receivables	8	11,937	42,296
(Decrease)/Increase in trade payables		(10,191)	(25,982)
Increase in lease liabilities	13	-	35,241
Movements in Current Assets - Initial adoption of IFRS 16		-	(85)
Movements in Financial Liabilities - Initial adoption of IFRS 16		-	(27,508)
Use of provisions	11	(1,039)	(9,765)
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities		(360,506)	(339,901)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	6	(3,648)	(5,471)
Purchase of intangible assets	7	(7,935)	(6,411)
Proceeds from disposal of PPE		-	3,793
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from investing activities		(11,583)	(8,089)
Cash flows from financing activities			
From the Consolidated Fund (Supply) – current year		362,110	358,522
Advances from Contingency Fund		28,500	-
Repayments to the Contingency Fund		(28,500)	-
Payment of lease Liability		(4,749)	(4,331)
Interest payment of lease liability		(300)	(219)
Net Financing		357,061	353,972
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period before adjustments from payments to the Consolidated Fund		(15,028)	5,982
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period after adjustment for receipts and payments to the Consolidated Fund		(15,028)	5,982
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		20,151	14,169
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period		5,123	20,151

Note

The notes on [pages 128-157](#) form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Department, analysed into 'general fund reserves' (i.e., those reserves that reflect a contribution from the Consolidated Fund). The Revaluation Reserve reflects the change in asset values that have not been recognised as income or expenditure. The General Fund represents the total assets less liabilities of a department, to the extent that the total is not represented by other reserves and financing items.

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	Note	General Fund £'000	Revaluation Reserve £'000	Total Reserves £'000
Balance at 1 April 2022		19,437	2,846	22,283
Net Parliamentary Funding		358,522	-	358,522
Comprehensive net expenditure for the year		(363,498)	-	(363,498)
Auditor's Remuneration	4	129	-	129
Initial adoption of IFRS 16		(54)	-	(54)
Transfers between reserves		651	(651)	-
Net loss on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	6	-	854	854
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets	7	-	622	622
Amounts issued from the Consolidated Fund for supply but not spent at year end	9	(20,151)	-	(20,151)
Deemed supply	9	14,169	-	14,169
Balance at 31 March 2023		9,205	3,671	12,876
Net Parliamentary Funding		362,110	-	362,110
Advances from the Contingencies Fund		28,500	-	28,500
Repayments to the Contingencies Fund		(28,500)	-	(28,500)
Comprehensive net expenditure for the year		(374,584)	-	(374,584)
Auditor's Remuneration	4	137	-	137
Transfers between reserves		494	(494)	-
Net loss on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	6	-	(99)	(99)
Net gain on revaluation of intangible assets	7	-	363	363
Amounts issued from the Consolidated Fund for supply but not spent at month end	9	(5,123)	-	(5,123)
Deemed supply	9	20,151	-	20,151
Balance at 31 March 2024		12,390	3,441	15,831

Note

The General Fund is used to account for all financial resources, except for capitalised assets. In 22/23 there was a £54k adjustment for initial adoption of IFRS16; this relates to outstanding operating lease prepayments, which debited the General Fund when these leases transitioned to IFRS16.

The Revaluation Reserve records unrealised gains and losses on revaluation of assets. The notes on [pages 128-157](#) form part of these accounts.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Statement of Accounting Policies and Accounting Convention

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

The 2023/24 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) applies International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), adapted or interpreted for the public sector. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the UK Statistics Authority for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the Authority are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment and in-house software.

The Authority is primarily resourced by funds approved by the House of Commons through the annual Appropriation Act. Resources are drawn down each month to meet expenditure requirements and are credited to the General Fund. The functional currency for the UK Statistics Authority is pounds sterling.

Going concern

The Authority anticipates continued funding to promote and safeguard the production of official statistics that serve the public good, as evidenced by the future financing of the Authority's liabilities, annually approved by Parliament via the passing of the Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Act and the Supply and Appropriation (Anticipation and Adjustments) Act. This is sufficient evidence that the Authority remains a going concern in accordance with the continuity of service principle outlined within the FReM. The Authority anticipates future Spending Review budgets to be agreed in due course and there is no reason to believe that future Estimate approvals will not be forthcoming. Furthermore, the Authority is currently discussing funding plans for the period beyond March 2025 with HM Treasury, as are all other Government Departments during this time.

Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment (PPE) assets include computers, and associated equipment, office machinery, and furniture and fittings.

Civil Estate property is occupied in Newport, Titchfield and Christchurch. Ownership of the land and buildings was transferred to the Government Property Agency on 30th September 2021 at market value at the time, using professional valuations.

All other PPE assets are re-valued from the beginning of the quarter of acquisition. These assets are stated at current costs by using indices taken from the Authority's publication Price Index Numbers for Current Cost Accounting.

PPE assets must exceed the capitalisation threshold of £5,000 (excluding VAT) and have a life greater than one year.

The Authority adopted IFRS 16 Leases in April 2022. Therefore, PPE previously classified as a Finance Lease, will now be recognised under Right of Use Asset. Please see Lease note.

Intangible assets

Intangible assets consist of software licenses and in-house developed software. Software licenses are not re-valued and are included at depreciated historical cost.

In-house developed software is stated at current costs by using indices developed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) National Accounts Division.

In House Developed Software assets must exceed a capitalisation threshold of £50,000 (excluding VAT) and have a life greater than one year.

Software Licences must exceed a capitalisation threshold of £5,000 (excluding VAT) and have a life greater than one year.

A contract that provides access to cloud-based software is generally expensed. However, in some limited circumstances it could be determined the Authority controls a software intangible asset which will require capitalisation.

Features of a cloud computing arrangement that may indicate that the Authority obtains control of a software intangible asset include:

- exclusive rights to use the software, or
- ownership of the intellectual property for customised software – i.e. the supplier cannot make the software available to other customers.

Statistical records

Statistical information has built up over many years and is stored for reference purposes. No attempt is made to value this data, as there is no realistic way of doing so that would arrive at a meaningful valuation. The cost of storing and maintaining the data is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as incurred.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the re-valued cost of assets over the estimated useful economic life on a straight-line basis. An asset disposal is actioned when the economic benefits have been fully realised.

All Intangible assets are reviewed annually for impairment.

Assets in the course of construction

Assets under construction are capitalised as appropriate where meeting the requirements of IAS 16 or IAS 38 and transferred out of assets under construction into the relevant category of PPE or intangibles on completion.

Research and development

The Authority undertakes certain research into statistical and survey methodology. Costs are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as they arise.

As required under European System of Accounts (ESA) 10 Research and Development costs are charged to Capital within the Statement of Parliamentary Supply. The reconciliation between the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and the Statement of Parliamentary Supply is shown at SOPS Note 2.

Revenue from contracts with customers

Under IFRS 15, key judgements in determining the recognition and timing of revenue recognition are identified at the point when:

- control of goods and services is transferred under contractual arrangements and services to the customer, and
- performance obligations are satisfied, whether at a point in time or over time.

Most of the Authority's performance obligations relate to services satisfied over time.

The Authority applies the five-stage model for the recognition of revenue from contracts with customers:

Step 1 – Identify the contract(s) with a customer.

Step 2 – Identify the performance obligations in the contract.

Step 3 – Determine the transaction price.

Step 4 – Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations in the contract.

Step 5 – Recognise revenue when the Authority satisfies a performance obligation.

The application of the model depends on the facts and circumstances presented in a contract with a customer and requires the exercise of judgement. Revenue

related to performance obligations recognised over time as the service is rendered is measured by reference to the input (resources consumed in satisfying a performance obligation) method.

Prices charged to customers are calculated in accordance with Managing Public Money (published by the Treasury).

Leases

IFRS 16 “Leases” was implemented in April 2022 in accordance with the requirements of the FReM and replaces IAS 17; this introduces a single lessee accounting model that requires a lessee to recognise assets and liabilities for all leases (apart from the exemptions included below).

In respect of lessees, IFRS 16 removes the distinction between operating and finance leases and introduces a single accounting model that requires a lessee to recognise (‘right of use’) assets and lease liabilities.

The definition of a lease has been updated under IFRS 16, there is more emphasis on being able to control the use of an asset identified in a contract.

Implementation and Assumptions

IFRS 16 “Leases” has been implemented from 1 April 2022 in accordance with the requirements of the FReM and replaces IAS 17; this introduces a single lessee accounting model that requires a lessee to recognise assets and liabilities for all leases (apart from the exemptions included below).

In respect of lessees, IFRS 16 removes the distinction between operating and finance leases and introduces a single accounting model that requires a lessee to recognise (‘right of use’) assets and lease liabilities.

The definition of a lease has been updated under IFRS 16, there is more emphasis on being able to control the use of an asset identified in a contract.

The definition of a contract is expanded to include intra-UK government agreements where non-performance may not be enforceable by law. This includes, for example, Memorandum of Terms of Occupation (MOTO) agreements.

The Authority has elected not to recognise right of use assets and lease liabilities for the following leases:

- intangible assets;
- non-lease components of contracts where applicable;
- low value assets (these are determined to be in line with capitalisation thresholds on Property, Plant and Equipment)
- leases with a lease term of 12 months or less.

At inception of a contract, the Authority assesses whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time. This includes assets

for which there is no consideration. To assess whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, the Authority assesses whether:

- the contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- the Authority has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefit from the use of the asset throughout the period of use, and;
- the Authority has the right to direct the use of the asset.

The Authority assesses whether it is reasonably certain to exercise extension options or not to exercise break options at the lease commencement date. The Authority reassesses this if there are significant events or changes in circumstances, within its control that were not anticipated at the lease commencement. There have been no significant events or circumstances that indicate an adjustment is required during 23/24.

Right of use assets

The Authority recognises a right of use asset and lease liability at the commencement date. The right of use asset is initially measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for initial direct costs, prepayments or incentives, and costs related to restoration at the end of a lease.

The right of use asset is depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the end of the lease term. Whilst the authority applies a straight-line depreciation method to its right of use assets, a periodic review is undertaken to adjust and align depreciation to any variable lease payments over time.

The Authority applies IAS 36 Impairment of Assets to determine whether the right of use asset is impaired and to account for any impairment loss identified.

Lease liabilities

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, or if that cannot be readily determined, the rate provided by HM Treasury (HMT) for that calendar year. The HMT discount rates were 0.95% for 2022, 3.51% for 2023 and 4.72% in 2024.

The lease payment is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. It is re-measured when there is a change in future lease payments arising from a change in the index or rate, if there is a change in the Authority's estimates of the amount expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee, or if the Authority changes its assessment of whether it will exercise a purchase, extension, or termination option.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- Fixed payments, including in-substance fixed payments;
- Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index rate as at the commencement date;
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee;
- The exercise price under a purchase option that the Authority is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if the Authority is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless the Authority is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is re-measured a corresponding adjustment is made to the right of use asset or recorded in the SoCNE if the carrying amount of the right of use asset is zero.

Provisions

The Authority provides for legal or constructive obligations which are of uncertain timing or amount at the Statement of Financial Position date on the basis of best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of time value is significant, provisions are discounted using the discount rates published by HM Treasury. These provisions are reviewed each year in accordance with IAS 37.

IAS 37 defines and specifies the accounting for and disclosure of provisions, contingent liabilities, and contingent assets.

The Authority recognises a provision if it is probable that an outflow of cash or other economic resources will be required to settle the provision. If an outflow is not probable, the item is treated as a contingent liability.

Trade receivables

Trade receivables are recognised at their amortised cost less expected credit losses in accordance with IFRS 9. Expected credit losses are based on the Authority's expectation of recovery at the year end.

Staff costs

Under IAS19 Employee Benefits, all staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as the organisation is obliged to pay them. This includes the cost of any untaken leave at the year end.

Staff costs include wages and salaries, social security costs and pension costs.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

The Authority holds balances of cash and cash equivalents in a readily realised form; these include cash balances, shopping vouchers and postage stamps. Any amounts held in a foreign currency are translated into sterling at the exchange rate on the date of reporting.

VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category or included in the capitalised purchase cost of assets. Where output VAT is charged or input VAT is recoverable, the amounts are stated net of VAT.

Programme Expenditure

Net expenditure for the year is analysed in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure between income and operating costs. The classification of expenditure and income as programme follows the definition of programme costs set out in HM Treasury Consolidated Budgeting Guidance, and as voted by Parliament in the Treasury's Supply Estimate.

Pensions

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Schemes as described in notes to the accounts and in the Authority's Remuneration Report. The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) and the Civil Servant and Other Pension Scheme (CSOPS) are unfunded, except in respect of death in service or ill health retirement. Employees can opt to open partnership pension accounts, a stakeholder pension with employer contributions ranging from 8% to 14.75% depending on the Employee's age. The Authority recognises the expected costs of these elements on a systematic and rational basis over a period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the Principal Civil Service Pension Schemes (PCSPS) of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS. In respect of the defined contribution elements of the schemes, the Authority recognises the contribution payable for the year.

Contingent liabilities

In addition to contingent liabilities disclosed in accordance with IAS 37, the Authority discloses for parliamentary reporting and accountability purposes certain statutory and non-statutory contingent liabilities where the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit is remote, but which have been reported to Parliament in accordance with the requirements of Managing Public Money.

Where the time value of money is material, contingent liabilities which are required to be disclosed under IAS 37 are stated at discounted amounts and the amount

reported to Parliament separately noted. Contingent liabilities that are not required to be disclosed by IAS 37 are stated at the amounts reported to Parliament.

Accounting Estimates and Judgements

In preparation of the Authority's financial statements, management has is required to make estimates and judgements that impact the amounts being reported for assets and liabilities as at the date of the Statement of Financial Position and amounts reported against income and expenditure during the year. Uncertainties are inherent in business activities, and as such, some elements of financial statements cannot be measured precisely and therefore can only be estimated. Estimation involves judgements based on the latest available, reliable information.

As per IAS1, paragraph 122 only the Estimates and Judgements that have the most significant effect on the amounts recognised in The Authority's financial statements have been documented in the following section.

Revenue from contracts with customers

IFRS15 Revenue from Contracts with customers requires that where a performance obligation is satisfied over time that revenue shall be recognised as and when the performance obligation has been satisfied.

This requires the application of judgement by management to be applied to the measurement and timing of revenue recognition, related balances for contract assets, trade receivables and accrued and deferred income in the context of whether satisfaction of performance obligations is satisfied over time or at a point in time.

The Authority has several income streams where the level of revenue is based on expenditure incurred; judgements are applied to ensure the costs associated with specific projects are reliable and accurately reflect the level of expenditure of the project.

Judgements are applied to calculate a corporate overhead rate which is used to derive the charge out rate when charging for staff time. The level of overheads associated with each revenue stream are agreed with the customer prior to contract commencement.

The Authority recognises revenue using an input method based on the full economic costs, including overheads incurred. Revenue is calculated by reference to reliable estimates and total expected costs. Revenue and associated margin are therefore recognised progressively as costs are incurred. The Authority has determined this method faithfully depicts the Authority's performance in transferring control of the services to the customer.

Leases

At the commencement of a lease agreement, The Authority considers reasonable certainty regarding the lease term to account for potential break clauses, extensions and terminations when measuring the asset and liability value. As part of that consideration the Authority's strategic plans and the ONS facilities team are consulted to ensure a suitable measurement is applied to the reasonable certainty evaluation. The Authority was reasonably certain not to exercise termination options within its property lease agreements upon commencement of the leases.

The Authority will reassess whether it is reasonably certain to exercise termination or break clauses, upon the occurrence of a significant event or a significant change in circumstances which is in the control of The Authority. Any significant event would need to relate to an unconditional business decision made by The Authority. No significant event(s) have taken place during 2023/24.

As the lease liability and the right-of-use asset is based on unadjusted lease payments as known at the commencement date, no uplifts for inflation or RPI have been factored into the calculations. Therefore, when the lease payments change because of inflation or RPI the Authority will account for the remeasurement of the lease by recalculating the new lease liability by discounting adjusted lease payments with the original discount rate. The difference will be a right-of-use asset adjustment. The Authority does not anticipate any volatility within its lease payments as set out in lease agreements.

Standards Not Yet Adopted

IFRS17 Insurance Contracts

IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts, which replaces IFRS 4 Insurance Contracts, will be adopted in the UK from 1 January 2023. HM Treasury have agreed with the Financial Reporting Advisory Board (FRAB) to delay the implementation of IFRS 17 in central government by 2 years to 1 April 2025

The headline of the new standard is that the scope of an insurance contract will change from that under IFRS 4 Insurance Contracts, meaning that some contracts issued by organisations and not previously considered to fall within an insurance category could now be classified as an insurance contract. e.g. product breakdown contracts or warranties. The standard only applies to insurance contracts issued and not those held.

Management has assessed the likely effect of the new standard and has concluded; the Authority does not believe it issues any contracts that fall within the scope of IFRS17.

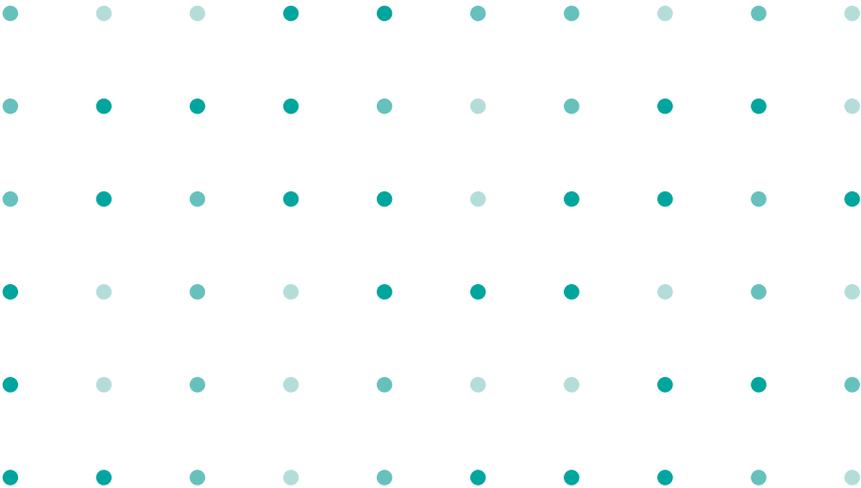
IFRS18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements

IFRS 18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements, will replace IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements. IFRS 18 will introduce three key new requirements on presentation and disclosures in the financial statements, with a focus on the income statement and reporting of financial performance.

Existing requirements of IAS 1 are expected to be brought forward into IFRS 18 or other IFRS Accounting Standards with only limited changes.

It will not change how the Authority will recognise and measure items in the financial statements. However, it will affect the way The Authority presents and discloses information in those statements.

IFRS 18 will be effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2027.



2. Segmental Information of Expenditure and Income

The following information is regularly provided in order to inform the decision making by the National Statistician's Executive Group and the primary Chief Operating Decision Maker (CODM) of the UK Statistics Authority to make decisions regarding planning, resource allocation and income, as well as performance monitoring.

	2023/24					2022/23				
	Gross Expenditure £'000	Customer Contracts Income £'000	Other Income £'000	Total Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000	Customer Contracts Income £'000	Other Income £'000	Total Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
Reportable segments										
Corporate support	53,244	(950)	(2,365)	(3,315)	49,929	59,967	(22,089)	(2,133)	(24,222)	35,745
Data growth and operations	20,263	-	(42)	(42)	20,221	21,381	-	-	-	21,381
Data science campus	6,806	(41)	(58)	(99)	6,707	5,985	(77)	(50)	(127)	5,858
Digital services and technology	79,736	-	(130)	(130)	79,606	77,553	-	-	-	77,553
Economic Statistics	33,398	(43)	(474)	(517)	32,881	28,896	(186)	(859)	(1,045)	27,851
Health analysis and pandemic insight	10,037	(1,243)	(4,007)	(5,250)	4,787	194,100	(175,857)	(1,521)	(177,378)	16,722
Health population and methods transformation	23,674	(4,083)	(114)	(4,197)	19,477	23,236	(98)	(131)	(229)	23,007
Integrated data programme and service	21,011	(6,513)	-	(6,513)	14,498	17,829	(5,370)	(22)	(5,392)	12,437
Leadership	2,345	-	-	-	2,345	2,393	-	-	-	2,393
Macroeconomic statistics and analysis	25,531	(167)	(503)	(670)	24,861	27,516	(38)	(242)	(280)	27,236
Methodology and quality	15,112	-	(32)	(32)	15,080	13,185	-	(14)	(14)	13,171
Public policy analysis	25,850	(302)	(1,092)	(1,394)	24,456	23,160	(324)	(1,115)	(1,439)	21,721
Surveys	75,178	(12,154)	(284)	(12,438)	62,740	71,572	(14,081)	(321)	(14,402)	57,170
UK Statistics Authority	3,183	-	(16)	(16)	3,167	2,717	-	-	-	2,717
Total	395,368	(25,496)	(9,117)	(34,613)	360,755	569,490	(218,120)	(6,408)	(224,528)	344,962

Reconciliation between segment information and net operating cost in the statement of comprehensive net expenditure.

		2023/24			2022/23		
	Note	Gross Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net Expenditure £000	Gross Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net Expenditure £000
Total reported by segment		395,368	(34,613)	360,755	569,490	(224,528)	344,962
Reconciling items							
Depreciation	4	13,713	-	13,713	12,146	-	12,146
Provisions created in year	11	158	-	158	5,984	-	5,984
Provisions not required in year	11	(1,096)	-	(1,096)	(142)	-	(142)
Unwinding discount on provisions	4	(29)	-	(29)	(5)	-	(5)
Performance related pay year end accrual	3	247	-	247	528	-	528
Loss on disposal of equipment	4	10	-	10	67	-	67
Land and buildings transfer to GPA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Movement in holiday pay	8,10	826	-	826	(42)	-	(42)
Statement of comprehensive net expenditure		409,197	(34,613)	374,584	588,026	(224,528)	363,498

Note

Net assets are not reported separately to the CODM.

3. Staff numbers and related costs

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	Permanently employment Staff £'000	Others £'000	2023/24		2022/23	
			Total £'000	Total £'000		
Statistical services staff costs	213,058	1,624	214,682		201,334	
Social security costs	21,860	-	21,860		20,340	
Other pension costs	54,365	-	54,365		51,853	
Tax and Levies	1,048	-	1,048		963	
Total	290,331	1,624	291,955		274,490	
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(316)	-	(316)		(316)	
Total net costs	290,015	1,624	291,639		274,174	

Note

Statistical Services staff costs include £13,509,000 of research and development costs (£11,326,000 2022/23) which are analysed as capital expenditure in the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply.

The 2023/24 salary figure reflect a net yearly credit of £826k of accrued holiday/flexi pay, and PRP of £247k. In addition to the £291,639k reported net costs, £1,485k of salary costs were capitalised as capital expenditure (£739k 2022/23) and not included in the above table.

Staff numbers

	Permanently employment Staff FTE	Others FTE	2023/24		2022/23	
			Total FTE	Total FTE		
Objective statistical services	5,067	261	5,328		5,363	
Total	5,067	261	5,328		5,363	

Note

Statistical services staff numbers are calculated using the average number of staff on the payroll each month rather than at year end.

Capitalised staff costs

	2023/24		2022/23	
	Cost £'000	FTE's	Cost £'000	FTE's
IDSP Platform Delivery	942	13	496	18
IDSP Core Service Design and Architecture	435	16	234	12
Data Management and SBR	108	4	9	1
Total	1,485	33	739	31

4. Programme costs

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	2023/24	2022/23
	Total £000	Total £000
Non-cash items		
Depreciation	9,735	6,983
Amortisation	3,978	5,163
Total Depreciation charge	13,713	12,146
Net release of provisions	(938)	5,842
Unwinding and rewinding of discount on provisions	(29)	(5)
Total Provision Expense	(967)	5,837
Grant Expense	178	3,724
External audit fee	137	129
Loss on disposal of equipment	10	67
Other operating expenditure	325	3,920
	13,071	21,903
Payments for carrying out surveys	13,209	130,298
Provision Utilisation	(991)	(9,742)
Survey Incentives	3,262	62,817
Other expenditure	8,755	7,453
Information technology	44,703	43,078
Contractors	4,183	18,459
Consultancy	10,280	16,458
Miscellaneous fees	520	2,296
Travel and subsistence	4,255	3,942
Telecommunications	1,306	2,375
Accommodation	7,934	4,989
Postage	3,307	3,562
External training	1,755	2,335
Marketing and media	298	996
Hospitality	398	516
Stationery	490	496
Other leases	98	797
Hire of plant and machinery	104	288
Exchange rate (gains)/losses	-	(2)
Ex-gratia payments	5	3
Purchase of goods and services	103,871	291,414
Finance Expense	300	219
	104,171	291,633
Total programme costs	117,242	313,536

Note

There were no payments to the auditors for non-audit services in the year 2023/24 (2022/23 nil).

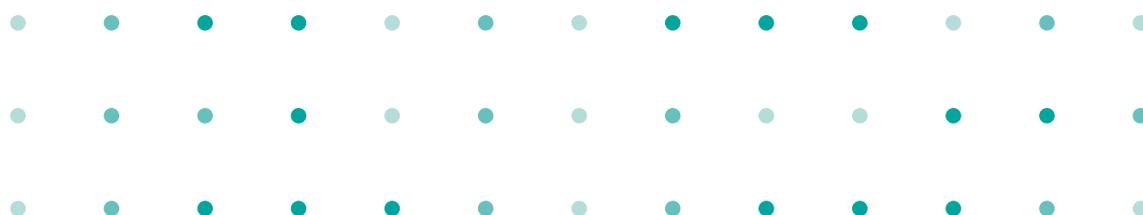
5. Income

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Customer contracts	25,496	218,120
Other	9,082	6,316
EU income	35	92
Total	34,613	224,528

An analysis of income from services provided external and public sector customers is as follows:

	2021/22			2020/21		
	External £'000	Public sector £'000	Total £'000	External £'000	Public sector £'000	Total £'000
Customer contracts	6,956	18,540	25,496	4,331	213,789	218,120
Other	2,812	6,270	9,082	1,115	5,201	6,316
EU income	35	-	35	92	-	92
Total	9,803	24,810	34,613	5,538	218,990	224,528



6. Property, plant and equipment

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	Building £'000	Computers £'000	Office machinery £'000	Furniture and fittings £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Total £'000
Cost or Valuation						
At April 2023	-	27,313	684	11,282	128	39,407
Additions	-	3,786	10	(14)	195	3,977
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	(6,007)	(124)	-	(178)	(6,309)
Revaluations	-	108	(5)	(225)	-	(123)
At 31 March 2024	-	25,200	565	11,043	145	36,953
Depreciation						
At April 2023	-	21,407	500	3,871	-	25,778
Charged in year	-	2,571	124	1,104	-	3,799
Disposals	-	(6,002)	(123)	-	-	(6,125)
Revaluations	-	62	(2)	(84)	-	(24)
At 31 March 2024	-	18,038	499	4,891	-	23,428
Net Book Value						
At 31 March 2023	-	5,906	184	7,411	128	13,629
At 31 March 2024	-	7,162	66	6,152	145	13,525
Asset Financing						
Owned	-	7,162	66	6,152	145	13,525
Leased	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net book value at 31 March 2024	-	7,162	66	6,152	145	13,525

Note

Included in the £3,977,000 of additions are £453,000 of capital creditors. The total amount of capital creditors brought forwards from 2022/23 was £124,000.



For the period ending 31 March 2023

	Building £'000	Computers £'000	Office machinery £'000	Furniture and fittings £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Total £'000
Cost or Valuation						
At April 2022	108	25,770	1,108	10,137	3,268	40,391
Additions	-	4,644	35	332	584	5,595
Disposals	(112)	(3,441)	(489)	(220)	(3,724)	(7,986)
Revaluations	4	340	30	1,033	-	1,407
At 31 March 2023	-	27,313	684	11,282	128	39,407
Depreciation						
At April 2022	82	21,978	859	2,690	-	25,609
Charged in year	17	2,656	113	1,023	-	3,809
Disposals	(102)	(3,441)	(489)	(161)	-	(4,193)
Revaluations	3	214	17	319	-	553
At 31 March 2023	-	21,407	500	3,871	-	25,778
Net book value at 31 March 2023	-	5,906	184	7,411	128	13,629

7. Intangible Fixed Assets

For the period ending 31 March 2024

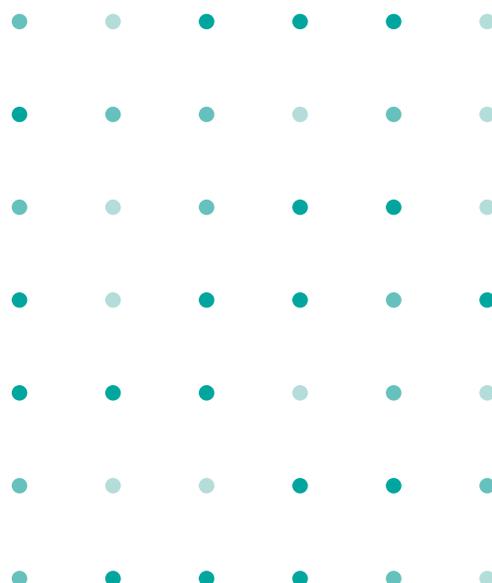
	In house software £'000	Software Licenses £'000	Assets under construction £'000	Total £'000
Valuation				
At April 2023	50,373	11,655	3,153	65,181
Additions	-	174	5,912	6,086
VAT Adjustment	-	(270)	-	(270)
Disposals	(29,890)	(5)	-	(29,895)
Revaluations	1,506	-	-	1,506
At 31 March 2024	21,989	11,554	9,065	42,608
Amortisation				
At April 2023	45,151	3,651	-	48,802
Charged in year	1,817	2,161	-	3,978
Disposals	(29,890)	-	-	(29,890)
Revaluations	1,143	-	-	1,143
At 31 March 2024	18,221	5,812	-	24,033
Net book value 31 March 2024	3,768	5,742	9,065	18,575

For the period ending 31 March 2023

	In house software £'000	Software Licenses £'000	Assets under construction £'000	Total £'000
Valuation				
At April 2022	44,919	12,495	252	57,666
Additions	-	6,235	3,811	10,046
Transfers from assets under construction	910	-	(910)	-
Disposals	-	(7,075)	-	(7,075)
Revaluations	4,544	-	-	4,544
At 31 March 2023	50,373	11,655	3,153	65,181
Amortisation				
At April 2023	37,863	8,930	-	46,793
Charged in year	3,368	1,795	-	5,163
Disposals	-	(7,075)	-	(7,075)
Revaluations	3,920	-	-	3,920
At 31 March 2024	45,151	3,650	-	48,801
Net book value 31 March 2023	5,222	8,005	3,153	16,380

Notes

The net book value of in-house developed software would be £3,043,000 if historic cost accounting had been applied. The Authority calculates indicies to value in-house developed software assets on a quarterly basis. The Authority does not re-value software licensees. Included in the £6,086,000 of capital additions are £1,516,000 of capital creditors and the amount brought forward from 2022/23 is £3,635,000. An asset disposal is actioned when the economic benefits have been fully realised.



Intangible Fixed Assets – In-house developed software applications

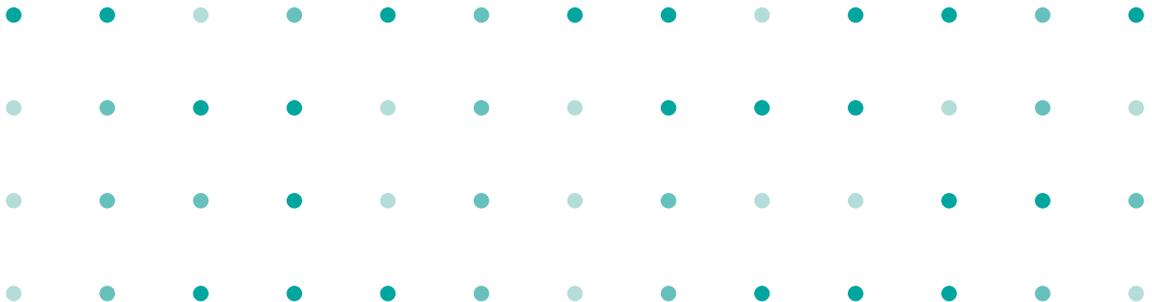
For the period ending 31 March 2024

	CORD	CASPA	Electronic Data Collection	Business Prices	Life Events	Data Access Platform	DCTP Business Registers	Clerical Matching	ARIES Prices	Adjustment	Total in-house software
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Valuation											
At April 2023	10,800	20,912	7,222	137	6,745	1,256	845	1,948	508	-	50,373
Disposals	-	(20,910)	-	(136)	(6,745)	(1,255)	(844)	-	-	-	(29,890)
Transfers from AUC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluations	862	-	448	-	-	-	-	155	41	-	1,506
Adjustments	-	(2)	-	(1)	-	(1)	(1)	-	-	5	-
At 31 March 2024	11,662	-	7,670	-	-	-	-	2,103	549	5	21,989
Amortisation											
At April 2023	10,424	20,912	4,362	137	6,745	1,256	828	467	20	-	45,151
Charged in year	36	-	1,388	-	-	-	18	289	86	-	1,817
Disposals	-	(20,910)	-	(136)	(6,745)	(1,255)	(844)	-	-	-	(29,890)
Revaluations	833	-	260	-	-	-	-	46	4	-	1,143
Adjustments	-	(2)	-	(1)	-	(1)	(2)	-	-	6	-
At 31 March 2024	11,293	-	6,010	-	-	-	-	802	110	6	18,221
Net book value 31 March 2024	369	-	1,660	-	-	-	-	1,301	439	(1)	3,768
Remaining useful economic life	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-



For the period ending 31 March 2023

	CORD £000	CASPA £000	Electronic Data Collection £000	Business Prices £000	Life Events £000	Data Access Platform £000	DCTP Business Registers £000	Clerical Matching £000	ARIES Prices £000	Total in-house software £000
Valuation										
At April 2022	9,789	18,954	6,545	137	6,113	1,256	766	1,359	-	44,919
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers from AUC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	407	503	910
Revaluations	1,011	1,958	677	-	632	-	79	182	5	4,544
At 31 March 2023	10,800	20,912	7,222	137	6,745	1,256	845	1,948	508	50,373
Amortisation										
At April 2022	9,228	18,602	2,446	137	5,461	1,256	558	175	-	37,863
Charged in year	230	373	1,590	-	688	-	203	264	20	3,368
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluations	966	1,937	326	-	596	-	67	28	-	3,920
At 31 March 2023	10,424	20,912	4,362	137	6,745	1,256	828	467	20	45,151
Net book value 31 March 2023	376	-	2,860	-	-	-	17	1,481	488	5,222



Notes

CORD (Central ONS Repository for Data) is the primary system used to compile the National Accounts including Quarterly National Accounts, Retail Sales Index and Trade (Goods and Services). The CORD platform capability is currently being enhanced to support the processing requirements to deliver the National Accounts in-line with the European System of Accounts 2012 Programme. This will be achieved through progressive improvements in statistical methods, data and system performance.

The Social Survey Repository replaced the Annual Population Survey/ Labour Force Survey re-weighting and Scientific Information Retrieval 2002 systems based in Newport, which currently weight, re-weight, impute, produce derived variables, attach geographies and store the APS and LFS data. It is built on the CASPA platform (Common Architecture for Statistical Processing and Analysis). In March 2023 the useful economic life has been fully realised, and the asset fully written down. As we move to a replacement platform some operational activities may continue during the transition with no further inputs or outputs to this current platform with no further economic benefit to the Authority; therefore it has been disposed from the Authority's asset register.

The Electronic Data Collection programme (EDC) aims to develop systems, methods and processes to improve the collection, integration and processing of data in relation to the UK's economy and society.

The software is part of an ongoing Data Collection Transformation Programme to modernise antiquated data collection modes, such as paper-based questionnaires, with a range of electronic data collection channels, making further use of the Web and administrative sources.

The Business Prices programme provides additional functionality to include more respondents in line with Prices Surveys. The useful economic life has been fully realised, and the asset fully written down. The asset has no further economic benefit to the Authority; therefore, it has been disposed from the Authority's asset register.

The Life Events software replaces the legacy system for processing and quality assuring life events registrations. The data held relates to registrations of Births, Deaths, Abortions, and Birth Notifications. The useful economic life has been fully realised, and the asset fully written down; therefore it has been disposed from the Authority's asset register.

DCTP Business Registers is a result of a Project Review in 2017-18, where three separate components, the Address Index, the Business Index and the Statistical Business register were reviewed and combined within one project. The development provides a new capability for ONS, increases efficiency, joins up across ONS and government, and puts ONS at the forefront of data management in government. This project will create high quality statistics, where discontinuities between the current and future system can be explained to an appropriate level of granularity. It will enable the ONS milestone of making short-term surveys integrated and online. This asset has been disposed from the Authority's asset register during 23/24 financial year.

Data Access Platform (DAP) - The ONS Strategy is to utilise new data sources and processing techniques to enable us deliver "Better Statistics, Better Decisions" this means utilising Big Data, bringing in data from other departments and companies, being able to explore that data and link it together to gain new insights. DAP is an enabler for that strategy, giving the ONS the tools and technology it needs to securely store all our data and the processing power to make use of it. The useful economic life has been fully realised, and the asset fully written down; therefore it has been disposed from the Authority's asset register.

Clerical Matching - The ONS requires a capability to match records from multiple datasets and assure that the quality of the matches meet strict targets. The immediate need relating to successful delivery of the 2021 Census. The ONS has an additional requirement that gives the option to re-use the capability for wider business needs beyond the Census with other datasets and to support the overall linking of datasets. This will require the flexibility to build on the existing capability of the tool to potentially meet emerging business need, for example, adding extra fields to the tool as required.

ARIES Prices - ONS collects and analyses prices data for goods and services in the UK. A high-profile use of this data is calculation of the rate of inflation. The wider uses of the data include fiscal and political decision making, commercial planning in the public and private sectors, and uses in academic settings. With observable impacts on currency exchange rates, credit interest rates and political discourse the reliability and security of prices and inflation data is of critical importance. Methods and sources used by ONS for analysis of prices have changed in the past. A further need for Alternative Data Sources (ADS) in price statistics to address current and near-term requirements has become clear through high profile independent reviews such as the 'Independent Review of UK Economic Statistics' by Professor Sir Charles Bean and 'UK Consumer Price Statistics: A Review' by Paul Johnson.

Intangible Fixed Assets

In-house developed software applications – Assets Under Construction

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	Integrated Data Platform – Core Design Service and Architecture £'000	Integrated Data Platform – Platform Delivery £'000	ARIES Prices £'000	Data Management and SBR £'000	Clerical Matching £'000	Total Assets Under construction £'000
Valuation						
At April 2023	380	2,194	-	578	-	3,152
Additions	573	2,903	-	2,437	-	5,913
Transfers from AUC	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	953	5,097	-	3,015	-	9,065

For the period ending 31 March 2023

	Integrated Data Platform – Core Design Service and Architecture £'000	Integrated Data Platform – Platform Delivery £'000	ARIES Prices £'000	Data Management and SBR £'000	Clerical Matching £'000	Total Assets Under construction £'000
Valuation						
At April 2022	380	2,194	503	578	156	3,811
Additions	-	-	-	-	251	251
Transfers from AUC	-	-	(503)	-	(407)	(910)
At 31 March 2023	380	2,194	-	578	-	3,152

Note

Assets under construction are not revalued or depreciated.

8. Trade Receivables and Other Assets

as at 31 March 2024

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade receivables	3,678	3,883
Contract receivables	1,091	10,980
Prepayments and accrued income	15,570	12,883
Contract Assets	1,710	6,061
	22,049	33,807
Amounts falling after more than one year:		
Deposits and advances	72	84
	22,121	33,891

Total Trade Receivables Outstanding

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
1-30 days	4,714	14,611
31-60 days	53	252
61-90 days	2	-
	4,769	14,863

Note

2023/24 figures reflect a net yearly increase of £826,000 in the value of pre-paid holiday and flexi pay. The Authority calculates the holiday and flexi prepayment at the year end with the figure being reflected in the category of prepayments and accrued income. In accordance with IFRS 9 the Authority has reviewed its activities and concluded as a standalone non-ministerial body it does not hold complex financial instruments.

Trade receivables are recognised at their amortised cost less credit loss. The Authority primarily transacts with public sector bodies, historically outstanding debts are recovered.

The Authority's payment terms are thirty days. At 31 March 2024 £53k debt is outstanding over 30 but less than 60 days and £2k debt over 61 days but less than 90 days. All of which is allocated to public sector bodies which it does not consider a credit risk.

9. Cash and Cash Equivalents

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Balance at 1 April	20,151	14,169
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(15,028)	5,982
Balance at 31 March	5,123	20,151
The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Government Banking Service accounts	5,016	17,021
Commercial banks and cash in hand	-	-
Cash equivalents	107	3,130
Balance at 31 March	5,123	20,151

10. Trade Payables and Other Current Liabilities

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Other taxation and social security	92	5,272
Trade payables	6,936	2,888
Other payables	2,658	3,816
Accruals and deferred income	27,125	35,586
Contract Liabilities	1,042	2,272
Amounts issued from Consolidated Fund for supply but not spent at year end	5,123	20,151
Total	42,976	69,985

Note

2023/24 figures reflect a net yearly decrease of £826,000 of accrued holiday and flexi pay. The Authority calculates the holiday and flexi accrual at year end with the figure being reflected in the category of accruals and deferred income. In accordance with IFRS 9 the Authority has reviewed its activities and concluded as a standalone non-ministerial body it does not hold complex financial instruments.

The only financial instruments included in the accounts are receivables and payables.

The Authority's standard contractual payment terms are 30 days, creditors are recognised on receipt of goods or services.

The Authority is not in receipt of loans.

11. Provisions for Liabilities and Charges

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	Survey Incentives £'000	Other Provisions £'000	Total £'000
Balance at 1 April 2023	1,400	2,203	3,603
Provided in year	-	158	158
Provisions not required written back	(699)	(397)	(1,096)
Provisions utilised in the year	(701)	(338)	(1,039)
Unwinding of discount	-	5	5
Rewinding of discount	-	(34)	(34)
Balance at 31 March 2024	-	1,597	1,597

For the period ending 31 March 2023

	Survey Incentives £'000	Other Provisions £'000	Total £'000
Balance at 1 April 2022	5,435	2,096	7,531
Provided in year	5,257	727	5,984
Provisions not required written back	-	(142)	(142)
Provisions utilised in the year	(9,292)	(473)	(9,765)
Unwinding of discount	-	(5)	(5)
Rewinding of discount	-	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2023	1,400	2,203	3,603

Items previously disclosed as 'Property Dilapidations' are now included with 'Other Provisions' classification.

Analysis of expected timing of discounted flows

	Other Provisions £'000	Total £'000
up to 31 March 2025	1,336	1,336
Between 2026 and 2028	135	135
Between 2029 and 2034	126	126
Between 2035 and 2040	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2024	1,597	1,597

Prior year analysis of expected timing of discounting flow for comparison

	Survey Incentives £'000	Other Provisions £'000	Total £'000
up to 31 March 2024	1,400	2,001	3,401
Between 2025 and 2027	-	77	77
Between 2028 and 2033	-	125	125
Between 2034 and 2039	-	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2023	1,400	2,203	3,603

Notes

Other Provisions

The Authority opted to trigger the break clause to vacate the single floor at the Drummond Gate building in January 2023. As part of the lease agreement, the Authority took on a repairing obligation for the externals of the building and part of the dilapidation. The UK Statistics Authority is in negotiations with the Landlord in respect of dilapidations due under the Terms of the Lease. An amount for dilapidations has been included within other provisions. Other provisions also includes ongoing contractual obligations and pending employment tribunals.

12. Capital Commitments

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Contracted capital commitments	183	149
Total commitments as at 31 March 2024 not otherwise included on these financial statements	183	149



13. Leases

Right of Use Assets

For the period ending 31 March 2024

	Buildings £'000	Office machinery £'000	Total £'000
Cost or Valuation			
At 31 March 2023	36,012	789	36,801
Additions	93	96	189
VAT Adjustment	(108)	(2)	(110)
At 31 March 2024	35,997	883	36,880
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	3,048	318	3,366
Charged in year	5,729	207	5,936
At 31 March 2024	8,777	525	9,302
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2023	32,964	471	33,435
At 31 March 2024	27,220	358	27,578

For the period ending 31 March 2023

	Buildings £'000	Office machinery £'000	Total £'000
Cost or Valuation			
At 31 March 2022	0	551	551
IFRS 16 Adjustment on adoption	27,494	45	27,539
At 1 April 2022	27,494	596	28,090
Additions	8,518	193	8,711
At 31 March 2023	36,012	789	36,801
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	-	192	192
Charged in year	3,048	126	3,174
At 31 March 2023	3,048	318	3,366
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2022	-	359	359
At 31 March 2023	32,964	471	33,435

Note

The Authority exercises judgement and estimation in the valuation of Right of Use Assets when considering indexation linked increase/decreases and break and extension clauses within contracts. Further information can be found in the Notes to the Accounts on [pages 128-137](#).

Included in the £189,000 of additions are £54k of capital creditors. The total amount of capital creditors brought forwards from 2022/23 was £901k

Included within the 22/23 £27,539k adjustment for IFRS16 adoption is £31k of invoices paid prior to the transition date. These have therefore been recognised within the Right of Use Asset but excluded from the opening lease liability.

Maturity analysis Lease Liability

A maturity analysis of contractual undiscounted cash flows relating to lease liabilities is given below. Management monitors rolling forecasts of The Authority's cash balance on the basis of expected cash flows, to ensure we are able to pay contractual commitments as they fall due.

	Amounts Falling Due 31st March 2024			Amounts Falling Due 31st March 2023		
	Buildings £'000	Office machinery £'000	Total £'000	Buildings £'000	Office machinery £'000	Total £'000
Amounts Falling Due:						
Not later than one year	3,268	242	3,510	3,244	305	3,549
Later than one year and not later than five years	9,778	77	9,855	11,147	141	11,288
More than five years	14,565	-	14,565	17,880	-	17,880
Discounted using the incremental borrowing rate	(1,402)	(10)	(1,412)	(1,685)	(10)	(1,695)
Balance as at 31st March 2024	26,209	309	26,518	30,586	436	31,022
Current	3,268	242	3,510	3,101	297	3,398
Non Current	22,941	67	23,008	27,485	139	27,624

Note

Darlington Lease - A formal financial commitment has been signed by the authority for the future occupation of the Darlington Economic Campus (DEC), a central hub for seven government departments and agencies. The lease has been agreed over a 30 year term and is forecasted to be ready for occupation by Spring 2026. The lease has therefore not been recognised because the commencement date is in the future.

GPA Leased Properties -The carrying value of right of use assets includes the Authority's intention to reduce occupancy at sites leased from the GPA in October 2024.

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Buildings:		
Depreciation	5,729	3,048
Interest Expense	293	214
Low value and short term leases	98	797
	6,120	4,059
Other:		
Depreciation	207	126
Interest Expense	7	5
Low value and short term leases	104	288
	318	419

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Cash Flows

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Buildings:		
Interest Expense	293	214
Repayments of principal on leases	4,550	3,954
	4,843	4,168
Other:		
Interest Expense	7	5
Low value & short term leases	199	377
	206	382



14. Other Financial Commitments

For the period ending 31 March 2024

The Authority entered into non-cancellable contracts (which are not Leases or PFI contracts) for Information Management Services, Statistical Services and Facilities Management. As a result the Authority is committed to the following payments.

	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Not later than one year	28,259	27,156
Later than one year and not later than five years	7,788	11,063
Total	36,047	38,219

Note

The above table has been represented to remove immaterial Census commitments.

15. Contingent Liabilities

For the period ending 31 March 2024

None.

16. Related Party Transactions

Although the Authority has had several material transactions with other government departments and other central government bodies, it is not required to disclose intra-government transactions.

No Board Member, Key Manager, or other related parties have undertaken any further material transactions with the Authority during the financial year 2023/24. The Authority has not identified any further related parties.

17. Events Arising after the Reporting Date

None

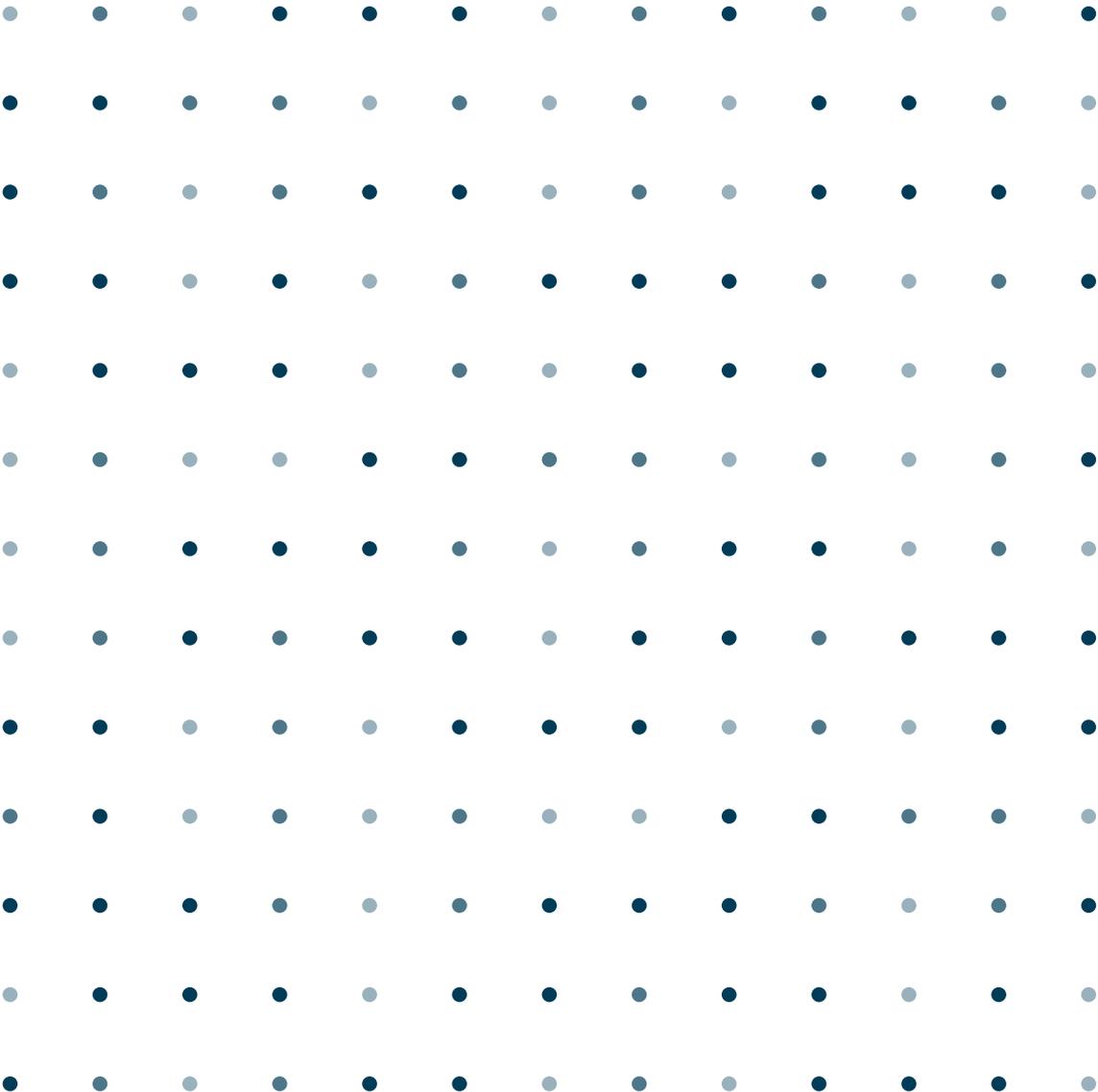
18. Date of Authorisation of the Accounts

The Accounts were authorised for issue on the date of the Comptroller and Auditor General's certification. This is documented on [pages 120-121](#).

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Annex

Office for Statistics Regulation Annual Report 2023/24



Foreword

This time last year, I reported to you about a small team delivering a high volume of outputs with an impressive range of outcomes. I also shared with you that we were ambitious to do more to support the public good of statistics by being more systemic and public-focused.

This year, the productivity of my team has continued to inspire me, but to achieve our ambitions, we have made a fundamental shift in how we operate. This report really demonstrates how we have moved away from delivering high volumes of small compliance checks against the Code to focus our resource on the big strategically important topics – for example, we have delivered a programme of assessments focused on the quality of economic statistics, and focusing on the transformation of the statistical system, including population statistics.

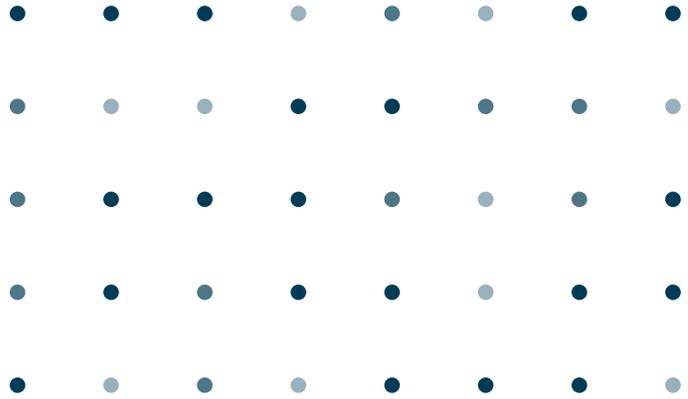
We've made important interventions and shared a broad range of guidance and as we have pressed forwards with our Intelligent Transparency campaign, it has been very positive to see how well the messages are resonating with people. Of course, shortly after the end of this financial year, the UK's General Election campaign started. We continued to stand up for appropriate use of statistics during the campaign. In May, I set out the guidance and support available for navigating statistics during an election campaign and the expectations we have as the regulator for an open, clear, and accessible approach to the release and use of data and statistics. We also published a [series of explainers](#) on key topics that featured in election campaigns for to support members of the public seeing data in debate, and made public statements on issues including the performance of schools, future tax rises, house building performance, and NHS waiting times. And we have brought together our Election work on an [Election web page](#).

Looking into the future, we have a lot more we want to achieve – for example, continuing to advocate for data sharing and linkage. To get a good sense of where we want to see improvements from producers of statistics and data, I would encourage you to read our latest annual State of the Statistical System report alongside this report. This report will form a key input into the forthcoming Statistics Assembly, which was the main recommendation of the Lievesley review – a review which endorsed the role we play as statistics regulator and whose recommendations we warmly welcome. We look forward to implementing the recommendations of the Lievesley review, and to continuing to support the public's right to have access to trustworthy, high quality, and valuable statistics.



Ed Humpherson

Director General, Office for Statistics Regulation



Our vision

Statistics should serve the public good.

What do we mean by serving the public good? Statistics published by public sector bodies should be produced in a trustworthy way, be of high quality and provide value by answering people's questions. In this way, they promote accountability, help people make choices and inform policy.

Statistics are also part of the lifeblood of democratic debate.

Statistics should therefore serve a wide range of users. When they meet the needs of these users, they serve the public good. But they do not always fulfil these ambitions. Their value can be harmed through poor production, a lack of relevance and coherence and misuse.

It is our role as a regulator to minimise these problems. We have observed the increasing relevance of our Trustworthiness, Quality and Value approach to statistics regulation. By championing high standards, we uphold public confidence in statistics that serve the public good.

What we do

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) provides independent regulation of all official statistics produced in the UK and aims to enhance public confidence in the trustworthiness, quality and value of statistics produced by government.

We are the regulatory arm of the UK Statistics Authority, being independent from government ministers and separate from producers of statistics, including the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

We regulate by setting the standards that official statistics must meet in the Code of Practice for Statistics. We ensure that producers of official statistics uphold these standards by conducting assessments against the Code. Those statistics which meet the standards are given Accredited Official Statistics status, indicating that they meet the highest standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value. We also report publicly on systemwide issues and on the way that statistics are being used, celebrating when the standards are upheld and challenging publicly when they are not.

Longer-term outcomes that we seek

How statistics are produced

We uphold the trustworthiness, quality and value of statistics and data used as evidence.

How statistics are used

We protect the role of statistics in public debate.

How statistics are valued

We develop a better understanding of the public good of statistics.

Our 2023/24 priorities (now extended into 2024/25)

Support and challenge producers to innovate, collaborate and build resilience

We will champion and support statistics producers to build on the innovation, collaboration and resilience they have displayed during the last few years. Our regulatory activities will see us promoting the sharing, linking and reuse of data. We will support statistics producers to maximise the value of their data and statistics through increased innovation and more collaboration. We will also focus on activities which will support statistics producers to develop and build resilience.

Champion the effective communication of statistics to support society's key information needs

We will continue to champion the transparent release and use of data and statistics and argue for accurate and timely statistics to be available on the topics that matter most. Our regulatory activities will see us focus on how statistics

producers communicate uncertainty, and how they mitigate and manage misuse of statistics and data. We will also focus our work on activities which support statistics producers to engage with, understand and meet the varying needs of a wide range of users of data and statistics.

Build partnerships to champion good practice principles for data and analysis that inform the public

We will continue our work with organisations and with teams within government departments, who are not official statistics producers, but who produce and communicate data and analysis that are used in the public domain. These types of data and analysis are often likely to be perceived and used by others as if they are official statistics. We will continue our engagement with data influencers and data users to support us with this focus.

Our governance

Our Director General reports directly to the Chair of the UK Statistics Authority. To ensure independence from ONS, the Director General Regulation has no reporting line to the National Statistician and is an Additional Accounting Officer with budgetary responsibility for the OSR.

OSR's business plan is agreed by the [Regulation Committee](#), which comprises the Director General, OSR and a number of Non-Executive Directors from the UK Statistics Authority. The Committee also commends a supporting budget for the delivery of the business plan to the Authority Board.

Drawing on our work as the UK's statistics regulator, this report shares our views on the performance and challenges facing the statistical system, highlights areas of progress and innovation, and sets out our recommendations for advancing the system.

The State of the UK Statistical System

This annual report reflects on our performance as a regulator in 2023/24. Each year we also publish a more outward-focused report about the UK statistical system which we would encourage you to read to fully understand our work and our ambitions for the public good of statistics. The State of the Statistical System 2024, report will be published in July 2024.

Drawing on our work as the UK's statistics regulator, the report shares our views on the performance and challenges facing the statistical system, highlights areas of progress and innovation, and sets out our recommendations for advancing the system. Key themes for 2024 include the demand for new statistics and insights; ensuring quality; improvement and innovation; and effective communication.

Our story of 2023/24 in numbers

Support and challenge producers to innovate,
collaborate and build resilience

9 Assessment Reports published

including a new series that focuses more intensively on the quality of economic statistics

3 new accreditations of Official Statistics, 3 confirmations of accredited status and 1 reaccreditation

We also had 2 temporary suspensions of accreditation (1 now lifted)

18 Compliance Checks and Rapid Reviews

delivered across the statistics system – for example, Winter Covid Infection Survey

6 strategic reviews progressed on important topics

including statistics on gender identity, international migration estimates and mental health statistics

We ran 18 events with over 1100 attendees

(remote and in-person) from a range of audiences to inform our Review of the Code of Practice for Statistics. 51 organisations and individuals also responded to our call for evidence

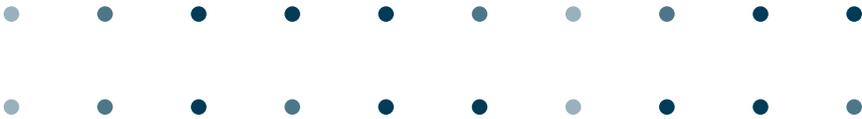
Champion the effective communication of statistics to support society's key information needs

231 casework cases considered
by OSR and the UK Statistics Authority

Just over half of cases were generated by members of the public
Parliament, media and academics engaged regularly with us and around a sixth of cases were generated internally

Of the 124 cases raised with us by members of the public, we recorded 38 as being duplicate concerns,
relating to doctors pay, knife crime, the Asylum backlog, housing maladministration judgements and the report into the Tees Valley regeneration. There were also clusters of cases we recorded as individual concerns, as they raised unique concerns about the statistics despite the topic being consistent, these clusters related to 20Mph Limit introduction in Wales, the presentation of Council Tax increases, Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) impact reporting and the Census questions on Sex and Gender.

Average time to close a case - median 14 days (-13) and mean 22 days (-4)
Reduced compared with the previous year



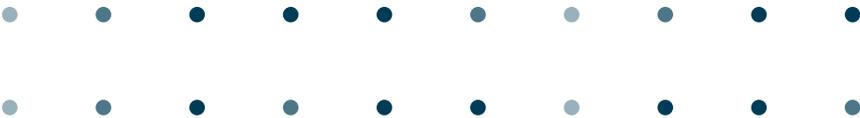
Build partnerships to champion good practice principles for data and analysis that inform the public

16 organisations
(outside of official statistics producers) have now published statements of voluntary compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

4th annual award for Statistical Excellence in Trustworthiness, Quality and Value given out
in partnership with the Royal Statistical Society – 2023 Award was to Fable Data for their Data for Good programme

21 blogs published
including guest blogs – sharing insights to inspire good practice

11 pieces of regulatory research, development and guidance published
including our Areas of Research Interest and an update on Data Sharing and Linkage for the Public Good



Our performance

Support and challenge producers to innovate, collaborate and build resilience

The change we want to see

We will champion and support statistics producers to build on the innovation, collaboration and resilience they have displayed during the last few years. Our regulatory activities will see us promoting the sharing, linking and reuse of data. We will support statistics producers in maximising the value of their data and statistics through increased innovation and collaboration. We will also focus on activities which will support statistics producers in developing and building resilience.

2023/24 highlights

At the beginning of 2023/24, we said that we wanted to be more consistent in balancing our responsiveness with applying strategic foresight and investing in deep dives – with a particular focus on the scrutiny of economic statistics and issues of quality.

Throughout 2023, we continued to respond to a high public interest in statistics. OSR's work covered a huge range of issues, such as confirming the [National Statistics Designation of Scotland's Census, Data Linkage](#), looking into statistics relating to the [Welsh Government 20 mph speed limit](#) and confirming the [National Statistics Accreditation of Statutory Homelessness in England](#). At the same time, we have shifted our priorities away from delivering high volumes of compliance checks towards more strategic programmes of work. For example, we started to deliver a new series of assessments that focus on the quality of economic statistics.

We have also established programmes to oversee the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as it seeks to transform key statistical outputs including the [Labour Force Survey](#) and [International Migration](#).

In our [State of the Statistical System Report](#), published in 2023, we reported that the UK's statistical system continues to perform strongly, responding flexibly to different social and economic issues. But we also noted that the system was experiencing increasing resource challenges. We committed to actions which will support statistics producers in developing and building resilience, for example, a [blog series](#) with practical advice on balancing scarce resources across a portfolio of statistics.

To ensure that the Code of Practice for Statistics remains relevant and able to effectively support producers as they and the external environment evolve, we

conducted a [review of the Code](#). We publicly invited feedback on all aspects of the Code, alongside a programme of external events and stakeholder engagement, to gather evidence on how the Code can be further strengthened.

Illustrations of how we are delivering impact

Economic Statistics: Following the end of the UK's membership of the European Statistical System, we have developed our approach to provide continued assurance that the UK statistical system produces high-quality, internationally comparable economic statistics. Our Spotlight on Quality programme has significantly enhanced our ability to assure confidence in the quality of economic statistics.

In July we published our first pilot review on [Producer Price Inflation](#) using a newly developed assessment framework that focuses more intensively on the quality of economic statistics. We identified eight actions that are needed to improve the quality of PPIs, seeing the issues with the samples of the three statutory surveys used to collect most price data as the biggest threat to the quality of the statistics. ONS published its [action plan](#) detailing how it intends to address our requirements in October.

In November we published our findings on [revisions of estimates of UK GDP](#). We found that ONS's approach to revisions is appropriate and well managed, concluding that the more extreme criticism that ONS received was misplaced. We highlighted requirements to improve public understanding of the uncertainty surrounding GDP estimates and outlined a need for faster access to data sources when producing these estimates.

In January we published our second pilot quality-focused assessment on [profitability of UK companies and gross operating surplus of private non-financial corporations statistics](#). Our report sets five requirements needed to improve the quality of these statistics. Most importantly, ONS needs to demonstrate a better understanding of whether the data sources used to compile the estimates are of sufficient quality. Additionally, ONS needs to better communicate to users its understanding of the methods and data sources used, along with any limitations and uncertainties in the statistics. ONS published [its response](#) in January, and we expect it to make significant progress on some of these requirements by late summer.

Our third and fourth quality-focused assessments, which centre on Business Investment statistics and Business Enterprise Research and Development statistics, are ongoing.

Population Statistics: We have been working on our assessment of ONS's admin-based population estimates (ABPE). Population estimates have previously been dependent on information collected in the census. To reflect changes in society

and technology, ONS has developed ABPE for England and Wales using the Dynamic Population Model (DPM). Our phased assessment will aim to provide reassurance to users on the new approach and will focus on:

- i. the suitability and quality assurance of the data and methods used in the DPM
- ii. the extent to which ONS is benchmarking the state of readiness of population estimates to replace the cohort component method previously used
- iii. an investigation into user understanding of and confidence in the new method

It is important to note the context for the work that is being undertaken by ONS. The work around producing and developing the DPM is complex, challenging and unique for UK official statistics. It is being undertaken by teams who are working incredibly hard and under considerable pressure. In addition to handling the complexity of this work, ONS also faces a challenge in terms of its financial position. There is ongoing uncertainty regarding the funding for the population transformation work, which adds to the challenging environment that staff members are operating in and presents a risk to the future delivery of the work.

In September we confirmed the Official Statistics accreditation of Scotland's Census. In coming to our decision, we reviewed the evidence, including the progress made against requirements outlined in the [2019 phase-one assessment report](#) and the [2023 phase-two assessment report](#), as well as our general expectations for meeting the standards of the Code. National Records of Scotland (NRS) faced unexpected challenges given that the overall response rate for Scotland's Census 2022 was lower than had been hoped for. This in itself is not a barrier to accreditation, what is most important is the good quality of the output estimate, and it was clear that NRS had undertaken an extensive programme of work to achieve this. We were impressed with the steps taken to ensure that the best-quality estimates were produced and to provide assurance for users. With the assistance of an expert International Steering Group, NRS took a rigorous and methodical approach to the challenges that arose and proactively communicated quality information in order to help users understand, interpret and use these important statistics.

Work also continues on other aspects of population statistics, such as planning for phase three of the assessment of Census 2021, and monitoring progress on other activities, such as ONS's consultation on the future of population and migration statistics and population statistics transformation plans in the devolved administrations. To support this work, OSR's transforming population statistics programme board continues to regularly meet to enable us to share information across the organisation, coordinate activities and identify cross-cutting issues to explore further.

Champion the effective communication of statistics to support society's key information needs

The change we want to see

We will continue to champion the transparent release and use of data and statistics and advocate for the availability of accurate and timely statistics on the topics that matter most. Our regulatory activities will focus on how statistics producers communicate uncertainty, and how they mitigate and manage the misuse of statistics and data. We will also focus our work on activities which support statistics producers in engaging with, understanding and meeting the varying needs of a wide range of users of data and statistics.

2023/24 highlights

Our wide-ranging outputs and high-profile public interventions helped us achieve our ambition to safeguard statistics that serve the public good, supported by our [Intelligent Transparency](#) campaign. At the start of 2023/24, we had hoped to accelerate our interventions programme, stepping into public debate in a timelier way to clarify how statistics should be interpreted. indicate that we are seeing definite gains this year, and we continue to challenge ourselves.

This work will be even more important as we approach a general election. The election will significantly impact our work; electoral campaigns, where parties vie with each other for the electorate's support, typically involve some of the most prominent uses of statistics in the public eye.

In 2023/24 (and continuing into 2024/25), we wanted to focus on factors supporting public confidence in statistics – for example, promoting better communication of statistics. We are in the early days of our Communicating Statistics programme, but one of our most significant reports in 2023 was on [Revisions to GDP](#). While we recognised the effectiveness of ONS's approach to revising GDP, we set a number of requirements that we determined ONS should fulfil to improve communication. In 2024, we will continue to support ONS in implementing these requirements – the last [Quarterly National Accounts of 2023](#) showed that ONS has already taken steps forward.

Throughout 2023/24, we worked on [two issues related to sex and gender identity](#) in data and statistics – updating our regulatory guidance and a review of statistics on gender identity based on data collected in the 2021 England and Wales Census.

Our new guidance provides a framework for the statistical system to support the effective collection, use and communication of statistics on sex and gender identity. We have published an interim report on the gender identity statistics

from the 2021 England and Wales Census which sets out our findings based on the question testing, quality assurance, communication and engagement with users undertaken by ONS. Our final report will be published in early 2024/25.

Illustrations of how we are delivering impact

Asylum Backlog: We have received a number of concerns about asylum statistics and data used by ministers over the last year. In many cases, the concerns related to claims about the size of the backlog or the number of legacy cases that had been cleared by the UK Government since it came to power. Many of these claims were made before the underlying data were available to the public. We judged that the use of statistics in such cases was not in line with our intelligent transparency principles. We engaged with the Home Office at both a working and senior level to ensure that our expectations were clear and to support the analytical team in providing ad hoc data when it was aware that a claim using data that were not already in the public domain would be made. This engagement led to positive results. In [our most recent case](#) relating to claims about asylum backlog figures, while we were clear that the Prime Ministers' tweet lacked appropriate context, the Home Office did present ad hoc data alongside its press release providing necessary context around the statement and ensuring public access to the data.

Gender Identity: We heard concerns from members of the public about the quality of the gender identity data collected in the 2021 England and Wales Census. We reviewed the concerns and wrote to ONS on 24 April advising that we would be undertaking a short review of the gender identity data. We published an [interim report](#) in October 2023 setting out our findings based on a review of the testing, quality assurance, communication and engagement with users undertaken by ONS. ONS has since published its [investigation of the quality of the 2021 census's gender-identity data](#). We will review this research and engage with users before publishing a follow-up report with our updated findings.

Tax and National Insurance Contributions: We received a number of concerns around claims about how much an average employee would benefit as a result of the National Insurance Contributions (NIC) change that took effect earlier this year. We judged that the claim had been clear in its context (as it specifically referred to the impact of the NIC change taking place on the day of the claim and not to the wider range of personal tax changes taking effect this year) and the available data (on what an average employee salary was) were in the public domain for anyone who wanted to check.

Build partnerships to champion good practice principles for data and analysis that inform the public

The change we want to see

We will continue our work outside of official statistics. Our focus will be on working with organisations and with teams within government departments who are not official statistics producers but who produce and communicate data and analysis that are used in the public domain. These types of data and analysis are often likely to be perceived and used by others as if they were official statistics, even if they have not been designated as such. We will continue our engagement with data influencers and data users to support us with this focus.

2023/24 highlights

At OSR, we support good evidence that informs the public. Our focus is on official statistics. But we also recognise the role that evaluation plays in providing insight into what works in government policies and programmes. We have been developing our work to support the transparency of evaluations, in partnership with the Evaluation Task Force – for example, working towards a [guest blog](#) from the head of the task force, published in April 2024.

We set out our [Areas of Research Interest](#) (ARI) in 2023. These are framed around our vision of statistics that serve the public good. We set out research questions we are interested in learning more about, what we can offer researchers and how we decide who to collaborate with. The questions have resonated well with the research community.

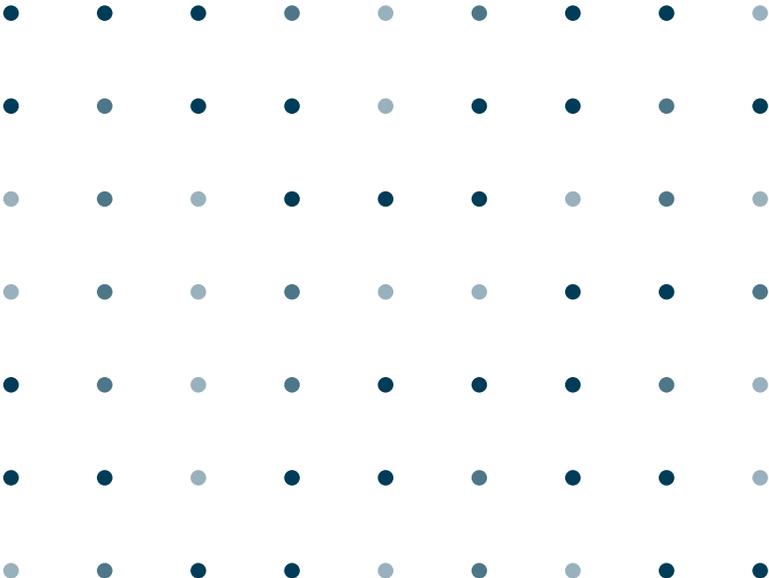
We have been building on our analytical leadership work, considering how this can be enabled across all professions. [Our published report](#) sets out the findings from our review and, drawing on case studies, looks at how analytical leadership can be demonstrated and enabled across government. This report is relevant for all who want to foster a stronger, data-driven culture in their organisations, offering actionable suggestions for people in different professions and levels of seniority.

We are seeing an [ever-growing list of organisations](#) who are [voluntarily adopting the Code of Practice](#), and we have announced the latest winners of the [Statistical Excellence in Trustworthiness, Quality and Value Award](#) (run in a partnership with the Royal Statistical Society and Civil Service World). OSR will continue to promote the use of the [Code of Practice](#) for Statistics, drawing on ideas and feedback gathered as part of our [Code Review](#).

Illustrations of how we are delivering impact

Data Sharing and Linkage for the Public Good: This is an area we have been monitoring and commenting on over the last five years. In July we published a [review of data sharing and linkage across government](#). Despite some excellent progress in creating linked datasets and making them available for research, analysis and statistics across the UK, we found there is still uncertainty about how to share and link data in a legal and ethical way and about the public perception of data sharing and linkage. There is also a lack of clarity about data access processes and data availability and data standards across government. Unless significant changes are implemented, we are concerned the progress that has been made could be lost. Our report made 16 recommendations that, if realised, will enable government to confront ingrained challenges and to move towards greater data sharing and linkage for the public good.

We shared our plan to use the report to engage across and beyond government, working with others to help realise our recommendations. Over 20 organisations contributed directly to the review, with many others providing feedback. We discussed the report with a small group of academics and independent researchers, each of whom has expertise and interest in the social impacts of technology and who generously gave their time. This report represents our ambition to work with partners who share our strategic aims, and to commit to ongoing campaigns that are fundamental to delivering public good from data and statistics. We have followed up this year with a series of blogs, but we know there is still much to do, and our campaign to see our recommendations implemented is at the forefront of our plans for the coming year.



OSR outputs in 2023/24

Assessment Reports Published

- 2022 Census in Scotland
- Earnings and Employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, UK
- Spotlight on Quality: Producer Price Indices
- Accident and Emergency Activity Statistics in Scotland
- Statistics about Butterflies, England and UK
- Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels statistics
- Accident and Emergency (A&E) Statistics in England (NHS England)
- Spotlight on Quality: Statistics on Profitability of UK Companies and Gross Operating Surplus of Non-Financial Corporations
- Personal Independence Payment Statistics (DWP)

Assessments Closed

- UK Business Demography Statistics
- Statistics on Statutory Homelessness in England (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC))
- Key Stage 4 Performance statistics for England
- Statistics from the People and Nature Survey (Natural England)
- Scottish Prison Population statistics
- 2022 Census in Scotland
- Accident and Emergency Activity Statistics in Scotland

Accreditations and Suspensions

New OS Accreditations

- People and Nature Survey for England
- 2022 Census in Scotland
- Accident and Emergency Activity Statistics in Scotland

Confirmations of OS Accreditation

- UK Business Demography statistics
- Key Stage 4 performance statistics for England
- Scottish Prison Population statistics

OS Reaccreditations

- Statutory Homelessness in England (de-designated 2018)

Temporary Suspensions

- Scottish House Condition Survey (Apr 2023) – suspension lifted (Feb 24)
- Labour Market statistics derived from the ONS Labour Force Survey

Compliance Checks and Rapid Reviews

- Domestic abuse question development (Office for National Statistics)
- Northern Ireland Homelessness Bulletin
- England and Wales Mortality Statistics (Office for National Statistics)
- Benefit Sanction Statistics (Department for Work and Pensions)
- Office for National Statistics' transformation of the Labour Force Survey (TLFS): OSR judgment and progress report, July 2023
- Accident and Emergency (A&E) Monthly Waiting Times Statistics (Public Health Scotland)
- Homelessness Accommodation Provision and Rough Sleeping Monthly Management Information (Welsh Government)
- Overseas Development Assistance Statistics (Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office)
- Follow up to Compliance Check of Transformed Migration Statistics
- Sexual Offences in England and Wales (Office for National Statistics)
- Wild Bird Population Statistics (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)
- Inpatients, day cases and new outpatient statistics in Scotland
- Statistics from the Adult Oral Health Survey
- Experimental Labour Market Statistics (Office for National Statistics)
- Scottish House Condition Survey (Scottish Government)
- Council Tax Statistics (Valuation Office Agency)
- Review of reintroduced LFS-derived Labour Market Statistics (Office for National Statistics)
- Revisions of estimates of UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Office for National Statistics)

Strategic Reviews (including Systemic Reviews)

- Review of statistics on gender identity based on data collected as part of the 2021 England and Wales Census: interim report
- Office for National Statistics' transformation of Long-Term International Migration Estimates: OSR progress report
- Review of mental health statistics in England: Update December 2023
- Analytical Leadership: Achieving better outcomes for citizens report
- State of the Statistics System 2022/23
- Annual Review of Casework 2022-23

Regulatory Research, Development and Guidance

- Data Sharing and Linkage for the Public Good
- Collecting and reporting data about sex and gender identity in official statistics: A guide for official statistics producers
- Office for Statistics Regulation's Areas of Research Interest
- How statistics can serve the public good: a think piece
- Clarifying National Statistics: findings from the designation refresh project
- Statistical Practice Capability Framework
- Understanding the difference between Official Statistics and published Management Information
- Guidance on producing official statistics in development
- The Office for Statistics Regulation's Guide to the UK Statistical System
- Future proofing the Code of Practice for Statistics: findings and next steps
- OSR's approach to quality assessing the Covid Infection Survey

Blogs

- There's more to statistical communication than avoiding truncated axes...
- Why does analytical leadership matter? What we've found so far
- Guest Blog: The Algorithmic Transparency Recording Standard
- Remember how far you've come, not just how far you want to go
- Guest Blog: Improving ethnicity data quality in the public sector
- Why misleading statistics should never become a catchphrase
- Intelligent transparency – or how the sausage gets made
- How do people use official statistics to make decisions?
- Shining the spotlight on the quality of economic statistics
- The sociotechnical nature of data sharing and linkage
- Keeping your statistics (and your garden) sustainable
- Guest Blog: The public good of statistics – narratives from around the world
- Guest Blog: Mental health data quality
- You're planning to do what? Statistics, resource constraints and user engagement
- Guest Blog: Producing, reviewing, and always evolving: UKHSA statistics
- The success and potential evolution of the 5 Safes model of data access
- Transparency: bringing the inside out
- Guest Blog: How do we use statistics in everyday life?
- A statistical jigsaw: piecing together UK data comparability
- Our current position on regulating, responding to and using AI
- What does it mean to be an accredited official statistic?

Our capability as a regulator

Overview

The change we want to see

Our maturity as a regulator is at the heart of determining our success. To deliver the outcomes and impact we want to have, we must be ambitious and continuously improve our capability and our capacity, often within resource constraints. We want our people to have the confidence, knowledge and skills to live OSR's values authentically and deliver with impact. We want our regulatory judgements to be impactful, transparent and easy to find, particularly for those who need to make the changes in the system that we want to see. To enable us to work in this way, we will need to have the right tools and processes to develop our regulatory maturity.

2023/24 highlights

Our people and resources

- A team of around 50 people operating across the UK (Newport, Edinburgh, London, Titchfield and Darlington) delivered our business in 2023/24.
- We were operating with only 2 vacancies by year-end - making use for the first time of flexible contingent labour, including a Senior Copy Editor, and introducing a new Senior Economic Advisor. Resource constraints particularly impacted our Economics, Business and Trade domain and our Data and Methods team in-year.
- Employee engagement rate of 75% in 2023 compared with 64% across the Civil Service.
- We operated within a £3.4 million baseline budget in 2023/24 with a small underspend driven by lower staffing costs (as we filled vacancies) and reduced consultancy costs.

Access to our regulatory judgements and advice

- We had 731K total engagements with our website, down by around 200k from the previous year (largely due to engagement with our January 2023 response to concerns raised about ONS Deaths by Vaccination Status statistics). Publications with high engagement in 2023/24 included our Review of Mental Health Statistics in Northern Ireland and the assessment of the 2022 Census in Scotland.
- We have not identified any specific pattern to the type of outputs that generate the greatest interest - for example, between reports, correspondence or guidance - but our high-profile interventions always generate spikes in traffic.

- 48% of engaged sessions with our website in 2023/24 were through direct access – typing in a url or utilising bookmarks – and 34% were from organic searches through search engines (not paid).
- We had 5902 total engagements with our X/Twitter account. Posts with high engagement included our report on data linkage and our published findings on ONS’s revisions of estimates of UK GDP.
- We had 560 LinkedIn impressions with the topics generating greatest interest being how statistics inform people’s decisions and data linkage.

For 2023/24 we have initiated a programme to invest in our skills, people and processes to enable us to grow as a regulator, and we are making good progress in a number of areas – from revisiting our values as an organisation to developing strong analytics to guide our website and publications. We’ve placed focus on writing skills and the development of communication messages, and together with providing training, we’ve employed a temporary senior copy editor whose role includes strengthening our capability and helping to upskill our team.

We have also initiated work to identify our capability needs for the next five years, and a programme of work will be underway from early summer 2024 to support us in achieving our desired level of maturity.

Managing risk

We have identified, and manage, four areas of strategic risk – relevance; voice; independence; and capability. We assess that our risk exposure relating to our relevance as the regulator is reduced compared with the previous year as we are doing a good job of responding to emerging issues. This impacts our broader capacity but helps us to be a responsive regulator. On both voice and independence, we have also lowered the risk assessment this year as our voice is coming through clearly.

In addition, we identify more specific risk exposures that need to be managed at a senior management level. In 2023/24 we’ve identified and are managing risks related to finance (since resolved and closed), transformation of the statistical system, and the pending general election. We are developing a standardised approach to reviewing transformation programmes and balanced communication. We are preparing for a general election in a number of ways, including providing public-facing materials and building an internal task force.

We have scheduled deep dives on risk at our senior leadership meetings, and we have regular horizon-scanning sessions with the Regulation Committee.

Reviews of OSR

Sturgis Review: In January 2023, we commissioned an independent review of our regulatory work on the Covid Infection Survey (CIS). This was done in response to concerns from representatives of the community interest campaign

group Better Statistics, who raised concerns over the adequacy of the regulatory oversight we provided for the CIS. Professor Patrick Sturgis completed his review in May. The Sturgis review concluded that we had done a good job of identifying the strengths and areas of improvements for the survey. He did, however, raise a number of areas where we could have better communicated our findings to ONS and improved on how we monitored ONS's progress against the objectives. We responded positively to the recommendations, publishing both the report and the response.

Lievesley Review: Professor Denise Lievesley's review of the UK Statistics Authority, including OSR, was published on 12 March 2024. Professor Lievesley's independent review was conducted as part of the programme of Public Bodies Reviews. The review highlighted four recommendations and six suggestions for OSR. We welcome the findings and are committed to implementing all the relevant recommendations to continue to strengthen our capability as a regulator.

Internal audit of our portfolio management: OSR has a monthly Portfolio Review Board (PRB) which monitors the implementation of the OSR 5-year strategy and business plan, and the portfolio of activities that support delivery of our priorities. In 2023 we established programme boards for the first time to provide strategic oversight in important areas – for example: economic statistics; transformation of the statistics system; and building partnerships. Each of these programmes is sponsored by a member of our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and reports to the PRB.

We need stronger mechanisms to help us deliver a flexible work programme - responding quickly to emerging issues and managing competing priorities for limited resources. We requested an advisory internal audit of our portfolio management approach in 2023, and we are currently implementing the findings from that audit, which we found very helpful. We have strengthened the governance and decision-making role of the PRB, and clarified the connection with our weekly SLT meetings, where a lot of PRB business is taken forwards. The audit trail for those meetings has been strengthened. We have also clarified the risk escalation from programmes to the PRB, and we have developed a skills matrix to help assign our people to best effect.

We have more work to do to progress the remaining commitments. Work is underway to update our criteria and approach to prioritising our work programme as well as a refresh of our portal of guidance on portfolio, programme, project and risk management. We have been limited by resource in 2023/24 and by the suspension of the development of a new automated workflow management system. The systems delay also means we have been unable to make the progress we would have liked on systemising our corporate intelligence, but we are working to develop alternative interim plans in parallel to working with the developers towards securing a restart.

Looking ahead

Our business plan for this last year has had a much greater outward focus than in the past, and our stakeholders have confirmed that the priorities we set out for 2023/24 continue to resonate strongly. We have decided that these priorities should persist into the coming year.

While we will double down on these priorities this year, as we approach the end of our strategic plan for 2020 to 2025, we plan to work closely with stakeholders to lay the foundations for the next 5 years. We plan to run an energised engagement programme with a series of events, and we will be getting out and listening to as many people as we can as we look towards the future.

The coming year will be important for other reasons. The General Election has been called for 4 July 2024. Over the last 18 months, we've established the principle of intelligent transparency – ensuring that, when the UK Government makes statements using numbers to explain a policy and its implementation, it should make the underlying analysis available for all to see. We want to see intelligent transparency applied by all parties engaged in the election, using quantitative analysis to support statements. We are using our regulatory framework and flexing our capacity to support transparency and openness, and responding publicly to any misuse of statistics and data we see.

We will also deliver the outcomes of our review of the Code of Practice for Statistics this year, refreshing the Code and publishing a third edition. We've been running a hugely engaging call for evidence around the Code and our core principles of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value – which are now well embedded within official statistics and increasingly universally across other forms of evidence. The time is right to ensure that the Code remains relevant given the changes we've seen in the data landscape, increased desire for statistics from users and changes in the ways statistics producers are working.

A recommendation of the Lievesley Independent review of the UK Statistics Authority is that the UKSA establish and deliver a Triennial Statistical Assembly with the remit of determining the UK's needs for statistics through a wide consultative process, including an annual public lecture from the Chair of the UKSA. Our annual State of the Statistical System report will play a key role in providing OSR's view on the performance and challenges facing the statistical system, the areas of progress and innovation, and our recommendations for advancing the system.

While we want to continue to move beyond supporting good statistics production – building partnerships and supporting wider voluntary application of the pillars of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value – the state of UK statistics will rightly continue to take up a lot of our attention. We are doing a significant amount of work on the quality of economic and labour market statistics and other areas where we are seeing significant transformation, like population and migration statistics.

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