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22nd February 2022

Dear Donald,

I am writing to provide you with an update on Scotland's Census. You will be aware that the legislation for Scotland's Census 2022 was subject to scrutiny by the previous Culture Committee. Members of that Committee, in their legacy report, recommended that a successor Committee continue to monitor progress in delivery of the Census in 2022. I am therefore pleased to confirm that Scotland's next census will be held on Sunday 20 March 2022, with census letters arriving at households across Scotland from today (28 February 2022), providing instructions on how to take part.

This will be the first census to take place in Scotland since the Scottish Government pledged to make public services "digital first", recognising that this is now a favoured channel for many. This approach will deliver a number of benefits in terms of ease of completion and accessibility for respondents.

It remains the priority and responsibility of National Records of Scotland (NRS) to put in place a census that enables everyone across Scotland to participate, so that information collected can be used to produce high quality outputs and deliver the benefits required by the people of Scotland. As such, help and support will be available for those who need it via a dedicated contact centre and the Scotland's Census website to enable all households to complete their census return.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

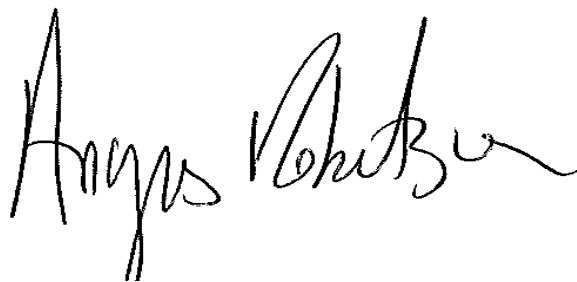


Scotland's Census provides people, businesses and organisations with high quality data and analysis which is used to inform key decisions in relation to policy making, investment and the planning of services. It is the official count of every person and household in the country and the only questionnaire of its kind to ask everyone the same questions at the same time.

The census also becomes part of our history, helping us to understand the similarities and differences in the population's characteristics locally and nationally, now and over time. Reflecting this, for the first time, Scotland's Census will also ask a question about previous service in the UK Armed Forces and voluntary questions on trans status or history and sexual orientation for those over 16.

I would like to once again thank the Committee for their interest in Scotland's Census to date. I urge all members to help ensure a successful census by encouraging maximum participation amongst all communities across Scotland.

Best wishes,



Angus Robertson

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