

census
2021

Adapting the England and Wales 2021 Census design due to the COVID crisis

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Changes to operations

Changes to collection operation

- Planned field address check cancelled, additional clerical resolution team put in place
- Provision for contact centre working from home
- Reduced capacity in printing supplier premises
- Virtual community engagement and completion events

Changes to field follow-up

- Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Revision of 'crossing the threshold' decisions
- Revised doorstep routine
- Wholly online training, including bespoke Covid health & safety training
- Plans for completely virtual operation, including governance and support contact centres

Operation already designed to be as flexible as possible, with use of mobile follow-up teams and potential to increase/decrease follow-up hours in different areas as needed. Additional flexible use of digital media campaign and ability to target reminder letters at worst performing areas.

Contingencies for collection operation

- Provision for printing of additional information leaflets for addresses within lockdown areas
- Potential to extend the follow-up in specific areas or for particular types of addresses (e.g. care homes)
- Use of Covid infection data to predict areas likely to go into lockdown and plan accordingly
- Investigate possibilities of picking up paper questionnaires where people are unable to get to a post box
- Plans in place to move schools census activities material online if schools are closed
- Assumptions around how people will respond monitored during live operations in case Covid has changed expected patterns of response. Forecasts updated and interventions implemented if needed

Media and community engagement

- Design changes implemented to enable flexibility in our campaign messaging
- Use of digital media (social media and digital billboards) to change or share new messaging
- Targeted letters to inform the public of changes to services
- Many more groups now online, enabling increased coverage of groups through secure virtual interactions in place of fewer face-to-face engagements

Covid impact on questions

Topics that could be impacted for **some** users:

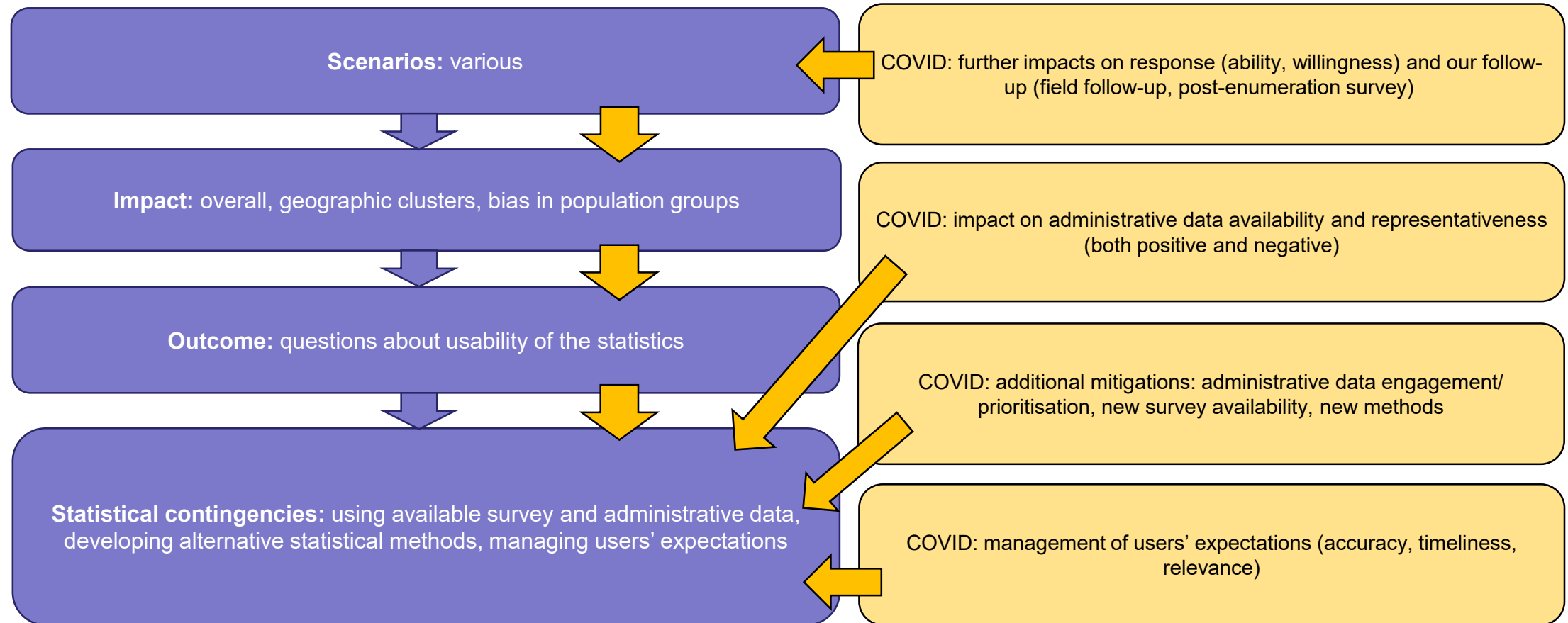
- Who usually lives here
- Labour market and travel to work
- Address questions: second address, term time address, usual address one year ago
- Full-time education, location of students
- General health, long-term health problem or disability
- Amount of unpaid care provided

Questions that are likely to be negatively affected for a **lot** of users:

- Hours worked – Some users put their pre-coronavirus hours if they are on furlough, others put reduced hours
- Travel to work – Most users put how they usually travelled to work, pre-coronavirus
- Place of work – Users are mixed between putting their pre-coronavirus place of work, or saying working from home

Initial work on consulting key stakeholders shows most want respondents to answer for their 'current circumstances'. The main exception is regarding travel to work and place of work.

Statistical contingencies



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Thank you