



HM TREASURY



Social Science in Government

1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

21 November 2011

Frances Maude MP
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2AS

Making Open Data Real

Dear Minister

We are writing in response to the Making Open Data Real consultation in our capacity as joint heads of the Government Social Research Service (GSR). We appreciate the official closing date for the consultation has recently passed but hope you will be able to take our thoughts into consideration as appropriate.

You have already had a response from the National Statistician, Jil Matheson. As fellow government analysts we would like to assure you of GSR's support for the open data agenda. Particularly the desire to place data in the public domain as quickly and in as much detail as possible, subject to legal and confidentiality constraints.

There has been lots of activity recently in the data transparency and access space and GSR is currently working on an initiative to put policy and practice in place that will enable routine archiving of research data and release to bona fide external researchers. One of the key issues to address if we are to succeed in our ambitions is consistent legal advice. At the moment we do not have a single, cross government view of whether and how we can routinely release research data but we are consulting with GSR researchers and government lawyers to resolve this.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss any points arising from this letter in more detail at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Dibden *Richard Bartholomew*

Jenny Dibden and Richard Bartholomew
Joint heads of the Government Social Research Service