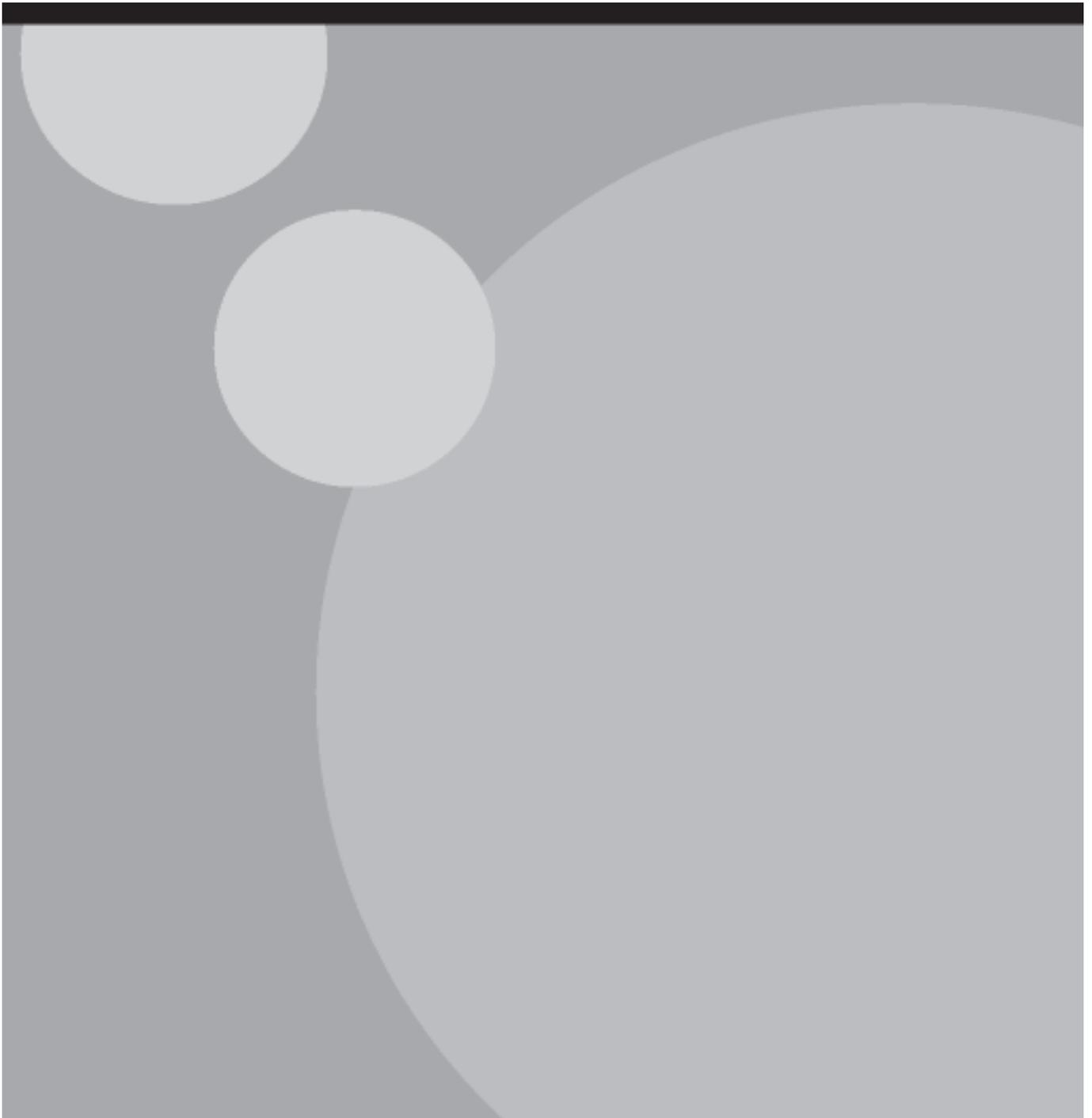




English Indices of Deprivation 2007: Consultation

Summary of responses





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1. Introduction

On 30 March 2010 the Department for Communities and Local Government published a consultation paper on the Indices of Deprivation. This was a technical consultation that sought the views of users of the Indices of Deprivation on the need for an update to the Indices and the methodology and data sources any future update should be based on. This document summarises the responses received and the Government's response to these comments.

A total of 98 responses were received from a range of interested parties including other government departments, local government, regional bodies, charities and other special interest groups. Table 1 below shows the type of organisations that responded to the consultation. Annex A lists all of the respondents that replied.

Table 1: Number of responses received from different organisational types

Classification	Number of responses received	Percentage of total responses
Metropolitan District	15	15%
Unitary Authority	14	14%
London Borough	13	13%
County Council	11	11%
Non Government Organisation	10	10%
Other Government Department	10	10%
Combined Local Government Response	9	9%
District Council	8	8%
Government Office	2	2%
Fire Authority	1	1%
Other	5	5%

The Department would like to thank all those who took part in the consultation exercise.

2. Key findings and future actions

Respondents welcomed the opportunity to comment on the proposals and were very supportive of the idea of producing an update to the Indices. The overwhelming majority of users indicated a desire for this update to be produced with minimal changes to the methodology used to produce the Indices of Deprivation 2007 (ID2007) and thereby maximising the comparability between the ID2007 and the next Index.

This consultation process has revealed that there is a broad consensus across the users of the Indices of Deprivation that an update is needed as soon as possible. Given this degree of support for the proposals outlined in the consultation document the department will publish an updated version of the Indices of Deprivation in March 2011. This update will be published as an Official Statistic and will broadly follow the methodology used in the previous updates, except in the instances that were outlined in the consultation document.

3. Summary of responses

The consultation paper asked specific questions on a number of issues and also asked for general comments. The rest of this document will focus on the specific questions raised in the consultation paper. These were organised into three sections:

- Section 1: Future of the Indices and UK-wide comparability
- Section 2: General methodology
- Section 3: Current availability of data sources used in ID2007.

4. Section 1: Future of the Indices and UK-wide comparability

1A

Should an updated set of Indices be produced in 2010 using existing indicators where available and methodology broadly consistent with the ID2007?

If not what evidence is there to support the need for a fundamental and immediate review of the English Indices of Deprivation?

A total of 93 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (97%) supported the proposal that the Indices of Deprivation be updated using a methodology broadly consistent with the ID2007. Four respondents indicated that there should not be an update this year; of these two believed that the proposed methodology did not accurately measure deprivation and should be reviewed before being updated. The others felt that the update should be delayed until 2011 to better capture the impact of the recession.

It should be noted that 30 respondents also suggested that a fundamental review of the Indices should take place after this update so that an improved methodology is ready to incorporate Census 2011 results which should be available by late-2012.

Department's response

Based on this overwhelming feedback in favour of proceeding, an update to the Indices of Deprivation will be produced based on existing methodology, indicators and data. Details of the available data were outlined in the consultation document. The output will be broadly consistent with the previous version of the Indices published in 2007. Where data are not currently available we specify the alternative method chosen for the current update in the relevant section of this document.

1B

Is there a need post-2010 for a comparable set of indices of deprivation across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland?

If yes what evidence is there to support the need and which domains should form the 'core' of comparable indices?

A total of 68 responses were received to this question. There was no clear consensus amongst the respondents; 41 per cent felt there was a clear need for a comparable UK Index while 59 per cent disagreed. Of those in favour of the comparable UK indicator the majority wanted the economic domains (income and employment) to form the core of a comparable index.

Twelve respondents commented that the need for a comparable set of indicators was secondary to the production of the best possible national indices.

Department's response

The work on the next update to the Indices of Deprivation will concentrate on producing the best possible set of indices for England. However, we will continue to work with the Devolved Administrations to identify common ground between the separate indices. We will consider the needs of users when investigating the feasibility for UK indicators that do not compromise the usefulness of each of the Devolved indices.

5. Section 2: General methodology

2A: Data time point

Is the mid-2008 data time point suitable to use in the next update to the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable time point is available?

A total of 84 responses were received to this question. The majority (73%) were in favour of using the proposed mid-2008 time point as the reference time point for the next update to the Indices. Of the 23 respondents who disagreed, 18 indicated that there was more recent information than mid-2008 available and that where available it should be used. The remaining five respondents stated that a 2008 data point would not capture the effect of the recession.

It should also be noted that eight of the respondents who agreed with the use of the mid-2008 data point also said the most up to date information should be used.

Department's response

The next update will use mid-2008 as the reference time point for as many indicators as possible. This maintains consistency with the methodology used in previous versions of the Indices by selecting a reference date when new data for all updated indicators are available. We have taken note of the call to use more recent data where available but this brings with it an internal conflict where updated indicators refer to different time points and leads to an inconsistency with existing methodology. This issue of the most appropriate time point to use will be given further consideration by a future review of the methodology.

More recent data are available for the indicators in the employment domain, and though not included in the current update of the Indices, users can use these with the published statistics to update the relevant indicators.

2B: Denominators and defining 'at risk' population

Are denominators derived from the same source as the numerator suitable to use in the next update to the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources are available?

Are population denominators produced by the Office for National Statistics suitable?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources are available?

A total of 65 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (94%) agreed with the proposals that denominators should be derived from the same source as the numerator and that the small area population estimates from the Office for National Statistics should be used. Four respondents disagreed with these proposals. Three of these respondents had concerns about the reliability of the Office for National Statistics estimates while the other had concerns that the denominators were not a good reflection of the 'at risk' population.

Department's response

Our view is that the population estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics are the most reliable population estimates produced for small areas within England. They will be used in the next update of the Indices and other options will be considered further by a future review of the methodology used to produce the Indices of Deprivation.

**2Ci: Geography and spatial scale of the output
Are Lower Super Output Areas the appropriate geographic scale for the next update to the Indices?**

If not what evidence is there to support this, at what level of geography should outputs be produced and what other suitable sources are available

A total of 85 responses were received to this question. There was near unanimous support for the proposal that Lower Super Output Areas were the appropriate geographic scale for the next update of the Indices. Only two respondents were opposed to this proposal; one felt that it was necessary for data to be collected at output area level to effectively capture deprivation while the other reported that wards were the preferable geographic level as users were more familiar with them. A number of respondents who supported the proposal suggested that data being made available at both Lower Super Output Area and ward level would be extremely helpful.

Department's response

Based on this feedback the next update of the Indices of Deprivation will continue to use Lower Super Output Areas as the spatial unit of analysis. Very few of the indicators used in the Indices of Deprivation are available at any lower level of geography. We understand the desire for finer-grained indicators but the currently available data sources are not capable of producing this.

A number of users requested outputs be produced for wards. Wards are much larger than Lower Super Output Areas, vary greatly in size and are prone to regular boundary changes, making them unsuitable as a unit of analysis or for identifying pockets of deprivation. In contrast Lower Super Output Areas are

smaller, of roughly even population size and their boundaries are stable between Censuses. Improved guidance will be provided for users wanting to use Lower Super Output Area indicators as building blocks to aggregate statistics to larger user-defined geographies, including wards.

2Cii: District summaries

Are the district and county summaries appropriate for the next update to the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and at what level of geography should summaries be produced?

A total of 70 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (92%) of respondents found the district and county summaries useful and five respondents disagreed. Of these, three respondents had concerns about the methods used to calculate the summary measures. Two would prefer the summaries to be provided at different levels of geography (by wards and output areas)

Twenty-two respondents reported that they would like ward-level summaries to be provided in addition to the district and county summaries.

Department's response

Based on this feedback the Department will continue to provide district and county level summaries of the Indices of Deprivation. Improved guidance will be provided for users wanting to use Lower Super Output Area indicators as building blocks to aggregate statistics to larger user-defined geographies, including wards.

2D: Methodology – combining indicators using factor analysis

Is factor analysis a suitable method to use for combining certain indicators in the next update to the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable methods are available?

A total of 48 responses were received to the question. All but one respondent supported the proposal to use factor analysis to combine indicators within the Indices. The respondent who disagreed with this approach believed the analysis used to work this out was not clear. Four respondents indicated that they would welcome more information about the workings of this method.

Department's response

Factor analysis will continued to be used to calculate the weights for combining indicators. More information will be provided about the results and steps involved in the factor analysis used in the Indices of Deprivation.

2E: Methodology – ‘shrinkage’ estimation to improve reliability of indicators based on small numbers

Is shrinkage estimation a suitable method for improving reliability of indicators based on small numbers in the next update to the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable methods are available?

A total of 45 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (93%) were in support of this proposal. Three respondents did not agree that shrinkage estimation was a suitable methodology but did not provide any further detail on their concerns.

Department’s response

To maintain consistency with previous version of the Indices, shrinkage estimation will be used for the current update. More information will be provided about the methodology of this technique and the impact on the results. The suitability of the technique will be assessed as part of a future review of the Indices of Deprivation.

2F: Methodology – domain combination and weighting

Are the current method and weights associated with combining the domains appropriate for constructing the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation in the next update to the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable methods are available?

A total of 70 responses were received to this question. The majority (89%) of respondents were in favour of using the current methods and weights to combine the domains. Eight respondents believed that the weights were inappropriate and needed to be changed prior to an update. Three of these respondents believed the weighting of the Crime Domain needed to be increased at the expense of the Living Environment. Two respondents felt the Income and Employment Domains had too much weight, with one suggesting that the Income and Employment Domains should be combined and given one weight and the remaining two felt that more weight needed to be given to the Barriers to Housing and Other Services Domain.

Thirteen respondents who agreed with the proposal to maintain the weights from ID2007 did stress there was a need for these to be re-assessed as part of a future fundamental review of the Indices of Deprivation.

Department's response

The current update will use existing methods to combine domains and current domain weights to maintain consistency with previous versions of the Indices of Deprivation. We will provide more detail of the process used to derive the current weights. In addition, we will also investigate the effects of changing the domain weights and the scale of the impact on the Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks. The domain weights and methods used to combine domains will form part of a future review of the methodology used to produce the Indices of Deprivation.

2G: Dissemination and outputs

Are the formats and method of dissemination for outputs suitable for the next update to the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support the need for outputs in a different format and what format should they take?

A total of 68 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (96%) reported that the formats and methods of dissemination of outputs proposed were suitable. Of the three respondents that disagreed with the proposals two felt that greater use should be made of interactive mapping and charting in the outputs. The third felt that significantly more guidance was needed on the appropriate use of the Indices.

Eleven of the respondents who supported the proposal did request that indicator level data be provided in addition to outputs previously published. A further 10 respondents commented that they would like the publication of the outputs to be better publicised.

Department's response

The next update will be disseminated as a single web-based release. We will provide more guidance at the time of the release on the potential uses of the Indices of Deprivation. Data will also be made available in an open format. We will also seek to provide more opportunities for feedback and interaction with users, including workshops, dissemination events and methodology advisory groups.

6. Section 3: Current availability of data sources used in ID2007

3A: Income Deprivation Domain

Are these indicators suitable to be used in the next update to the income deprivation domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources are available?

A total of 52 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (96%) were in favour of using the proposed indicators. Two respondents had concerns about the indicators chosen. One respondent felt that housing benefits should have been included in the calculations of deviations from median incomes. The other respondent who did not support the proposal felt that there was a rural / urban bias within these indicators.

Department's response

The next update of the Indices will continue to use the existing indicators to maintain consistency with previous versions. We will consider the detailed user comments as part of the future review of the Indices of Deprivation.

3Bi: Employment Deprivation Domain

Are these indicators suitable to be used in the next update to the employment deprivation domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources are available?

A total of 56 responses were received to this question, with all but two supporting the use of the proposed indicators. The remaining respondents suggested that the proposed indicators were not adequate. One felt that it was essential for an indicator reflecting the proportion of individuals Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) in an area be included in this domain. The other respondent felt that the definitions used were too narrow and that indicators needed to be developed that could reflect concepts such as under-employment.

Six of the respondents who supported the proposals did raise some concerns that the definitions used were too narrow and didn't capture employment deprivation amongst a number of groups including lone parents and young people.

Department's response

Based on the feedback the Indices of Deprivation will be updated using the existing methodology and indicators to maintain consistency with earlier versions of the Indices. Therefore the proposals to broaden the definition of employment deprivation to include concepts of under employment will not be adopted in the next update. These proposals will be considered fully when the methodology of the Indices of Deprivation is fully reviewed.

3Bii: Employment and Support Allowance

Should specified components of the new Employment and Support Allowance benefit be included, as a replacement for other discontinued benefits, in the next update to the employment deprivation domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources are available?

A total of 50 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (90%) of responses were supportive of the proposal to incorporate the new Employment and Support Allowance benefit data into the indicator set. Two of the five respondents who disagreed with the proposal suggested that it would be better to use an earlier time point so that the discontinued benefits could still be used. The others felt the change was unnecessary or that by not including income-based Employment and Support Allowance claimants a large proportion of the workless population would be excluded.

Department's response

The next update to the Indices of Deprivation will incorporate the Employment and Support Allowance data into the employment domain rather than move to an earlier time point to avoid the overlap. This approach maintains consistency with employment domains in previous versions of the Indices.

3Ci: Health Deprivation and Disability Domain

Are these indicators suitable to be used in the next update to the health deprivation and disability domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources are available?

A total of 51 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (90%) of the respondents supported the proposed set of indicators for the health domain. Five respondents reported that they were unsatisfied with the proposed indicators. Four of these respondents had concerns that the proposed indicators were not the best possible indicators of health deprivation; in particular they questioned whether prescribing data was actually a reliable proxy for disease prevalence. The other respondent that

was not satisfied with the proposals indicated that the health domain needed to be given a bigger weight in the overall index.

Department's response

The next update of the Indices will continue to use the existing indicators to maintain consistency with previous versions. We will consider the detailed user comments as part of a future review of the methodology used to produce the Indices of Deprivation.

3Cii: Deaths due to suicide and prescribing data

If data on deaths due to suicide and prescribing data are unobtainable, should previous data be used in the next update to the health deprivation and disability domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources are available?

A total of 44 responses were received to this question. The vast majority (95%) supported this proposal. Three respondents disagreed; two felt that the suicide rate was changing and that it was inappropriate to use the old data as a proxy. The third felt that this approach would make the domain redundant as it would basically be the same as the ID2007.

Department's response

Updated data on deaths due to suicides has been obtained and will be used to produce the updated health deprivation and disability domain. Unfortunately though due to changes in the administration of the data source previously used for the prescribing data it has not been possible to update this indicator. Therefore as proposed in the consultation document the previous data will be used in the next update to the health deprivation and disability domain.

3D: Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain

Are these indicators suitable to be used in the next update to the education, skills and training deprivation domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources are available?

A total of 57 responses were received to this question. The majority of responses (88%) supported the proposals. Seven respondents disagreed that the proposed indicators were the most suitable for the domain. Four of these respondents suggested that Census data was given too much weight in this domain; the other three felt that different indicators, such as some of the former National Indicators, should be used instead of the census indicator for skills and the Key Stage 2 indicator.

Department's response

To maintain consistency with earlier Indices of Deprivation the next update will use the same weights to combine the indicators within the education domain. Additional information will be provided about the weights each sub-domain received to allow users to better assess how suitable the domain is for their needs. A full review of the indicators, their weights and methods used to combine them will take place following publication of the current update.

3Ei: Barriers to Housing and Services Domain

Are these indicators suitable to be used in the next update to the barriers to housing and services domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources of data are available?

A total of 64 responses were received to this question. Most agreed with the proposed indicators. However, 17 respondents did not agree that the proposed indicators were suitable for reflecting barriers to housing and other services. Six of the respondents had concerns about geographical barriers, stating that being physically close to a service does not necessarily indicate that individuals had access to them. Three respondents reported that they found the homelessness indicator unreliable and three described the wider barriers as too limited. The other comments covered a broad range of issues.

Department's response

The next update of the Indices will continue to use the existing indicators to maintain consistency with previous versions. The issues raised by users have been noted and will be considered fully in a future review of the methodology used to produce the Indices of Deprivation.

3Eii: Access to owner occupation

Should the methodology for producing the access to owner occupation indicator be changed to reflect current best practice and improve consistency with other available estimates of housing affordability?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources of data are available?

A total of 42 responses were received to this question. There was universal support for the proposed approach, although several respondents did have some concerns about this indicator. Three requested more information about the specifics related to this change in methodology and two commented that this was an indicator of affluence and not deprivation.

Department's response

The next update of the Indices will change the methodology to reflect best practice. We will consider the suitability of this indicator as part of the full review of the methodology.

3F: Crime Domain

Are these indicators suitable to be used in the next update to the crime domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources of data are available?

A total of 53 responses were received to this question. The majority of the responses (79%) supported the use of the proposed indicators. Eleven respondents disagreed, citing issues with the denominator of the burglary indicator as the reason for their concern. A number of alternatives were suggested including; Office for National Statistics projections, dwelling data from neighbourhood statistics and National Land and Property Gazetteer.

Department's response

In order to maintain consistency with previous versions the same indicators will be used for the crime domain as were used in previous versions of the Indices of Deprivation. This also applies to the use of the 2001 Census as part of the denominator for the burglary indicator. We felt that this data set was the best option for providing a nationally consistent denominator as well as providing greater consistency with previous versions of the Indices.

The Department is aware of the ongoing developments of a national address register based on a number of sources, including the National Land and Property Gazetteer. These developing data sources will be considered in the review of methodology for future updates of the Indices of Deprivation.

3G: Living Environment Domain

Are these indicators suitable to be used in the next update to the living environment domain of the Indices?

If not what evidence is there to support this and what other suitable sources of data are available?

A total of 55 responses were received to this question. The majority (84%) of the responses were in favour of using the proposed indicators. Nine respondents disagreed with the proposals for this domain, three felt that the central heating indicator was outdated and should be replaced by an indicator of fuel poverty and two had concerns that the air quality indicators were measures of emissions not concentrations. The other respondents had general concerns about the ability of these indicators to fully reflect issues surrounding the living environment in their areas.

Department's response

The same indicators will be used for the living environment domain as were used in the previous version of the Indices of Deprivation. Due to cost considerations the quality of housing indicator will not be updated and the indicator from the 2007 Indices will be retained in the next update.

Annex A: Responses received

Organisation	Classification
Association of Regional Observatories	Non Government Organisation
Audit Commission	Non Government Organisation
Barnsley	Metropolitan District
Bedford	Unitary Authority
Bexley	London Borough
Birmingham	Metropolitan District
Blackburn and Darwen	Unitary Authority
Blackpool	Unitary Authority
Bolton	Metropolitan District
Bournemouth	Unitary Authority
Brent	London Borough
Bristol	Unitary Authority
Buckinghamshire	County Council
Burnley	District Council
Bury	Metropolitan District
Central Bedfordshire	Unitary Authority
Child Action Poverty	Non Government Organisation
Chorley	District Council
City of Derby	Unitary Authority
Colchester	District Council
Commission for Rural Communities	Other Government Department
Coventry	Metropolitan District
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Government Department
Department for Communities and Local Government (Inspiring Communities)	Government Department
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	Government Department
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Government Department
Department for Work and Pensions (EG Division)	Government Department
Department of Health (PCT Resource allocation)	Government Department
Dorset	County Council
Durham County	Unitary Authority
East Sussex	County Council
Enfield	London Borough
Exeter	District Council
Fenland	District Council
Government Office South West	Government Office
Government Office West Midlands	Government Office
Greater Manchester Transport Group	Non Government Organisation
Halton	Unitary Authority
Hampshire	County Council
Haringey	London Borough
Harrow	London Borough
Havering	London Borough
Herefordshire Partnership	Non Government Organisation
Homes and Communities Agency	Government Department
House of Commons Library	Other
Islington	London Borough

Organisation	Classification
Kent	County Council
Knowsley	Metropolitan District
Lancashire fire and rescue	Fire Authority
Leeds	Metropolitan District
Lincolnshire (Combined response)	Combined Local Government Response
Liverpool	Metropolitan District
London Councils	Non Government Organisation
Luton	Unitary Authority
Manchester	Metropolitan District
Mayor of London (GLA)	Combined Local Government Response
Milton Keynes	Unitary Authority
MSJ Consultancy	Other
Newham	London Borough
NHS (Tom Frost - Wiltshire)	Other
North East Regional Information Partnership	Non Government Organisation
North Yorkshire	County Council
Norwich	District Council
Nottingham	Unitary Authority
Oastler Centre	Non Government Organisation
Office for National Statistics	Government Department
Office of the National Statistician	Other
Oldham	Metropolitan District
ONS (Neighbourhood Statistics)	Other
Oxford	District Council
Oxfordshire	County Council
Plymouth	Unitary Authority
Redbridge	London Borough
Ribble Valley	District Council
Richmond upon Thames	London Borough
Salford City Council and PCT	Combined Local Government Response
Scottish Government	Devolved Administration
Sheffield	Metropolitan District
Shropshire	Unitary Authority
Solihull Observatory	Non Government Organisation
South Tyneside	Metropolitan District
Southampton City Council and PCT	Combined Local Government Response
Southwark	London Borough
Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA)	Combined Local Government Response
Staffordshire	County Council
Suffolk	County Council
Sunderland	Metropolitan District
Surrey	County Council
Tees Valley Unlimited	Combined Local Government Response
Torbay City Council and PCT	Combined Local Government Response
Tower Hamlets	London Borough
Tyne and Wear Research and Information Group	Non Government Organisation
Wakefield	Metropolitan District
Walsall	Metropolitan District
Wandsworth	London Borough
Wigan Borough Partnership	Combined Local Government Response
Wolverhampton Strategic Partnership	Combined Local Government Response
Worcestershire	County Council