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**Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sir David Norgrove**

Andy Street  
Mayor of the West Midlands  
(via email)

10 May 2021

Dear Mr Mayor,

Thank you for your letter of 13 November 2020 about the population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry.

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) has looked into your concerns as part of a wider review of the population estimates and projections produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), against the Code of Practice for Statistics<sup>1</sup>. I enclose a copy of the review, which has been published today.

The review found that the approach taken at the national level by ONS is fit for purpose and is supported by expert advice from demography and academic partners. However at subnational level the accuracy of estimates is variable, and OSR found that the population estimates for some cities such as Coventry did seem to be inconsistent with local evidence. This also appeared to be the case in some other smaller cities with large student populations. ONS will investigate the causes and scale of this issue and communicate its findings publicly.

The review also recommends that ONS should improve its communications in this area of statistics and be more ready to respond to challenge.

My office will ensure that the further ONS work is brought to your attention when it is published.

Thank you again for your letter. I am writing in similar terms to a number of MPs who also wrote to me about the accuracy of local population statistics.

Yours sincerely,



**Sir David Norgrove**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://code.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>