

Summary of responses to the survey “Views on the next Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation”

1. Introduction

Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) within the Welsh Government carried out a user survey to seek feedback from users on when the next publication of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) should occur. The last full publication occurred in 2014.

In addition to this, users were asked how they currently use the WIMD publication, any plans for the future that would use WIMD and their opinions and use of the various other products that have been released regarding WIMD.

The user survey, which ran between 18 October 2016 and 4 November 2016, received 20 responses in total. 8 responses were from 7 of the different local authorities in Wales and the rest were from various sources, including sections of the Welsh Government as well as third sector and other organisations. A full list of organisations who submitted a full response is attached in Annex A.

We would like to thank all those that took the time to respond to this user survey. This report summarises all the responses received, with data tables or graphs to summarise the quantitative questions contained in the survey. Taking into account this feedback, our proposals for the next WIMD are outlined immediately below.

2. Next Steps

The responses to our survey support our preferred suggestion of an Index update in 2019. Many users highlighted the importance of an improved housing domain as well as noting that trends in deprivation are usually more obvious over the long term and so a delay of a year from 2018 would not result in dramatic differences in the data. However several users stated a strong preference of not having to wait until 2020, in a few cases citing timing of assessments required under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Based on the survey feedback received and wider considerations, our proposals are to:

- Work towards the next update of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation in 2019, with preparations including research work and consultation on proposed new indicators starting in 2018
- Prioritise work to obtain robust and relevant indicators for the housing domain, BUT continue towards a 2019 update even in the absence of improved housing domain data
- Plan to keep the range of WIMD outputs broadly similar, but have an improved plan to raise awareness and better promote use of the Index in future
- In the interim, continue annual indicator updates for 2017 and 2018, and publish a one page guide to promote use of the annual indicator data

3. Background

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the Welsh Government's tool for identifying small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Wales. The most recent version, WIMD 2014, was published in November 2014 and was an update and improvement on the two previous versions.

The recent pattern of producing an index every three years was not determined by any particular rationale. There are several ongoing areas of development, and also external factors which suggest the need to review and plan timing of the next few editions.

The areas of development that need to be considered were summarised in a note which was produced as an aid to the survey, and this information is repeated below as background.

3.1. Factors to consider

A. Full or basic update to WIMD?

The 2011 edition of WIMD was a basic update of the 2008 version with minimal changes to indicators (and no update to the Access to Services calculations or Census indicators), whereas for 2014 there was a more involved process with a consultation, updates to all indicators, and a review of what outputs were produced and how they were disseminated.

Experience of WIMD 2014 suggests beginning the process for the next WIMD at least two years in advance for a full update. Alternatively a basic update with minimal changes to indicators, no update for some (e.g. Access to Services) and no consultation is estimated to take a year, subject to sufficient resources being available within Welsh Government's Knowledge and Analytical Services to work on the update in a given period.

In future, a full update would enable us to consider including newly available data (such as the Foundation Phase Indicator, Child Measurement Programme etc.) whereas a basic update would not necessarily allow time for this

B. Income and Employment domains

The UK Government has started to implement changes to the benefit system (including Universal Credit) and these will have a significant impact on the data used for the employment and income domains of WIMD. We currently anticipate WIMD indicator data for 2016 to 2021 (and likely beyond) to involve a mixture of old and new system claimants. By 2017, the latest data available would reflect a situation where all new claimants in all local authorities (and some legacy claimants) are on the new system. It is unclear as yet how the mixture of data could be handled within WIMD, and significant work is needed to develop fit for purpose indicators.

C. Housing domain

Work to identify appropriate small area housing data is ongoing, given the general consensus that current indicators (overcrowding and central heating) are in need of improvement. The aim of the domain is to capture deprivation through lack of adequate housing (in terms of housing physical condition, living conditions and availability), and we believe a measure of housing quality derived from data from a property survey would be the ideal.

However, no such data currently exists even at a national level. Development of improved data on the condition of housing in Wales is the aim of the recently agreed Housing Conditions Evidence Programme, but it is unlikely that any new indicators would be available in time for an update before 2019 and so earlier updates would have to continue to use 2011 Census data. A key question is whether users see the value in a further update with an unsatisfactory housing domain.

D. Census 2021

Small area data from the 2021 Census are expected to be published in 2023, and currently provide four key indicators (limiting long-term illness, overcrowding, central heating, qualifications).

E. Assessments of Local Wellbeing

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, a public services board must publish an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area. The first assessments are due to be published in the period leading up to May 2017, with the subsequent assessment likely to be published in the period leading up to May 2021. This timetable is tied in with Local Government Elections.

The WIMD rankings and underlying indicators may be key data that public services boards choose to use in their assessments. Some indicators are updated on an annual basis, but others are not, and improved indicators are added to our range of data only in full WIMD update years. Therefore, it would seem sensible to plan timing of future editions of WIMD to fit in with the cycle driven by the new Act. This currently suggests a 4 yearly cycle, starting in 2019 or 2020 ahead of assessments due around May 2021.

3.2. Illustrative timetable

Due to the time it takes to produce the index and our current analytical priorities, 2018 is the earliest point at which we would be able to update the index. **As an illustration**, the table below outlines some key dates relating to a full WIMD update in late 2019, and a further update following the 2021 Census.

In the survey text, we originally stated that our preferred option is to begin development work (domain groups and consultation) in 2018 for a full update in late 2019, but with the possibility of delay to 2020 should this be needed to include improved housing data.

Key event	Date
Rollout of new welfare system (Universal Credit)	2013/14+
Gather domain expert groups to explore new indicators and conduct consultation on proposed changes – <i>illustrative example</i>	Start 2018
Possible availability of data on housing quality to be modelled for small areas	Mid 2019
Publish WIMD 2019 – <i>illustrative example</i>	Late 2019
Second Assessments of local Wellbeing published – <i>subject to change</i>	2020/21
New welfare system mostly in place	2022
Small area results from 2021 Census published– <i>subject to change</i>	Early-mid 2023
Publish WIMD update using new Census data and most of income /employment deprivation based on new welfare system	Late 2023 or 2024

4. Summary of responses

There were 20 full responses to the user survey (see Annex A):

- 8 from 7 of the 22 Welsh local authorities
- 4 from public sector organisations (excluding Welsh Government and local authorities)
- 4 from the Welsh Government
- 2 third sector organisations
- 2 others

There were an additional six incomplete responses submitted (two from members of the public, and four from public sector organisations). These partial responses are not included in the analysis below, but for the answered questions, overall they were in line with the full responses submitted.

4.1. Key points:

- Respondents were asked to rank their preference for timing of the next edition of WIMD, with the options 2018, 2019 and 2020. 65% of the respondents (13 out of 20) put 2019 as their first choice for a publication date. The rest put 2019 as their second choice; it was no one's last preferred choice.
- Weighting the choices so that first, second and third choice received three, two and one points respectively, the different years can be allocated a points score (higher is preferred). In this case, the respective scores for 2018, 2019 and 2020 were 32, 53 and 35.
- All respondents had used at least one of the different WIMD outputs and 60% (12 out of 20) had used 5 or more different WIMD outputs.
- The most commonly used WIMD outputs were the indicator data on StatsWales and the interactive tool, with 16 out of 20 and 14 out of 20 respondents (respectively) having used them.

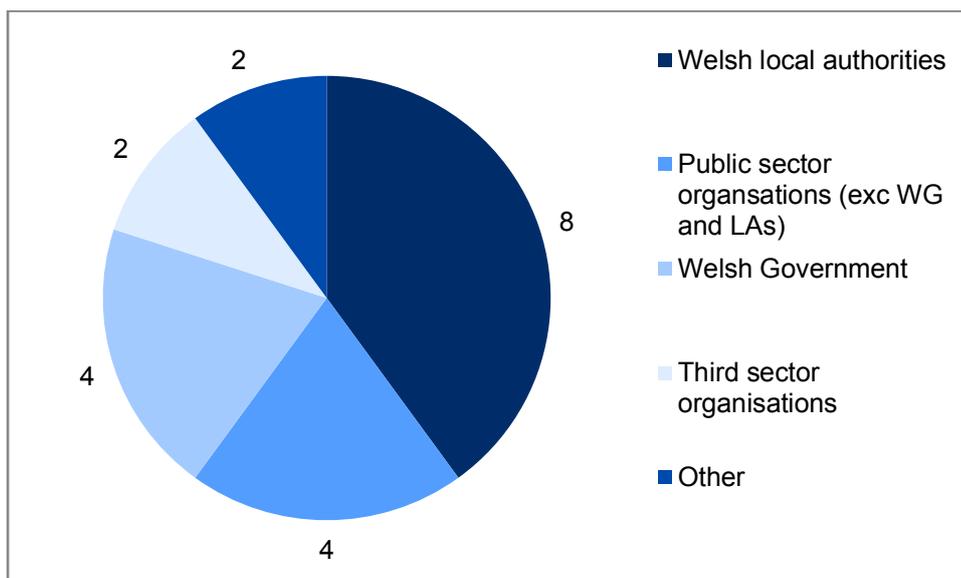
4.2. Survey results

There were 20 responses in total, 19 respondents completed the survey in English and 1 completed the survey in Welsh.

Responses to Question 1: What organisation/department do you represent, or are you responding as a member of the public?

- 8 from 7 of the 22 Welsh local authorities
- 4 from public sector organisations (excluding Welsh Government and local authorities)
- 4 from the Welsh Government
- 2 third sector organisations
- 2 others

Figure 1: Chart showing breakdown of responses to Question 1



Responses to Question 2: Please describe briefly how you currently use WIMD, and how often you use it.

The responses to this question highlighted that WIMD is often used in conjunction with other sources of data as well as being used to identify areas which are eligible for grants or targeting areas for funding.

Many of the respondents from local authorities highlighted their use of it to make policy decisions as well as using it to determine eligibility for grants. The Well-being of Future Generations Act was also mentioned and how the Index might be used to inform the strategic plans for this.

Other respondents largely used the Index to compare more and less deprived areas, usually within their area of expertise. Often, the top and bottom deprivation fifths are used to show the gap between the two.

Responses to Question 3: Please describe any specific planned activity which is likely to use WIMD, over the next few years. Include known timing for such activities.

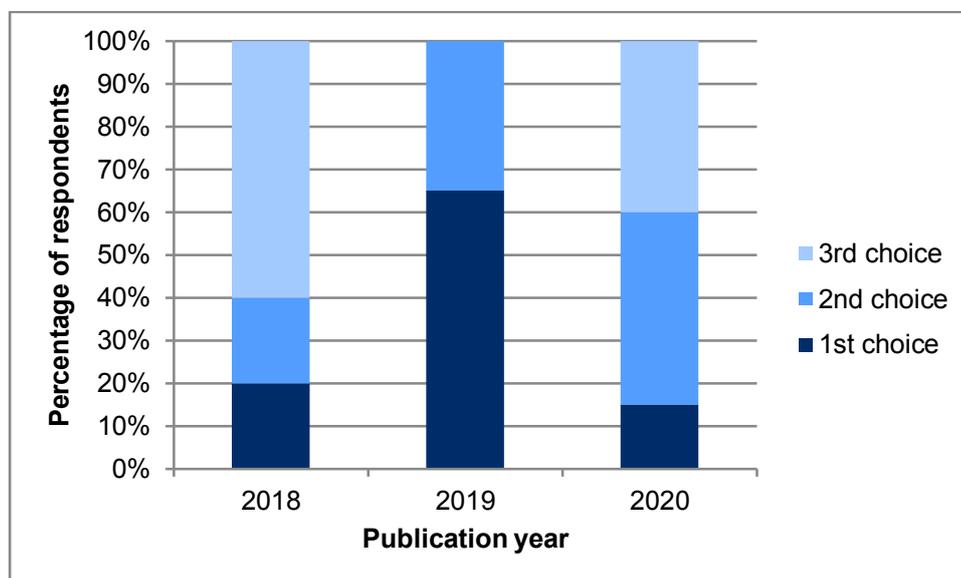
Many of the local authorities mentioned the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the assessments that are required for this within their answers. Four respondents had nothing planned and eight respondents replied that they would continue using WIMD in the same way they have in the past – some with annual use and others with more ad hoc use. One respondent also highlighted plans to use WIMD as part of academic research into mental health.

Responses to Question 4: Please rank your preference for possible timing of the next edition of WIMD:

- 2018
- 2019
- 2020

65% of the respondents (13 out of 20) put 2019 as their first choice for a publication date. The rest put 2019 as their second choice; it was no one's last preferred choice.

Figure 2: Chart showing the responses to Question 4



Weighting the choices so that first, second and third choice received three, two and one points respectively, the different years can be allocated a points score (higher is preferred). In this case, the respective scores for 2018, 2019 and 2020 were 32, 53 and 35 (see Table 1).

Preference between 2018 and 2020 varied depending on the method used. 2018 was preferred in a 'first past the post' system but 2020 was preferred in a weighted system.

Table 1: Weighted scores for Question 4

	1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice	Weighted Score
2018	4	4	12	32
2019	13	7	0	53
2020	3	9	8	35

Responses to Question 5: Please describe the reasons for your rankings.

8 of the 20 respondents mentioned the need for a full update, with several of them mentioning the weakness of the housing domain. Some respondents mentioned that area deprivation is a relatively stable measure and LSOAs rarely move many ranks between indices. Thus, they were willing to wait an extra year for a full update in 2019. However, several respondents mentioned that they were reluctant to wait until 2020 with a 6 year gap between indices being perceived as too long, and too close to expected timing for the next assessments required under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

Responses to Question 6: For the next WIMD, what priority would you place on a basic update versus full update, bearing in mind a full update may take a year longer to produce? Please describe the reasons for your prioritisation.

16 out of 20 respondents (80 per cent) highlighted the importance of a full update. Those who wanted a basic update largely gave their reasoning as not wanting to wait longer for a full update. Again, the ability of the current Index to meet most needs was raised by several respondents.

Several mentioned that they would be willing to wait a year (2018 to 2019) for a full update, but were less willing to wait until 2020.

Responses to Question 7: Do you use WIMD annual indicator data? If so, which ones are of interest to you and why?

11 of the respondents answered that they do use annual indicator data; within this income, employment, education and health were the most commonly mentioned indicators. There was some discrepancy between the answers for this question and the responses seen in question 8. There is the possibility that this could be because respondents said they used 'Indicator data on StatsWales' when in fact they used the ranks that are published on StatsWales but do not use indicator data, or have used indicator data in the past but no longer use it.

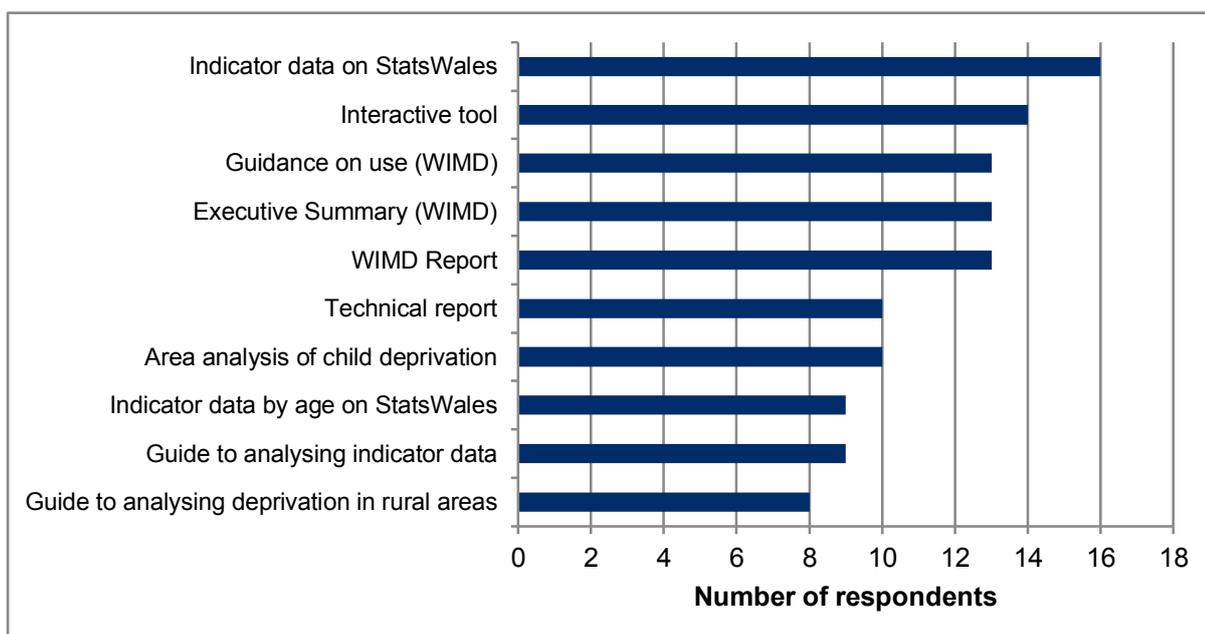
Responses to Question 8: The following are statistical products which were provided when WIMD 2014 was released (or as follow-up analyses). Please indicate in the table below which, if any, you have used:

- WIMD Report
- Executive summary (WIMD)
- Interactive tool (<http://wimd.wales.gov.uk/>)
- Guidance on use (WIMD)
- Guide to analysing deprivation in rural areas
- Area analysis of child deprivation
- Guide to analysing indicator data
- Technical report
- Indicator data on StatsWales
- Indicator data by age on StatsWales

All respondents had used at least one of the different WIMD outputs and 60 per cent (12 out of 20) had used 5 or more different WIMD outputs.

The most commonly used WIMD outputs were the indicator data on StatsWales and the interactive tool, with 16 out of 20 (80 per cent) and 14 out of 20 (70 per cent) respectively respondents having used them. As stated above, there was some discrepancy between the results in questions 7 and 8 so the results for the indicator data on StatsWales should be interpreted cautiously.

Figure 3: A chart showing the responses to Question 8



Responses to Question 9: Do you have any comments on the quality and usefulness of the statistical products that were produced? Which would you like to see again?

Multiple respondents mentioned the interactive tool and said it was useful and accessible. Three mentioned that they used data on a local authority level and would be interested at seeing more being published specific to local authorities. The technical report was also mentioned by multiple users for being useful, especially when WIMD is used for further statistical analysis. One respondent mentioned that a decile and quartile lookup would be useful and given the prevalence of respondents saying they used these measures and queries to our inbox, we have decided to add deciles, quintiles and quartiles onto the spreadsheet with ranks on our website.

Responses to Question 10: Do you have any suggestions for improving the way in which the information about WIMD is disseminated?

The vast majority of respondents had no additional comments on improving the dissemination of WIMD, and said that they were content with the current range of outputs. Two respondents mentioned that they would like to see WIMD publicised more as they felt that not many were aware of the publication and that there is the potential for receiving more attention. One respondent mentioned that they enjoyed the 'pre-publication' session and thought it was useful to have the results 'sense checked' by local authorities.

5. Other UK Nations

The other UK Nations (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) also have indices of deprivation which are similar to WIMD. Although the underlying domains and indicators are not the same for all countries, the basic premise is similar. There is a Four Nations Index of Multiple Deprivation Working Group which convenes once or twice a year to discuss common issues.

For information, the table below shows the most recent publication date of the Index in each country as well as a link to their website. We will continue to discuss common Index development issues with the Four Nations, particularly given likely close timing of the next Indexes.

Country	Most recent publication	Website
Wales	2014	http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/welsh-index-multiple-deprivation/
England	2015, next expected 2019	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-indices-of-deprivation
Scotland	2016, next expected 2019	http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/SIMD
Northern Ireland	2010, next planned 2017	http://www.nisra.gov.uk/deprivation/nimdm_2010.htm

Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation team
Knowledge and Analytical Services, Welsh Government
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Annex A

List of organisations who submitted a full response:

- Cardiff Council
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- City & County of Swansea Education Department
- City & County of Swansea – Information and Research
- Conwy County Borough Council
- Flintshire County Council
- Policy Engagement Partnership (PEP) Department, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- Torfaen County Borough Council
- Housing sector
- National Assembly for Wales – Research Service
- Public Health Wales Observatory
- South Wales Police
- 4 x Welsh Government (Education Policy, Housing Policy, Decarbonisation and Energy Division, Not specified)
- RSPCA Cymru
- Urdd Gobaith Cymru
- Bangor University
- Data Unit Wales