



Advisory Group Paper (04)03

2011 CENSUS - COMMUNITY LIAISON PROGRAMME

1 The objectives of the community liaison programme are to:

- facilitate enumeration and ensure fullest possible coverage;
- publicise the Census and underline its use and value;
- provide help to national and local community groups; and
- assist with the provision of language translation and interpreting facilities.

2 Advisory Group members are asked to:

Note the options for taking this work forward, and to forward any comments and suggestions by **29 November 2004** to

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ONS October 2004

2011 CENSUS COMMUNITY LIAISON PROGRAMME

Background

- 3 ONS is committed to working in partnership with minority and special interest groups in order to encourage their co-operation and participation in the 2011 Census. Community Liaison was a successful initiative for the 2001 Census, although an evaluation of the process suggested that the exercise would have benefited from an earlier start in the census planning timetable. As a result, the 2011 Census Community Liaison Programme is being initiated some two to three years ahead of the corresponding 2001 timetable and will develop the work which was carried out for that census.
- 4 Proposed changes in Census methodology (as set out in the Information Paper ‘The 2011 Census: a design for England and Wales’) on the ONS website at www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/2011_design_information.pdf include a different enumeration approach which envisages post-out as the prime means of form delivery. This would mean that Census field staff would have less contact with the public than has been the case in previous censuses. There is an increased need, therefore, to target minority and hard-to-count population groups in order to provide them with reassurance about the purpose of the Census and the confidentiality of the information provided, and to offer help with form completion should they require it.
- 5 Essentially the Community Liaison Programme is all about making a difference at the grass roots level, so research is currently being undertaken into the most appropriate organisations with which to establish working links. The process of meetings with these groups will commence in 2005. Although from the general public’s perspective the Census is still some way off, the need to consult and engage with the wide variety of organisations at a much earlier stage is recognised.
- 6 The Census Test planned for 2007 in a selected number of areas will provide a first practical opportunity to judge the effectiveness of community liaison. The importance of involving local and health authorities to help establish links with targeted local groups cannot be underestimated.

Objectives of community liaison

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Summary of 2011 strategy

- 8 In response to the recommendations of the Treasury Select Committee’s report on the 2001 Census a new Census Advisory Group - the Special Populations Advisory Group -

has been set up to advise ONS particularly on the developments of the 2011 Community Liaison Programme. The Group meets for the first time on **4 November** as part of the current round of Census Advisory Group meetings.

- 9 ONS will establish links with organisations such as CRE, Age Concern, SCOPE, the RNID and the RNIB and bilateral consultation with such organisations and other umbrella groups representing minority and special interest groups is planned to start in **the first half of 2005**.
- 10 Additionally ONS will make use of the knowledge that exists in local and health authorities about their own communities. ONS aim to develop the approach adopted for 2001 of appointing Census Liaison Officers in a number of local authorities, and an LA Liaison Steering Group was set up in August to facilitate this work and is due to meet again in **January 2005**. ONS will also liaise with health authorities who have particular knowledge, for example, about languages used in local communities. ONS will investigate the possibility of appointing Census Liaison Officers in some health authorities also.
- 11 ONS will undertake further research into the variety of languages for which it will be necessary to have translations of census documentation. A Language Strategy Working Group will be established to assist in this research and to help identify the most effective means of providing interpretation facilities.
- 12 A proposed timetable of high level ONS activities within the Programme for the next year is given at Annex A. There will be an opportunity to test Community Liaison in the 2007 Test.

Action for Advisory Group members

- 13 Comments on any aspects of this paper are invited by **29 November**. Assistance with identifying potential sources of help to meet the aims of the Programme will be most welcome at any time.

Proposed 2011 Census Community Liaison Programme timetable for 2004/2005

2004

Oct-Dec Establish Special Populations Advisory Group
Research and identify specific communities and interests to be covered.

2005

Jan-Mar LA Liaison Steering Group meets formally for the first time
Role of Census Liaison Officers agreed
Develop strategies for particular groups such as the disabled, elderly, ethnic, religious.
Research into braille and audio visual materials and online response starts
2007 Census Test areas decided

Apr-Jun Links with relevant organisations established and initial bilateral discussions start
Proposed strategy to be discussed by Advisory Groups
Census Liaison Officers in 2007 Test areas appointed
Language Strategy Working Group established

Jul-Sep Programme Strategy agreed and promoted through relevant journals

Oct-Dec Opportunity for Workshop