

Advisory Group Paper (99)07

LOCAL COMMUNITY LIAISON

1. **The objectives of local community liaison are: -**
 - To facilitate enumeration and ensure full coverage.
 - To help provide a source of potential field staff.
 - To advertise the Census and underline its uses.
 - To provide help to individual members of local communities.
 - To help with translations and advertising.

2. **Advisory Group members are asked to:-**

- (a) **note the options for taking the work ahead, and**

- (b) **forward comments and suggestions within two weeks of meeting to:-**

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April 1999

ADVISORY GROUP DISCUSSION PAPER

LOCAL COMMUNITY LIAISON

1. Background

- 1.1 The Census Offices are committed to working in partnership with minority groups in order to pave the way for their co-operation in the 2001 Census. It is apparent that some sections of the community such as the elderly are becoming increasingly isolated and local community liaison will be essential to neutralise any ill effects of this on the Census.
- 1.2 Changes in Census collection methodology resulting in the introduction of postback means Census field staff now have less contact with the public than previously. There is an increased need, therefore, to target minority groups in order to provide them with reassurance about the aims of the Census and to offer help with form completion should they require it.
- 1.3 The process of communicating with minority groups commenced during the 1997 Census Test and continues in the Census Rehearsal currently being held. In both the Test and Rehearsal the main thrust has been to establish direct links with local groups using the Local Authorities as a source of information and guidance.
- 1.4 The 2001 Census is only two years away and there is an urgent need to consult with a range of organisations representing minority groups in order to settle on a liaison strategy so that links with local groups can be created in good time.

2. Objectives of local community liaison

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3. Options for taking the work ahead

- 3.1 For 2001 it is envisaged that there will be a more formal structure for consultation than was used in the 1997 Census Test or 1999 Census Rehearsal.
- 3.2 There appear to be three possible consultation options:
 - a national Advisory Group made up of representatives of the major groups;
 - two regional Advisory Groups each made up of representatives of the major groups;
 - separate national Advisory Groups representing a) community groups, b) Local/Health Authorities and c) charities.

4. Potential avenues and issues to be explored

- 4.1 Administrative arrangements for recruitment of Census field staff.
- 4.2 Public relations campaign – arrangements for special circulars and notices publicising the Census.

- 4.3 Opportunities for display of Census material.
- 4.4 Explore the use of Local Authority networking and outreach capabilities to reach community groups.
- 4.5 Outreach to the elderly or disabled through service providers, for example, Age Concern, Scope, Local Associations of Disabled People.
- 4.6 Outreach to council tenants/occupants of council run sheltered housing through Local Authority newsletters.
- 4.7 Outreach to other local community groups through Local Resident Forums.
- 4.8 Racial Equality Councils/Race Equality Networks/LA Umbrella Groups as a means of communicating with ethnic minority groups.

5. Request for comments and assistance

Comments on any aspects of this paper will be welcome. In particular, views are sought on the consultation options at 3.2 above as well as suggestions of potential contacts to join the Advisory Group(s).