



2011 CENSUS ADVISORY GROUPS

Advisory Group Paper AG (05) 01

UPDATE ON TOPICS CONSULTATION

Background

- 1 As part of its research programme for the 2011 Census in England and Wales, ONS launched a programme of user consultation, focused on identifying those topics to be considered for inclusion in the next Census. An ONS Consultation Paper, '*The 2011 Census: initial view on content for England and Wales*', was published on 16 May, and invited responses by 5 August 2005. The programme was launched with a Press Release and received good press coverage.
- 2 To supplement the consultation document, six roadshows were held during June and July in Harrogate, Crewe, London, Northampton, Newcastle and Cardiff with over 300 people attending. Over 1,400 responses, from over 450 individuals/organisations have been received.

Action

- 3 **Advisory Group members are asked to note some of the early messages from consultation.**

Initial summary of response

- 4 An initial scan of the responses shows:
 - that responses have been received on all topics covered in the consultation;
 - the strength of justification varies a lot and some may need follow-up to fully understand the response;
 - there have been good quality responses on all the issues; and
 - there is continuing interest in all the topics previously covered in the 2001 Census.

Basic demographics are required, for example for service provision (including resource allocation), Migration, Ageing population and Housing demand.

Academic qualifications – although poorly answered in 2001, are still the best source of no/low qualification at small area and to identify areas of deprivation

Disability and illness; carers information is used for example, to support service provision, and monitoring equality.

Ethnicity is used for cross-classifying with other variables.

Requests for new information

5 There have been requests for a number of new topics to be included in the Census:

- **Second addresses** – to support coverage; for service provision by, for example, Local Authorities.
- **Visitors** - to support coverage; and may indicate those with no usual address.
- **Sexual orientation** – for service provision and for monitoring equality.
- **Income** – Government departments want data on income in order to target areas of deprivation and accordingly are interested in the lower levels of income distribution. Businesses want data on income to target business services and are interested in full income distribution.
- **Languages spoken** – Language used in home for the purpose of provision of services; Language proficiency, for example, for resource allocation; British Sign Language.
- **Identity categories** – Welsh, Cornish, Kashmiri, Gypsy, Irish Traveller, Arab, Sikh. Request for Welsh/Welsh speaking throughout the UK.

Next Steps

6 The process for assessing responses is for ONS to:

- summarise requirements for each topic/question;
- assess against the criteria set out in the consultation document;
- review summaries with ONS topic experts;
- hold internal UK workshop on findings and draft response;

7 This process will take until spring 2006 when a summary of the responses and the ONS view of the likely content of the 2011 Census will be published. There will also be engagement with census user groups and government departments.

Questionnaire constraints

- 8 There are, however, always demands for more questions than can be accommodated on a self-completion questionnaire. There are a number of constraints such as the burden on the public and cost, and a number of difficult trade-offs will have to be made. It is likely that the questionnaire design will be broadly similar to that for 2001 with a page of household questions and three pages per person. Demand for new information may mean, however, that some questions from 2001 will be lost.
- 9 Question development and testing has already started, and ONS is aiming to produce a draft Census questionnaire for the 2007 Test by June 2006.

ONS
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