

Field Operation

September 2011

What did we set out to achieve?

- A national operation
- But one that could be optimised locally



Building from 2001

- Lessons from 2001 informed design of 2011
 - Postal operations
 - Recruitment, training and payroll
 - Inequitable work loads for field staff
 - Little management information
 - Large variability in response rates



Main innovations for 2011

- Address register
- Posted out questionnaires
- Questionnaire tracking
- Dedicated staff
- Flexible field force
- Internet completion
- Outsourced recruitment, payroll and training



Dedicated Staff

- Separate roles
 - Liaison and engagement:
 - area managers, community advisors
 - Census operation
 - area managers, coordinators, special enumerators, collectors
 - CCS
 - regional managers, team managers, interviewers
 - Non-Compliance
 - coordinators, non-compliance officers, non-compliance assistants
- Focus on follow-up

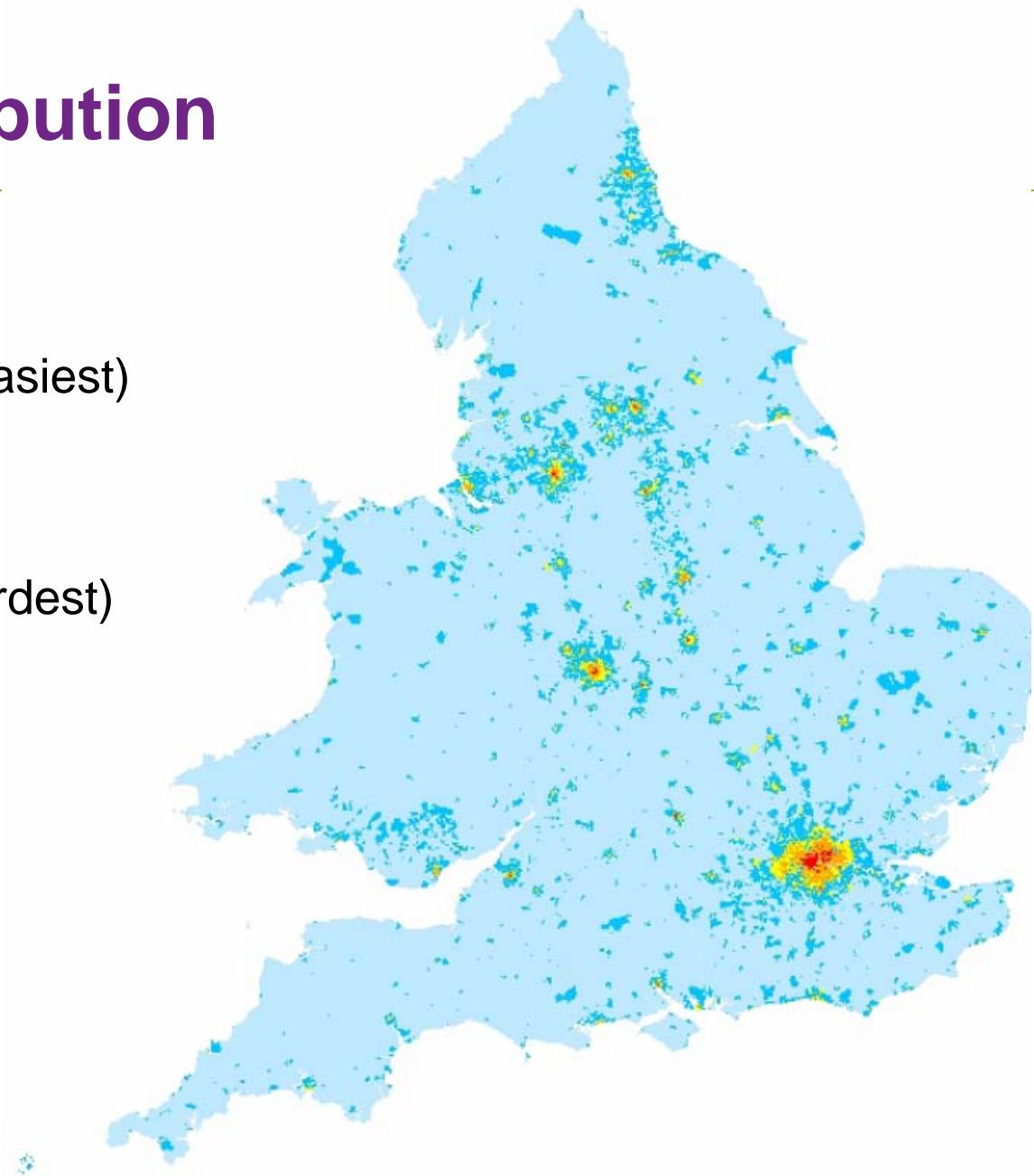
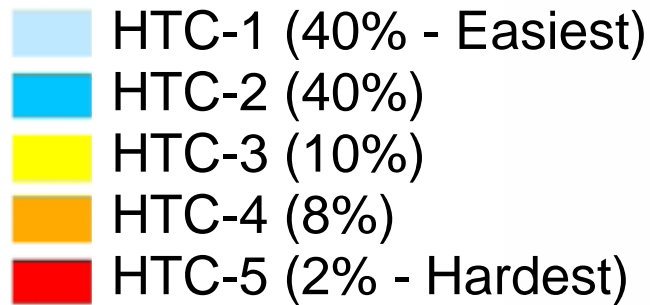
How many collectors and where?

- Field workload allocation model
 - Determined the amount of follow up to achieve minimum return rate thresholds
- Numerous drivers but three main ones:
 - Rate of return without intervention
 - how likely it is that a household in a given area will respond before follow up starts (day 10)
 - Success at follow up
 - how successful each attempt at follow up will be
 - Number of attempts
 - how long each visit takes

Hard to Count Index

- How likely it is that a household in a given area will respond
- Based on current values of factors associated with poor response in 2001
 - ethnicity, unemployment, age, housing density
- Five categories
 - HTC 1: most likely to respond
 - HTC 5: least likely to respond

HTC Distribution



Staff Numbers

- Cautious approach
 - Under estimated the day 10 return rate
 - Over estimated number of staff needed
 - by 10% in HTC5
 - by 5% in HTC4
 - Under estimated number of visits probable per hour
 - Over estimated the detrimental impact of post out
 - Made no allowance for impact of
 - media/ advertising
 - community support



Overall Staff Numbers

- About 35,000 staff for main operation
 - Almost 29,000 field staff just for follow up
- Over five million hours of staff time altogether
 - Almost three times as many hours dedicated to follow-up compared to 2001
- Nearly 5,000 staff for the CCS



Staff Allocation

- More staff allocated to areas where poorer response more likely
- Staff were team based
 - Enabled flexible deployment by their manager



Recruitment (1)

- Over 2,000,000 visits to www.censusjobs.co.uk
- 350,000 applications for jobs
- 70,000 job offers made
 - References sought
 - DS checks requested
- 4,000 training events
 - Role specific classroom training & E-learning

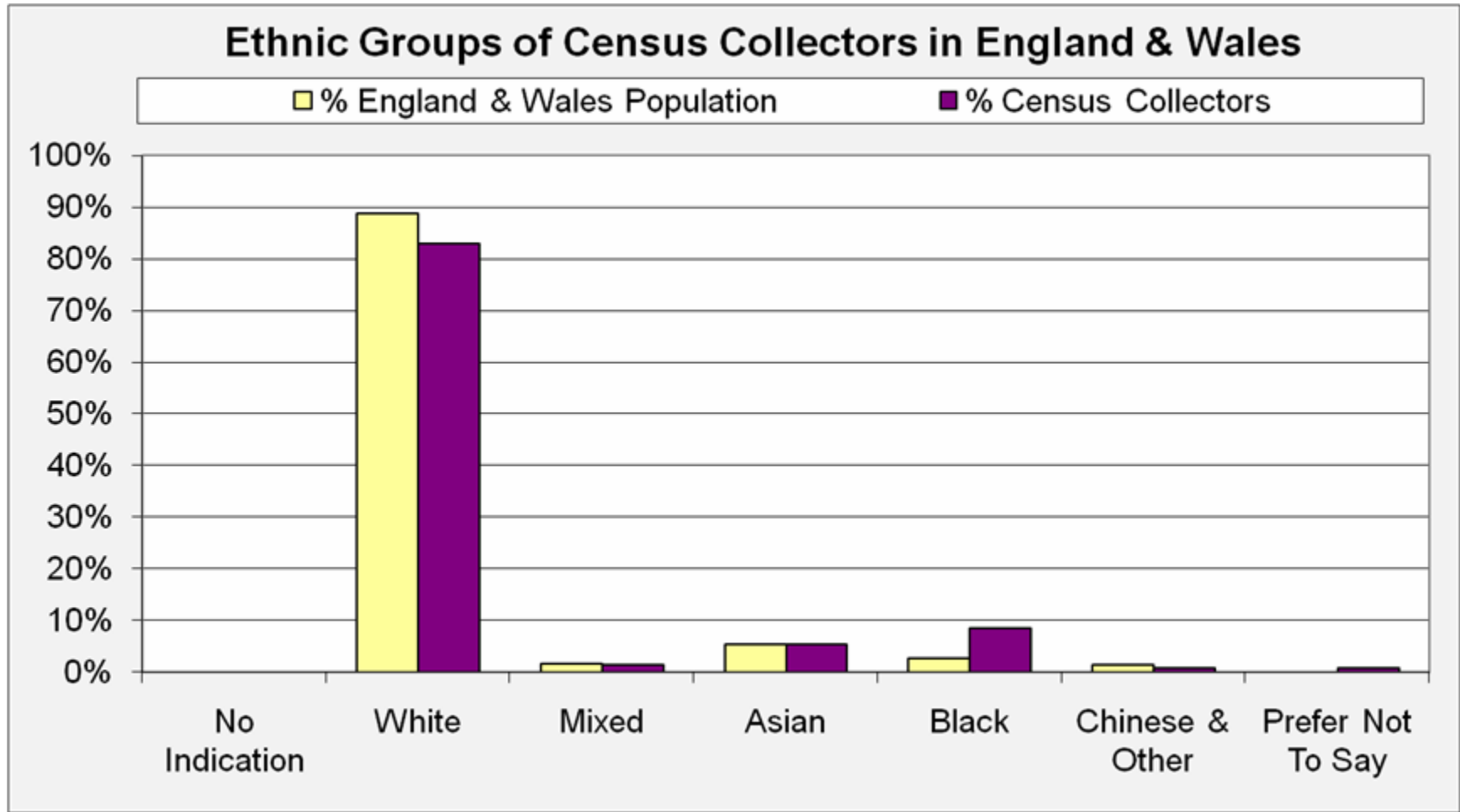
Recruitment (2)

- Lower than expected numbers of collectors in some areas
 - ... over-estimated the number of staff needed in most areas
- What we did
 - Continued recruitment
 - Allocated staff additional hours
 - AM moved staff
 - Some areas had too many staff
 - good return rate and over-recruitment
 - Sent targeted reminder letters
 - Provided support to coordinators from HQ
 - Converted SEs to collectors

Recruitment (3)

- Aimed to get local staff representative of local communities
- Captured details of languages spoken other than English
- Achieved good diversity ...

Good Ethnic Diversity



Delivery – Post Out

- About 25.4 million questionnaires delivered
 - Started three weeks before census day
 - Delivered in just over five days
 - ... much quicker than expected
- UAA – undelivered as addressed
 - About 450,000 returned as UAAs
 - Checking was one of the main functions of early collectors
 - carried out by other staff where recruited numbers of these staff were less than expected

Delivery – Hand Delivery

- Hand delivery
 - To specific population groups and communal establishments
 - eg, gypsy and travellers, homeless
 - eg, universities, prisons, care homes, hospitals, etc
 - By special enumerators
 - Started three weeks before census day
 - 1.7m i-questionnaires delivered altogether
 - to almost 85,000 CEs

Collection

- Post Back
 - First questionnaires received on 7 March
 - Up to 40 vehicles delivered to UKDC every day
- Internet
 - About 16% of total returns



Follow up (1)

- Day 10 returns much better than expected
 - Expected 69%
 - Actual 76%
- QT identified addresses from which no response had been received

Every questionnaire had a unique id number and bar code



Household Questionnaire
England
Office for National Statistics

THE OCCUPIER
LITTLE COTTAGE
11 RAINY ROAD
LITTLE VILLAGE
NEWTOWN
XX1 1YY

0159810301460269

Return to:
FREEPOST 2011 Census,
Processing Centre, UK

Complete online
www.census.gov.uk
Your personal internet access code is:

QQAA QQBB QQCC QQDD QQEE

OR fill in this paper questionnaire and post it back using the pre-paid envelope supplied.

If your address is incorrect or missing, enter your correct address here:

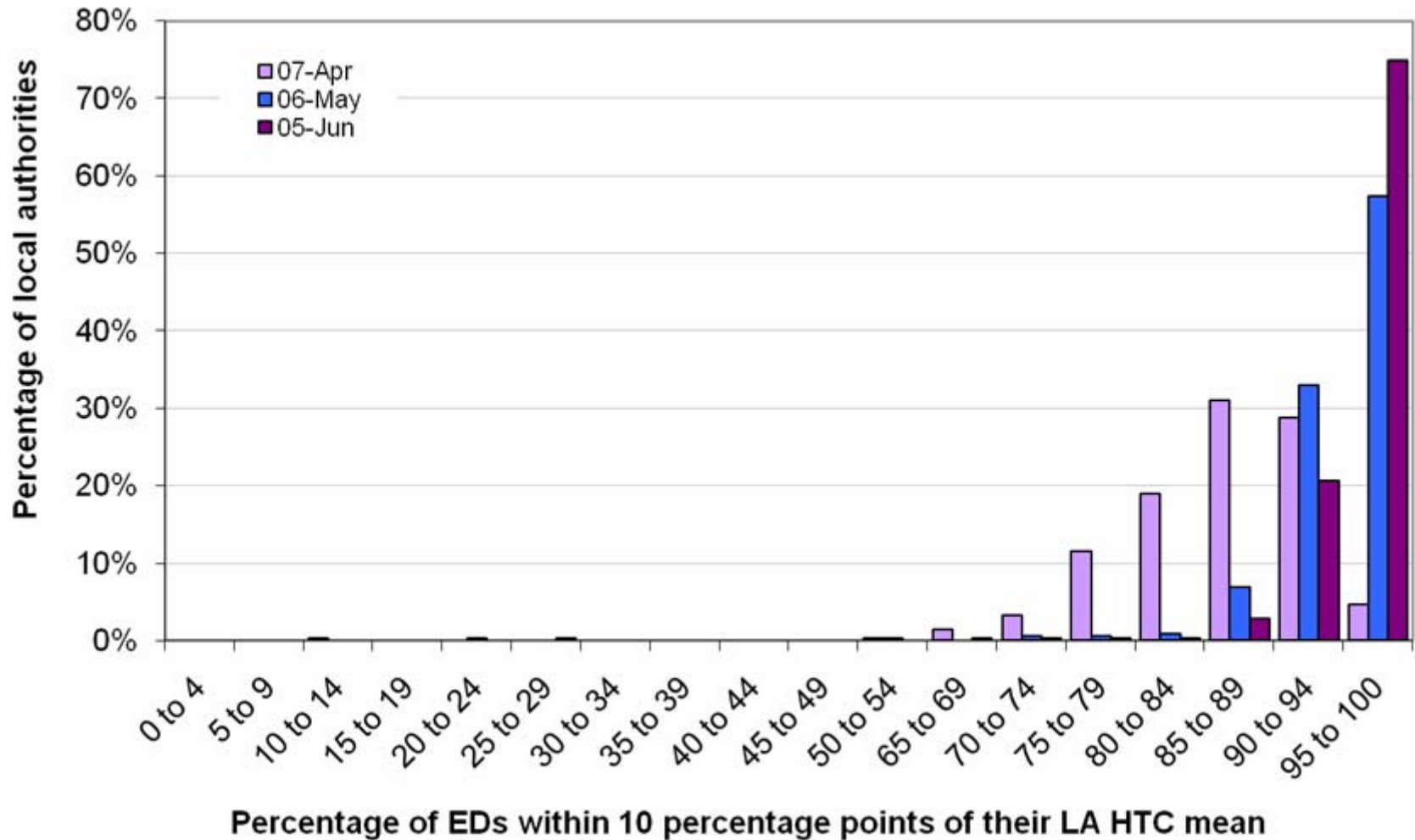
A message to everyone - act now
Everyone should be included in the census - all people, households and overnight visitors.
It is used to help plan and fund services for your community - services like transport, education and health.

Postcode

Follow up (2)

- Two phases
 - Phase 1 – focused on poorest responding areas
 - Staff targeted within a coordinator area
 - Work loads generated by the QT system
 - Designed to increase returns and reduce variability
 - Phase 2 – ensured every single non-responding address was followed up
 - ... often many times to support and encourage completion

Reduced return rate variability



Follow up (3)

- ‘Dummy’ forms
 - Ensure that the status of every address on the address register is recorded
 - Poor completion in 2001
 - Put much earlier in process
 - To improve level of completion



How we also encouraged ...

- **Census help-line**
 - Total of 1.6 million calls
- **Web 'self-help' site**
 - 1.5 million visits
- **Language lines**
 - 32,969 calls to language helplines
 - 7,294 calls to interpretation services
- **Community engagement**
 - National and local activity
- **High profile advertising and media campaign**
 - National, local and minority foci

Actions to Improve Response (1)

- Reminder letters
 - Over 3.5 million letters
 - delivered between 30 March and 5 May
 - multiple letters to some areas with increasing message strength
 - Targeted at specific areas
 - those with the lowest return rates
 - ... but also sent to areas where initial levels of recruitment were lower than expected
 - to manage variability within an LA

Actions to Improve Response (2)

- Targeted letters
 - Indications are that this worked
 - return rates increased by up to 4% in targeted areas
 - ... *not all may be attributed to the letters*
 - Impact of letters is also reflected in the profile of requests for additional questionnaires and supporting documentation

Actions to Improve Response (3)

- Extension to advertising in poorer responding areas
 - S and W Wales, NW England, London
- Enhanced media activity
- Extension to 'purple bus' tour



Actions to Improve Response (4)

- Extended follow-up activity
 - Identified areas where further follow-up would be useful
 - Extended by 2 days
 - Extended in 116 LAs
 - Criteria driven to try to ensure the Census targets were achieved

Local Challenges

- Some completely unique to one area, others localised but seen in different places, e.g.
 - Large numbers of access-controlled buildings
 - Areas of densely populated Jewish communities
 - Large numbers of caravan parks, holiday and second homes
- Addressed using different measures, e.g.
 - Area Manager LA and community engagement
 - Maximising field staff “skills” and working patterns
 - Completion events

Universities

- Considered very challenging
 - Students historically difficult to count
 - Term time known to be problematic
 - Some finished weeks before census day and not returning until after follow-up has finished
 - Disparate and complex nature of living accommodation
 - Difficult to track the questionnaires in large, complex halls

Universities

- 2009 rehearsal
 - Just 5% returns from one of the universities in rehearsal
 - Major re-work of processes and procedures



Universities

- 8 universities finishing before 18 March
 - Separate enumeration process
 - Agreed locally by AM with university
- Process to track questionnaires was designed and implemented



Universities

- Some problems encountered
 - Duplicate i-forms and H forms
 - These have mostly been retrieved and deactivated
 - Internal QA will also carry out adjustments
 - Initially low return rates
 - Boosted by completion events
 - Extension to SE period for some universities
- Early return rate indications are encouraging



CCS

- Similar approach to 2001
 - Because it worked well
- But ...
 - Stratified the sample using the HTC categories
 - greater sample in those areas where response expected to be poorest
 - Process to allocate additional sample in areas where response below that expected
 - almost 400 extra postcodes
 - almost 6,000 addresses

CCS

- National CCS response rate about 90%
 - Equivalent to 2001
- Significant achievement
 - Voluntary survey
 - 'Harder' sample than in 2001
 - Increased public apathy (falling response rates to ONS social surveys)

CCS Non-Response Actions

- Targeted letters
 - About 1,500 letters sent
- Telephone capture
 - Offered in 71 workloads
 - specific areas where contact was the problem
- Extension to survey period
 - First extension in 360 workloads – 86 LAs
 - Second extension in 243 workloads – 80 LAs
 - Third extension in 66 workloads – 14 LAs
 - extended in these areas by just over 2 weeks

CCS Non-Response Actions

- Post back questionnaire
 - Maintained timing within process despite extension
 - retain processing window
 - Expected about 5,000
 - in line with 2001 returns
 - Received over 18,000
 - added 3% to response rates overall
 - ... only just made the processing cut-off deadline

So did it work?

- Confident we've hit the '94% national response rate' target
- Confident we've hit the 'over 80% in every LA' target
- Confident less than 10% of LAs below 90% response rate
- Inner London boroughs 5 to 15 percentage points better than 2001
- Confident that the voluntary CCS has 90% response rate
- A great platform for the quality assurance phase

Questions

