

COMMUNITY LIAISON

1. This paper is for information. The paper updates Advisory Groups on the progress made on the community liaison since the last round of meetings.

February 2000

Community Liaison

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper updates Advisory Groups on the progress made on community liaison since the last round of meetings.

2. Progress

2.1 Roadshows

- 2.1.1 A series of roadshows have been held throughout the country to discuss the community liaison programme with colleagues from local authorities, health authorities, advisory groups, voluntary and community organisations. The aim of the roadshows is to raise awareness about the Census and identify ways of providing practical help to community groups as well as identify how community groups can provide an input to the census programme.

- 2.1.2 Roadshows were held in: Cardiff, Mold, Taunton, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Cambridge, Nottingham, London (3 events) and Leeds starting on 2 February and finishing on 8 March. Attendance figures range from 18 at Mold to 60 (per event) in London.

- 2.1.3 The roadshows have generally been well received, and many organisations have offered help in promoting and facilitating the Census. Issues raised include adult literacy, recruitment on ethnic staff, confidentiality and the provision of interpreters.

- 2.1.4 All contacts and offers of help will be put onto a community contacts database to be held by ONS and will also be made available to senior field staff as a key part of planning and carrying out the Census.

2.2 Language Strategy Group

- 2.2.1 To help formulate the 2001 language strategy an appeal was placed on both the ONS and Local Government Association Website asking for help and this has been successful in identifying offers of support.

- 2.2.2 Many local authorities replied giving details of the languages spoken in their area and the translating and interpreting services they provide. Several offered to share their experiences and join a group to discuss the Census language strategy.

- 2.2.3 The first meeting of the language strategy group was held on 21 January. The group is chaired by ONS and will be instrumental in providing information on language issues that affect the Census including; translation of the Census form and supporting documentation into a number of languages other than English; the availability, use and operation of interpreting services; data collection methods; how the Census call centre can help and advice on arrangements for liaison with organisations interested in language issues.

2.3 National Charities

- 2.3.1 Following the meeting with national charities on 21 September, initial discussions have taken place with RNID, RNIB, SCOPE and RADAR about opportunities for publicising the Census by using the newsletters produced by these organisations.

2.3.2 Additionally, practical measures for assisting those with impaired sight and hearing have been discussed with RNID and RNIB; these include the production of information in Braille and large print, audio tapes, the provision of minicom or 'phone as part of the census helpline, and the supply of British Sign Language interpreters.

2.4 **LARIA Presentation**

2.4.1 Pat Mann has accepted an invitation to speak to the annual LARIA conference on "involving the community in 2001 Census" in March 2000.

Pat Mann
24 February 2000