

CENSUS ADVISORY GROUP

AG (10) 08 Local Authority Engagement

2011 Census Local Authority Liaison

Summary

1. Further to the Advisory Group Paper AG (09) 14, this paper updates members on the actions taken and progress made in engaging with local authorities (LAs) in England and Wales.
2. Advisory Group members are invited to note progress on these issues and activities and to comment where necessary.

Reaching all LA

3. **Census Regional Champions (CRCs)** Following on from the very successful events in 2009, a further round of regional events for local authority census liaison managers (CLMs) and Assistant CLMs took place this spring. These focused on: feedback and lessons learned from the 2009 Rehearsal; communications with LAs; development of census local partnership plans; community engagement; recruitment; quality assurance; and address register development. Local authority feedback on concerns and opportunities has been collected to inform future plans and responses to questions raised are being prepared. The CRCs are now arranging CLM/ACLM meetings within their region and providing feedback to ONS on these discussions.
4. Over 95% of LAs have responded positively and nominated staff to fill census liaison manager (CLM) or Assistant CLM roles. A number of visits to local authorities have continued to clarify the roles and answer any queries raised by authorities. ONS is also attending the regional working groups led by CLM/ACLMs to present updates on census preparations as well as gathering knowledge and feedback from ACLMs. A number of county councils such as Suffolk and Kent are coordinating discussions between authorities in their area. ONS has continued to meet with representatives from county councils and the County Council Network to explore further opportunities for counties to support census.
5. A programme of engagement through third party communication channels has continued over recent months. This has included frequent engagement with the Local Government Association in both England and in Wales, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and SOLACE Wales, the Improvement &

Development Agency (IDeA), the Local Authority Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) and the National Association of Local Authorities (NALC). This programme will continue over the next 12 months, raising awareness of the Census among local authority audiences before the awareness campaign for the general public begins. ONS has met with local authority councillors at these events and in response to feedback, we have produced a councillor handbook to outline key census messages and outline its importance to local authorities and communities. This has received excellent feedback.

6. ONS is continuing to provide regular updates for CLM/ACLMs via the census regional champions and the online census communities of practice (COPs) hosted by IDeA. Since January 2010, we have increased the frequency of these to monthly. We are providing answers to local authority questions on the COPs and these now number 10-15 a day on average. Standard presentations and papers are also uploaded onto the site. Almost 200 local authorities are logged on as users of the CLM/ACLM community, whilst over 260 LAs subscribe to the 2011 Census and address register communities.

Local authority partnership guide

7. The local authority partnership guide for CLM/ ACLMs sets out seven strands of partnership working that ONS is asking authorities to support, including address register development, enumeration intelligence, identifying and developing community contacts, etc. In response to feedback that a significant proportion of local authority officers hadn't accessed the guide on our census website, we are working to improve awareness of its content and application. The guide will help local authorities to plan and resource their census activities in partnership with ONS for 2010/2011 and 2011/2012. We have taken on board the comments of local authorities and the LGA in England and Wales to revise the guide. An updated version will be available at the end of April.

LA Communications toolkit

8. ONS has developed a local authority communications toolkit to help councils publicise key messages and keep residents and communities informed of the 2011 Census. The toolkit sets out core scripts for local authority websites, newsletters, news releases, as well as FAQs, standard presentations and publicity materials. The toolkit, together with other support materials, is available on the census website. It was developed in consultation with our local authority communications advisory group. ONS has been meeting with local authority communications officers through their regional networks to explain the purpose of the toolkit

Census local partnership guide

9. Following their planned appointment in August 2010, census area managers will meet with CLM/ACLMs to discuss and agree the local actions needed to ensure a successful census in each local authority area. These actions will be set out in a census local partnership plan (CLPP). The CLPP will set out the activity against each of the 7 partnership strands as well as communication arrangements between the area manager and each of the local authorities they are responsible for. The CLPP will incorporate the community plans being developed for each black and ethnic

minority (BME) population group. The CLPP will be agreed with the CLM of the relevant district/unitary council in consultation with any relevant county council. ONS is producing draft guidance and template for the completion of CLPPs and we plan to send these to LAs in May for consultation.

Local authority advisory groups

10. ONS has now held three meetings of both the LA Communications Advisory Group (LACAG) and Operational Management Advisory Group (LAOMAG). Both groups have been instrumental in helping us to shape and fine tune our census preparations. LACAG membership is composed of LA communication managers and census liaison managers and advises us on local authority communication activity. It helped ONS with the development of a communications toolkit for local authorities and this was published in January 2010.
11. The LA Operational Management Advisory Group provides local authority feedback and advice on 2011 Census preparations and field operations processes and procedures. The group has advised ONS on a range of issues including: field force allocations; the LA partnership guide; the community advisor role; development of the census local partnership plans; and recruitment, particularly LA secondments to the area manager position. Membership of the group has been extended to include representatives from a district council and county council.

Address register development

12. Some 90% of local authorities returned their resolved address anomalies and this helped significantly in the development of a national address list for the 2011 Census. ONS is now carrying out field work to address check 15% of postcodes in England and Wales. This activity will continue until the end of August and is focusing on those areas where we have least confidence in the accuracy of the address list and on identifying the details of communal establishments such as student halls of residence, secure establishments, military bases, hostels, residential care homes, etc. We will be asking the address check coordinators to make contact with ACLMs to make them aware of planned field activity.

LA quality assurance studies

13. ONS is carrying out local authority quality assurance studies to help us improve the accuracy of census population estimates and to consider administrative data sources held by local authorities. For those local authorities that have experienced the largest demographic change since 2001 and for which enumeration is anticipated to be most difficult, the census quality assurance team will be undertaking quality assurance studies to understand the complex issues in these areas to an earlier timeframe. The studies start in April following evaluation of a pilot exercise in 10 LAs from January – March 10. The 10 pilot authorities were: Camden, Cambridge City, Ceredigion, Hackney, Kensington & Chelsea, Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Oxford and Westminster. Further information is available in the quality assurance section of the highlight report AG (10) 01.