

Preparing for the 2011 Census - Scoping for Assistant Census Liaison Manager role

Every 10 years the Office for National Statistics (ONS) plans and carries out a count of all people and households in England and Wales. Working with the ONS, Local Authority's provide vital local area expertise into this process. The information the census provides allows central and local government, health authorities and many other organisations to target their resources more effectively and to plan future delivery of housing, education, health and transport services. The next Census will be carried out on 27th March 2011

To ensure effective implementation and ultimately an accurate count of its population, the ONS recommend that local authorities should appoint a Census Liaison Manager (CLM) and Assistant Census Liaison Manager (ACLM), by April 2009, two years prior to the Census. Their roles include:

- Raising the profile of the Census within the LA to achieve "management buy-in"
- Information gathering to create local area profiles
- Publicity – raising awareness among residents of the borough

In 2007 the ONS carried out a Census Test comprising of five chosen LAs, one of which was Camden. The following paper summarises Camden's experience to ascertain the requirements for the two roles and highlights sources of guidance to help start Southwark's preparation for the 2011 Census. This paper was prepared for and presented to the Corporate Governance Panel in January 2009.

Key points advised by the ONS in preparation for 2011 Census

- LAs are advised to appoint a Census Liaison and Assistant Liaison Manager by April 2009. Guidance of these roles will be available from the ONS by February.
- LAs were advised to have begun to clean up their LLPGs from October 2008 as the ONS will start providing LAs with address queries from February 2009 and these are expected to be resolved by December 2009.

Census date: 27th March 2011

London Borough of Camden's 2007 Census test

Camden's experience can provide a good insight for the 2011 Census preparation for Southwark. The majority of the tasks were managed by the Census Liaison Officer (Census Assistant Liaison Manager) and so this overview also provides the scope of the role.

The 2007 Census Test in Camden involved several members of council staff, including:

Chief Executive
Assistant Director – Planning (Census Liaison Manager - CLM)
Census Liaison Officer (Assistant Census Liaison Manager - ACLM)
Land and Property Gazetteer (LPG) Manager and an LPG officer
Council Tax Manager
Electoral Services Manager and an Electoral Services officer
District Housing officers
Development Monitoring officer
Development Control officers
Community Safety Manager
The Census Test day was 13 May 2007.

Census Liaison Managers

The first act of the ONS/local authority partnership was to establish a CLM and ACLM. The ONS' intention was that the CLM would be a person of sufficient seniority in the local authority hierarchy who could bring sufficient weight to bear across the Council, to ensure data provision or assistance. In Camden this person was the Assistant Director - Planning, a member of the Extended Camden Management Team. The ACLM is an officer-level contact and who is expected to do the bulk of the work. This person was already the Census Liaison Officer since 2000.

The following were the main tasks undertaken by Camden, the ACLM in particular, in preparation for the Census test.

1) Raising the profile

Camden's Chief Executive, Moira Gibb, originally agreed to Camden's involvement in the Census Test in April 2005. In April 2006, as most of the work started for the Census Test, it was appropriate that the Chief Executive was brought up to date with the latest plan of action and to achieve "management buy-in". It can be assumed that the CLM was responsible for continuing this task although Camden found that this person was not senior enough and suggest that the CLM should be the Assistant Chief Executive to in order to achieve full "management buy-in" across the council.

2) Information gathering (Duration 6-12 months)

A major part of the job of preparation for the Census Test was to gather local information together to create local **Area Profiles**. These were designed to give ONS more local information and to provide Census Test field staff with a better understand of their patch. There was particular focus on:

- **Address check** - Crucial to the Census Test and 2011 Census strategy of posting-out questionnaires. The ONS compared their Address list against Camden's Local Land Property Gazetteers (LLPG) and will rely on all LA's to provide an up-to-date LLPG for this purpose.
- **Communal establishments** – 5% of Camden's population
- **Electoral Registration statistics** – to locate hard to reach areas and large households
- **Enumerator safety** – electoral services and Community safety advised about dangerous areas
- **Council Tax** – ONS requested for the number of second homes on the borough.
- **Gated communities** – Information on the large number of flats/apartments protected by gates or entry-phone systems.
- **Housing Change**. Development monitoring data used to gather information about planned developments between the time of the address check and the date of the Census Test.
- **Languages** - Camden's annual schools language survey, general information from Camden's Interpretation and Translation Service.
- **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** - There are many HMOs in the borough, which are required to be licensed by Camden's Environmental Health.
- **Mobile/temporary accommodation/Hotel's and B&B's** – located by GIS/LLPG
- **Community contacts** – list of community groups in the borough. This was used to guide the Census Team Managers to find community contacts in their areas.

3) Establishing the field force

Managed by ONS who outsourced to Hays. They advertised among community groups and also obtained motivated people who had worked on the electoral roll canvas and 2001 census.

4) On going liaison

Camden provided support and liaison in the build up to and duration of the Census Test: the ACLM attended Census Team Manager meetings and enumerator training to provide support and advice. Camden provided bulk storage of Census Test questionnaires and stationery, as well as providing parking dispensations to aid with logistics.

5) Publicity

The original plan was for ONS to provide detailed publicity for the Census Test and that the CLM in the Test areas would arrange for placement of material in staff and resident's newsletters and to provide contacts with local media. Letters were sent to participating households instead.

6) Post-Census

After the Census the ACLM could take the lead role in feedback, data analysis, raising awareness and local dissemination.

Information sources for LAs

The ONS are currently writing a guidance document for LAs informing them of the roles, responsibilities, skills and experience needed for the CLM and ACLM positions. This should be available in January/February 09.

Higher level stakeholder engagement will be attained through 59 Regional Champions who will encourage LAs and related strategic partners to work with ONS to deliver a successful 2009 rehearsal and 2011 Census and to have increased confidence in the results. The ONS and or Regional Champions are due to write to LA Chief Executives shortly (date not known due to delays). The London Regional Champion is the Chief Executive of Lewisham.

Other stakeholder partnerships formed with the ONS include:

- SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers) and
- CLIP (Central and Local Information Partnership) which have formed a CLIP Census sub-group to provide a communication channel between the ONS and LAs.

2011 Census Key current/recent activities

2007 Census test

Date: May 2007

Purpose: Operational test of field procedures-outsourcing recruitment training and pay

Statistical test of response rates

-Income question v no income question

-Postout v hand delivery

- Conducted in five Local Authorities: Bath & North East Somerset, Camden, Liverpool, Stoke on Trent, Carmarthenshire (Wales)
- Questionnaires to 100,000 households during May 2007
- Many other small scale tests done and planned

Key Findings from test

Postal delivery is viable; only small drop in response rates, but recoverable at follow up using a proportion of the post out savings

- Inclusion of an income question is not viable; 2.3% drop in response, significant cost to recover -poor public reaction- poor data quality
- Outsourcing recruitment, training and pay is viable
- Field design (procedures and systems) viable

2009 Census Rehearsal

Rehearsal Date -11 October 2009

- Fully integrated rehearsal of field operation (including supporting systems), data capture and coding
- Aim to have near-final systems going into the Rehearsal

•135,600 households: Lancaster (61,500 –whole LA)•Newham (40,000)•Isle of Anglesey, Wales (34,100)

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