

Data Management and Analysis Group

Census Team Workplan 2008-09



DMAG Briefing 2008-14

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For more information please contact:

Eileen Howes
Data Management and Analysis Group
Greater London Authority
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA

Tel: 020 7983 4657
e-mail: eileen.howes@london.gov.uk

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Introduction

The GLA Census Team is part of the Data Management and Analysis Group within the Corporate Services Directorate. The Team currently has four posts:

- Principal Research and Statistical Analyst - **Eileen Howes** - who leads the Census Team and also manages the SASPAC and General Statistics Teams
- Senior Research and Statistical Analyst - **Bill Armstrong** - who specialises in mapping, SASPAC training for the London Census Consortium, and a range of technical issues relating to the large data holdings
- Senior Research and Statistical Analyst - **Giorgio Finella** - who specialises in the Samples of Anonymised Records and a range of technical issues relating to the large data holdings (Giorgio will be leaving his post at the end of April 2008)
- Research and Statistical Analyst - **Richard Cameron** - who specialises in Census analysis and data holdings

The Census Team's main clients are:

- Mayor's Office
- London Plan Team
- Equalities Team
- Policy Support Unit
- Other Teams in DMAG
- GLA Directorates
- Greater London Assembly
- Functional Bodies
- The London Boroughs and members of the London Census Consortium (including London Councils and the London Health Observatory)
- Other local authorities throughout England and Wales

Academics, the media and various other organisations seek the advice of the Census Team on a range of Census issues. The GLA Census Team is recognised, along with other DMAG colleagues, as a nationally renowned team of experts on all things related to the Census of Population and its use. The Team has a close two-way relationship with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) who also make use of our extensive knowledge and experience of census data and fieldwork.

What we do

The Team manages the GLA Information Scheme Number 1 and the London Census Consortium - a legally binding agreement between the GLA and the London Boroughs plus agreements between the core GLA, Transport for London, the London Development Agency, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, the Metropolitan Police Authority, the London Health

Observatory and London Councils. The consortium purchase of data, analysis and other support services was agreed and fully funded by the listed organisations to provide them all with access to the best census expertise they could get and which was seen to provide them all with very good value for money. The arrangement was consistent with the advice given by the Audit Commission in its occasional paper 'Numbers that Count: Making good use of the 1991 Census'.

The Team manages, maintains and provides access to the massive data holdings arising from a number of Censuses. In electronic form this data goes back to 1981 at very detailed area levels for London and the rest of the country. This includes all the nationally comparable standard datasets at all geographical levels as well as all the associated maps of administrative boundaries for London (many of which are only available on paper or microfilm) and the huge number of specially commissioned tabulations for London since 1961. Access is provided to some fascinating basic data for London going back to 1801.

Another major role for the Team is to provide an extensive range of Briefings and reports analysing the Census data for London. Many of these are undertaken by members of the Census Team but others are produced by other members of DMAG - the range of census data is so wide that the Team could not produce all the analysis by itself.

Census data is provided to a wide range of customers within the GLA and outside. Data is provided to support the London Plan and other Mayoral Strategies; to support other areas of work such as the demographic projections; equalities work in the GLA; some projects carried out by GLA Economics, the Policy Support Unit and others within the GLA. Data is also provided to the Functional Bodies, the London Boroughs, the London Health Observatory, London Councils, a number of academics and organisations and a range of other London stakeholders.

Advice, training and support are offered in the availability and use of all census data to the GLA family and other members of the Census Consortium. In particular, regular training sessions are offered in use of SASPAC, the software that is used throughout the public sector to access census data.

The Team is very heavily involved in planning for the 2011 Census in a number of ways. There is the involvement with ONS in the consultation and planning process and our role as experts in the field which is used by ONS and others on a regular basis. This allows the Team to promote the needs of London from the 2011 Census and to ensure that they are not submerged by the differing demands from Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and even the rest of England when plans are being made and finalised. In addition there is currently much work being done to promote the proposal for a 2011 Census Consortium along the lines of the 2001 Consortium which, so far, has been supported in principle by officers in the London Boroughs and London Councils. This plan will now be taken further by putting more formal proposals to the Mayor's Office, Functional Bodies, London Councils, Borough Leaders and Chief Executives.

The Team also deals with a range of ad hoc inquiries, Freedom of Information requests and other requests for work that may be accommodated.

Representation and networking

As part of the role of analysing and reporting on what the census data tells us about London and the wider role of representing London-wide interests, the Leader of the Census Team is a member of:

ONS CLIP Census Sub Group
ONS UK Census Development Methodology Advisory Committee
ONS Microdata Release Panel
ONS Academic Advisory Group on Ethnicity, National Identity, Language and Religion
ONS Approved Researcher Working Group
ONS Microdata Standards Working Group

A number of the Census Team staff are also members of:

The Royal Statistical Society
The British Society for Population Studies

The Team participates in a range of meetings, doing presentations at a range of events. The Team is involved with a large number of events outside City Hall and provides speakers on a wide range of Census issues for events, in particular those sponsored or arranged by the Royal Statistical Society and the Office for National Statistics, throughout the year.

The Team organises the long running Census Users' Group which meets quarterly. This meeting has been run by the GLA since its creation in 2000, and was formerly run by the London Research Centre and the GLC. London Census Users have been meeting and benefitting from this type of collaboration for many years.

2008/9 Priorities

During 2008/9 the main priorities for the Census Team will be to make progress with the plans for a 2011 Census consortium arrangement with the GLA, Functional Bodies and the London Boroughs, and to provide data, training, advice and expertise on all aspects of the Census of Population for the GLA family, the London boroughs and others.

Specific items for 2008/9 will include:

- Push forward with plans for a 2011 Census Consortium along the lines of the 2011 Census Information Scheme and Consortium Purchase arrangement
- Respond to consultations on the 2011 Census so that the specific data needs of London are recognised
- Continue to meet the obligations and commitments made under the 2001 Census Information Scheme
- Improve and expand access to the archive of census data held by the GLA, especially the small amount of pre-1951 data that we now have relatively easy access to
- Produce a number of Briefings including one on industry from the 2001 Census data and four Census Information Notes

- Represent the needs of London in ongoing discussions and consultations on the 2011 Census
- Continue to provide data, support, training, advice, analysis to London stakeholders and to respond to new and topical demands for data as they arise
- Hold four Census Users' Group Meetings during the year

Dissemination of our work and outputs

Census Users' Group meetings are held quarterly. They are a very good mechanism for keeping in touch with other London Census users and this is the group through which formal decisions are made for the Census Consortium.

The Team produces a varying number of Briefings each year relating to the Census of Population and gives internal presentations as well speaking at meetings and conferences organised by people such as ONS, the Royal Statistical Society, the BPS amongst others. The Team responds to inquiries coming from the media, FoI requests, requests from the London Assembly and Mayoral questions.

The Census extranet is updated regularly to provide the latest Census information, dates and minutes of meetings plus any other relevant information.

Data Supply

Mainly from ONS, old Census publications, microfilmed data and other archived data but also some from the Census Offices in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Other data sources we deal with include PayCheck from CACI, boundary data related to censuses from Ordnance Survey and a wide range of other possible sources.

Research and Publications Programme

There are a few ongoing projects that are pushed forward when time and technology allows. These include:

Historical data for London

A major ongoing project is to improve access to all the historical census data held by the Census Team. This is, in effect, London's archive of census data. Recent additions to this have been Census reports from the 1931 Census for London plus on-line access to Census reports going back to 1801. Expanding access to data on London back that far leads inevitably to consideration of the London boundary and how it has changed over time. The Census Team is beginning to acquire copies of boundaries for London going back as far as the 1901 Census and plan to investigate the best way of making use of these alongside the fascinating data on London that has recently become available to us.

We are creating pdf versions of some early (1931, 1951 and 1961) published Census reports for our own internal use mainly because some of the books are very old and we do not want to damage them. We access some of the 1961 and 1971 data which is stored on microfilm by using our own microfilm scanner to create jpg images and then OCR software to create Excel files from these jpg images. For some early data we just use paper copies and published reports

which are sometimes the only source. This can, of course, be quite time consuming and is therefore fitted in whenever time becomes available or there is a specific request for historical data. An example of this is the data produced in 2007/8 for the Mayor's Office and the London Suburbs Project, for which we produced data on housing tenure in London from every Census since 1961. Other data was produced, such as employment rates, going back to 1971 and we are investigating how to take this back further.

Improvements in maintenance and storage of the datasets

This is a huge project involving the storage and use of massive datasets and is fundamental to the work of the Census Team. We are constantly striving to improve the way this data is stored and we try to make it more easily accessible, for example by re-working 1981 table layouts to remove unnecessary duplication. Changes are made whenever technological developments make them either necessary or possible.

Housing data for London

We plan to do further analysis of the so far under used housing data from the 2001 Census. This work would look more widely at the range of housing statistics and the household and individual characteristics of people in different types of housing.

Commuting and travel to work

Building on work done in 2007/8, the Census Team has commissioned more detailed data from the 2001 Census via a special licence. The variables requested include: age, gender, ethnicity, occupation and family type by qualification levels and method of travel. The data requested was unrounded, allowing the GLA to define its own geography based on wards.

This will probably be the biggest dataset the GLA have commissioned to date. Each table will contain some 10 million flows with between 100 and 200 million pieces of data.

Further analyses

More Census publications are planned including a profile of Black Caribbeans in London, Housing Tenure Change 1961 to 2001, and an analysis of industry data in London from the Census. Other reports are produced on topics of current relevance and on topics requested by the Mayor or other stakeholders and to fill in any remaining gaps where we think the work would be useful to the GLA.

Publications

A series of Briefings will be produced from the work detailed above. Some are regular bulletins and some will be specific new analyses while a few others are completing work already well under way. The Briefings will include:

- 2001 Census Profiles: Black Caribbeans in London
- Housing Tenure Change in London: 1961 to 2001
- Quality of 2001 Census origin-destination data

- 2001 Census Information Scheme and Consortium Purchase - a summary of how this was set up and operated and whether it was value for money
- Census Information Note 2008-2, a quarterly newsletter for the Census Consortium and others
- Census Information Note 2008-3, a quarterly newsletter for the Census Consortium and others
- Census Information Note 2008-4, a quarterly newsletter for the Census Consortium and others
- Industry in London from the 2001 Census
- Housing in London from the 2001 and earlier Censuses

ICT requirements

The nature of this work is such that our requirements from ICT are unique within the GLA. This poses challenges and problems for us and ICT which we strive to deal with, sometimes successfully and sometimes less so. This is an area which we need to work harder on, especially in the run up to the 2011 Census which will present us with some new and some familiar challenges when we add another huge amount of data to the collection.

Technological developments

We try to keep up to date with and take advantage of changes in technology - examples such as acquiring the microfilm scanner and the new software to create Excel files from jpg images are two small examples - to improve access for all users and we will continue to do this.

Regular Briefings from the GLA Data Management and Analysis Group (DMAG)

Recent DMAG Briefings 2008:

2008-01	Census Information Note 2008-1	Eileen Howes
2008-02	PayCheck 2007	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-03	GLA 2007 Round Ethnic Group Projections	Baljit Bains
2008-04	Council Tax Analysis	Elizabeth Williams
2008-05	A Profile of Londoners by Country of Birth	Lorna Spence
2008-06	Claimant Count Model 2008: Technical Note	Lorna Spence
2008-07	GLA 2007 Round Demographic Projections	John Hollis
2008-08	Greater London Authority Constituency Profiles	Elizabeth Williams & Caroline Hall
2008-09	Family Resources Survey 2005/06: Results for London	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-10	London Borough Migration 2001-06	John Hollis
2008-11	Social Exclusion Data Team Workplan 2008/09	Social Exclusion Data Team
2008-12	Demography Team Workplan 2008/09	John Hollis
2008-13	Education Team Workplan 2008/09	David Ewens
2008-14	Census Team Workplan 2008/09	Eileen Howes

Recent DMAG Briefings 2007:

2006-23	A 2001 Census Ward Atlas of London	Census Team
2007-16	Key Facts for Diverse Communities: Ethnicity and Faith	Baljit Bains
2007-17	A profile of Londoners by housing tenure	Lorna Spence
2007-18	Londoners and the Labour Market: key facts	Lorna Spence
2007-19	Benefit Claimants 2006	Lovedeep Vaid
2007-20	The Worker Registration Scheme	Elizabeth Williams
2007-21	Economic activity rates in London	Richard Cameron/Giorgio Finella
2007-22	ONS model based income estimates 2004-05	Lovedeep Vaid
2007-23	Borough Poverty Profiles vNov 2007	Lovedeep Vaid
2007-24	Counting the population	John Hollis (Editor)
2007-25	Census Information Note 2007-2	Giorgio Finella

A full list of DMAG Briefings is available to internal customers through the GLA Intranet; otherwise please contact dmag.info@london.gov.uk. A CD containing PDF versions of the Briefings, or hard copies, can be provided.

Contact details for the Data Management and Analysis Group are as follows:

DMAG Contacts

Rob Lewis (020 7983 4652) is **Head of the Data Management and Analysis Group**. *rob.lewis@london.gov.uk*

Eileen Howes (020 7983 4657) is responsible for the work of the **Census, SASPAC and General Statistics Teams** and particularly for Census analysis. *eileen.howes@london.gov.uk*

John Hollis (020 7983 4604) is responsible for the work of the **Demography, Education and Social Exclusion Teams**, and particularly for demographic modelling. *john.hollis@london.gov.uk*

Gareth Baker (020 7983 4965) is the **GIS Manager** with responsibility for leading work on **GI** including strategy, the development of data holdings, analysis and dissemination. *gareth.baker@london.gov.uk*

Steve Forgan (020 7983 4185) is the interim **London Analyst Support Site (LASS) Manager** and is responsible for **data exchange & analysis projects** for crime reduction in London. *stephen.forgan@london.gov.uk*

Kelly Rump (020 7983 4655) is the **Business Coordinator**. *kelly.rump@london.gov.uk*

Census, SASPAC and General Statistics Teams

Eileen Howes (020 7983 4657) is responsible for the work of the **Census, SASPAC and General Statistics Teams** and particularly for Census analysis. *eileen.howes@london.gov.uk*

Bill Armstrong (020 7983 4653) works in the **Census Team** with particular responsibilities for **commissioned tables, workplace data and mapping**. *bill.armstrong@london.gov.uk*

Richard Cameron (020 7983 4473) works in the **Census Team**. *richard.cameron@london.gov.uk*

Giorgio Finella (020 7983 4328) works in the **Census Team**. *giorgio.finella@london.gov.uk*

SASPAC

Alan Lewis (020 7983 4348) leads on the **SASPAC** project. *alan.lewis@london.gov.uk*

General Statistics Team

Gareth Piggott (020 7983 4327) works in the **General Statistics Team** with particular responsibilities for **Focus on London** and **Compendia**. *gareth.piggott@london.gov.uk*

Elizabeth Williams (020 7983 4532) works mostly on **statistical compendia** and **special publications**. *elizabeth.williams@london.gov.uk*

Please use the above descriptions in deciding whom to contact to assist you with your information needs. For further details of DMAG staff please contact Richard Walker at *richard.walker@london.gov.uk*