

Data Management and Analysis Group

Census Team Workplan 2009/10



DMAG Briefing 2009-14

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Introduction

The GLA Census Team is currently part of the Data Management and Analysis Group within the Intelligence Unit. The Team currently has two posts, reduced from four last year:

- Principal Research and Statistical Analyst - **Eileen Howes** - who leads the Census Team and also manages the SASPAC and General Statistics Teams
- Research and Statistical Analyst - **Richard Cameron** - who specialises in Census analysis and data holdings

The size of the Team was reduced as part of OfD as it was a low point in the Census ten-year cycle and work on the Census will be greatly increased with the arrival of 2011 data, due in September 2012. The Census Team is likely to recruit at least one further post if the plans for the 2011 Census Information Scheme and Consortium go ahead as currently proposed. These posts will be funded by the consortium.

The Census Team's main clients are:

- Mayor's Office
- London Plan Team
- Equalities Team
- Policy Support Unit
- Other Teams in the Intelligence Unit
- 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 current and former 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 Information Paper Number 7 '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 1971 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 provided 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 have been offered in use of SASPAC, the software that is used throughout the public sector to access census data. Until the 2011 Census data is imminent and because of the reduced staff numbers in the Census Team the level of training sessions is under review and will be reduced until we get nearer to the arrival of the 2011 Census data.

We host the long-running Census Users' Group meetings quarterly and produce a newsletter for the consortium and others quarterly in the form of Census Information Notes.

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, Congress, 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 Design and Methodology Advisory Committee
ONS Academic Advisory Group on Ethnicity, National Identity, Language and Religion
National Statistics Working Group on Ethnicity and Identity
National Statistics Diverse Communities Advisory Group
Workplace Zones User Group
ONS 2011 Census Output Working Group
SASPAC Advisory Panel
Census Strategy Group
ESRC Census Programme Advisory Committee
BSPS Council

and is a Fellow of The Royal Statistical Society.

The Team participates in a range of meetings, giving presentations at a range of events when the opportunity arises. The Team has been involved with a large number of events outside City Hall and provided 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.

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 benefiting from this type of collaboration for many years.

2009/10 Priorities

The Team's priorities for 2009/10 now reflect the reduced capacity of the Team. During this year the main priorities for the Census Team will be to push forward 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.

A further priority is negotiating new license arrangements for all ONS data - this has arisen

because of EH's previous membership of the ONS Microdata Release Panel and the concerns expressed at every opportunity about the damage done to 2001 Census outputs by the rounding applied to all data from the 2001 Census. Current discussions are about the GLA piloting a new type of license for ONS.

Specific items for 2009/10 will include:

- Push forward with plans for a 2011 Census Consortium along the lines of the 2001 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 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
- Produce four Census Information Notes during the year
- Negotiate with ONS on better license arrangements for holding 'disclosive' Census data
- Work with DMAG colleagues to provide data for the GLA Data Store
- Improve communication with users, in practice this has involved setting up a forum for the London Consortium on the Communities of Practice website

Review of 2008-9

Data processing - the largest and most complicated commissioned Census tables ever produced by ONS were ordered by us for GLA Economics. Some considerable time was spent in turning these tables into a usable format, in this instance SASPAC was the best and most efficient means of accessing this because it has a module developed specifically for data of this type (double geography matrices) and stores the data very efficiently. Although very labour intensive, this exercise was an excellent learning opportunity for the newest member of the Team and quite a challenge for the 'old hands' too. The Team has every reason to be proud of this work.

ONS set up an Output Working Group along the lines of the one involved in discussions and three members of DMAG are members of this group.

We continued to develop our contacts with the Census Regional Champion for London (Barry Quirk, Chief Executive of Lewisham) and with a wider range of people in London who are involved in some way in the Census.

Dissemination of our work and outputs

Census Users' Group meetings were 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 BSPS amongst others. This continued throughout 2008/9. Four Census User Group meetings were held and four Census Information Notes were published. The Team responded to inquiries coming from the media, Fol requests, requests from the London Assembly and Mayoral questions.

The Census extranet continued to be problematic and most publications were too big to be available this way. The extranet did contain information about and minutes of the User Group meetings.

Research and Publications Programme

There are a few on-going 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 since 1961. 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 pdf images and then OR software to create Excel files from these pdf 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.

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.

Industry

Building on work done in 2007/8, the Census Team has commissioned more detailed data from the 2001 Census via a special license. 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. Analysis of this will be produced in 2010.

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.

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.

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

Recent DMAG Briefings 2009:

2009-01	Claimant count model 2009: Technical Note	Social Exclusion Data Team
2009-02	GLA 2008 Round Projections	John Hollis and Jessica Chamberlain
2009-03	Greater London Demographic Review 2007	John Hollis
2009-04	Census Information Note 2009-1	Eileen Howes
2009-05	Census Information Note 2009-2	Eileen Howes
2009-06	2001 Census Consortium and Information Scheme	Eileen Howes
2009-07	2009 European election results for London	Gareth Piggott
2009-08	GLA 2008 Round Ethnic Group Population Projections	Ed Klodawski
2009-09	Demography Team Workplan 2009/10	Demography Team
2009-10	Education Team Workplan 2009/10	Education Team
2009-11	Social Exclusion Team Workplan 2009/10	Social Exclusion Team
2009-12	Urban Audit III: London and Other Large European Cities	Richard Walker
2009-13	Census Information Note CIN 2009-3	Eileen Howes
2009-14	Census Team Workplan 2009/10	Eileen Howes
2009-15	SASPAC Workplan 2009/10	Alan Lewis
2009-16	General Statistics Workplan 2009/10	Gareth Piggott
2009-17	Census Information Note CIN 2009-4	Richard Cameron

Recent DMAG Briefings 2008:

2008-15	2001 Census Profiles: Black Caribbeans in London	Richard Cameron
2008-16	GIS Team Workplan 2008/09	Gareth Baker
2008-17	Lone Parents on Income Support by Ethnic Group	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-20	SASPAC Workplan 2008-9	Alan Lewis
2008-21	Indices of Deprivation 2007: A London perspective	Rachel Leeser
2008-22	London Ward Level Summary Measures for the Indices of Deprivation 2007	Rachel Leeser
2008-23	General Statistics Team Workplan 2008-9	Gareth Piggott
2008-24	2001 Census: Ethnic Group Migration Structures (as used in Model)	Baljit Bains/Ed Klodawski
2008-25	Census Information Note 2008-2	Eileen Howes
2008-26	London council by-election results	Gareth Piggott
2008-27	Social Selection Sorting 2	David Ewens
2008-28	Summary of Social Trends 2008	Elizabeth Williams
2008-29	Children in Benefit Families 2007	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-30	Londoners and labour market	Lorna Spence
2008-31	Child Poverty in London	Social Exclusion Data Team
2008-32	Census Information Note 2008-3	Eileen Howes
2008-33	PayCheck 2008	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-34	Background to the DMAG Poverty Profiles	Lovedeep Vaid

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:

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