



News Release

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2011 Census hits next parliamentary milestone

The Draft Census Order, which will allow the next census to take place in England and Wales in 2011, was laid before Parliament today by Cabinet Office Minister Angela E Smith.

This is the latest milestone in planning the census, which will take place on 27 March 2011.

The Government published the UK Statistics Authority's proposals for the 2011 Census in a White Paper in December last year.

The laying of the Draft Census Order is the latest stage in the legislative process that will enable the census to take place in 2011 – when over 25 million households across England and Wales will be asked to complete and return a census questionnaire.

The 2011 Census proposals include seven new questions, two about the household; number of bedrooms, and type of central heating and five about the residents; passports held, national identity, year of entry to the U.K and intended length of stay for recent arrivals, main language and whether or not they have a second residence.

The census questions have been developed through an extensive four year process of consultation and testing.

The 2011 questionnaire also includes space to enter details about visitors staying overnight on census day.

The statistics derived from the census underpin the allocation of billions of pounds of public money on local services like education, transport and health and are used by policy makers in central and local government to understand the needs of different communities and neighbourhoods.

Census statistics also enable businesses to make informed decisions about their markets, and provide a basis for other national statistics such as birth rates.

In March 2011 each household in England and Wales will receive a questionnaire to complete either through the post or delivered by hand. The questionnaires can then be completed and returned by post or using the new secure online questionnaire.

Over the last few weeks a census rehearsal has been taking place in Lancaster, the Isle of Anglesey (Ynys Môn), and the London Borough of Newham, together with a smaller test in some parts of Birmingham.

Residents are being asked to complete a rehearsal questionnaire to help ONS test the new systems and procedures that will be in place in 2011.

ONS Census Director, Glen Watson said: "This is an important milestone in the preparations for a successful 2011 Census in England and Wales. Our proposals on the questions for the census are now with Parliament and this marks the culmination of four years of consultation question testing.

“Once the Census Order is agreed by Parliament and the subsequent Census Regulations are made, we’ll be full steam ahead for 2011. In fact we’re already road testing a range of innovations in a census rehearsal that is now in parts of the country.”

“The rehearsal is going well and I’m confident that the real thing will be a huge success in 2011.”

For further information regarding question and content recommendations for 2011, please visit:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011-census/2011-census-questionnaire-content/question-and-content-recommendations-for-2011/index.html>

Background notes

1. For journalists who wish to view it, the 2011 Census White Paper is number CM7513.
2. A census is a survey of all people and households in the country. It provides essential information from national to neighbourhood level for government, business, and the community.
3. ONS is responsible for carrying out the census in England and Wales.
4. The ONS is responsible for gathering and interpreting all the data from the census and turning it into helpful information, as well as using it to estimate the number of people and households in each area across England and Wales.
5. Personal data collected through the census is confidential and the information given is safeguarded by law.
6. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the Media Relations Office.
7. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for official statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2009