



News Release

Help tomorrow take shape

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Office for National Statistics
Segensworth Road
Titchfield
PO15 5RR

Contact

Media Office
01329 44 7654

Email

2011censusmedia@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Visit

www.census.gov.uk/Media

It's still not too late to take part in Lancaster and Morecambe's census rehearsal

2009 Census Rehearsal day may have passed in Lancaster and Morecambe, but it's still not too late for residents to complete and return their rehearsal questionnaires and help shape the next census in 2011.

65,000 households in Lancaster and Morecambe have been invited to take part in the rehearsal, which will road test the new online questionnaire and the postal delivery of paper questionnaires planned for the 2011 Census.

Local resident Daniel Poreba will be going door to door later this week as part of a team of official census collectors. "Starting this Wednesday I'll be visiting households in Lancaster and Morecambe who haven't returned their questionnaires. I'll be answering any questions people may have about the rehearsal and also helping people to complete the questionnaire.

"Hopefully even though participation is not compulsory we'll be able to encourage as many people as possible to take part as this is something really important to the future of our community."

All Census collectors will carry official identification.

The census is an estimate of the population of England and Wales carried out every ten years by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The information given is confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside the ONS.

Commenting on the importance of supporting the 2009 Census Rehearsal, Lancaster City Council's chief executive, Mark Cullinan, said: "The results paint a unique picture of our community that is used to help plan local services and allocate funding. All of our public services depend on the number and type of people living in the local community."

ONS Census Director Glen Watson, said: " We rely on the public's co-operation to make the rehearsal a success, so you may have been sent a reminder to encourage you to take part. You may also be visited by a member of the census team.

"This follow up is important because it gives members of the community help and information they need to take part. It's not too late to complete the form and send it back to us and a successful rehearsal will help us to ensure a high quality census in 2011. "

Facts about the 2009 Census Rehearsal:

- The rehearsal is taking place in three areas - Lancaster, the London Borough of Newham and Ynys Môn – Isle of Anglesey
- In total, around 140,000 households in these areas have been asked to take part in the census rehearsal
- These areas represent a cross-section of the population and include a broad range of housing types
- In parallel to the rehearsal a small scale test in Birmingham will be undertaken
- The small scale test in Birmingham will include 17,000 addresses and will utilise some of the procedures and processes being delivered within the rehearsal
- Everyone is asked to answer the same questions in order to take a snapshot of the population at one moment
- The census is easy to fill in, confidential and can be filled in online for the first time
- The results from the rehearsal will not be published but used to improve procedures for 2011
- There are 56 questions in total, 14 are about the household and its accommodation and 42 questions are for each individual member of the household to complete
- Most questions can be answered by a simple tick
- Taking part in the 2009 Census Rehearsal and test in Birmingham is voluntary. Everyone will be obliged to take part in the 2011 Census

For more information on the 2009 Census Rehearsal or to request a copy of the census questions in Braille or alternative languages, please visit www.census.gov.uk or telephone 0300 0200 901.

British Sign Language video clips and audio recordings are also available on the site.

For further information or imagery please contact Jonathan Ayre on B10100@census.gov.uk / 07827 820 509