



News Release

Help tomorrow take shape

29 September 2009



Issued by

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

Serving up the census rehearsal in Newham

One of just three areas in England and Wales taking part in the 2009 Census Rehearsal, the London Borough of Newham has seen a workforce of 100 created, a revival of the ancient art of origami, and for many, a serving of statistics with their evening takeaway.

The rehearsal is a road test of the systems and procedures in place for the 2011 Census and the people of Newham will be among the first in the country to test the new postal and online questionnaire options. Eye-catching origami shapes and statistics will also be popping up in the borough, including on takeaway cartons, to help raise awareness and understanding. The origami images symbolise how communities can help shape services in their local area by taking part.

The rehearsal has created around 100 new temporary jobs in Newham especially suited to local residents, as first-hand knowledge of the borough's geography is essential.

Colin Pridmore, census area manager for Newham said: "There has been a great response from local residents while recruiting for the rehearsal roles and now that we've got our team in place, we can't wait to get started. Questionnaires started dropping through people's letterboxes yesterday."

Census Collector, Ahmed Chifri, a Newham resident for over 20 years said: "I grew up in the area and so I won't have any trouble finding my way around and it's a great opportunity to help the local community."

ONS Census Director Glen Watson, said: "Census statistics are used for local service planning, allocation of funding and monitoring discrimination and so it's very important that they are as accurate as possible. We're asking the residents of Newham to help us get it right for the 2011 Census by completing and returning their rehearsal questionnaires. It's easy to fill in, confidential and can now be completed online."

The census has over the past 200 years also shown us a vivid picture of how life has changed:

- In 1881 six out of ten women in London worked as indoor domestic servants, 13 times more than men.
- In 1891 London had 13,807 blacksmiths.
- The average number of people per household in London went down from eight in 1801 to 2.4 in 1991.
- In 1851 there were six chimney sweeps in London aged between five and nine years old.

-ENDS-

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 will be asked to take part on Census Rehearsal Day, 11 October 2009
- 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 the same questions on the same day 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 Colin Pridmore on H10100@census.gov.uk / 07827 820510