

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

CENSUS 2021

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Members of preparations being made for the 2021 national census, and the contribution the County Council will be able to make to help ensure its effectiveness.

Information

2. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for the conduct of the next decennial census, which is due to take place on Sunday, 21 March 2021.
3. The use of census information is fundamental to the allocation of billions of pounds in funding every year to local authorities for the delivery of local services in England and Wales. Those local services embrace all of the considerations listed above. It's important, therefore, that census estimates are accurate so these funds are allocated where they're needed. To get accurate estimates, a good response to the census from all areas and communities is crucial.
4. Through partnership working with local authorities, the ONS aims to positively impact census response rates (and especially online response rates for this census), and to lead and co-ordinate effective communication to reinforce confidence in results. Specific objectives for Census 2021 are:
 - response rate targets of 94% nationally and 80% locally to support quality levels
 - a digital first focus, with a 75% online response rate (16.4% completed online in 2011) – this should deliver better quality data, quicker outputs (first outputs within a year of the census date), and make it easier for respondents to complete the census
 - to provide a basis for considering the future development of the census, for example to hold future censuses more frequently than decennially. Proposals will be brought forward in 2023.
5. To help achieve this, the ONS has requested each local authority to nominate officers in two key roles, as set out below alongside the officers nominated for the County Council:

Census Liaison Manager (CLM):	Nigel Stevenson
Assistant Census Liaison Manager (ACLM):	Rob Disney
6. These officers provide the primary communication link between the Council and ONS for all matters relating to the Census 2021; all newsletters, updates, and online content will be routed

through these officers. Together, they will be responsible for co-ordinating census activity within the Council, to ensure an integrated approach and successful delivery of the census locally.

7. The CLM and ACLM at each local authority will receive support from ONS through newly established and enhanced local engagement roles for this census.

Census Engagement Manager (CEM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ To engage with the local authority and community leaders to promote the benefit of the census and gain their support for it➤ To develop a partnership working plan with the local authority that will contain details of agreed activities and support➤ This is a new role for Census 2021 and around 200 CEMs have been appointed nationally➤ There are three CEMs assigned to work with the District Councils in Nottinghamshire: one for Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe; one for Ashfield and Mansfield; one for Bassetlaw and Newark & Sherwood. There are a further two CEMs assigned for Nottingham City. The CEM for Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe is the designated liaison officer with the County Council.
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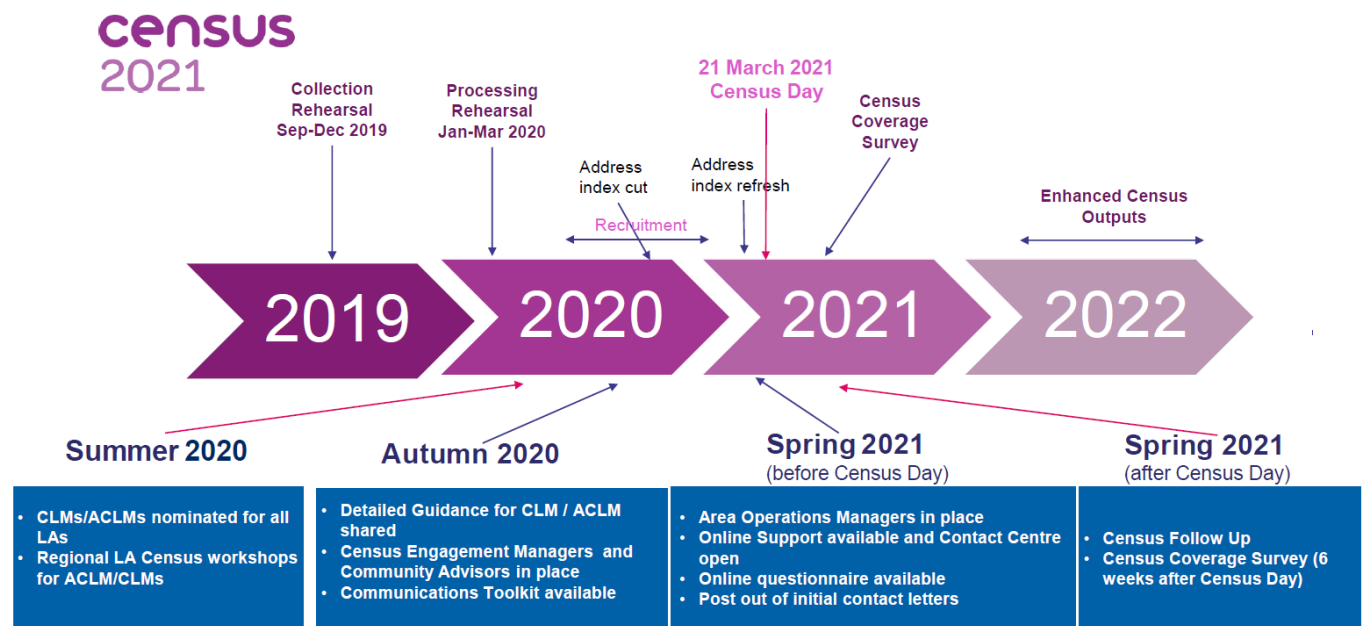
Community Adviser (CA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ To engage with specific communities that have been identified as needing extra support and encouragement, to understand the benefit of the census and to encourage completion of the census questionnaire➤ Their focus is expected to be on inner city areas, to tackle barriers such as language issues➤ More CAs will be appointed for 2021 than with previous censuses, around 150 in total.
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8. ONS advise that the Census 2021 will progress in three key stages. A significant task will fall to District Council colleagues, to assist ONS in ensuring the address list for the census is accurate and up-to-date. This will be done primarily using datasets held within District Councils, and it is not anticipated that significant input will be required from the County Council. The CEMs are agreeing a Local Authority Partnership Plan with each District Council.
9. Nonetheless, there will be a role for the County Council both before and after census day. The details of this will be set out in a shortened version of the Partnership Plan, which the ONS term the 'County Council Report'. The following sets out the nature of the role anticipated for the County Council in each of the three phases.



10. A first meeting with the ONS Community Engagement Manager (CEM) for the County Council has been held, and it is anticipated that activity in the preparation period will gather speed over the coming weeks and months. The Council's CLM and ACLM will engage with other colleagues across the Council, as required, to support the Council's input. We will also link in with the CLMs and ACLMs at the other Nottinghamshire councils, to help co-ordinate local activity. To date, recruitment opportunities with Census 2021 have been advertised on the County Council's website.

11. An outline of the planned timeline for Census 2021 is set out below.

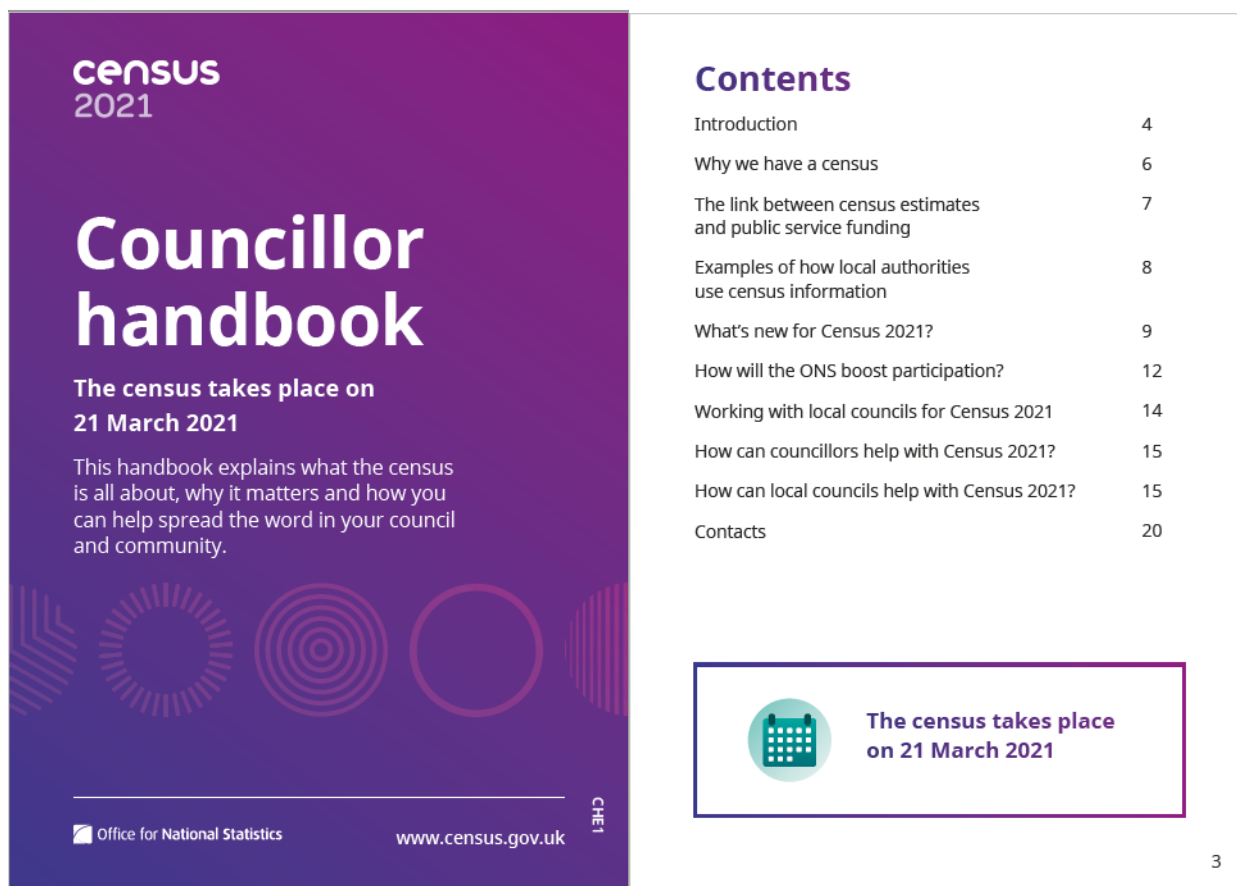


Impact of COVID-19

12. An ONS workshop on preparations for Census 2021 provided several insights into how the pandemic has already impacted on Census 2021, and preparations being made for its continuing influence. The ONS highlight that census activity has been continuing around the world during the height of the pandemic, and adapting processes are being observed and evaluated to learn lessons for the UK process.
13. The ONS has reviewed and refined its Census plans and is confident that everyone will be able to provide their census information safely and securely. The ONS advises its design now means it can conduct the main census field data collection operation without anyone ever needing to enter a house. All contact will be socially distanced, field staff will be equipped with PPE in line with government guidance and ONS recruitment and training have been moved wholly online. The ONS has scenario plans in place to cater for the potential, rolling impact of COVID-19.
14. The ONS recognises that the coronavirus pandemic has impacted us all in different ways, and it has further emphasised the need for up-to-date data about the population to help organisations such as local authorities shape services for society for the years to come.

Councillor Handbook

15. The ONS recognises the influential role local councillors can play to encourage participation in Census 2021 among residents in their wards. A helpful [Councillor Handbook](#) has been prepared and is available to all Members. This may be accessed through the above link, and it will be made available to all Members on the appropriate intranet pages.



16. The Handbook includes the following prompts for Councillors to consider:
- Are you up to date with local plans and activities – are you being regularly briefed on census progress in your area?
 - Has your council appointed a CLM and ACLM?
 - Do you know who the CLM and ACLM are and have you met them?
 - What can you do as a community leader to build local awareness of, and support for, the census?
 - Your endorsement is influential – could you encourage people to take part in the census?

The Census Schools Campaign

17. The ONS has developed an education programme, designed to inspire the next generation to get involved in the census and to teach pupils about the importance of it. The primary school programme, 'Let's Count!', aims to excite and engage both children and families with the census. With maths and statistics at its core, the cross-curricular initiative provides lesson plans and interactive activities for pupils to learn about the relevance of statistics to a range of other subjects.
18. Following a virtual stakeholder meeting in September 2020, both the primary and secondary school programmes were launched and are taking registrations to take part from all schools in England and Wales.

Other Options Considered

19. No other options were considered for the matters covered by this report.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

20. To allow Members the opportunity to consider the contribution the County Council can make to the delivery of an effective census in 2021, and to determine whether any further information or reports are required at this stage.

Statutory and Policy Implications

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) Members agree to receive a further update report on the County Council's input to Census 2021 in the new year, and determine whether any further information or reports are required at this stage.
- 2) Members agree to review the Councillor Handbook and consider how best to promote engagement with Census 2021 in their wards.

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE
Leader of the Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Nigel Stevenson
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Constitutional Comments (EP 29/10/2020)

22. The Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (RWK 29/10/2020)

23. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All