

2011 CENSUS

What is the census used for?

The census is vitally important for communities, making sure that the facilities and services can be identified. All sorts of decisions are taken based on census statistics, from the number of car parking spaces needed at local supermarkets, to where to locate bank branches and even the allocation of fire engines. Numbers of school places, development of traffic systems and funding for local authorities are all heavily influenced by the census. It's all about planning ahead. The census, a rich source of statistics, affects all of us in one way or another, as decisions about the communities we live in take place all the time.

The 2011 Census is run by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Key messages: The 2011 Census is coming

The census collects information about the population every ten years. The next census in England and Wales is in March 2011.

A census counts everybody and describes society

The population's characteristics are always changing. A census collects and shares facts about society's make-up.

Your community and family benefit

You need to take part so that the services and facilities your community / family need can be identified. These services include schools, hospitals and emergency services.

A census is a fantastic source of historical information

Everyone should be proud of playing their part in the census; the statistics are available for you. ONS's census is respected worldwide.

Define your identity in 2011

You will know that you have played your part in helping tomorrow take shape in your community

Your census answers are confidential

Personal census information is never shared with any other government department, nationally, regionally, or locally. The information collected is kept confidential by ONS and protected by law.

Complete the census online (www.census.gov.uk)

Completing the census online is straightforward, convenient and secure.

Returning your census questionnaire is required by law

Completing the census is a legal requirement: the few people who don't complete their census questionnaire may be prosecuted for breaking the law, could face a criminal record and may be fined up to £1,000.

The next census is on Sunday 27 March

The answers you give on your census questionnaire should be about Sunday 27 March, so that ONS can take an accurate picture of the population on the same day.

It's straightforward

Completing the census is straightforward. Most questions can be answered by simply clicking, or ticking, in a box.

Your census questionnaire is kept secure

Your personal information is protected by lots of layers of security.

Help and support is available

The census is straightforward. Help and support is available from online help at www.census.gov.uk and by telephone from Friday 4 March

Accessibility Resources & Completion Events / Activity / Support

Accessibility resources are being produced and will be available through helplines from Friday 4 March. In addition, completion events and activity offering support are being developed, offered and publicised locally.