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Manchester
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Quality in Action Award



PROGRAMME IMPACT REPORT

Census Support 2021

January 2025

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This programme had the second highest level of engagement and third highest level of census completion rates, compared to other similar commissioned programmes in the region.

census
2021



Office for
National Statistics

flowhession

BUILD • BELONG • ASPIRE • VALUE



Report Type: End of programme evaluation report

Investment Body: Office for National statistics

Town/City: Bolton, Salford, Rochdale

Programme Duration: September 2020 – May 2021

Why was the Investment needed?

The United Kingdom has been collecting Census data since 1801. Statistics from the UK censuses help paint a picture of the nation and how we live. They provide a detailed snapshot of the population and its characteristics and underpin funding allocations to provide public services. The 2021 Census was the very first 'digital first' census in England and Wales. This meant that respondents were able to complete all questions online. The Foundation was commissioned by the ONS to provide face to face support to people who are socially, digitally excluded so that they could access the Census online and receive bilingual, digital support to complete all the questions in a satisfactory manner. The support was provided at Flowhession sites in Bolton, Salford and Rochdale.

Expected Outcomes

- Provide wifi, suitable tablets and laptops to ensure respondents can complete the census online
- Provide bilingual staff, trained in census advice, to support respondents with navigating the online census form
- Bilingual staff to explain to respondents, if required, what different words and phrases within the census document mean so that respondents can answer questions independently
- Ensure confidentiality, safeguarding independence, GDPR and related regulations are adhered too

Output - Data Dashboard



total clients
Attending
our support centres **517**



staff and
volunteers
per centre **8**



total census
completed
via support **506**



total in-person
queries
answered **1962**



average
waiting time
mins **21**



total
phone
queries
answered **506**

% of
targets
met: **96%**



% CER
participants
on FSM **100%**

guardian
groups
held **5**

What worked well?

Centralised, streamlined booking, appointments and referral system kept waiting times down.

2:1 ratio meant clients were well supported.

Hearing loops, disabled access at all centres allowed for inclusive support to be provided.

What could have been done better?

Staff and volunteers had made clear to clients that they were not allowed to complete the form for them.

We had a reserve list in place and called new clients to attend if a client did not arrive within 10 minutes of their appointment slot.

Our online referral system was well received by the statutory sector.

Impact

Our advisors across all sites were able to deliver support in community languages such as Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati. This ensured that all clients that attended our sites for Census support were catered for. Our phone line support service received a 125% increase in queries, compared to anticipated demand, over the delivery period. By removing language, IT barriers and providing this support we were able to ensure that clients completed their census before the deadline.

Outcomes



95%

of clients independently surveyed were 'pleased', 'very pleased' with the support we provided



Our staff and volunteers gained experience in providing critical, time-sensitive support for official data gathering. These skills will be transferred to other programmes



22%

of clients signed up to our IT and literacy programmes after completing the census with us

How has the investment positively impacted community cohesion

The census has provided an opportunity for staff to engage with clients, highlighting the significance of official data collection and its role in funding public services, shaping policies, and guiding government decisions. Through these discussions, clients have gained a deeper understanding of the importance of civic participation, which in turn fosters community cohesion by strengthening connections to broader societal goals and responsibilities.

Additionally, the programme has encouraged clients to improve their IT literacy, as they recognise the increasing shift of government services and data collection to online platforms. This realisation has motivated individuals within the diaspora to enhance their digital skills, promoting education and skill development. As a result, the initiative not only boosts individual capabilities but also contributes to the broader integration and cohesion of the community in the digital age.

Legacy

This programme was time limited to census support. However, it generated a significant interest in registration for our IT and literacy programmes. It has significantly upskilled our staff and volunteers who are now experienced to deliver similar programmes in future.

'I am really happy with the wonderful support I have received from Flowhession to complete my census. I struggle with English and also do not have sufficient IT skills to complete the Census online. I called the Flowhession number and was put in touch with a Punjabi speaking advisor who helped me complete the census over the phone. I would have really struggled without this service.'

(Afrooz, 56, Client who attended our Salford Census Support Centre)