

My name's Des. I'm a training officer for the census so I'm responsible for developing the training materials to enable our field staff to be competent when they're delivering the census.

I've been responsible for developing training materials and that also included being an area manager as well for census, which was very fulfilling. As an Area Manager, I would have daily calls with my team to make sure if there are any issues, anything they need help with and observing as well. So, I was very keen in my role not to be able to do it all from head office. Developmental feedback as well, to staff, to enable them to achieve and to get better results. Probably the most important skill, I think, as an area manager, is the ability to adapt because you never quite know what the day's going to bring. So, it can be a simple thing as someone's having some issues with their device to capture information, which I had to sometimes troubleshoot over the telephone with an officer who may not be as IT proficient as I would like, to an incident where someone's car is stuck in the middle of nowhere and they've got no signal on their phone and no signal on their Wi-Fi and not quite sure what to do, really, and trying to assist them.

For me, I found it a very satisfying role, working on the census. I'm very much a big picture person so when I look at the census, I realise that actually, everything I'm contributing to is going to, in effect, help and I do feel very much it's a way of sort of giving back and so I felt very purposeful in that role. The training fulfilled staff and is typically digital learning to start off with, to give them an overview of the census, security as well, which is a very important topic as well to make sure that census material is handled securely, health and safety, having to deal with dogs and other hazards as well, certainly for more senior grade. Some classroom training, which covers some of the managerial soft skills that are required to make sure that you can motivate your team. I would recommend everyone, if they can, to get involved in census because it's really a historical event and when you contribute to it, you really are helping Britain make better decisions.