



Census 2021 - Labour Force and Travel to Work





Key Headlines

Census 2021 took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the labour market and travel to work topic. ONS have advised care should be applied when using this data for planning and policy purposes.

Labour Market:

- 59.8% of Staffordshire residents stated they were economically active, down from 69.8% in 2011 and slightly lower than national. This ranges from 56.7% in South Staffordshire and 63.1% in Tamworth. This data is likely impacted by the pandemic.
- 40.2% of Staffordshire residents were economically inactive. 3.8% was due to long term sickness or a disability. This is in line with 2011, but lower than the LEP area (4.4%) and England (4.1%).
- 71.5% of Staffordshire residents in work were employed on a full-time basis, representing a slight increase from 70.9% in 2011.
- Retail Trade (10.9%), Construction of Buildings (9.9%) and Education (9.5%) were the most dominant employment sectors in Staffordshire, with a similar trend seen for the overall LEP area.
- Professional occupations remained the most prevalent occupation in Staffordshire (17.5%), increasing from 15.5% in 2011. The highest proportion can be seen in Stafford (21.1%) and lowest in Tamworth (13%).
- Caring/Personal Services, Sales Assistants and Elementary Storage were the most prevalent job types within Staffordshire, accounting for 13.1% of the workforce.

Travel to Work:

- 25.2% of Staffordshire residents said that they worked mainly at or from home, lower than national (31.5%) but slightly higher than the overall LEP area (23.1%). This is likely impacted by more people working in sectors where home working was not possible, for example retail and construction.
- The highest proportion of residents working from home lived in Lichfield (31.6%) and the lowest in Cannock Chase (19.5%).
- Similar to national, the main method of travelling to work in Staffordshire was by car or van (57.8%). Cannock Chase recorded the highest percentage within all English local authorities (64.0%).
- Almost half (49.4%) of Staffordshire residents travelled less than 20km to work, higher than national counterparts (45.8%) but lower than the LEP area (52.3%).
- Residents in East Staffordshire travelled particularly short distances with 15.8% travelling less than 2km, compared to 11.0% in England and Staffordshire.
- Although a relatively low proportion, more Staffordshire residents travelled over 20km to work (11.0%) compared to national (8.3%). This trend was also true across all districts/boroughs, with the exception of Newcastle-under-Lyme where only 7.4% of residents travelled more than 20km.



Introduction

Census Day took place on the 21st March 2021, with results providing a snapshot of the population and its characteristics at a point in time. 'Labour Force & Travel to Work' is the latest release in a series of topic-based summaries, which ONS published on 8th December 2022. This provides information on labour market characteristics and travel to work patterns.

The Census 2021 was undertaken 12 months after the start of the first UK coronavirus lockdown. It is the view of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) that this will have affected responses, suggesting results are considered as a snapshot of UK life during the pandemic. For these reasons any comparisons with 2011 results should be viewed with caution.



Labour Force

The Census 2021 took place during the pandemic, with issues such as national lockdowns, associated government restrictions and support such as the furlough scheme. This will have affected the labour market data, therefore identifying any long-term change since 2011 is challenging.

Economic Activity

In Staffordshire, 59.8% of residents stated they were economically active¹, a reduction from 69.8% in 2011. This is in line with economic activity across the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area (59.4%) and slightly lower than England (60.9%), both of which saw a similar drop. It is important to note that this reduction is likely to be reflective of the pandemic.

At a district/borough level, economic activity ranges from 56.7% in South Staffordshire to 63.1% in Tamworth. A more detailed breakdown of economic activity is shown in Figure 1.

40.2% of residents in Staffordshire were economically inactive, an increase since 2011 (30.1%) and slightly higher than England (39.1%). This is likely to relate to the age profile of the population, with retirees constituting a large proportion of the economically inactive population. In Staffordshire a high proportion of the economically inactive population are retired (influenced by the county's older demographic profile), at 26.1% of those aged 16 and over, this is notably higher than in England (21.5%).

¹ Includes those in employment and those unemployed but seeking work or waiting to start a job already obtained

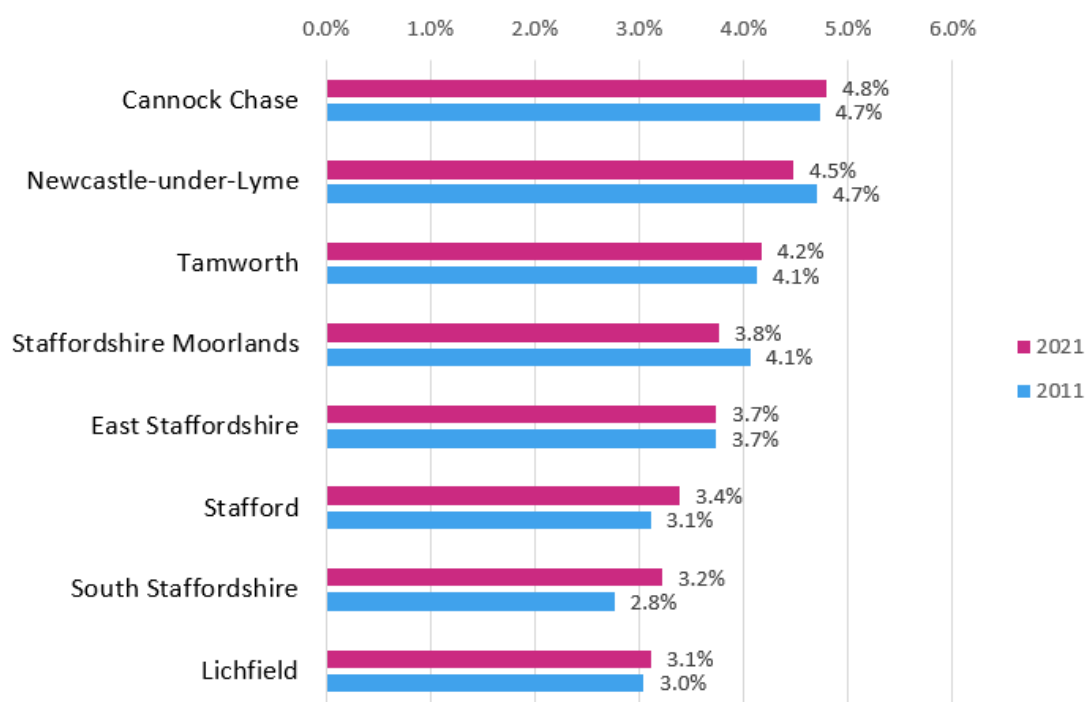
Figure 1 – Economic activity²/inactivity in Staffordshire by district/borough, 2021

District	Tamworth	Cannock Chase	East Staffs	Stafford	Lichfield	Newcastle-under-Lyme	Staffs Moorlands	South Staffs	Staffordshire
Economically Active	63.1%	62.3%	61.9%	60.2%	59.4%	57.8%	57.7%	56.7%	59.8%
Economically Inactive	36.9%	37.7%	38.1%	39.8%	40.6%	42.2%	42.3%	43.3%	40.2%

Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

3.8% of Staffordshire residents are economically inactive due to long term sickness or a disability. This is broadly in line with 2011 and lower than England (4.1%) and the LEP area (4.4%). Inactivity due to long term sickness or disability is highest in Cannock Chase (4.8%) and lowest in Lichfield (3.1%). A breakdown by district/borough is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Percentage of Staffordshire residents who are long term sick or disabled by district/borough, 2011 and 2021

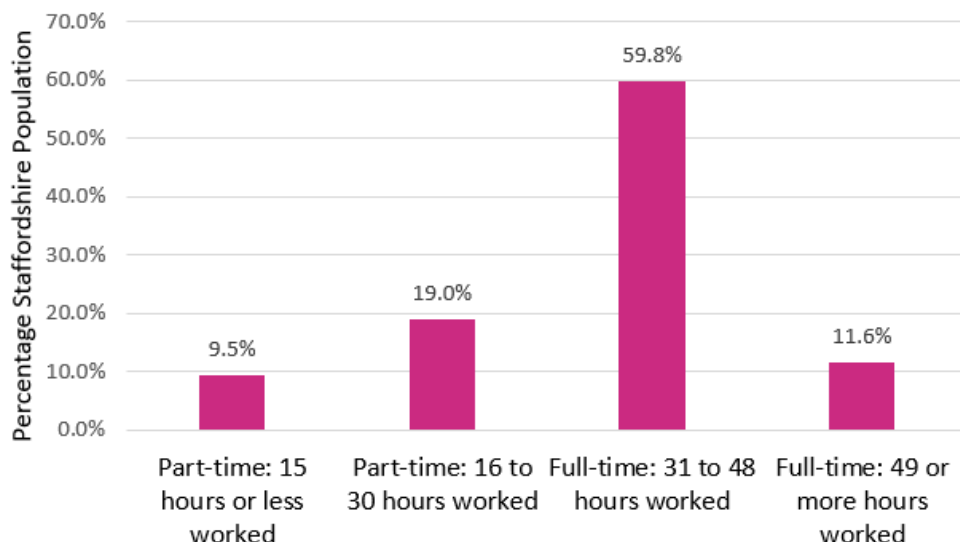


Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021 and 2011

² Economically active figures include those in employment and those unemployed but seeking work or waiting to start a job already obtained.

71.5% of Staffordshire residents in work, were employed on a full-time basis, representing a slight increase from 70.9% in 2011. This was slightly higher than England (70.2%) and similar to the LEP area (71.4%). Slightly fewer (28.5%) were employed part time, compared to 29.1% in 2011. A breakdown of employment hours in 2021 is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Employment hours for Staffordshire residents, 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

Of those in work, full time employment ranges from 69.9% in Staffordshire Moorlands to 73.0% in Tamworth. See Figure 4 for a detailed breakdown.

Figure 4 – Employment hours by district/borough, 2021

District	Part-time: 15 hours or less worked	Part-time: 16 to 30 hours worked	Full-time: 31 to 48 hours worked	Full-time: 49 or more hours worked
Cannock Chase	8.6%	19.2%	61.0%	11.2%
	27.8%		72.2%	
East Staffordshire	9.2%	18.5%	60.7%	11.5%
	27.7%		72.3%	
Lichfield	10.4%	18.7%	58.0%	13.0%
	29.1%		70.9%	
Newcastle-under-Lyme	9.3%	19.8%	61.0%	9.9%
	29.1%		70.9%	
South Staffordshire	10.2%	19.6%	58.5%	11.7%
	29.8%		70.2%	
Stafford	9.5%	18.3%	59.6%	12.6%
	27.8%		72.2%	
Staffordshire Moorlands	10.2%	19.9%	56.9%	13.0%
	30.1%		69.9%	
Tamworth	8.5%	18.5%	63.2%	9.8%
	27.0%		73.0%	
Staffordshire	9.5%	19.0%	59.8%	11.6%
	28.5%		71.5%	

Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

Industry and Occupation

The dominant sectors of Staffordshire residents in employment, in 2021, were:

- Retail Trade (10.9%)
- Construction of Buildings (9.9%)
- Education (9.5%)
- Human health activities (8.6%)

This is broadly in line with the LEP area and reflects a similar trend seen across England. A breakdown by district/borough showing the top 3 industries is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5 – Top 3 industries for Staffordshire residents in employment by district/borough, 2021

District	Most Common		Second Most Common		Third Most Common	
Cannock Chase	Construction & civil engineering	13.3%	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	12.1%	Education	8.2%
East Staffordshire	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	12.1%	Human health activities	8.7%	Education	8.6%
Lichfield	Education	10.4%	Construction & civil engineering	10.4%	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	10.1%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	12.3%	Human health activities	11.2%	Education	10.3%
South Staffordshire	Construction & civil engineering	11.8%	Education	10.8%	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	8.7%
Stafford	Human health activities	10.5%	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	10.0%	Education	9.6%
Staffordshire Moorlands	Construction & civil engineering	10.1%	Education	9.7%	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	9.4%
Tamworth	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	13.0%	Construction & civil engineering	9.4%	Education	7.5%
Staffordshire	Retail trade, exc' motor vehicles	10.9%	Construction & civil engineering	9.9%	Education	9.5%

Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

More people in Staffordshire were employed in professional occupations in 2021, compared with any other broad occupation categories (17.5% compared to 20.3% in England and 16.5% across the LEP area). In Staffordshire this represents an increase from 15.5% in 2011. A breakdown by district/borough is shown in Figure 6.

More notable changes include a decrease in Administrative & Secretarial occupations from 11.4% in 2011 to 9.5% in 2021 and an increase in Managers, Directors & Senior occupations from 11.1% in 2011 to 13.0% in 2021.

Figure 6 – Occupation category by district/borough, 2021

Occupation Type	Staffordshire	Cannock Chase	East Staffordshire	Lichfield	Newcastle-under-Lyme	South Staffordshire	Stafford	Staffordshire Moorlands	Tamworth
Professional occupations	17.5%	13.7%	15.5%	20.8%	17.8%	19.4%	21.1%	16.9%	13.0%
Managers, directors & senior officials	13.0%	11.1%	12.2%	16.7%	10.6%	15.4%	13.8%	13.1%	11.0%
Associate professional & technical	12.3%	11.8%	10.6%	13.3%	11.7%	13.1%	13.9%	11.8%	11.5%
Skilled trades occupations	11.7%	14.2%	10.6%	10.7%	11.7%	12.5%	9.8%	14.5%	10.8%
Elementary occupations	11.6%	11.8%	15.9%	9.2%	12.3%	8.1%	10.6%	9.7%	14.9%
Administrative and secretarial	9.5%	9.6%	8.8%	9.5%	9.2%	11.0%	9.2%	8.7%	10.4%
Caring, leisure and other service	8.8%	9.8%	8.2%	7.5%	10.2%	8.0%	8.4%	10.0%	8.7%
Process, plant and machine	8.0%	9.4%	11.0%	5.9%	7.8%	6.0%	6.0%	8.3%	10.4%
Sales and customer service	7.5%	8.4%	7.3%	6.5%	8.6%	6.6%	7.2%	7.0%	9.2%

The most prevalent occupation type is highlighted in dark blue

Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

ONS offers a further breakdown of employment, grouping professions into broad job titles. Caring/Personal Services, Sales Assistants and Elementary Storage were the most prevalent job types within Staffordshire, accounting for 13.1% of the workforce.

Travel to Work

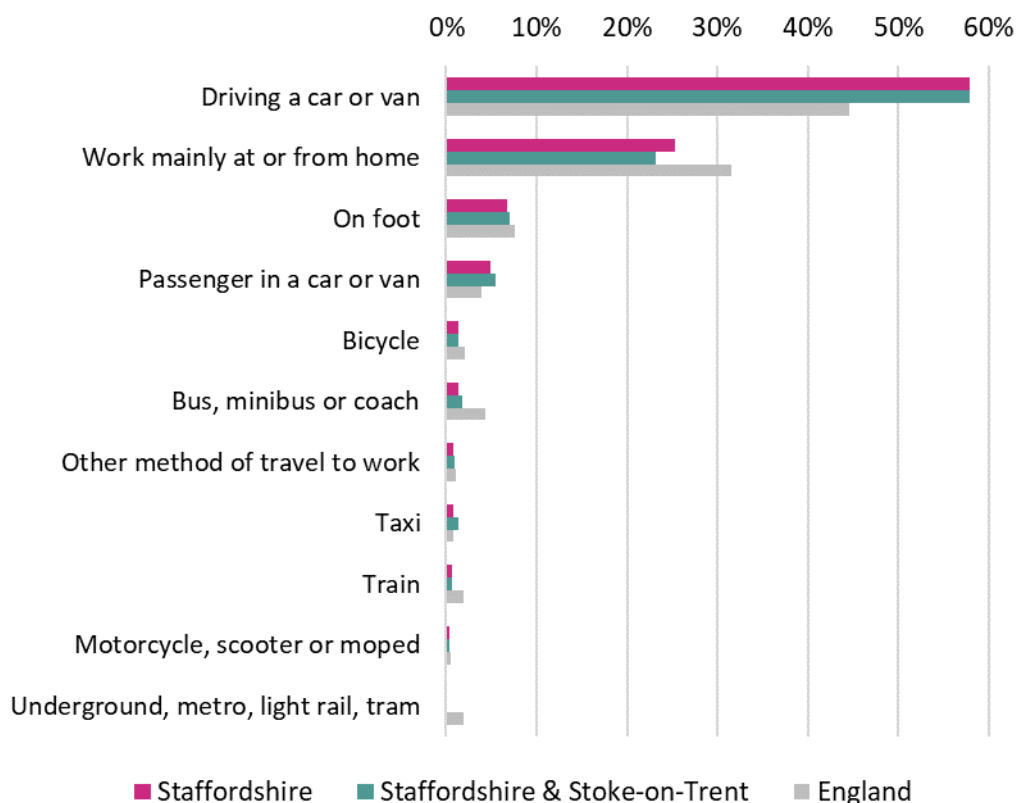
At the time of Census 2021, UK government guidance and lockdown restrictions resulted in unprecedented changes to travel behaviour and patterns. It is also not clear if furloughed respondents followed guidance as intended when completing the Census, therefore ONS has advised to take care when interpreting results. This section should therefore be used as an indication only.

In Staffordshire, 104,763 usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment (25.2%) were working mainly at or from home in 2021 compared to 31.5% in England and 23.1% for the LEP area (Figure 7). It is likely the industry sectors in which people were employed had a major impact on home working trends during the pandemic. In Staffordshire more people were employed in sectors where home working was not possible, for example retail and construction.

Looking at Staffordshire's districts and boroughs, the highest proportion of residents working from home lived in Lichfield (31.6%) and the lowest in Cannock Chase (19.5%).

For those Staffordshire residents who did not work mainly at or from home (74.8%), their main method of travelling to work was by driving a car or van (57.8%). This was also the main method of travel in England, but with a lower proportion nationally (44.5%). The largest percentage, not just within Staffordshire, but within all English local authorities was 64.0% in Cannock Chase.

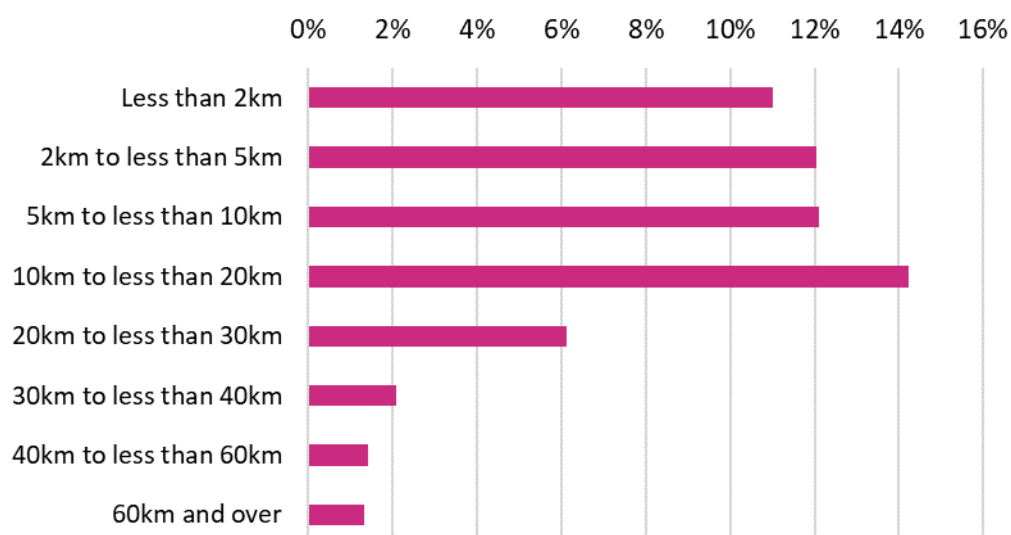
Figure 7 - Method used to travel to work, 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

Almost half (49.4%) of Staffordshire residents travelled less than 20km to work (Figure 8), higher than national counterparts (45.8%) but lower than the LEP area at 52.3%. Although a much smaller proportion, compared to national, more Staffordshire residents were likely to travel longer distances to their workplace than national, with 11.0% travelling 20km or further compared with 8.3% in England. This trend was also seen across all districts/boroughs, with the exception of Newcastle-under-Lyme where only 7.4% of residents travelled more than 20km.

Figure 8 - Distance travelled to work in Staffordshire, 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021

Looking at Staffordshire’s district/boroughs, Figure 9 shows that residents in Newcastle-under Lyme had the highest proportion of residents travelling under 20km to work, and East Staffordshire travelled particularly short distances with 15.8% travelling less than 2km, compared to 11.0% in England and Staffordshire.

Figure 9 - Percentage of residents travelling each distance by district/borough, 2021

Area	Travelled under 2km	Travelled under 20km	Travelled over 20km
Cannock Chase	11.3%	51.6%	10.8%
East Staffordshire	15.8%	53.0%	11.7%
Lichfield	8.4%	42.4%	11.7%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	11.7%	55.9%	7.4%
South Staffordshire	6.0%	45.9%	10.8%
Stafford	11.2%	44.3%	12.9%
Staffordshire Moorlands	10.6%	50.7%	9.9%
Tamworth	12.4%	52.4%	12.2%
Staffordshire	11.0%	49.4%	11.0%
Staffordshire & Stoke	11.6%	52.3%	10.1%
England	11.0%	45.8%	8.3%

The highest percentages for each distance are highlighted in dark blue.

Source: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021



Future Releases

ONS is planning to release further labour market and travel to work analysis in 2023, starting from end of January 2023.



Useful Links

All briefing notes for the 2021 Census will be published on the Staffordshire Observatory [here](#).

The ONS Census 2021 data is available to explore and use now, with a number of helpful resources made publicly available.

- The ONS Census 2021 bulletin on Economic Activity Status along with data tables can be found [here](#).
- The ONS Census 2021 bulletin on Travel to Work along with data tables can be found [here](#).

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