

DIGITAL ACCESS: STAFFORDSHIRE & THE UK

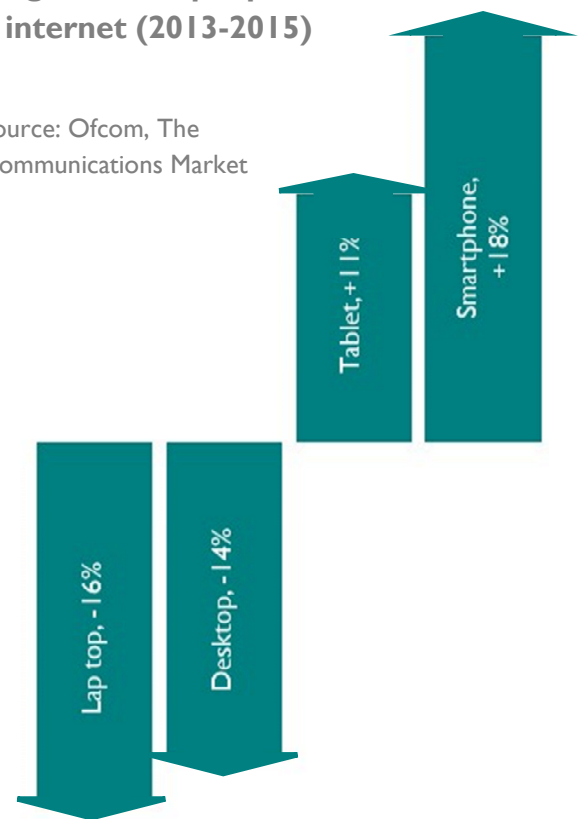
This year, smartphones have become an increasingly popular device for getting online. 71% of people now own a smartphone using it to browse the internet, access social media, online bank and shop online. Staffordshire is also on its way to being a superfast broadband county and this will enable more people to have quicker and easier online access. Digital access and skills do however vary amongst Staffordshire's communities and enabling equal access amongst our communities will be a real challenge.

71% of UK adults now own a smartphone. Smart phones have experienced the greatest increase in usage over the last two years. Usage of smart phones to access the internet has increased by 18% in the last two years.



Changes in how people access the internet (2013-2015)





Source: Ofcom, The Communications Market



Tablet usage has also increased—by 11% in the last two years. Lap tops/Desktop PC's are still popular but their usage for internet access has declined significantly in the last two years.

Source: Ofcom, The Communications Market 2015 and Ipsos Mori, Basic Digital Skills, UK Report, 2015

Eight in ten adults in the UK have a PC or lap top in their home. Those groups with the lowest levels of digital capability (65+ year olds and social groups C2DE) also have the lowest levels of device ownership/internet usage.

	Smartphone	Tablet	PC/Laptop	Use broad-band at home
UK adults	 71%	 44%	 82%	 69%
65+ year olds	26%	29%	66%	54%
Manual workers and persons retired—social groups C2DE	65%	32%	72%	57%

Source: Ipsos Mori, Basic Digital Skills, UK Report, 2015

How long do people spend browsing online?



**31 hours,
19 minutes
per month**

On average in the UK, people spend 1 hour 54 minutes per day online with their smartphone, this is 45 minutes more than on their laptop and desktop PC (1 hour 9 minutes).

Source: Ofcom,

The Communications Market 2015

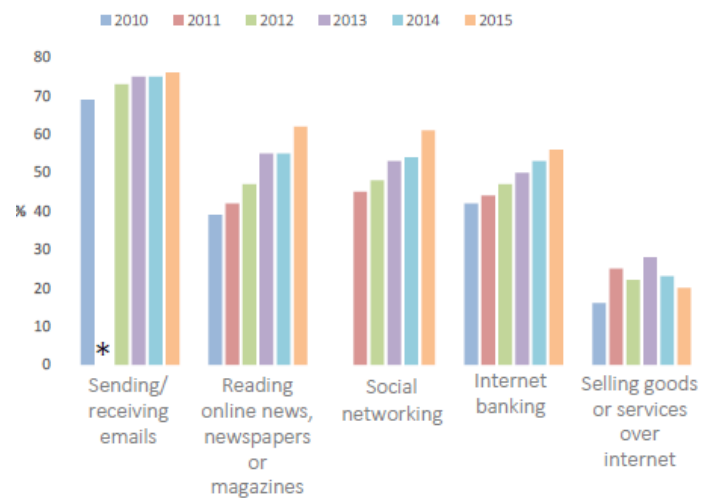
What do people use the internet for?

E-mail remains the most common activity on the internet with 76% of UK adults using the internet for this purpose.

Reading online news, newspapers or magazines shows the largest increase from 39% in 2010 to 62% in 2015. This is a percentage point increase of 23%.

Social networking has risen considerably between 2014 and 2015 and is the most common internet activity in 16-24 year olds. (92%). Source: ONS, 2015

Internet use over time



* Data not available

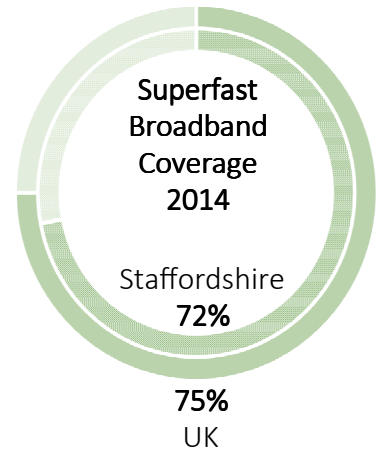
Internet use by age groups

16-24 year olds were more likely to use the internet for social networking, sending/receiving emails, reading the news and online banking than those aged 65+ were. Young people used the internet most for social networking. Older people used the internet most for sending and receiving emails.

	Social networking	Send/receive emails	Read news online	Online banking
16-24 year olds:	92%	82%	73%	60%
65+ year olds:	15%	50%	32%	26%

Nearly one in three UK broadband connections are now superfast, up from around one in four in November 2013. The growing take-up of superfast cable or fibre services - connections delivering 30Mbit/s and above - has resulted in average UK broadband speeds increasing by a fifth in the six months up to November 2014.

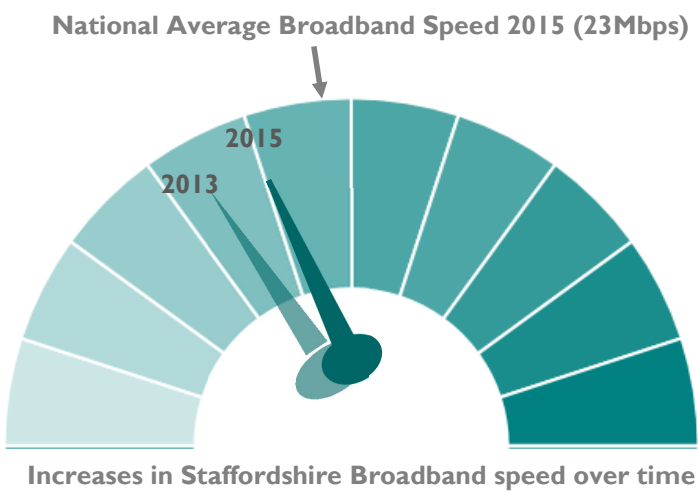
Broadband speeds: Staffordshire and UK



(Source: Superfast Staffordshire).

Currently, around 57,000 (72%) premises in Staffordshire have superfast broadband coverage with a promise that 95% of premises in the county will gain access to superfast broadband by 2017.

Increases in broadband speed over time: Staffordshire and UK



The average UK broadband speed stands at 23Mbps (megabits per second). Whilst the average broadband speed in Staffordshire is 5Mbps lower than this at 18Mbps, there has been a 3Mbps increase in the last two years.

Sandy Lane in Cannock Chase also has the fastest broadband connection speed in the country with an average speed of 72.9 Mbps. Source: uSwitch

11.7% of households in Staffordshire (41,566 households) do not receive broadband speeds of at least 2 Mbps (Megabits per second). This is also the same across all Staffordshire districts.

Households with internet coverage (UK)

86% (22.5 million) of households in the UK have internet access.

Source: ONS, 2015



Exclusion by geography

Staffordshire: likelihood of overall exclusion for Staffordshire is **Medium**.

The likelihood of exclusion for all districts within Staffordshire is also **Medium**

Level of exclusion in Staffordshire:



Digital Skills

77% of the UK adult population have Basic Digital Skills. This means they are capable of doing each of the below; managing information, communicating, transacting, creating and problem solving online¹.

1) Managing Information

Using a search engine to look for information online
Finding a previously visited website
Downloading/saving a photo found online

2) Communicating

Send a personal message via email or online messaging service
Carefully make comments and share information on line

3) Transacting

Buy items or services from a website
Buy and install apps on a device

4) Creating

Complete online application forms which include personal details
Create something new from existing online images, music or videos

5) Problem solving

Verify sources of information found on line
Solve a problem with a device/digital service using online help

23%



of UK adults don't possess basic digital skills. Assuming that similar levels in Staffordshire also do not have these basic skills, we can estimate that 158,830 Staffordshire adults are also likely to not have these basic digital skills.

Who is least likely to have basic digital skills?

Age group:

- The over 45's are least likely to have basic digital skills. Digital skills levels start to decline amongst the 45+ demographics culminating in the 65+ group who have the lowest level of Basic Digital Skills. 43% of 65+ year olds have basic digital skills. In Staffordshire this is likely to equate to 75,560 65+ year olds. This age group struggle most with 'creating something new' and installing apps.
- The 65+ year olds also have the lowest level of digital device ownership, the bulk of them are retired, suggesting they lack the opportunity/desire to acquire the skills (*Ipsos Mori, 2015*).

¹ Ipsos Mori, Basic Digital Skills, UK Report, 2015

Gender:

Males are significantly more likely than females to be competent in each digital skill. Overall **80%** of males possess basic digital skills compared to **74%** of females. The greatest differences related to problem solving. **83%** of males had basic digital skills in problem solving compared to **76%** of females.

Social grade:

Those people considered to be of social grades **AB²** and **C1²**³ which covers those occupations which can be described as managerial, professional and administrative were most likely to have basic digital skills (**87%**). However, those who were of social grade **C2⁴** and **DE⁵**, who can generally be described as manual workers and pensioners were less likely to have basic digital skills.

Work status:

Students/children at school (**93%**) and those who are employed (**89%**) are more likely to possess basic digital skills. High earners are also most likely to have these skills. Those who are retired are least likely to have these skills (**47%**).

Access:

14% of adults in Staffordshire have never been online (**96,679** adults) and this is the same across all Staffordshire districts.

Basic Digital Skills:

Three quarters of Staffordshire adults (**75%** or **517,922**) have basic digital skills. There is some variation by geographical location. Those in Cannock Chase are slightly less likely to have these basic digital skills (**73%**) whilst those in Stafford and the Staffordshire Moorlands are slightly more likely to have these skills (**77%**).

Basic Digital Skills used:

Across Staffordshire (**38%** or **262,414** adults) have used all five basic digital skills in the last three months. Those in East Staffordshire were least likely to have used them (**35%**) whilst those in Stafford and the Staffordshire Moorlands were most likely to have used them in the last three months.

² High and Intermediate Managerial, Administrative and Professional.

³ Supervisory, Clerical, Junior Managerial, Administrative and Professional.

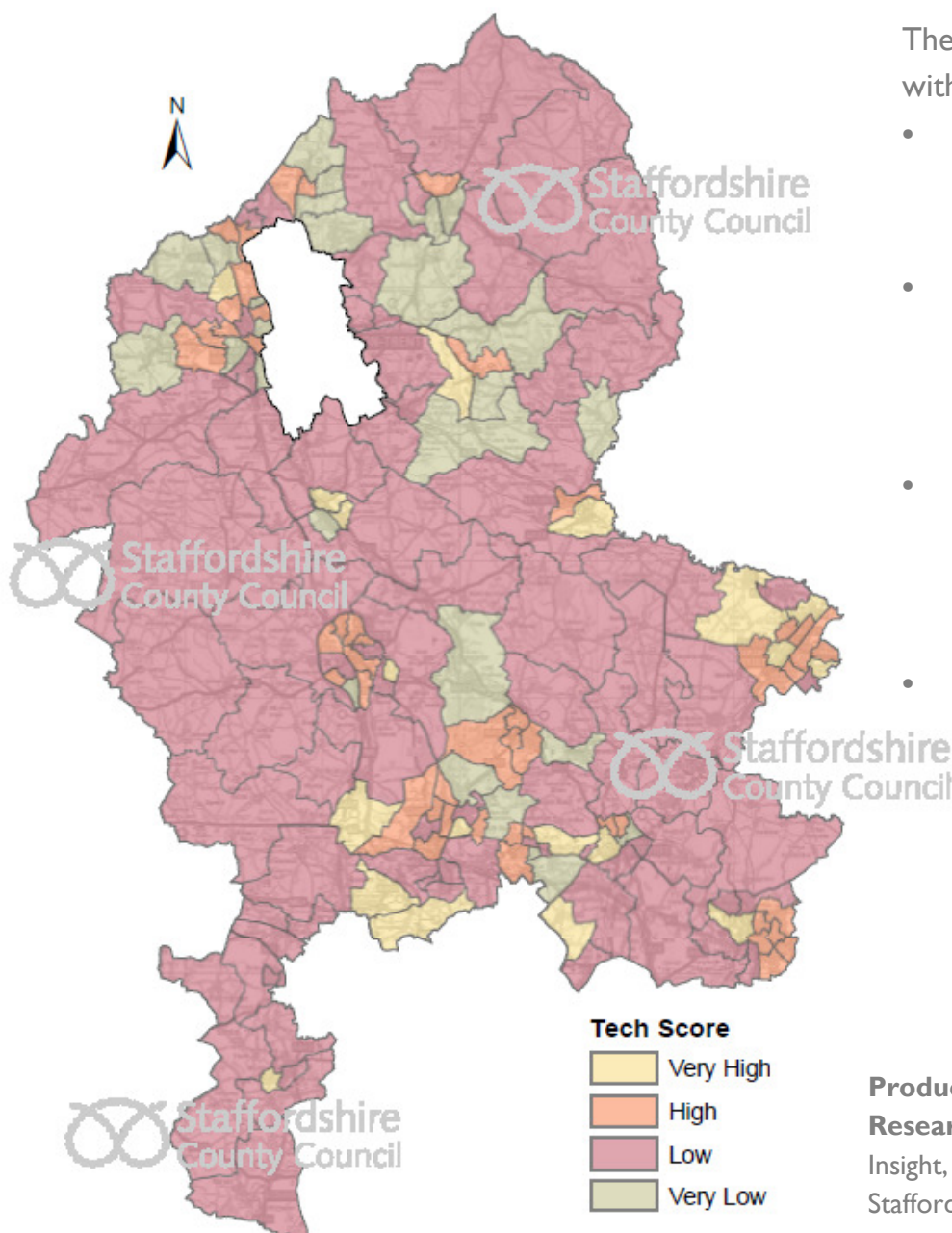
⁴ Skilled Manual Workers

⁵ Semi and Unskilled Manual Workers and Pensioners, Casual or Low Grade Workers, Unemployed on State Benefits.

An Overview of Staffordshire's Digital Use by Ward: Mosaic Public Sector is a customer segmentation tool that defines every household and post code in the country as one of 15 groups and 66 types, based on their likely characteristics, behaviours and preferences. The map of Staffordshire below shows the likely levels of digital use by ward by way of a 'tech score'. This has been derived by combining different groups from Mosaic and combining different variables on the basis of whether they are higher or lower than the national average.

These variables are; attitude to technology, technology owned and internet usage. Very high relates to areas where residents are more likely to be very 'tech savvy', love technology, own lots of technology gadgets and use the internet several times a day. Very low relates to areas where residents are more likely to not be very interested with technology, maybe own a smartphone but would not own a tablet or laptop and use the internet less than every day.

Overall, the majority of Staffordshire are low digital users. These low digital users cover 31.3% of the population. This compares with 10.8% of the population being very high digital users, 29.7% being high digital users and 27.5% being very low digital users.



The mosaic groups contained within each score are as follows:

- **Very High:** C City Prosperity, D Domestic Success, I Urban Cohesion
- **High:** H Aspiring Homemakers, J Rental Hubs, L Transient Renters, M Family Basics
- **Low:** E Suburban Stability, A Country Living, B Prestige Positions, O Municipal Challenge
- **Very Low:** F Senior Security, K Modest Traditions, G Rural Reality, N Vintage Value

Produced by: Heather Collier, Research Co-ordinator
 Insight, Planning and Performance Team,
 Staffordshire County Council
 E-mail: observatory@staffordshire.gov.uk