

200 years of the Census in...

SUSSEX

March 10th 2001 marks the bicentenary of the modern Census in Britain.

For 200 years the Census has been the cornerstone of planning in Britain. The first Census in 1801 was taken amidst fears that Britain's growing population might outstrip the country's supply of food. It asked 5 questions and counted 10 million people living in two million households. The 2001 Census, which takes place on the 29th April, will count almost 60 million people who live in approximately twenty four million households. It will ask 40 questions and generate 2 billion pieces of information to allocate more than £50 billion of public spending each year.

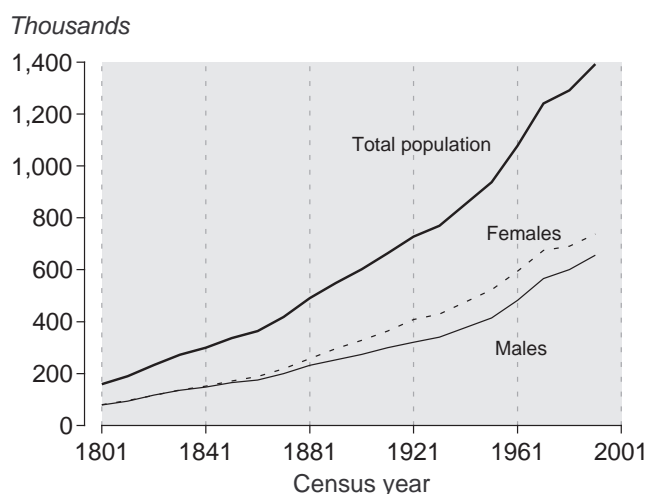
The Census is not only useful for planning. Two centuries of census taking have produced a record of remarkable changes in British society. For example, 90% of the population lived in urban areas in 1991 compared with just 16% in 1831. The average size of households has fallen by half in the past 100 years from 4.6 persons in 1901 to approximately 2.4 persons in 1991. We are also living longer. In 1821 almost half of the population was under 20 years of age compared with just over a quarter under 20 years of age today.

The value of the Census is that it provides detailed information at a local as well as a national level. This pamphlet - one of a series for various areas in England and for Wales - describes the changes in society measured by the Census between 1801 and 1991.

The information from censuses has continued to evolve and grow since the first reports in 1801. The questions and results are on issues relevant to a particular time and change cannot always be tracked exactly over the two centuries. Boundaries of counties also shift over time. The figures and graphs in this pamphlet are the best approximation in the circumstances and are to help paint the picture of change. A full list of the topics covered in the census since 1801 is available in an accompanying document 'Census Topics 1801-2001', and details on how to obtain further information on historical census statistics are given on the back page of this monitor.

THE POPULATION AND AREA SIZE OF SUSSEX

This table and chart show the various increases and decreases in area size and population, and numbers of males and females. The counties of East and West Sussex have been combined for the later years to allow comparison across the 200 years. In terms of analysing the growth in population, Sussex has not been significantly affected by boundary changes.



Year	Area Size (Acres)	Total Population	Males	Females
1801	na	159,311	78,797	80,514
1811	na	190,083	94,188	95,895
1821	na	233,019	116,705	116,314
1831	907,920	272,340	135,333	137,007
1841	907,920	299,753	147,604	152,149
1851	934,851	336,844	165,772	171,072
1861	936,911	363,735	174,982	188,753
1871	934,006	417,456	199,532	217,924
1881	933,269	490,505	232,331	258,174
1891	932,733	548,979	252,937	296,042
1901	932,409	602,255	273,724	328,531
1911	932,409	663,378	299,188	364,190
1921	932,471	727,997	320,111	407,886
1931	932,471	769,859	340,363	429,496
1951	932,513	937,339	413,941	523,398
1961	932,528	1,077,507	482,765	594,752
1971	932,335	1,240,469	566,453	674,016
1981	935,145	1,291,140	600,178	690,962
1991	934,900	1,392,737	655,827	736,910

na = not available

Households and Amenities

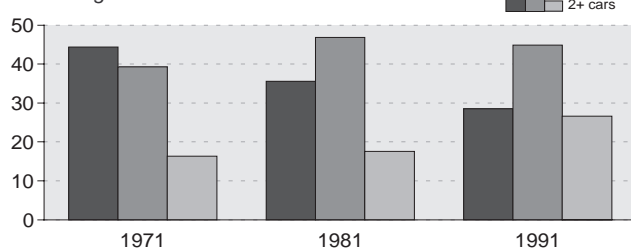
At the end of the Second World War (1939-45) it was vital to assess the overall housing situation in Great Britain. Consequently the 1951 Census had a number of questions on housing needs. These were met in the post-war housing programmes, and significant improvements were evident in subsequent Censuses. In 1971 only 2,750 in Sussex were without a WC, compared to 18,199 households in 1951. By 1981, only 6,187 households were without a fixed bath.

The 2001 Census will ask questions relevant now, such as availability of central heating and the lowest floor level of accommodation.

Amenities	1951	H/Holds %
H/Holds without piped water	8,729	3.0
H/Holds without WC	18,199	6.2
H/Holds without fixed bath	78,281	26.7
H/Holds without kitchen sink	7,114	2.4
H/Holds without cooking stove	5,368	1.8
H/Holds with all five of the above	179,573	61.3

(Total Households in 1951 = 292,761)

Percentage



Car Availability 1971 – 1991

A question on car availability was asked for the first time in 1971, by which time almost 56 per cent of households in Sussex already had a car. At the time of the 1991 Census this had increased by a further 16 percentage points to almost three-quarters of households (72 %). There has also been a big increase in households with two or more cars since 1971.

OCCUPATIONS

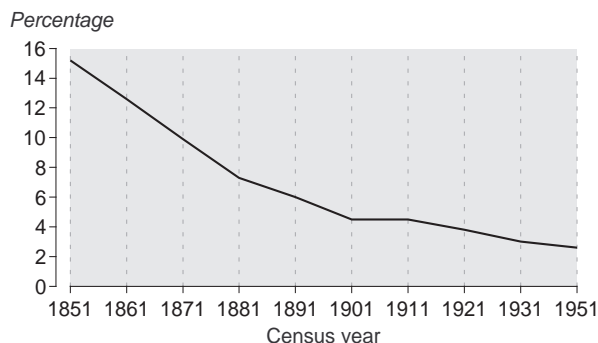
Agriculture

A general decline in the number of people employed in agriculture is common to many counties. In Sussex the number of agricultural labourers fell from 32,398 in 1861 to 14,071 in 1931, a decrease of 57%.

By 1991, the number of farmers and agricultural labourers accounted for less than 1% of the Sussex population.

N.B. This analysis is based upon the number of people employed in agriculture as a percentage of the total population, not just the working population..

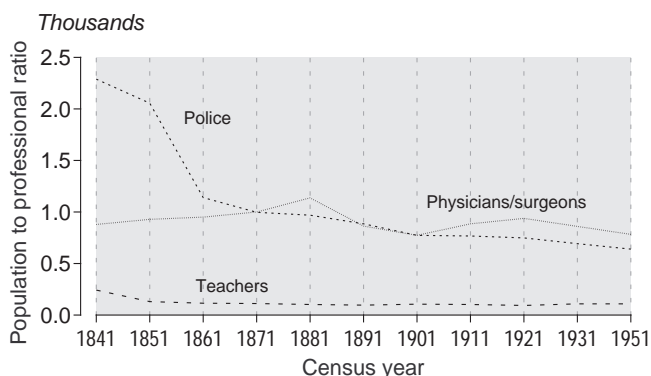
Percentage of people employed in agriculture in Sussex



Professionals

This chart is based on a comparison between three professional occupations (physicians/surgeons, teachers and the police), and the total population of Sussex, 1841-1951.

There have been changes in definition in what is included in each of these professions over the years.



For example, in 1841 'Police' included watchmen who were paid for 'guarding the gates' and patrolling the streets at night. Early figures for physicians and surgeons are also overstated as they included people employed in 'apothecary' (chemists) and medical students.

The number of people per physician/surgeon appears to have remained relatively stable, whilst the numbers of people to each policeman/woman and teacher has fallen over the period. For example, there was one police officer per 2,000 people in 1851, dropping to 640 people in 1951.

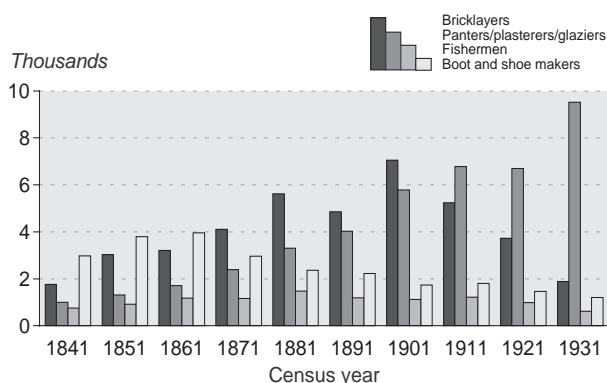
By 1991, there was one teacher per 67 people, one physician/surgeon per 645 people and one police officer per 448 people.

N.B. Figures between 1951 and 1991 have not been included due to problems with the availability and comparability of data between these years.

Key Occupations

The chart highlights four occupations in Sussex, past and present, and trends over the years.

The graph clearly shows a large rise in people employed as bricklayers during the late nineteenth century reflecting the increase in house building due to coastal resorts becoming fashionable and more accessible with railway links. The strong growth in painters, plasterers and glaziers is also a reflection of this trend. Numbers of fishermen/women rose and then fell again over the period, as did numbers of boot and shoemakers.



N.B. Analyses are only shown to 1931 because of difficulties in making comparisons with more recent statistics.

Did you know ?

- The population of Sussex increased almost nine-fold between 1801 to 1991.
- In 1991, one in six households in East Sussex and one in nine households in West Sussex did not have central heating, which compared to a GB average of one in five.
- Between 1851 and 1901, the number of people employed on the railways in Sussex (excluding construction) increased eight-fold – from 502 people to 4,156 people.
- In 1881, 14% of the Sussex female population were employed as indoor domestic servants. Over five times as many females were domestic servants as males.
- In 1851, there was one chimney sweep aged between 5 and 9 in Sussex.
- In 1891 there were 2,227 blacksmiths in Sussex, whilst the highest number of fishermen/women recorded for Sussex was 1,473 in 1881.
- There was a rise in the population density of Sussex from 0.3 people per acre in 1831, to 1.5 people per acre in 1991. This was above the GB average of almost 1 person per acre in 1991.
- The numbers of people per household has decreased over the last 200 years. In 1801 the average household in Sussex contained 6 people, compared to 2.4 in 1991. This was slightly lower than the 1991 GB average of 2.5 people per household.

The Census reports also contain interesting explanatory notes:

1851 – *“Owing to the gradual encroachment of the sea, the church and the village of Aldrington (or Atherington) have been destroyed; consequently the Parish contained neither houses nor population at the Census of 1801, 11, 21 and 31. The house returned in 1841 and 1851 is a toll-house, built since the completion of the new road from Shoreham to Brighton.”*

1861 – *“The increasing demand for timber and coals for the manufacture of gas led to the request to have a canal cut, and a large basin dug to allow vessels engaged in the conveyance of such goods to discharge their cargoes. Significant numbers of people are involved in the oyster trade, including some people having moved from Essex.” (from notes on Brighton)*

1871 – *“In Broadwater and Worthing, the increase in population is ascribed to the attractions and healthiness of the locality.”*

Further information

These monitors have been produced to show county level information. Often, there is more interest in information for lower geographical areas e.g. parishes. Many good reference libraries hold census volumes to enable individuals to carry out their own research. The ONS London library (details below) which is open to the public also contains a full set of census volumes back to 1801. From 10th March 2001 there will be additional information made available on our website www.statistics.gov.uk. Further advice and limited research can be also carried out by Census Customer Services.

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