

200 years of the Census in...

LEICESTERSHIRE

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.

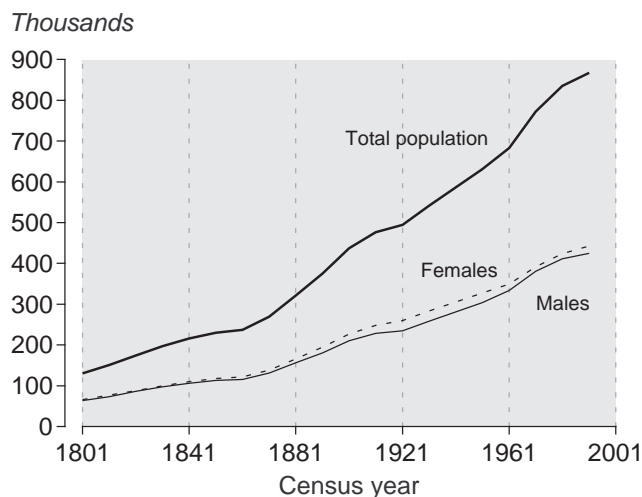
The Census is not only useful for planning. Two centuries of census taking have produced a record of remarkable changes in British society. For example, 90% of the population lived in urban areas in 1991 compared with just 16% in 1831. The average size of households has fallen by half in the past 100 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 LEICESTERSHIRE

This table and chart show the various increases and decreases in area size and population, and numbers of males and females. Despite a number of small changes in the boundaries and size of Leicestershire over the years, the population has been more or less unaffected, and has continued to increase steadily.



Year	Area Size (Acres)	Total Population	Males	Females
1801	na	130,081	63,943	66,138
1811	na	150,419	73,366	77,053
1821	na	174,571	86,390	88,181
1831	511,340	197,003	97,556	99,447
1841	511,340	215,867	105,616	110,251
1851	514,164	230,308	112,937	117,371
1861	514,164	237,412	115,426	121,986
1871	511,719	269,311	131,202	138,109
1881	511,907	321,258	155,881	165,377
1891	528,986	375,092	180,709	194,383
1901	532,788	437,490	210,226	227,264
1911	532,779	476,553	228,353	248,200
1921	532,779	494,469	234,517	259,952
1931	532,779	541,861	258,267	283,594
1951	532,385	631,077	303,403	327,674
1961	532,389	682,568	333,380	349,188
1971	533,558	772,102	380,500	391,602
1981	630,829	835,647	411,439	424,208
1991	630,319	867,521	424,840	442,681

na = not available

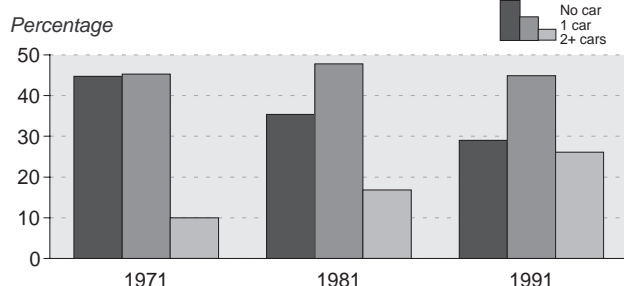
Households and Amenities

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 2,100 households in Leicestershire were without a WC, compared to 17,803 households in 1951. By 1981, only 5,303 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	15,288	8
H/Holds without WC	17,803	9.3
H/Holds without fixed bath	77,554	40.5
H/Holds without kitchen sink	8,148	4.3
H/Holds without cooking stove	2,174	1.1
H/Holds with all five of the above	98,523	51.4

(Total Households in 1951 = 191,732)



Car Availability 1971 – 1991

A question on car availability was asked for the first time in 1971, by which time 55 per cent of households in Leicestershire already had a car. At the time of the 1991 Census this had increased by a further 16 percentage points to 71% of households. There has also been a big increase in households with two or more cars since 1971.

OCCUPATIONS

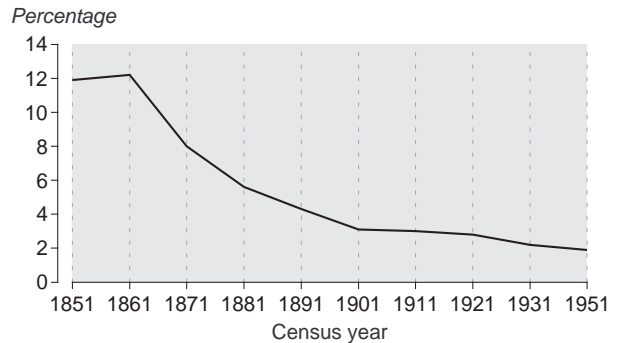
Agriculture

A general decline in the number of people employed in agriculture is common to many counties. In Leicestershire the number of agricultural labourers fell from 16,333 in 1861 to 6,038 in 1931, a decrease of 63%.

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

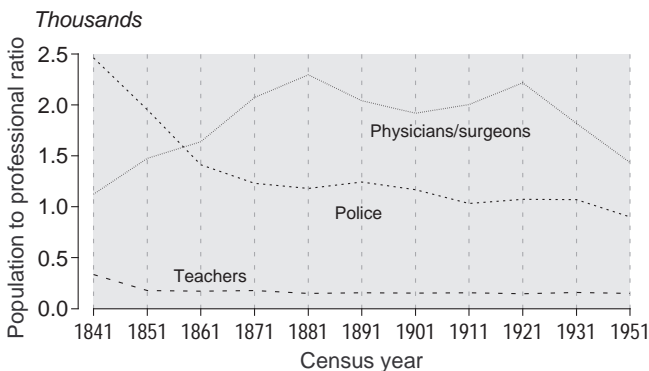
N.B. This analysis is based upon the number of people employed in agriculture as a percentage of the total population, not just the working population.

Percentage of people employed in agriculture in Leicestershire



Professionals

This chart is based on a comparison between three professional occupations (physicians/surgeons, teachers and the police), and the total population of Leicestershire, 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 may also be overstated as they included people employed in 'apothecary' (chemists) and medical students.

The number of people per physician/surgeon appears to have risen and fallen, whilst the numbers of people per policeman/woman and teacher has fallen. For example, there was one police officer per 1,951 people in 1851, dropping to 899 people in 1951.

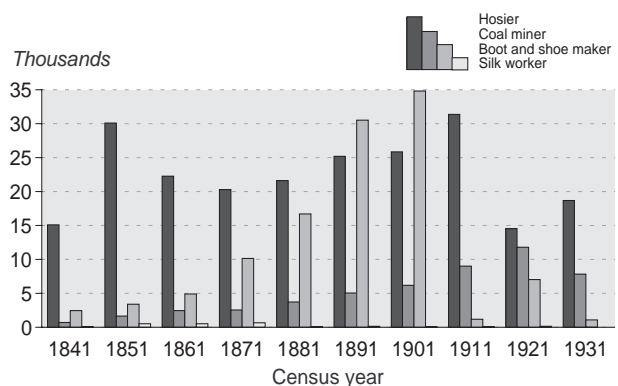
By 1991, there was one teacher per 57 people, one physician/surgeon per 526 people and one police officer per 434 people.

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 of the main occupations in Leicestershire, past and present, and trends over the years.

The largest increase between 1841 and 1931 occurred in the manufacture of boots and shoes and in the hosiery (stocking) industry, with boot and shoe manufacture reaching its peak during 1901 with 34,824 employed, and hosiery manufacture during 1911 employing 31,377 people. The numbers employed in coal mining increased steadily up to 1921 and then declined.



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

Did you know ?

- The population of Leicestershire increased more than six-fold between 1801 and 1991.
- In 1991, one in eight households in Leicestershire did not have central heating.
- Between 1851 and 1901, the number of people employed on the railways in Leicestershire (excluding construction) increased more than fourteen-fold – from 266 people to 3,795 people. There was also a rise in the numbers of people employed constructing the railways. This rose from 238 people in 1851 to 1,723 people in 1901.
- In 1881, 7% of Leicestershire's female population were employed as indoor domestic servants. Over 12 times as many females were domestic servants as males.
- In 1851, there were 10 chimney sweeps between the age of 5-9 in Leicestershire.
- In 1841 there were 1,952 people employed in lace manufacturing, and a further 329 people employed as hatters in Leicestershire.
- There was a rise in the population density of Leicestershire from 0.4 people per acre in 1831, to 1.4 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 Leicestershire contained 5 people, compared to 2.6 in 1991. This was slightly higher than the 1991 GB average of 2.5 people per household.

The Census reports also contain interesting explanatory notes:

1821 – *“The increase in population in Melton Mowbray is chiefly attributed to the setting up and keeping of a large hunting establishment.”*

1821 – *“The increase of Population is partly attributed to the return of discharged and disembodied soldiers, together with a continuance of public tranquillity.”*

1821 – *“ The Population of Hinckley is said to have increased from 1811 to 1815; and since then to have declined in consequence of the cessation of trade with America hence (so paupers have increased and are very burthersome on the rest of the Inhabitants).”*

1911 – *“The very large increase in the population of Melton Mowbray Civil Parish is attributed mainly to the development of the woollen and shoe manufacturing industries.”*

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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