

200 years of the Census in...

BERKSHIRE

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.

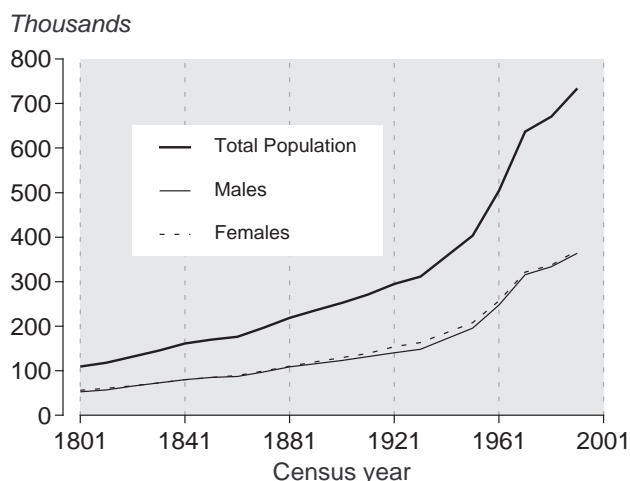
The Census is not only useful for planning. Two centuries of census taking have produced a record of remarkable changes in British society. For example, 90% of the population lived in urban areas in 1991 compared with just 16% in 1831. The average size of households has fallen by half in the past 100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

This table and chart show the various increases and decreases in area size and population, and numbers of males and females. There have been several changes in the boundaries and size of Berkshire over the years. The 1974 Local Government Re-organisation led to Berkshire losing area to Oxfordshire (including Abingdon and Wallingford) but gaining Slough, which had a high population density.



Year	Area Size (Acres)	Total Population	Males	Females
1801	na	109,215	52,821	56,394
1811	na	118,277	57,360	60,917
1821	na	131,977	65,546	66,431
1831	472,270	145,389	72,553	72,836
1841	473,920	161,147	80,231	80,916
1851	450,348	170,065	84,927	85,138
1861	451,210	176,256	86,875	89,381
1871	450,132	196,475	97,078	99,397
1881	462,210	218,363	108,431	109,932
1891	461,742	236,163	115,962	120,201
1901	462,367	252,571	122,807	129,764
1911	462,367	271,009	131,809	139,200
1921	463,830	294,821	140,640	154,181
1931	463,830	311,453	148,310	163,143
1951	463,830	403,141	195,528	207,613
1961	463,830	504,154	247,591	256,563
1971	463,846	636,857	315,528	321,329
1981	311,074	670,859	333,731	337,128
1991	311,047	734,246	363,706	370,540

na = not available

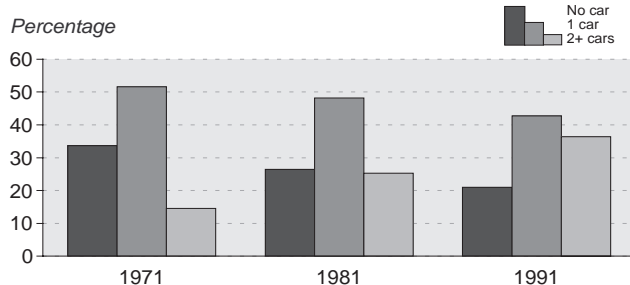
Households and Amenities

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 2,310 households in Berkshire were without a WC, compared to 15,716 households in 1951. By 1981, only 2,831 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	9,021	7.8
H/Holds without WC	15,716	13.7
H/Holds without fixed bath	45,499	39.5
H/Holds without kitchen sink	7,819	6.8
H/Holds without cooking stove	1,621	1.4
H/Holds with all five of the above	58,326	50.7

(Total Households in 1951 = 115,161)



Car Availability 1971 – 1991

A question on car availability was asked for the first time in 1971, by which time over 65 per cent of households in Berkshire already had a car. At the time of the 1991 Census this had increased by a further 14 percentage points to over three-quarters of households (79%). There has also been a big increase in households with two or more cars since 1971.

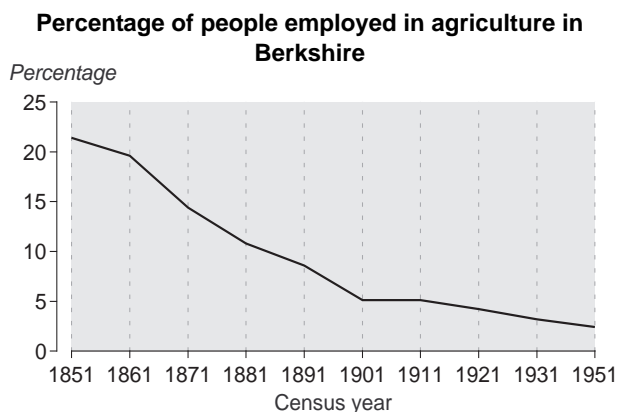
OCCUPATIONS

Agriculture

A general decline in the number of people employed in agriculture is common to many counties. In Berkshire the number of agricultural labourers fell from 25,310 in 1861 to 6,878 in 1931, a decrease of 73%.

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

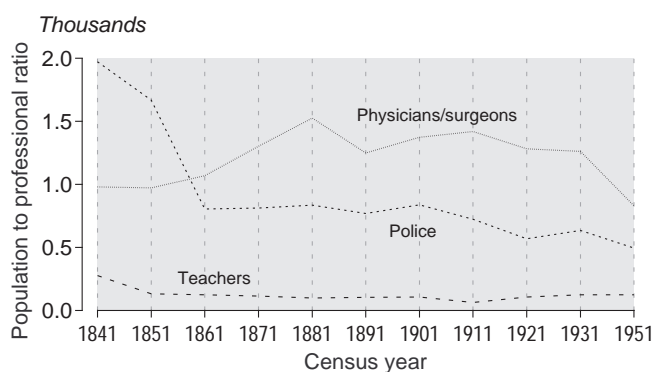
N.B. This analysis is based upon the number of people employed in agriculture as a percentage of the total population, not just the working population.



Professionals

This chart is based on a comparison between three professional occupations (physicians/surgeons, teachers and the police), and the total population of Berkshire, 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 1,667 people in 1851, dropping to 493 people in 1951.

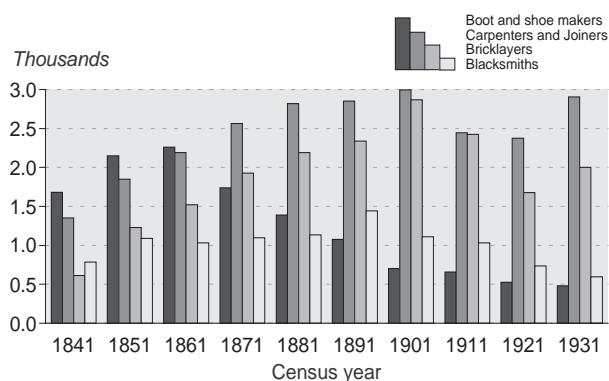
By 1991, there was one teacher per 65 people, one physician/surgeon per 706 people and one police officer per 382 people.

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 Berkshire, past and present, and trends over the years.

Between 1841 and 1911 the biggest increase in employment came in bricklaying, which grew in numbers from 612 people to 2,002 people. The number of carpenters and joiners also increased over two-fold, whilst boot and shoemakers witnessed a general decline. The number of blacksmiths rose from 1841 and 1891 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 Berkshire increased seven-fold between 1801 to 1991.
- In 1991, one in nine households in Berkshire 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 Berkshire (excluding construction) increased over seven-fold – from 277 people to 2,078 people.
- In 1881, 13% of Berkshire’s female population were employed as indoor domestic servants. Over 12 times as many females were domestic servants as males.
- In 1851, there were 2 chimney sweeps aged between 5 and 9 in Berkshire.
- In 1921 there were 430 racehorse trainers, horses jockeys and stable attendants in Berkshire.
- There was a rise in the population density of Berkshire from 0.3 people per acre in 1831, to 2.4 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 Berkshire contained 5 people, compared to 2.6 in 1991, which closely matched the 1991 GB average of 2.5 people per household.

The Census reports also contain interesting explanatory notes:

1821 – *“An increase of population in the Parish of Blewberry is attributed to a Charity School, which is said to attract and retain parishioners.”*

1831 – *“The small number of persons employed by manufacturers in the County of Berkshire, are mostly employed in making mats and sacking at Abingdon, and sail cloth there and elsewhere.”*

1861 – *“The decrease of population in Tubney Parish is attributed mainly to the removal of the kennels of the Old Berkshire Hunt from Tubney House, where a large establishment was kept.”*

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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