

200 years of the Census in...

CORNWALL AND THE ISLES OF SCILLY

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.

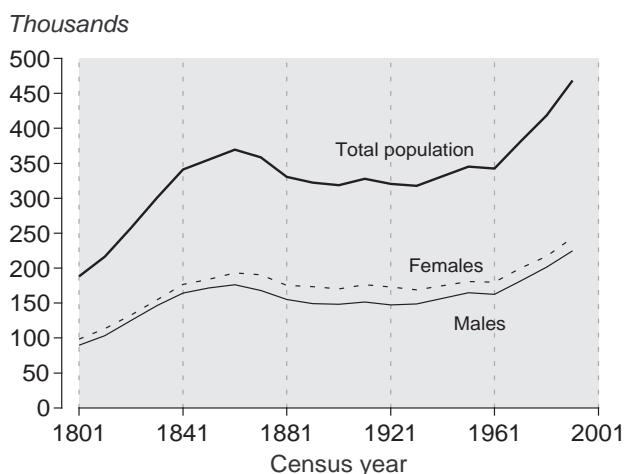
The value of the Census is that it provides detailed information at a local as well as a national level. This pamphlet - one of a series for various areas in England and for Wales - describes the changes in society measured by the Census between 1801 and 1991.

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 CORNWALL AND THE ISLE OF SCILLY

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 minor changes in the boundaries and size of Cornwall and the Isle of Scilly, however these alone are unlikely to explain changes in the size of population over the 200 years.



Year	Area Size (Acres)	Total Population	Males	Females
1801	na	188,269	89,868	98,401
1811	na	216,667	103,310	113,357
1821	na	257,447	124,817	132,630
1831	854,770	300,938	146,213	154,725
1841	854,770	341,279	164,757	176,522
1851	873,600	355,558	171,636	183,922
1861	873,600	369,390	176,384	193,006
1871	885,541	358,356	167,839	190,517
1881	863,665	330,686	155,115	175,571
1891	868,208	322,571	149,259	173,312
1901	886,384	318,591	148,127	170,464
1911	868,167	328,098	151,614	176,484
1921	868,167	320,705	147,463	173,242
1931	868,167	317,968	148,849	169,119
1951	868,167	345,442	164,777	180,665
1961	868,167	342,301	162,428	179,873
1971	880,319	381,672	181,735	199,937
1981	880,734	418,631	201,675	216,956
1991	880,828	468,425	224,801	243,624

na = not available

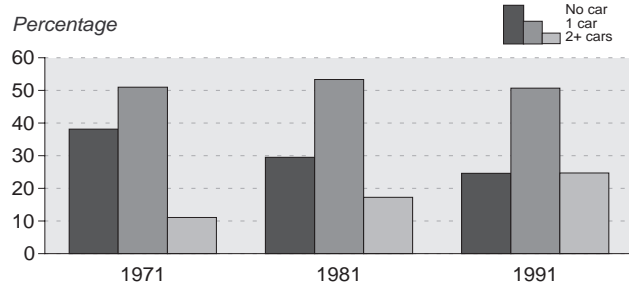
Households and Amenities

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 5,320 households in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly were without a WC, compared to 25,836 households in 1951. By 1981, only 6,196 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	28,030	27.1
H/Holds without WC	25,836	25.0
H/Holds without fixed bath	53,797	52.1
H/Holds without kitchen sink	32,357	31.3
H/Holds without cooking stove	1,576	1.5
H/Holds with all five of the above	42,228	40.9

(Total Households in 1951 = 103,281)



Car Availability 1971 – 1991

A question on car availability was asked for the first time in 1971, by which time 62 per cent of households in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly already had a car. At the time of the 1991 Census this had increased by a further 13 percentage points to three-quarters of households (75 %). There has also been a big increase in households with two or more cars since 1971.

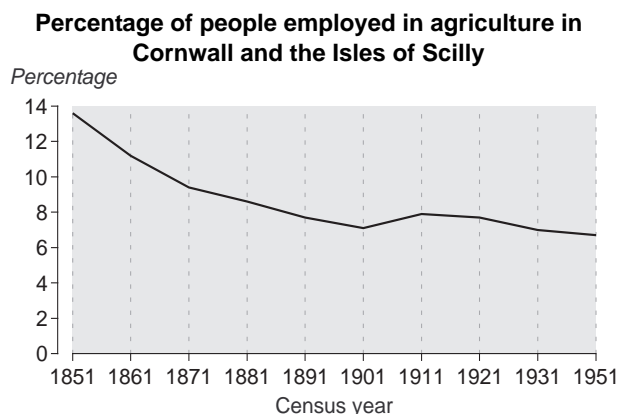
OCCUPATIONS

Agriculture

A general decline in the number of people employed in agriculture is common to many counties. In Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly the number of agricultural labourers fell from 15,291 in 1861 to 9,156 in 1931, a decrease of 40%.

By 1991, the number of farmers and agricultural labourers accounted for less than 2% of Cornwall and Isles of Scilly's population.

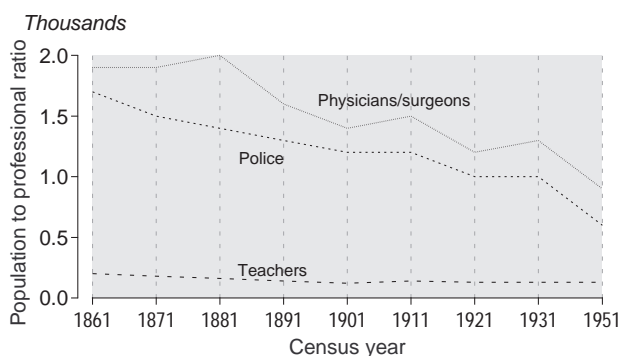
N.B. This analysis is based upon the number of people employed in agriculture as a percentage of the total population, not just the working population.



Professionals

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

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



Early figures for physicians and surgeons are possibly overstated as they included people employed in 'apothecary' (chemists) and medical students. Figures for the Police have not been included for 1841 and 1851 as there were so few of them (28 and 23 respectively).

Generally the numbers of people to each professional has fallen over the period. For example, there was one police officer per 1,700 people in 1861, dropping to 698 people in 1951.

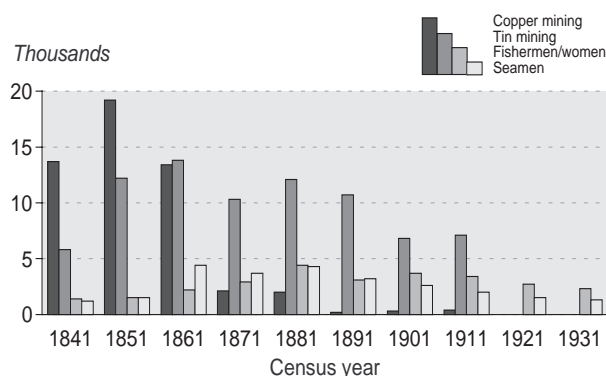
By 1991, there was one teacher per 76 people, one physician/surgeon per 710 people and one police officer per 593 people.

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 Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, past and present, and trends over the years.

The graph clearly shows the decline of the copper and tin mining industries in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly over the period. In 1851 almost 20,000 people were employed in copper mining. By 1911, this had dropped to below 100 people. The number of fishermen/women and Seamen varied over the period. The slightly erratic numbers may be explained by numbers of people away at work for some censuses (and so not counted) but at home for others.



N.B. Analyses are only shown to 1931 because of difficulties in making comparisons with more recent statistics. Figures for copper and tin mining for 1921 and 1931 are not available due to changes in the classifications used.

Did you know?

- The population of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly increased two-fold between 1801 to 1991.
- In 1991, one in four households in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly 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 Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (excluding construction) increased by over 26 times – from 64 people to 1,676 people.
- In 1881, 9% of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly's female population were employed as indoor domestic servants. Over 13 times as many females were domestic servants as males.
- In 1881, there were 4,440 fishermen/women in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- The rise in the population density of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly has been modest. There were 0.4 people per acre in 1831, compared to 0.5 people per acre in 1991. This was below 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 Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly contained 6 people, compared to 2.5 in 1991. This was consistent with the 1991 GB average.

The Census reports also contain interesting explanatory notes:

1841 – *“The increase in the population in the parish of St Just is attributed to the prosperity of the Tin and Copper mines in the neighbourhood”.*

1841 – *“The entire parish of Bodmin includes 195 persons in the County Gaol, 165 in the County Lunatic Asylum and 94 in the Bodmin Union Workhouse.*

1851 – *“There has been a decline of trade in Mevagissey, and in 1849 the cholera caused unusual mortality in this area”.*

1851 – *“The decrease in population in several of the parishes in St Keverne subdistrict, the inhabitants of which depend upon agriculture for their support, is ascribed to the very low rate of wages obtainable for labour, which has induced many to emigrate or seek employment in the mining districts”.*

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.

Census Customer Services
Office for National Statistics
Room 4300S
Segensworth Road, Titchfield
Hampshire, PO15 5RR

Phone: 01329 813800
Fax: 01329 813587
e-mail: census.customerservices@ons.gov.uk

ONS London Library
1 Drummond Gate
Pimlico
London
SW1V 2QQ

