

200 years of the Census in...

KENT

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.

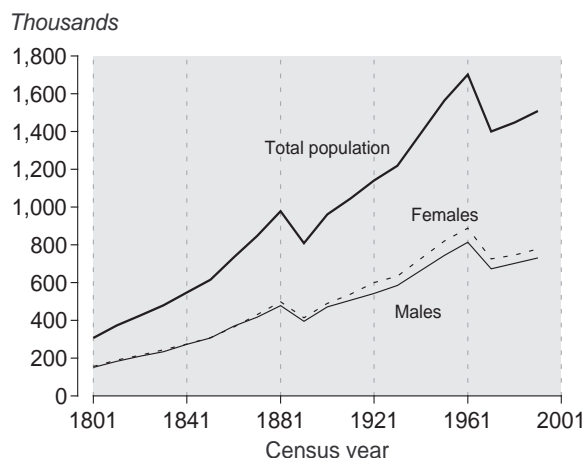
The Census is not only useful for planning. Two centuries of census taking have produced a record of remarkable changes in British society. For example, 90% of the population lived in urban areas in 1991 compared with just 16% in 1831. The average size of households has fallen by half in the past 100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

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 Kent over the years; for example, the apparent decrease in Kent's population between 1961 and 1971 was predominantly caused by boundary changes.



Year	Area Size (Acres)	Total Population	Males	Females
1801	na	307,624	151,374	156,250
1811	na	373,095	183,500	189,595
1821	na	426,016	209,833	216,183
1831	972,240	479,155	234,572	244,583
1841	972,240	548,337	272,532	275,805
1851	1,041,479	615,766	307,041	308,725
1861	1,039,419	733,887	369,129	364,758
1871	1,004,984	848,294	417,506	430,788
1881	995,392	977,706	478,653	499,053
1891	975,820	808,736	395,288	413,448
1901	976,881	961,139	471,436	489,703
1911	975,966	1,045,591	506,870	538,721
1921	975,978	1,141,666	542,088	599,578
1931	975,978	1,219,273	584,335	634,938
1951	975,978	1,564,324	743,668	820,656
1961	975,926	1,701,851	813,134	888,717
1971	922,039	1,399,463	673,458	726,005
1981	921,831	1,448,393	702,101	746,292
1991	922,916	1,508,873	730,995	777,878

na = not available

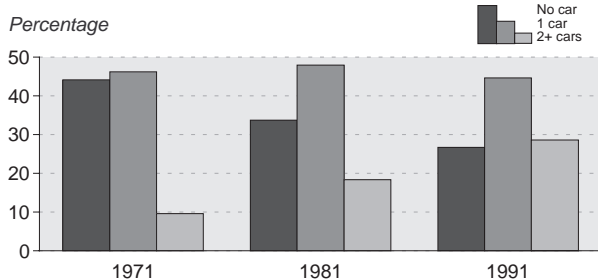
Households and Amenities

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 3,325 households in Kent were without a WC, compared to 18,229 households in 1951. By 1981, only 12,658 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	7,394	1.58
H/Holds without WC	18,229	3.88
H/Holds without fixed bath	140,703	29.98
H/Holds without kitchen sink	7,456	1.59
H/Holds without cooking stove	3,418	0.73
H/Holds with all five of the above	287,962	61.36

(Total Households in 1951 = 469,295)



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 Kent already had a car. At the time of the 1991 Census this had increased by a further 17 percentage points to almost three-quarters of households (73 %). There has also been a big increase in households with two or more cars since 1971.

OCCUPATIONS

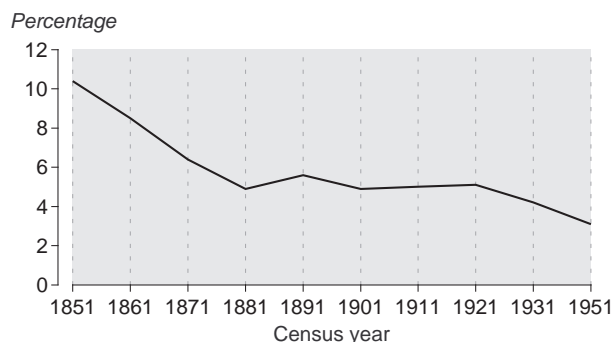
Agriculture

A general decline in the number of people employed in agriculture is common to many counties. In Kent the number of agricultural labourers fell from 42,916 in 1861 to 23,569 in 1931, a decrease of 45%.

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

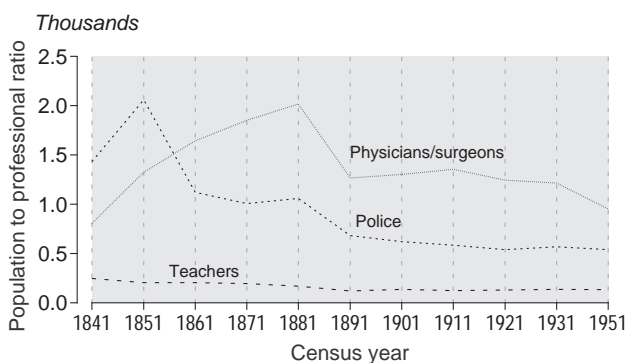
N.B. This analysis is based upon the number of people employed in agriculture as a percentage of the total population, not just the working population.

Percentage of people employed in agriculture in Kent



Professionals

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

Generally the numbers of people to each professional has fallen over the period. For example, there was one police officer per 2,000 people in 1851, dropping to 538 people in 1951.

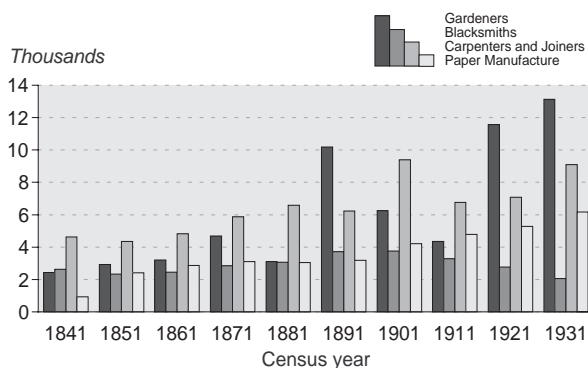
By 1991, there was one teacher per 73 people, one physician/surgeon per 754 people and one police officer per 375 people.

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

The biggest increases between 1841 and 1931 occurred in the paper manufacturing industry, and in gardening, with both occupations increasing more than five-fold. The only occupation on the chart to experience a fall in employment between 1841 and 1931 was blacksmiths, with a drop of 22%, although the number did rise and fall during the period.



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

Did you know ?

- The population of Kent increased five-fold between 1801 to 1991.
- In 1991, one in six households in Kent 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 Kent (excluding construction) increased twelve-fold – from 563 people to 6,749 people.
- In 1881, 8% of Kent’s female population were employed as indoor domestic servants. Over 19 times as many females were domestic servants as males.
- In 1851, there were 9 chimney sweeps aged between 5 and 9 in Kent.
- In 1891 there were 3,071 shipwrights in Kent.
- There was a rise in the population density of Kent from 0.5 people per acre in 1831, to 1.6 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 Kent 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 – “367 males and 285 females have been returned as having emigrated to colonies and foreign countries since December 31st 1840.”

1881 – “The increase in the population of Darenth is mainly attributed to the establishment of the Metropolitan Imbecile Asylum, which contained some 801 persons.”

1911 – “Gillingham Civil Parish contained 3,261 persons enumerated on board Her Majesty’s Ships.”

1931 – “The decrease of population in the Isle of Grain Civil Parish is attributed to the closing down of the Royal Air Force Station based there.”

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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