

census 2021

2021 is Census year. Every ten years since 1801 the nation has set aside one day for the Census – a count of all people and households in England and Wales. It provides the most complete snapshot of the population – of age, employment, household size, and ethnic background. It has been held every decade except for 1941, during the Second World War. The last Census was held in 2011. The next Census is on **Sunday 21st March 2021**.

But the 2021 headcount could be the UK's last, with future population counts being carried out in other cheaper – and easier – ways. We now live our lives so digitally that those digital footprints could be used instead. It would be a far cry from the 1801 census carried out by officials using only pen and paper.

Looking back, there are various views on why the Census first came about. Some reports say it was to count the number of able-bodied men in the country who could fight in the Napoleonic wars. Others say it was simply to record the population to ensure there was enough to eat.

At the time of the first Census the population of the UK was 9 million. In 2011 it was 63.2 million. In 1801 some 44,000 people lived in Stratford upon Avon district. In 2011, there were 120,485 living in the district. In 1861 only 6% of the local population were aged 65 and over. This had risen to 22% by 2011.

At the time of the last census in 2011: 120,485 people lived in Stratford, there were 795 farmers and 107 actors/entertainers/presenters, and 36 librarians. 17.1% of people (10,476) worked mainly at or from home. Polish was the most popular language other than English or Welsh, spoken by 1,073 people. Stratford-on-Avon was made up of 214 different ethnicities.

Completing the Census is required by law and people can be fined £1,000 for not doing so. However, in the past, some have taken extreme measures to avoid taking part. In 1841, the artist JMW Turner rowed a boat into the Thames for the day so he could not be counted as being present at any property.

The data gathered in the Census can be used by central and local government, charities and communities for things like housing, education, care services, health and transport. However, all personal and identifying information in the Census is locked away for 100 years for future generations.

Census2021 will be the first run predominantly online, with every household receiving a letter with a unique access code in March, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets. Paper questionnaires will also be available on request. A new question this time is whether anyone in the household has served in the UK Armed Forces.

For more information, visit census.gov.uk or contact Sally Bannister, Community Engagement Manager for Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick and Leamington Spa.
Tel: 07452-940469 or email: sally.bannister68@field.census.gov.uk