

Corporate Policy Committee

Date of Meeting:	23 March 2023
Report Title:	Census 2021 Results
Report of:	Jane Burns – Executive Director of Corporate Services
Report Reference No:	CP/40/22-23
Ward(s) Affected:	All

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1.** To provide Corporate Policy Committee with a summary of the key data released to date from the Census 2021 for the Cheshire East area.
- 1.2.** Census data supports delivery of all priorities of the Corporate Plan, providing data and intelligence on our population to inform decisions, strategies and service planning.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1.** The census is a once in a decade survey of all the people and households in England and Wales, carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).
- 2.2.** Information collected in the census helps councils like Cheshire East, central Government, emergency services and other public organisations to plan and fund services. Census data is available for everyone to use, from creating business plans to charity funding bids.
- 2.3.** Census Day was Sunday 21 March 2021. Results from the 2021 census have been made available late in 2022 and into early 2023. The final release of Census 2021 outputs is scheduled for Spring 2023.
- 2.4.** The census helps inform the delivery of public services throughout the UK. Different groups and organisations use census statistics in a variety of ways: for example, to plan services for now and in the future, e.g., education, social

care, roads, and health services, to develop policies and plans. The data helps to ensure that funding and services go where they're needed the most. For example, looking at the housing and household information helps us to plan how many houses should be built, where they should be built and what type are needed for the future. Looking at population changes can determine how services and funding will need to respond in the future.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1.** To note the headlines in the Census 2021 releases made to date (See 6.5 and **Appendix 1** 'How life has changed in Cheshire East: Census 2021').
- 3.2.** To note the release timetable for the Census 2021 data, detailed in paragraph 6.4.
- 3.3.** To agree to utilise the Census 2021 data in all new strategies and plans, including developing proposals under the MTFS, within the refresh of the Health and Wellbeing strategy and when looking to review and refine the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1.** The Census is not just a headcount, it is vital in making informed policy decisions by providing accurate information on local demographics, housing, employment and need.
- 4.2.** The information it collects helps with decisions on the planning and funding of council run services in local areas, along with where schools, doctors' surgeries and emergency services are needed most.
- 4.3.** Accurate population figures and detailed information about need are important in determining the funding of key public services, as well as for the voluntary and community sector and businesses.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1.** Do nothing is not option for the council as decisions should always be made on the latest and most accurate data.

6. Background

- 6.1.** Every household in England and Wales should complete a census form, and only small changes are made to the questionnaire with each iteration. This makes it highly comparable across local authorities and smaller geographies such as middle-layer-super-output areas (MSOAs), and an important tool for understanding long-term changes. All information is anonymised, and the actual census records are kept for 100 years.
- 6.2.** The census is a core dataset for understanding Cheshire East's residents and households. Statistics provided by the census are generally considered

the highest quality source of information available for topics such as population, demography, and ethnicity. It forms the baseline for many statistical products which will be used for the next decade, including future population estimates and projections.

- 6.3.** Census data is published in phases. The first phase provides data tables for only one characteristic of a person or household at various levels geography (country, local authority, output area).
- 6.4.** Future releases will see the publication of more granular data and multi-variate tables. The provisional dates for these releases are:

Data Theme	Update	Provisional Release Date
Geography	Ward Data	30 January 2023
Geography	NHS Health Areas	16 February 2023
Multi-variate	Sexual orientation: age and sex	25 January 2023
Multi-variate	Gender identity: age and sex	25 January 2023
Multi-variate	Religion by age and sex	30 January 2023
Multi-variate	Disability by age, sex and deprivation	8 February 2023
Multi-variate	Unpaid care by age, sex and deprivation	13 February 2023
Multi-variate	Health by age, sex and deprivation	22 February 2023

- 6.5.** The headline data for Cheshire East from the Census 2021 is summarised below:

Demography:

The number of households in Cheshire East increased to 174,900 (9.7% growth) from 159,400 in 2011.

Average household size in Cheshire East was 2.3 people per household, unchanged from 2011 and slightly below the average in England and Wales of 2.4.

Deprivation in Cheshire East has decreased with 54.8% of households not being deprived in any dimension, improving from 50% in 2011.

Overall, 65.8% of households (115,100) were single family households, 30.4% (53,100) were one person households and 3.8% (6,600) were multiple family or other household types.

Since 2011, the percentage of usual residents aged 16 and over who were married or in civil partnerships has decreased from 52.1% in 2011 to 49.3% in 2021.

The percentage who were never married and never been in a civil partnership has increased from 28.5% in 2011 to 31.6% in 2021.

Migration:

The majority of Cheshire East residents, 91.7%, were born in the UK, this has decreased from 2011 which stood at 94.5%.

Poland was the most common country of birth outside of the UK in 2021 (5,700, 1% of usual residents).

22,000 usual residents (5.5%) held a non-UK passport; the most common non-UK passport held was Polish (6,000, 1.5% of all usual residents).

2,600 usual residents had an address outside of the UK one year before the census, up from 2,200 in 2011.

Armed Forces:

In 2021, 12,826 people in Cheshire East reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces (4.1% of usual residents aged 16 years and over).

Of the UK armed forces veterans in Cheshire East, 74.7% (9,584 people) previously served in the regular forces, 20.8% (2,670 people) in the reserve forces, and 4.5% (572 people) served in both the regular and reserve forces.

247 Cheshire East armed forces veterans (1.9%) lived in communal establishments and the remainder (12,580, 98.1%) lived in households.

There were 12,154 households (7% of all households) in Cheshire East with one or more persons who served in the UK armed forces.

National Identity:

In 2021, 94.5% (376,940) of usual residents identified with at least one UK national identity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, and Cornish); this is a slight decrease from 96.6% (357,613) in 2011.

People who identified with at least one UK and one non-UK identity accounted for 1.2% of the overall population (4,978) in 2021; this is an increase from 0.4% (1,587) in 2011.

Those selecting a non-UK identity only accounted for 5.4% of the overall population (21,486), which is an increase from 3.4% of the population (12,518) in 2011.

Among those who described a non-UK national identity, the most common response was those describing “Polish” only as their identity (1.2%, 4,814); “Polish” only was also the most common response in 2011 (1.1%, 4,073).

“Romanian” only was the second most commonly reported non-UK national identity, increasing to 0.6% (2,364) in 2021 from just 60 residents in 2011, which is the largest increase for any non-UK national identity.

Other common non-UK identities include “Irish” only (0.3%, 1,384), “Portuguese” only (0.3%, 1,105), and “Indian” only (0.3%, 1,104).

Language:

In 2021, 95.8% (370,917) of usual residents, aged three years and over, had English as a main language, down from 97.4% (348,956) of usual residents in 2011.

In 2021, a further 3.4% (13,209) of the overall population of Cheshire East were proficient in English but did not speak it as their main language.

The most common main languages, other than English were: Polish (1.3%, 5,102, Romanian (0.6%, 2,234), Slovak (0.2%, 721) and Portuguese (0.2%, 621).

The largest increase was for people who specified Romanian as a main language, who accounted for 0.6% of usual residents in 2021 (2,234 people), up from 0% (64) in 2011.

In 2021, 67.2% (117,573) of households consisted of members who all had the same main language; 2.4% (4,147) had different main languages within the household.

Religion:

The religion question is voluntary; 94.5% (376,955) of usual residents answered the question in 2021, slightly above the national average of 94.0% and an increase from 93.3% (345,486) in 2011.

Just over half of the population in Cheshire East described themselves as “Christian” at 54.3% of usual residents (216,629), however this has fallen 14.6% from the figure in 2011 in which 68.9% (254,940) of usual residents described themselves as “Christian.” While the proportion of residents describing themselves as “Christian” in Cheshire East is higher than the national average (46.2%) the decrease between census years was larger than the national decline (13.1%).

“No religion” was the second most common response, increasing by 15.0% percentage points to 37.7% (150,257) from 22.7% (83,973) in 2011.

There were small increases (0.1%) in the proportion of usual residents in Cheshire East responding as “Buddhist” (0.3%, 1314), “Hindu” (0.5%, 2046) and “Muslim” (1.0%, 4140).

Ethnicity:

In 2021, 94.4% (376,543) of usual residents in Cheshire East identified their ethnic group within the high-level “White” category, a decrease from 96.6% (357,627) in the 2011 Census.

As part of the “White” ethnic group, 89.6% (357,337) of total population in Cheshire East identified their ethnic group as “English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British”, this is a decrease from 93.6% (346,264) in 2011.

The next most common high-level ethnic group was “Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh” accounting for 2.4% (9,531) of the overall population, this ethnic group saw the largest percentage point increase from 2011, up from 1.6% (6,060).

Economic Activity:

At Census Day, 21 March 2021, 195,245 usual residents aged 16 years and over Cheshire East were economically active (59.3%), while 129,185 (39.2%) were economically inactive.

Among usual residents aged 16 years and over, almost half were employees (47.4%, 156,192), almost 1 in 10 were self-employed (9.8%, 32,225) and a further 2.4% (7,802) were unemployed but looking for work.

Over a fifth of usual residents aged 16 years and over were economically inactive because of retirement (26.6%, 87,692).

Travel to Work:

Census 2021 took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the travel to work topic. This factor should be taken into account when using the Census 2021 data for planning and policy purposes.

Census 2021 estimates that 67,827 (35.2%) usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment in Cheshire East worked mainly at or from home in the week before Census Day, 21 March 2021. The impact of COVID can be seen as this figure stood at 13,462 in 2011.

124,660 usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment (64.8%) gave a method other than “at or from home”.

The most selected mode of travel to work was driving a car or a van (48.5%, 93,442 of all usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment).

In Cheshire East the most common distance of travel to work was 10km to less than 20km, 23,236 usual residents (12.1% of working age economically active).

Industry and Occupation:

The largest number of usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment the week before Census Day, 21 March 2021, worked within the broad wholesale, retail and motor trade industry (15.6%, 30,000 out of 192,485 in employment).

Employment in the manufacturing industry decreased by 2.4 percentage points (9.9%, 19,113 in 2021, compared with 12.3%, 22,226 in 2011), whereas employment in human health and social work activities increased by 1.8 percentage points (14.1%, 27,137 in 2021, compared with 12.3%, 22,343 in 2011).

More people were employed in professional occupations compared with any other broad occupation categories (21.4%, 41,211 people).

The most common socio-economic classification in Cheshire East was lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations (22.5% of usual residents aged 16 years and over, 74,148).

Gender Identity:

The census question on gender identity was a voluntary question asked of those aged 16 years and over. The question asked “Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?”.

Overall, 329,474 (95.0% of the population aged 16 years and over) answered the question.

In total, 312,882 (95.0%) answered “Yes” and 1,387 (0.4%) answered “No”.

The remaining 15,205 (4.6%) did not answer the question.

Sexual Orientation:

The census question on sexual orientation was a voluntary question asked of those aged 16 years and over.

In total, 309,493 (93.9% of the population aged 16 years and over) answered the question.

Around 301,391 (91.5%) identified as straight or heterosexual.

Around 8102 (2.5%) identified with an LGB+ orientation ("Gay or Lesbian", "Bisexual" or "Other sexual orientation").

The remaining 19,981 (6.1%) did not answer the question.

Education:

There were 65,235 schoolchildren and full-time students (17.2%) in 2021 Cheshire East, out of a total 378,842 usual residents aged five years and over.

More than 3 in 10 usual residents aged 16 years and over had Level 4 or above qualifications (for example, Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree and post-graduate qualifications); this was 37.6%, or 123,785 people.

In 2021, 15.0% (49,524 people) reported having no qualifications, this has decreased from 19% (59,806) in 2011.

Across Cheshire East, apprenticeships were the highest qualification for 5.9% of people (19,394).

7. Implications

7.1. Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.2. Finance

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3. Policy

This report is in line with our Policy objectives as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan. The Census 2021 data will support delivery of all priorities within the Corporate Plan, enabling opportunities for a more accurate understanding of the communities which we service.

7.4. Equality

The Census 2021 enables an accurate picture of the population of the borough to be established. Census 2021 also asked voluntary questions about sexual orientation and gender identity for the first time.

This will provide the Council with more accurate information on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations in the borough. It will help the Council to combat any inequalities these groups face and show where services are needed.

7.5. Human Resources

There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

7.6. Risk Management

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

7.7. Rural Communities

The Census 2021 enables an accurate picture of the population of the borough to be established and will be increasingly important as the smaller geography and multivariate tables become available allowing more detailed analysis of the changes in our rural communities within the borough and will support the updating of the Urban/Rural classification map.

7.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

The Census 2021 enables an accurate picture of the population of the borough to be established and will be increasingly important as the smaller geography and multivariate tables become available allowing more detailed analysis of the changes in the borough.

7.9. Public Health

The Census 2021 asked questions about health including data about people's general health. Analysis of this data will provide the Council with an opportunity to establish key areas for health and wellbeing interventions and will support the drafting of Joint Strategic Needs Assessments.

7.10. Climate Change

The Census 2021 asked questions about car ownership. Analysis of this data will provide the Council with an opportunity to establish key areas for interventions and opportunities to introduce projects to reduce car dependency to reduce levels of pollution.

The Census 2021 also included a question on central heating. Analysis of this data will provide the Council with an opportunity to establish key areas for interventions and opportunities to introduce projects to reduce car dependency in an attempt to reduce levels of pollution and improve household heating and insulation efficiency.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Phil Christian Phil.Christian@cheshireeast.gov.uk 01270 686414
Appendices:	Appendix 1: How life has changed in Cheshire East: Census 2021
Background Papers:	Background Paper 1: Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS