



Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Strategic Evidence Base for Bath and North East Somerset

Demography and Life Expectancy

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Demography and Life Expectancy

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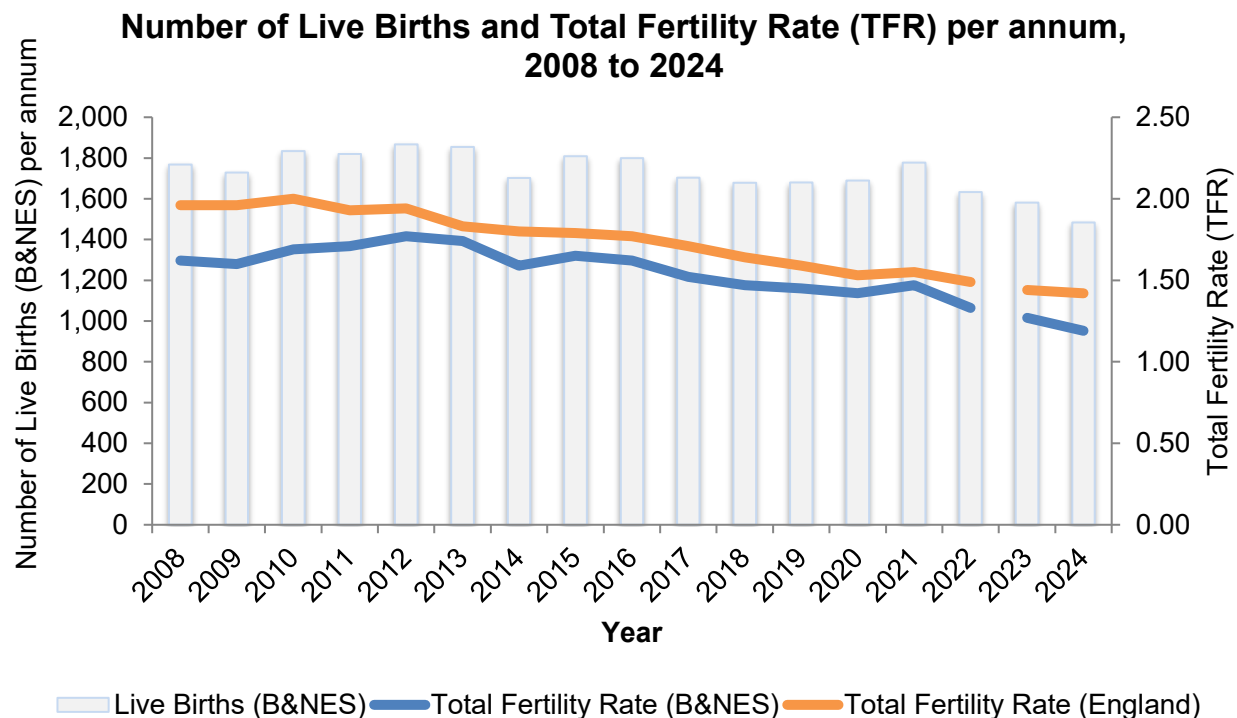
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Live Births and Fertility



Note: TFR trends remain comparable, but 2023 and 2024 rates use refreshed ONS population estimates, which may affect absolute levels.

- In **2024** there were **1,484 live births** to mothers usually resident in B&NES, a decrease of 97 live births (6%) compared to the year before, 2023 (1,581). **This represents the lowest number of live births since at least 2008.**
- **Nationally**, fertility rates have declined across most age groups since 2010, with the largest reductions among younger women, particularly those aged 25 to 29. At the same time, there has been a shift towards later childbearing, reflected in increasing maternal age, although this has not offset the overall decline in fertility rates.
- The **fertility rate** in B&NES has **decreased by 6%** in one year **between 2023 and 2024** – from 1.27 to 1.19. This is higher than the comparable decrease seen in England (1%), from 1.44 to 1.42.
- Overall, **fertility rates are now at historically low levels locally and nationally**; the 2024 rate in B&NES (1.19) and England (1.42) is the lowest since at least 2008.
- Following a long period of narrowing, births and deaths in B&NES have moved into a sustained pattern of natural **decrease**.

Definition: the **Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** in a specific year is defined as the total number of children that would be born to each woman if she were to live to the end of her child-bearing years and give birth to children in alignment with the prevailing age-specific fertility rates. It is calculated by totalling the age-specific fertility rates as defined over five-year intervals. Simply put, total fertility rate is the average number of children a woman would have if she survives all her childbearing (or reproductive) years. Childbearing years are considered age 15 to 49.

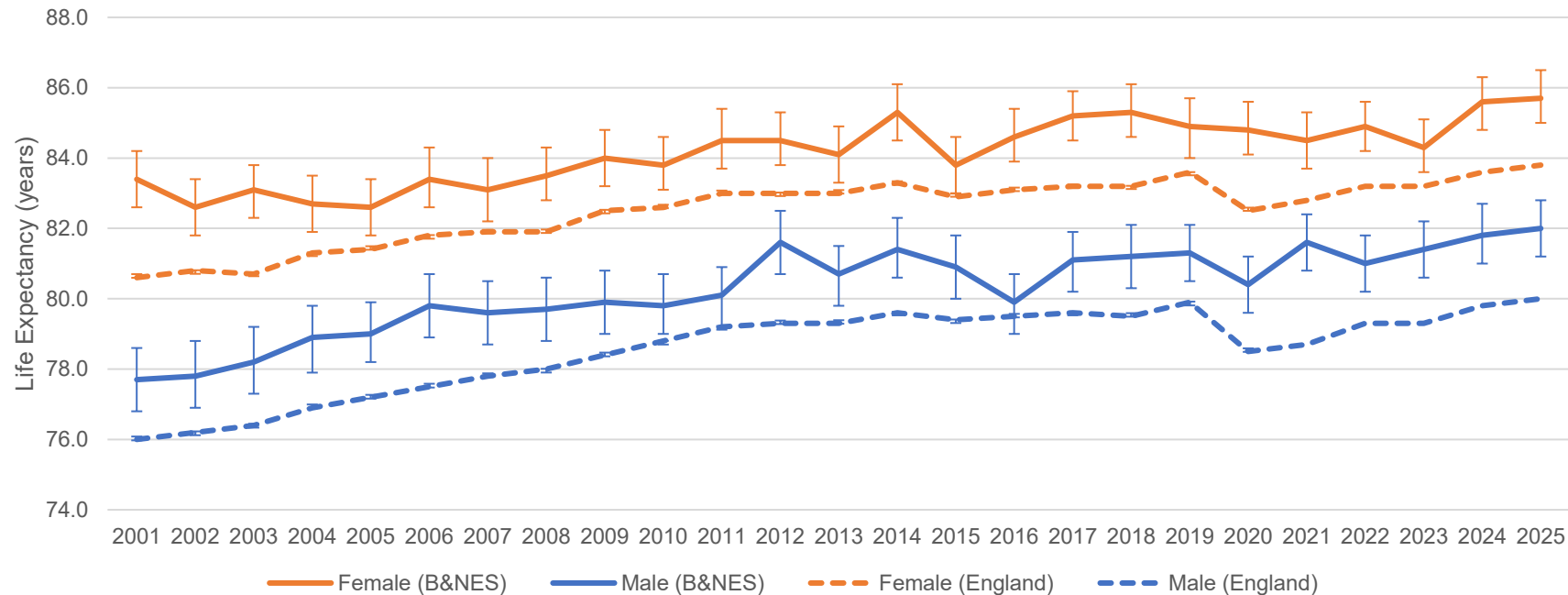
Sources: (i) ONS ([Births in England and Wales: 2024](#)); (ii) ONS ([Deaths registered in England and Wales: 2024](#))

Life Expectancy

Female life expectancy (2025): B&NES = 85.7 years, England = 83.8 years

Male life expectancy (2025): B&NES = 82 years, England = 80 years

Male and Female Life Expectancy at birth, England and B&NES, 2001 to 2025 (single year)
95% confidence intervals shown



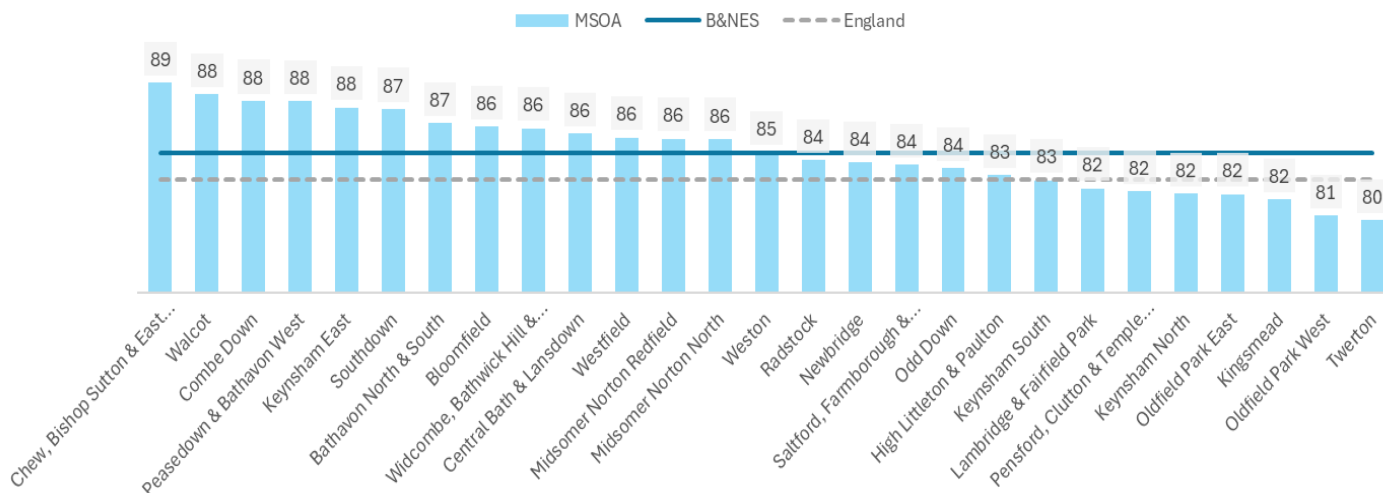
- Life expectancy is affected by a range of factors and has [improved dramatically since the 19th century](#) for many reasons including; better nutrition and living conditions, healthier lifestyle behaviours, the introduction of immunisation programmes and advances in diagnosis and treatment of diseases such as heart disease and cancer.
- Recent data suggests that increases in **life expectancy may have recovered** and are improving again following a [levelling off](#) from 2011 and a sharp fall for males during **COVID-19 (2020)**.
- Male and female life expectancy in B&NES has been **significantly above England** for almost the entire time since 2001.
- The gap between the sexes is still evident, with females living nearly **4 years longer** than males in 2025. This gap was 5.7 years in 2001.
- Life expectancy for females hit its **lowest point** since 2015 in 2023 at 84.3 years, but has since increased again.

Definition: Period life expectancy is the average number of years a person would expect to live based on contemporary mortality rates. For a particular area and time period, it is an estimate of the average number of years a new-born baby would survive if he or she experienced the age-specific mortality rates for that area and time period throughout his or her life.

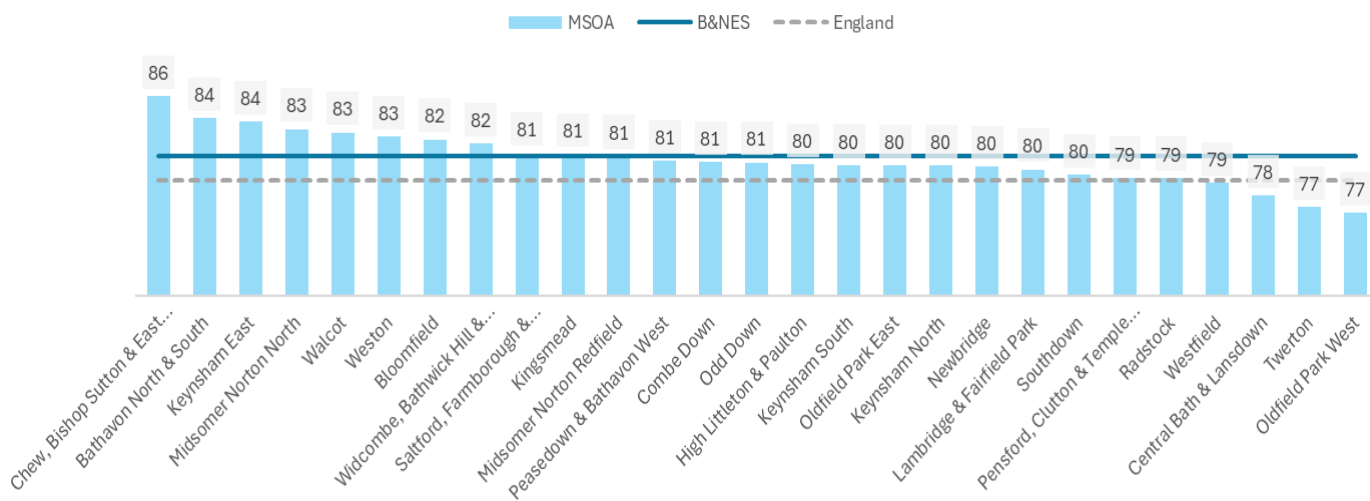
Source: OHID (2025), *Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF)*, available from: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/public-health-outcomes-framework>

Inequalities in Life Expectancy

Life expectancy at birth (2019-23) Females



Life expectancy at birth (2019-23) Males



- In [England](#) during the period 2018 to 2020, males living in the most deprived areas were living 9.7 fewer years than males living in the least deprived areas, with the gap at 7.9 years for females. About **one-third** of these inequalities in life expectancy are **caused** by higher mortality rates from **heart and respiratory disease, and lung cancer** in more deprived areas.
- The chart opposite shows life expectancy within B&NES by [MSOA](#) for males and females during the five year period 2019-2023. When compared to England, **Oldfield Park West** is the only MSOA with a [statistically significant lower life expectancy](#) for both males and females. **Twerton** MSOA is also statistically lower for females.
- The **gap in female life expectancy in B&NES** between the MSOA with the highest (Chew, Bishop Sutton and East Harptree, 89) and lowest (Twerton, 80.5) life expectancy is **8.6 years**.
- The **gap in male life expectancy in B&NES** between the MSOA with the highest (Chew, Bishop Sutton and East Harptree, 85.9) and lowest (Oldfield Park West, 76.6) life expectancy is **9.3 years**.
- [Trends affecting future life expectancy](#) are influenced by inequalities include **childhood obesity rates, smoking** prevalence and **drug misuse** amongst those living in more deprived areas. Worsening mental health is also likely to have an impact on life expectancy.

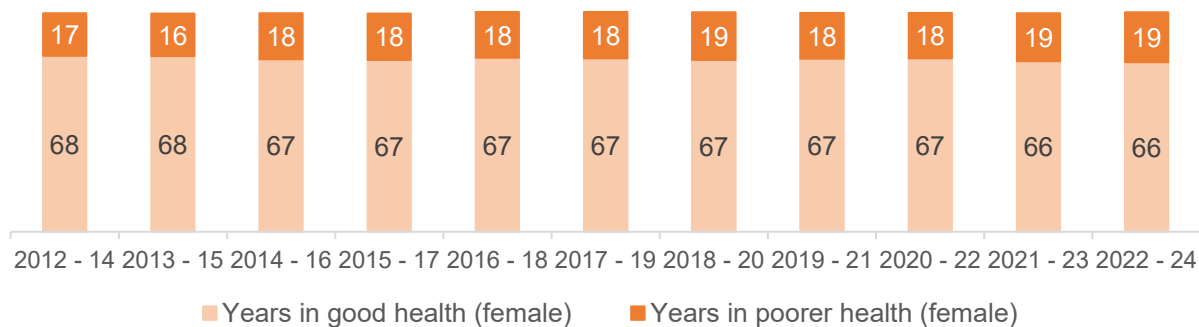
Definition: Period life expectancy is the average number of years a person would expect to live based on contemporary mortality rates. For a particular area and time period, it is an estimate of the average number of years a new-born baby would survive if he or she experienced the age-specific mortality rates for that area and time period throughout his or her life.

The Upper age band used for calculations in the charts is 90+.

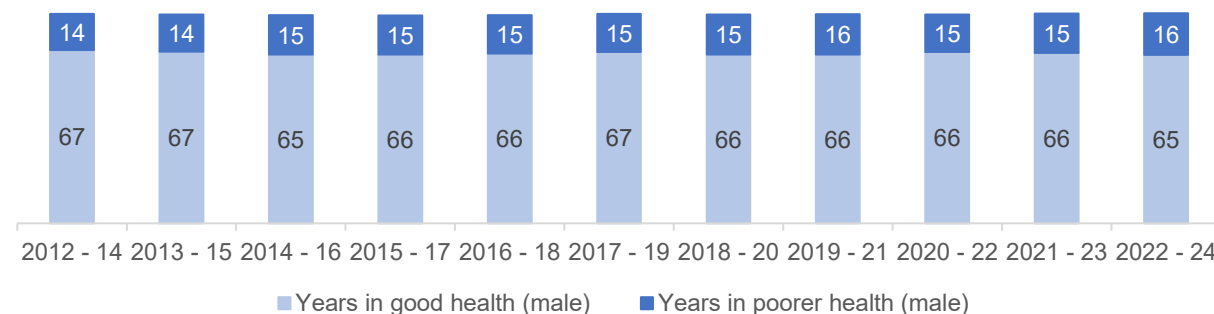
Source: OHID (2025), *Local Health*, available from: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/local-health>

Healthy Life Expectancy

Number of years in good health and poorer health, females, B&NES, 2012-14 to 2022-24



Number of years in good health and poorer health, males, B&NES, 2012-14 to 2022-24

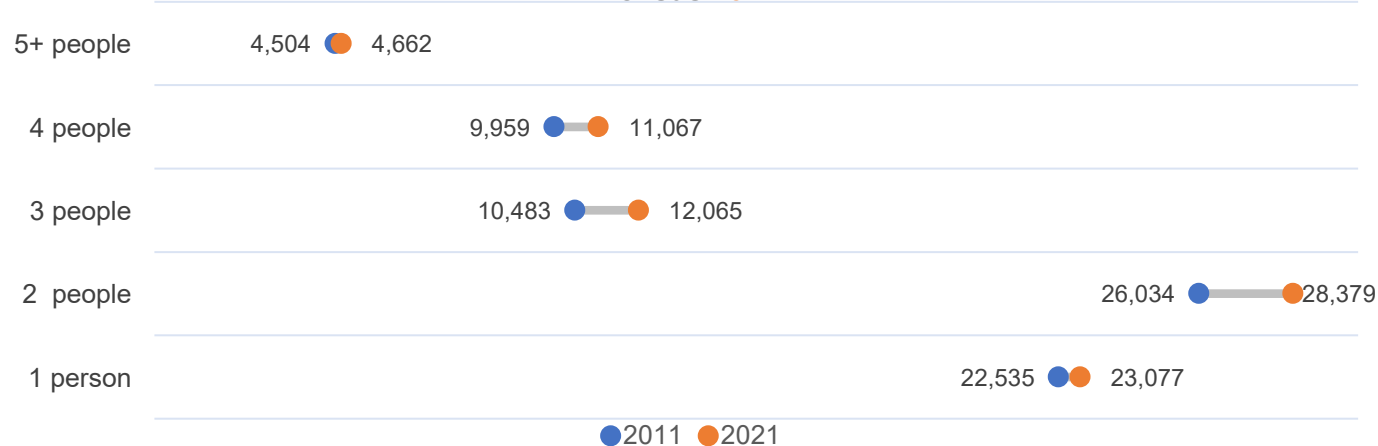


- Healthy life expectancy shows the years a person can expect to live in good health (rather than with a disability or in poor health). Combining this with life expectancy at birth provides an estimate for the average **number of years people live in 'poorer' health**.
- As is the case nationally, the charts above show that **although females live longer than males in B&NES, most of that additional time is spent in poor health**.
- Those [living in the most deprived areas](#) in England have the shortest life span and **live more years in poor health**.
- Healthy life expectancy has decreased in recent years and in [90% of local areas](#) across Great Britain, people can now expect to fall into ill health **before reaching the state pension** age of 66.
- Declines in healthy life expectancy reflect worsening [self-reported health](#) (particularly mental health among younger adults) alongside a wider burden of chronic conditions. These patterns are linked to behavioural risks (e.g. smoking, inactivity, obesity) and underlying socioeconomic factors, including deprivation and [housing](#).

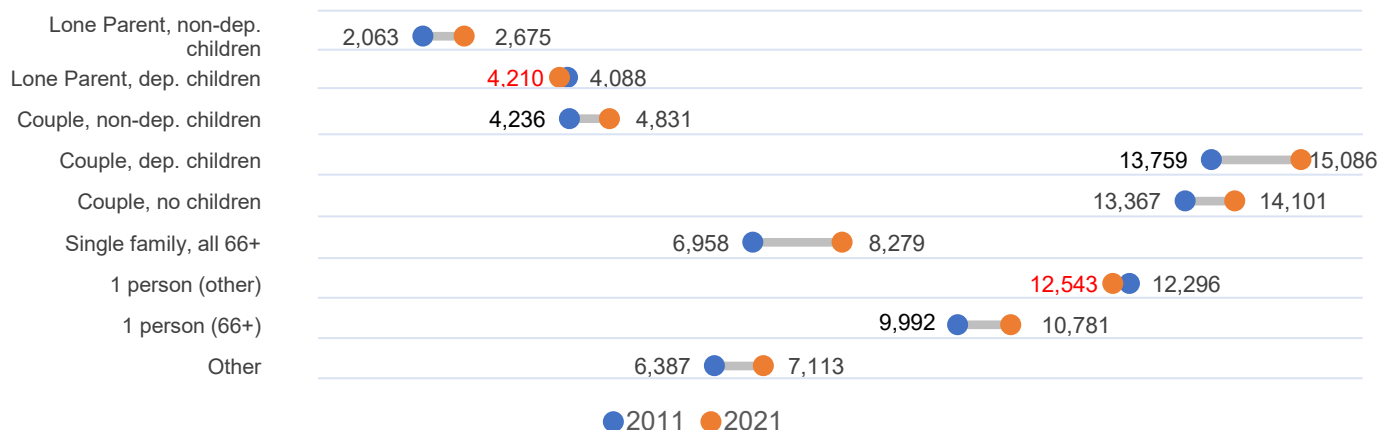
Definition: Healthy Life Expectancy is a measure of the average number of years a person would expect to live in good health based on contemporary mortality rates and prevalence of self reported good health. The prevalence of good health is derived from responses to a survey question on general health. There are [methodological concerns](#) with self-reported good health that may affect calculated HLE.

Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (2022), Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF), available from: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/public-health-outcomes-framework>

Number of Households by Size of Household, B&NES, Census 2011 and Census 2021



Number of Households by Composition of Household, B&NES, Census 2011 and Census 2021



Notes: Numbers in red indicate decreases between 2011 and 2021.

'Other' category of household composition includes: (i) 'other, including all full-time students and all aged 66 years and over'; (ii) 'other household types: with dependent children'; and (iii) 'single family household: other single family household: other family composition'.

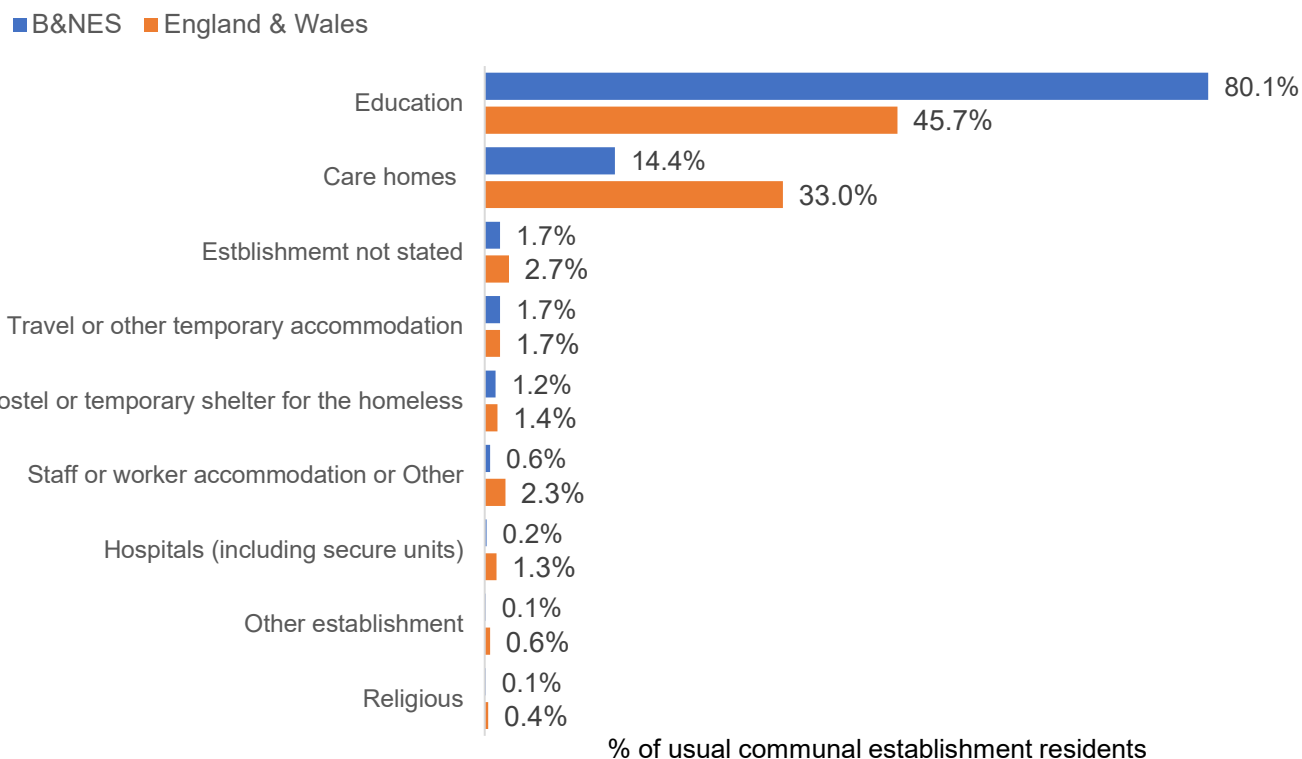
- In March 2021, **185,438** usual residents of B&NES had their usual place of residence in **households (96%)**, the remainder (~7,970 | 4%) had their usual residence in communal establishments.
- There were **79,250 households** in **B&NES** on Census Day 2021; the number of households **increased by 5,735 since 2011 (8% increase)**, when there were 73,515 households. This represents **higher growth** compared to England & Wales (6%).
- **Almost two-thirds** of households in B&NES are **made up of one or two person** households. **Two, three and four people households** have all **grown faster** in B&NES in the decade to 2021 compared to the growth in all households (9%, 15% and 11% respectively).
- **Couple households with dependent children**, as well as **households where all occupants are aged 66 and over**, have **increased the most in B&NES** during the decade up to 2021, increasing by 1,327 and 1,321 respectively.
- **Single person (age under 66) and lone parent households with dependent children** have **fallen** in the decade up to 2021 in B&NES, to 12,543 and 4,210 respectively. **All other household types** have **increased** in number during this period.

Data Note: A household is defined as:(i) one person living alone; or (ii) a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room, or dining area (includes sheltered accommodation units in establishments and caravans on any type of site that is a usual residence).

Sources: ONS (2022), [Household and resident characteristics, England and Wales: Census 2021](#), and [NOMIS](#) (for 2011).

Communal establishment residents

Communal establishment residents Census 2021



- In **2021**, the number of usual residents that lived in communal establishments in Bath and North East Somerset was **7,972**, the number has **increased by 1,933 since 2011 (32.0% increase)** when there were **6,039** residents living in communal establishments.
- The most common type of communal establishment in Bath and North East Somerset was **Education (6,382 | 80.1%)**, which includes boarding schools and university halls of residence, the number has **increased by 2,681 since 2011 (72.4% increase)** up from 3,701 | 61.3% in 2021. This is **higher** than the overall percentage for Education establishments across England and Wales (**45.7%**).
- **Care Home** establishments (**1,149 | 14.4%**) was the second most common type of communal establishment. Since 2011 the number of usual residents living in a care home has **decreased by 265 (18.7% decrease)**, down from 1,414 | 23.4% in 2021. This is **higher** than the overall **decrease** seen across England and Wales (9.9%).
- The age range with the highest number of residents that live in communal establishments was **16 to 24 years** (5,872 | 75.9%), followed by **85 years and over** (581 | 7.5%).
- The ward with the highest proportion of residents in communal establishments was **Bathwick** 3,065, of which 2,860 (93.3%) were in an education establishment.

Data Notes:

- Census 2021 communal establishment questions asked, 'What is the nature of this establishment?', 'Who is responsible for the management of this establishment?' and 'How many people are currently living in this establishment?' A communal establishment is an establishment with full-time or part-time supervision providing residential accommodation, such as student halls of residence, boarding schools, armed forces bases, hospitals, care homes, and prisons.
- Breakdowns by sex and age are for residents, but not for the smaller numbers of the owners and staff in communal establishments, their family members, and those who were staying in a communal establishment temporarily with no usual UK address.
- Census 2021 was conducted during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which may have affected the number of residents in certain types of communal establishment. For example, the disruption of international travel may have led to a lower number of [students](#) in education establishments than would otherwise have been expected, because of a reduction in the number of students arriving from overseas.

Source: (i) [ONS \(Communal establishments residents\) England and Wales Census 2021](#), (ii) [Nomis official census and labour market statistics communal establishments residents Census 2011](#)

Ethnic background (detail) 2011 - 2021

Ethnicity (2021)	2011	2021	% of population	Change	% Change
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	158,640	165,478	85.56%	6,838	4%
White: Other White	6,629	11,114	5.75%	4485	68%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese	1,912	2,089	1.08%	177	9%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian	1,160	1,876	0.97%	716	62%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	954	1,846	0.95%	892	94%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian	1,116	1,787	0.92%	671	60%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	951	1,505	0.78%	554	58%
White: Irish	1,146	1,427	0.74%	281	25%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	701	1,310	0.68%	609	87%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	367	1,058	0.55%	691	188%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African	499	980	0.51%	481	96%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean	672	616	0.32%	-56	-8%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	292	595	0.31%	303	104%
Other ethnic group: Arab	375	552	0.29%	177	47%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi	219	359	0.19%	140	64%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani	170	278	0.14%	108	64%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black	155	250	0.13%	95	61%
White: Roma*		218	0.11%	218	
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	58	71	0.04%	13	22%
Total	176,016	193,409		17,393	

- In the **2021** Census, **85.6%** of people in **B&NES** identified their ethnic background within the **White British** category, compared with 90.1% in 2011.
- In contrast, across the whole of **England and Wales** in **2021**, **74.4%** of people identified their ethnic background within the White British category.
- Increases can be observed across the other ethnic backgrounds and the area has **become more diverse** since 2011.
- The largest ethnic group (detailed) in B&NES other than White British (165,409) is **'White: Other White'** (11,114), which excludes White British, Irish, Travellers and Roma.

Notes: The 2021 Census question asked 'What is your ethnic group?'. Roma category added to major ethnic background grouping for first time in 2021.

Source: ONS (2022), [Ethnic group, England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

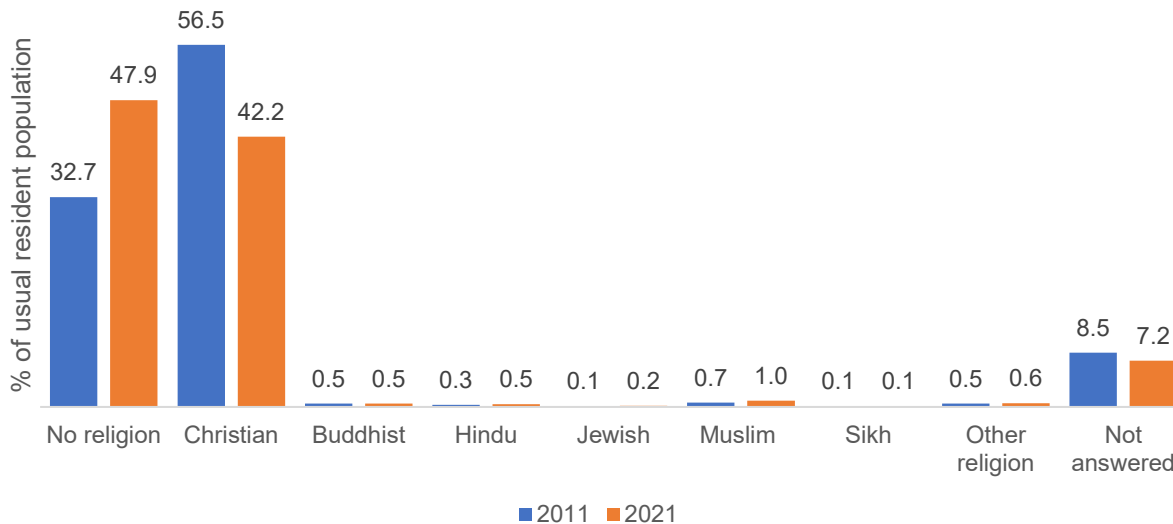
Top 10 main languages spoken in Bath and North East Somerset	2021 Census
English	178,953
Polish	1,400
Romanian	950
Spanish	726
Italian	630
All Chinese	601
French	440
Greek	358
Arabic	326
Tagalog or Filipino	280

- In the 2021 Census, in Bath and North East Somerset, **96.9%** of usual residents spoke **English** as a main language, compared to 91.1% in England and Wales and 95.4% in the South West.
- **Polish** (0.76%) is the second most commonly spoken main language in Bath and North East Somerset, followed by **Romanian** (0.51%), which is in line with the figures for England and Wales (1.1% and 0.8% respectively).
- In addition to spoken languages, 12 residents (0.01%) stated they used **British Sign Language** or other communication systems as a main language, compared with 0.04% across England and Wales.

Data notes: The 2021 Census question asked 'What is your main language?' with a free text box option for any language other than English. The question captured those aged three and above. 5,231 (2.8%) of people within Bath and North East Somerset did not state their language in the 2021 Census.

Sources: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS024/editions/2021/versions/1>
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/language/bulletins/languageenglandandwales/census2021>

Proportion of the B&NES population by religious affiliation, Census 2011 and 2021

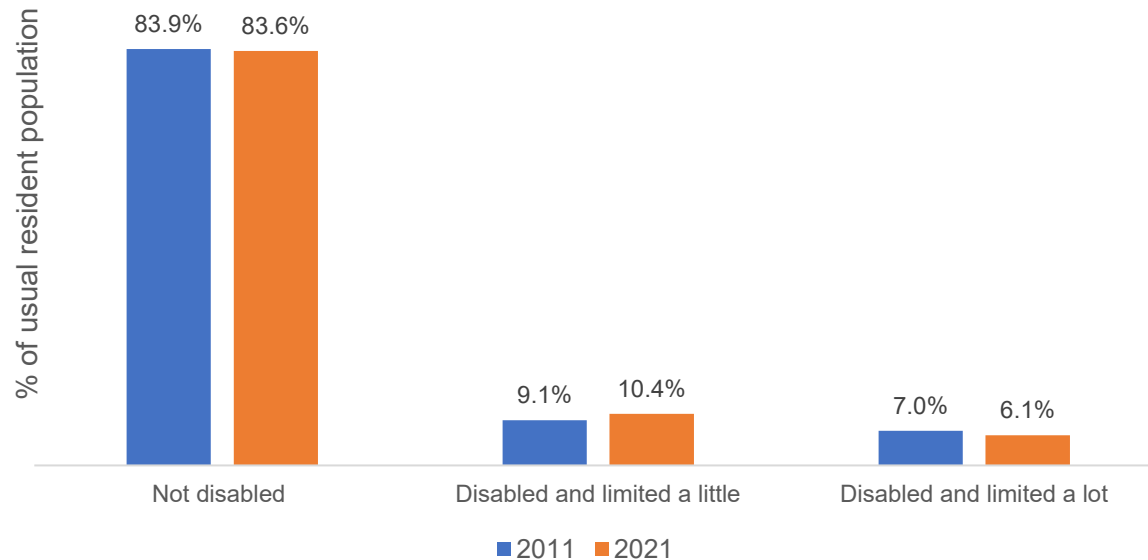


- In the 2021 Census, for the first time since 2001 **'No religion'** (47.9% | 92,567) was the **highest** response in Bath and North East Somerset followed by **'Christian'** (42.2% | 81,553).
- Since 2011 in Bath and North East Somerset there has been an **increase** of 34,941 people that describe themselves as **'No religion'** from 32.7% to 47.9%; and a **decrease** of 17,915 people that describe themselves as **'Christian'** from 56.5% to 42.2%.
- The percentage of people in Bath and North East Somerset who described themselves as having **'No religion'** (47.9%) is **higher** than the overall percentage across the South West (44.1%) and across England and Wales (37.2%).
- The percentage of people in Bath and North East Somerset who described themselves as **'Christian'** (42.2%) is **lower** than the overall percentage across the South West (46.2%) and across England and Wales (46.2%).
- Compared to 2011, there were **increases in the number of people** who described themselves as **Hindu (875), Jewish (325), Muslim (1,909), other religion (1,097), Buddhist (996) and Sikh (162)**. *Figures in brackets denote numbers in 2021, while percentages are shown in the chart opposite (noting that percentages shown did not increase for Buddhist and Sikh).*
- In 2021, 7.2% (13,930) of people did not state their religion, down from 8.5% (14,938) in 2011.

Data Note: A voluntary question 'What is your religion?' was introduced to the Census in 2001. Religion refers to a person's religious affiliation i.e., the religion with which they connect or identify, rather than their beliefs or active religious practice. The number of people who answered the question in 2021 was 193,414 an **increase** of 9.9% compared to 176,016 in 2011.

Source: (i) [NOMIS Official Census and labour market statistics \(Religion\), England and Wales Census 2011](#),
(ii) [ONS \(Religion\), England and Wales Census 2021](#)

Proportion of B&NES population by long-term health condition or illness, Census 2011 and 2021



- In the 2021 Census, 6.1% | 11,717 of Bath and North East Somerset residents identified themselves as '**Disabled and limited a lot**', a **decrease** when compared with 7.0% in 2011.
- 10.4% | 20,061 of residents identified themselves as '**Disabled and limited a little**' an **increase** when compared with 9.1% in 2011.
- The proportion of residents that identified themselves as '**Not disabled**' was 83.6% | 161,631 a **slight decrease** when compared with 83.9% in 2011.
- The percentage of residents who were identified as '**Disabled and limited a lot**', 6.1%, is **lower** than the overall percentage across England and Wales (7.5%).
- The percentage of residents who were identified as '**Disabled and limited a little**', 10.4%, is **slightly higher** than the overall percentage across England and Wales (10.0%).
- The percentage of residents who were identified as '**Not disabled**', 83.6%, is **higher** than the percentage across England and Wales (82.5%).

Data Notes:

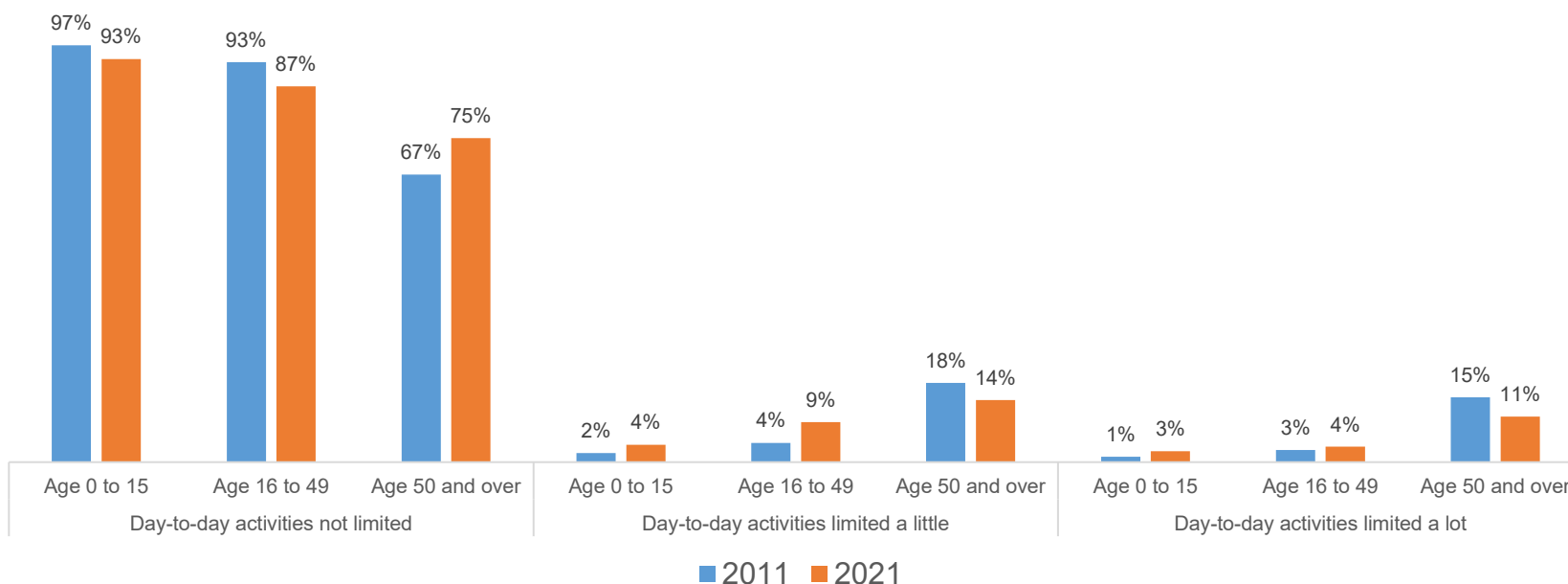
- Census 2021 asked *usual residents to report if they had a long-term physical or mental health condition or illness, lasting or expected to last 12 months or more, and whether it limited their day-to-day activities "a little", "a lot" or "not at all".
(*A usual resident of the UK is anyone who, on Census Day, was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for a period of 12 months or more or had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK and intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months)
- Census 2021 was undertaken during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This may have influenced how people perceived their health status and activity limitations, and therefore may have affected how people chose to respond.

Caution should be taken when making comparisons between 2011 and 2021 because of changes in question wording and response options.

Source: (i) [NOMIS Official Census and labour market statistics \(Long-term health problem or disability\), England and Wales Census 2011](#)
(ii) [ONS \(Disability\), England and Wales Census 2021](#)

Disability (by age group)

Proportion of B&NES population by long term health condition or illness by age group, Census 2011 and 2021



- The age demography of self-reported disability in B&NES has changed between 2011 and 2021.
- **Under 50s** have reported an increase in disability whilst **over 50s** have seen a decrease:
 - Self-reported disability in the over 50s has decreased from 33% in 2011 to 25% in 2021.
 - There has been a small but notable **increase in persons aged under 16** self-reporting as disabled (either limited a little or limited a lot) from 2011 (3%) to 2021 (7%).
 - A **larger increase** in self-reported disability can be seen among the **16-49** age group, from 7% in 2011 to 13% in 2021. Most of those self-report their day to day lives as limited a little.

Data Notes:

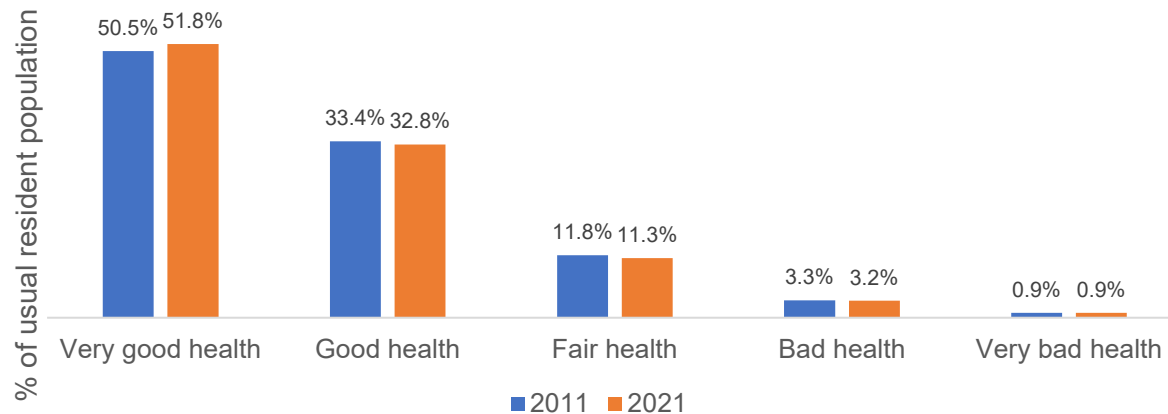
- Census 2021 asked *usual residents to report if they had a long-term physical or mental health condition or illness, lasting or expected to last 12 months or more, and whether it limited their day-to-day activities "a little", "a lot" or "not at all".
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- Census 2021 was undertaken during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This may have influenced how people perceived their health status and activity limitations, and therefore may have affected how people chose to respond.

Caution should be taken when making comparisons between 2011 and 2021 because of changes in question wording and response options.

Source: (i) [NOMIS Census 2011 - disability by age](#)

(ii) [NOMIS Census 2021 - disability by age](#)

Proportion of B&NES population by general health, Census 2011 and 2021



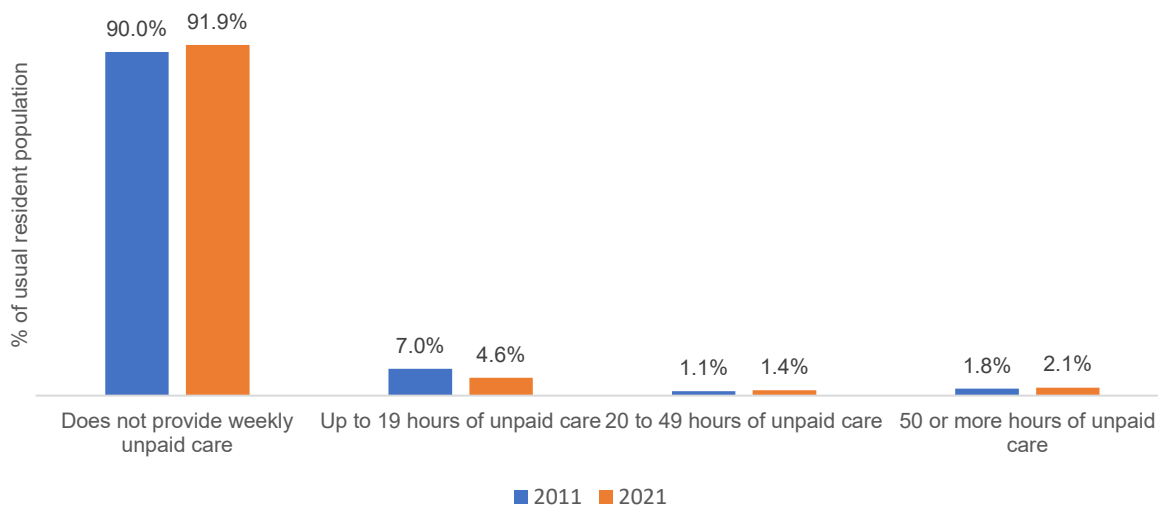
- In the 2021 Census, 51.8% | 10,0186 of Bath and North East Somerset residents described their health as **'Very good'**, an **increase** when compared with 50.5% in 2011. The percentage of residents that described their health as **'Good'** 32.8% | 63,514 **decreased** from 33.4% in 2011.
- The overall percentage of Bath and North East Somerset residents that described their health as **'Very good'** or **'Good'**, 84.6%, **increased** from 83.9% in 2011.
- The proportion of residents that described their health as **'Bad'** 3.2% | 6,121 was **similar** to 3.3% in 2011; and the proportion of residents that described their health as **'Very bad'** 0.9% | 1,735 **remained the same**.
- The percentage of residents that described their health as **'Very good'** or **'Good'** 84.6% is **higher** than the overall percentage across England and Wales (81.6%); and the percentage that described their health as **'Bad'** or **'Very bad'** 4.1%, is **lower** than the overall percentage across England and Wales (5.2%).

Data Notes:

- Census 2021 question asked *How is your health in general?' on a five-point scale: "Very good", "Good", "Fair", "Bad", or "Very bad".
(*A usual resident of the UK is anyone who, on Census Day, was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for a period of 12 months or more or had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK and intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months)
- Census 2021 was conducted during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This may have influenced how people perceive and rate their health and therefore may have affected how people chose to respond..

Source: (i) [NOMIS Official Census and labour market statistics \(General Health\), England and Wales Census 2011](#)
(ii) [ONS \(General Health\), England and Wales Census 2021](#)

Proportion of the B&NES population by hours of unpaid care provided, Census 2011 and 2021



Unpaid care	B&NES (2021)
Provides no unpaid care	169,418
Provides 9 hours or less unpaid care a week	6,485
Provides 10 to 19 hours unpaid care a week	2,085
Provides 20 to 34 hours unpaid care a week	1,282
Provides 35 to 49 hours unpaid care a week	1,269
Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week	3,849
Total	184,388

- In the 2021 census, **8.1%** of the usual resident population of B&NES reported providing **unpaid care**, an overall **decrease** from 2011 (9.9%).
- The largest decrease was seen in those providing up to 19 hours of unpaid care per week, down from 7.0% in 2011 to 4.6% in 2021.
- A slight increase was recorded in those providing 50 or more hours of unpaid care per week at 2.1%, up from 1.8% in 2011.
- **6,485** usual B&NES residents report providing 9 hours or less of unpaid care per week in 2021, representing **43%** of all unpaid care provision reported in B&NES.

Data Notes:

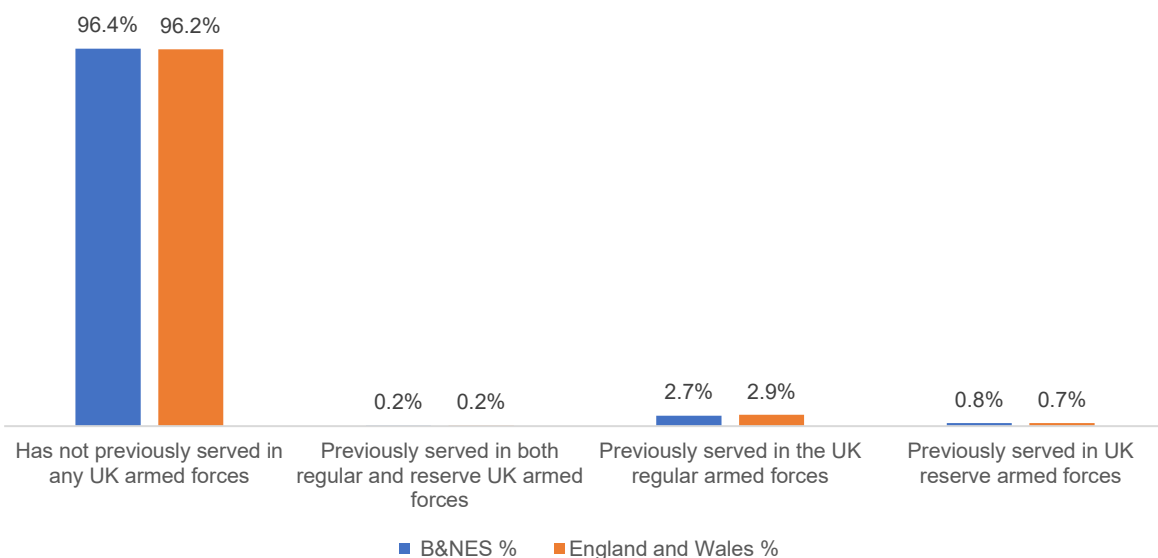
- Census 2021 was undertaken during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This may have influenced how people perceived and managed their provision of unpaid care, and therefore may have affected how people chose to respond.
- Caution should be taken when making comparisons between 2011 and 2021 because of changes in question wording and response options.
- Census 2021 question text asked: *“Do you look after, or give any help or support to, anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems relating to old age? (Exclude anything you do as part of your paid employment)”*.

Sources:

1. ONS Unpaid Care Census 2021 Local Authority dataset <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/healthdisabilityandunpaidcarecensus2021inenglandandwales>
2. ONS NOMIS Unpaid Care Census 2011 dataset <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/ks301uk>

UK Armed Forces Veterans

Proportion of the 16+ B&NES population by previous service in the UK armed forces, Census 2021



UK armed forces	B&NES (2021)
Has not previously served in any UK armed forces	155,760
Previously served in both regular and reserve UK armed forces	243
Previously served in the UK regular armed forces	4,341
Previously served in UK reserve armed forces	1,274
Total	161,618

- In the 2021 census, **3.6%** (5,858) of the 16+ population in B&NES had previously served in the UK armed forces, compared with 3.8% across England and Wales.¹
- Of this figure, the majority (4,341, 2.7%) served in the **regular** armed forces.
- The proportion of B&NES residents who have previously served as either regular or reserve (or both) in the armed forces **varies greatly by ward**.²
 - Keynsham North (5.1%), Timsbury (4.8%) and Keynsham East (4.7%) wards have the highest proportions.
 - Westmoreland (1.8%), Oldfield Park (2.2%) and Walcot (2.5%) wards have the lowest proportions.
- B&NES has an [Armed Forces Covenant](#) in place since 2013, including numerous local partner organisations.

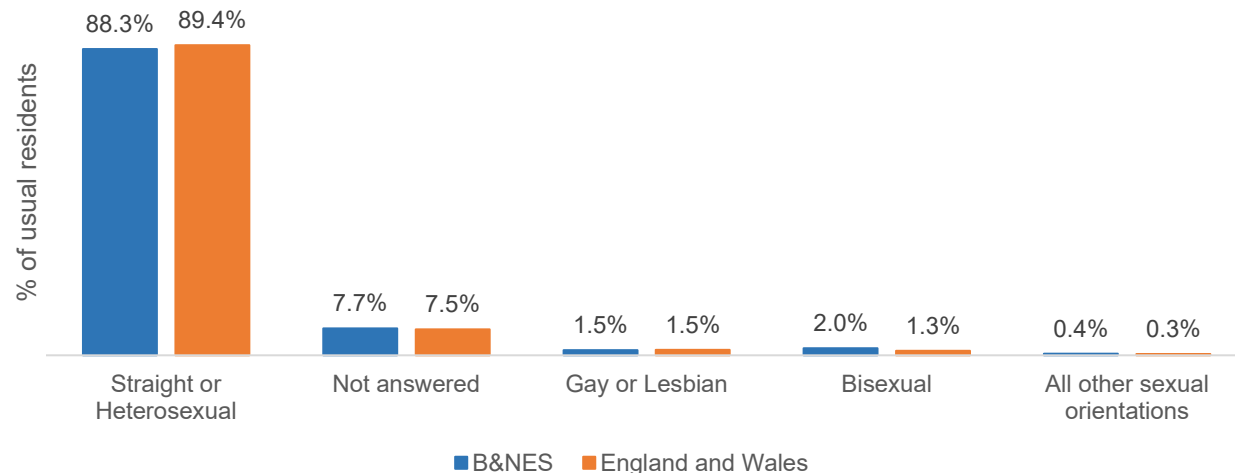
Data Notes:

- This was a new question for the 2021 census. Therefore, no comparison data is available with the 2011 Census.
- Data relates to those who previously served in the UK armed forces and excludes those who are currently serving (even if they had left and rejoined the armed forces). ONS applied extra quality assurance processes to correct responses from currently serving personnel who had incorrectly identified themselves as previously serving.
- Data applies only to those aged 16 or over. 'Does not apply' responses have been removed from the analysis.

Sources:

- ONS UK armed forces Census 2021 Local Authority dataset <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/ukarmedforcesveteranscensus2021inenglandandwales>
- Bath and North East Somerset Ward Profile tool <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoieMzRhZjJjN2EtNDY2NS00ZWY0LTkzZjltMmVjNTM5ZmlyNzQwIiwidCI6ImM1NjJjMGNILWQ5MjUtNGRmZC04ZDk5LW5NDE2ZWlwM2ViOSJ9>

Census 2021 Sexual Orientation - B&NES compared to England and Wales



Sexual Orientation	B&NES (2021)
Straight or Heterosexual	142,696
Not answered	12,475
Gay or Lesbian	2,449
Bisexual	3,282
All other sexual orientations	716
Total	161,618

- In the 2021 Census, 44.9 million people answered the question on sexual orientation¹ in England and Wales.
- In B&NES, **7.7% did not answer the question**, a similar percentage compared to national (England & Wales) at 7.5%.
- In B&NES, **88.3% identified as straight or heterosexual**, which aligns closely with the national figure of 89.4% for England & Wales.
- In B&NES, **4.0% identified with an LGB+ orientation (“Gay or Lesbian”, “Bisexual” or “Other sexual orientation”)**, a higher proportion when compared to England & Wales (3.2%).
- In B&NES, **2.0% identified as Bisexual**, a higher proportion compared to England & Wales (1.3%).

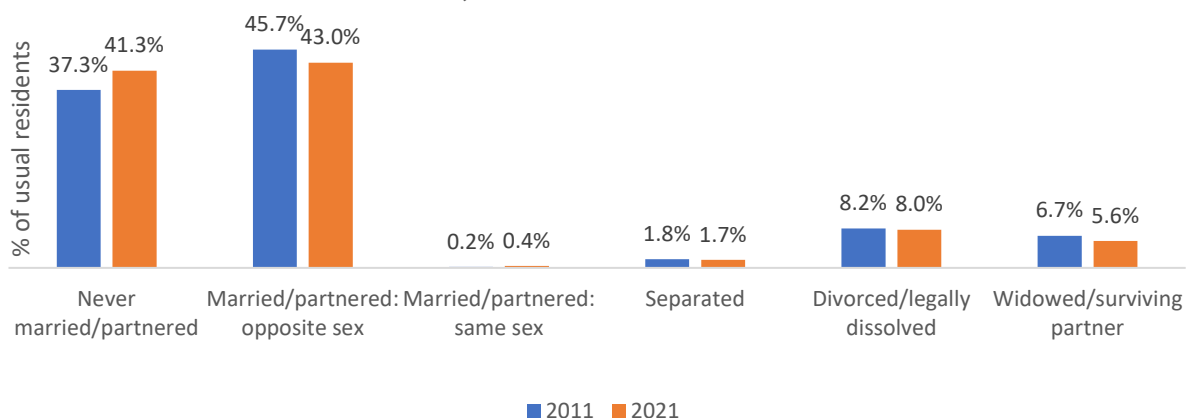
Data Notes:

- ¹ The census question on sexual orientation was a voluntary question asked of those aged 16 years and over. 2021 is the first Census in which this question has been asked.
- The question asked: 'Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?'
- Sexual orientation is an umbrella term covering sexual identity, attraction, and behaviour.
- Statistics should be interpreted purely as showing how people responded to the question, rather than being about whom they are attracted to or their actual relationships.

Legal Partnership Status

Legal partnership status	B&NES 2011	B&NES 2021	Change	% Change
Never married/partnered	54,597	66,741	12,144	22%
Married/partnered: opposite sex	66,961	69,495	2,534	4%
Married/partnered: same sex	309	671	362	117%
Separated	2,663	2,707	44	2%
Divorced/legally dissolved	12,057	12,911	854	7%
Widowed/surviving partner	9,852	9,091	-761	-8%
Total	146,439	161,616	15,177	

Proportion of the B&NES population by legal partnership status, Census 2011 and 2021



- There is a **general shift** away from people getting married or entering into a **civil partnership**. This is especially true of younger adults. The [ONS](#) note the following: “*The increase in adults who have never been married or in a civil partnership (since 2011), after standardising for age, is seen across all local authorities, religious groups and ethnic groups.*”
- Between 2011 and 2021 in B&NES there has been a **much larger increase** in the number of people who are **never married or in a civil partnership** (+12,144, representing a 22% increase) compared to those people who are **married or in a civil partnership** (+2,896, representing a 4% increase), a trend also seen regionally & nationally.
- Between 2011 and 2021 in B&NES the number of adults **widowed or a surviving partner from a civil partnership** has **decreased by 8%** (from 9,852 to 9,091 respectively). This same downward trend is also seen in the South West and England.¹
- There has been a **more than two-fold increase** from **309** (2011) to **671** (2021) for those who identified themselves as **married or in a civil partnership with the same sex** following the [Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013](#), which can also be seen at both regional and national levels.²
- Unsurprisingly, the wards in B&NES with the highest proportion of those **never married or in a civil partnership** are where there are the highest proportions of Higher Education students, e.g. Westmorland Ward (74% of people never married / in a civil partnership).

Sources: 1. ONS UK Legal partnership status [Census 2021](#) dataset. 2. NOMIS UK Legal partnership status [Census 2011](#) dataset. 3. Bath and North East Somerset [Ward Profile](#).

Notes: Census 2021 question text asked ‘On 21st March 2021, what was your legal marital or registered civil partnership status?’ The Census 2021 question was broadly comparable with 2011. With same-sex marriage legalised in 2014 and opposite-sex civil partnerships legalised in 2019, the questions related to these areas were updated and added to reflect this change. Data applies only to those aged 16 or over. ‘Does not apply’ responses have been removed from the analysis. Pandemic restrictions may have affected the number/timings of marriages and civil partnership formations/dissolutions during much of 2020 and 2021.