

Housing

Introduction

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has begun to release detailed results from the 2021 Census for England and Wales. This latest release includes information about households in East Sussex. Readers are advised that due to statistical disclosure control measures applied by the ONS and the impact of rounding, there may be small differences between estimated numbers contained in this and other census briefings and analysis (see [page 23](#) of this briefing for further details).

Key Findings

- 75.6% of East Sussex households lived in houses or bungalows in 2021, exactly the same proportion as in 2011. However, the type of house people lived in changed, with the proportion of households in terraced houses falling from 18.2% in 2011 to 17.5% in 2021.
- The proportion of households owning their homes outright (without a mortgage) increased from 37.9% in 2011 to 41.0% in 2021. However, because the proportion of households renting increased (while the proportion with mortgages fell), overall there was a decline in the proportion of owner-occupied households from 69.9% in 2011 to 69.3% in 2021.
- Contrary to the rest of the county, Hastings saw a decline in the proportion of households renting their properties, down from 43.3% in 2011 to 42.9% in 2021. Eastbourne saw the largest increase in the proportion of households renting, up from 36.5% in 2011 to 39.6% in 2021.
- Wealden saw a notable increase in the proportion of households in the social rented sector, up from 7.7% in 2011 to 8.4% in 2021. The proportion in social rented fell in the rest of East Sussex, in line with the wider national trend.
- The number of households owning a car or van increased across the decade from 78.1% in 2011 to 80.8% in 2021. The greatest increase in car ownership was in Hastings, where the proportion of households with a car or van has increased from 66.7% in 2011 to 70.8% in 2021.

Overall change in the number of households

The total number of households recorded in the 2021 Census in East Sussex was 240,120 - an increase of 8,210 over the 2011 Census. Household growth in East Sussex was lower than across the South East as a whole over the decade, at 3.5% vs 7.1% respectively. As discussed in one of our [previous briefings](#) published July 2022, it also fell short of both the 2014 and 2018 projections of 10.9% and 8.6% growth, respectively.

Geography	Total Population in 2021	2011-2021 Population Growth Rate	Number of Households in 2021	2011-2021 Household Growth Rate
EAST SUSSEX	545,846	3.6%	240,119	3.5%
Eastbourne	101,686	2.3%	45,609	1.3%
Hastings	90,995	0.8%	40,454	-1.7%
Lewes	99,905	2.5%	43,689	3.6%
Rother	93,108	2.8%	42,102	3.0%
Wealden	160,152	7.5%	68,264	8.9%
SOUTH EAST	9,278,100	7.5%	3,807,700	7.1%
ENGLAND	56,489,800	6.6%	23,436,300	6.2%

Source: ONS

At district and borough level, only Wealden registered a household growth rate above the English national average. The number of households in Wealden grew 8.9% between 2011 and 2021 (a net increase of 5,590 households across the decade), compared to 6.2% in England overall. In Hastings, by contrast, the number of households decreased by 710 from 41,160 in 2011 to 40,450 in 2021 (a fall of 1.7% across the decade).

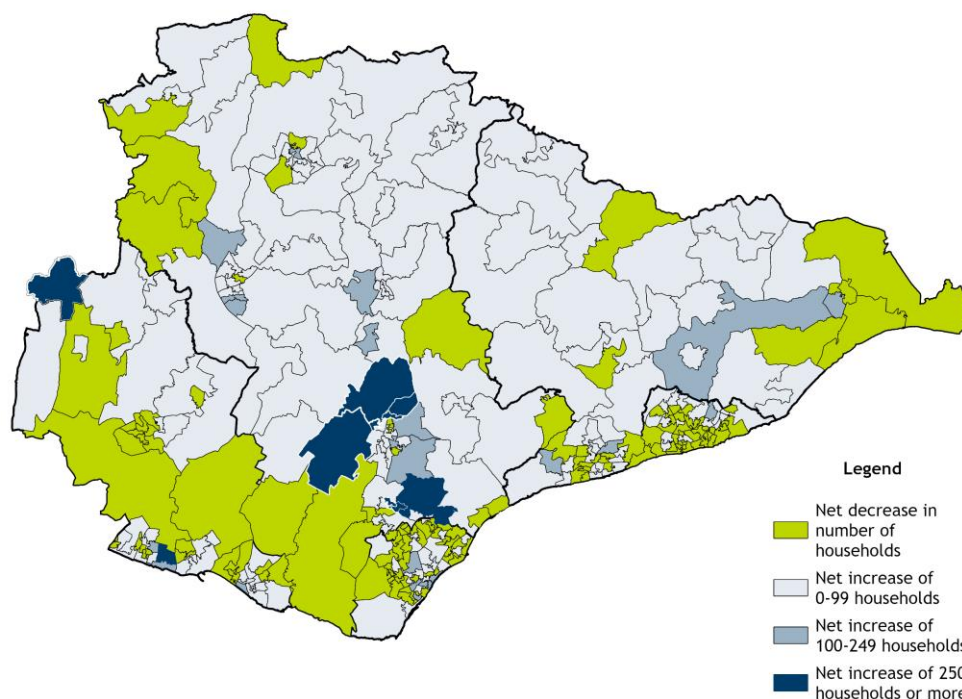
The map on the next page shows the change in the number of households at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA). The areas shown in green represent areas where there was an overall decline in the number of households between 2011 and 2021, and the areas shown in dark blue represent areas where the number of households increased by 250 households or more.

The area registering the greatest growth across the decade was Hellingly (formerly Wealden 018D and Wealden 018F). Between 2011 and 2021, the number of households in these two LSOAs combined increased 87.0% from 1,503 to 2,810.

Other areas registering higher rates of growth were the Wivelsfield area (Lewes 002A), which saw a 53.7% increase in the number of households, as well as the area extending from East Polegate through Stone Cross to Westham near Pevensey (formerly Wealden 019A, Wealden 020C, and Wealden 020D), which when taken together, registered a 45.6% increase in households. Peacehaven East (Lewes 010C) also saw a sizable increase in households of 37.1%.

As a result of the increase in number of households in the Wealden LSOAs mentioned above, the ONS took the decision to split these into smaller LSOAs to ensure that population and household thresholds were met. More information, including the new 2021 LSOA codes, can be found in our [2021 Census Geographies Note](#), published November 2022.

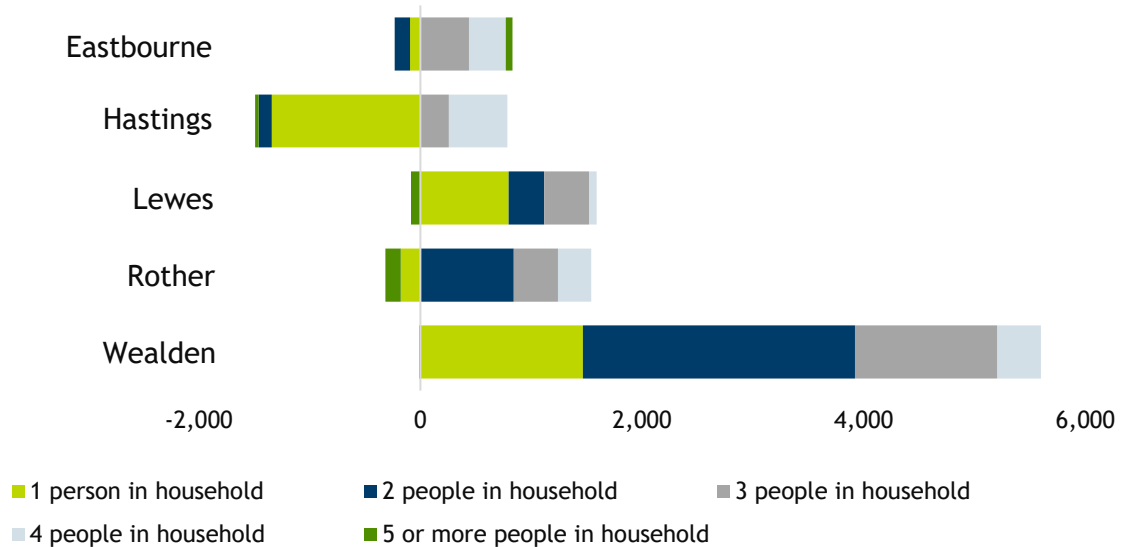
Change in number of households at LSOA level, 2011-2021



Source: ONS, ArcGIS

The size of households also changed over the decade. In Hastings, where there has been an overall reduction in the number of households, it is interesting to note that while there has been a net reduction in the number of one- and two-person households, there has been a net increase in the number of households made up of three and more members. In Wealden, by contrast, the greatest increase is in the number of two-person households.

Change in the number of household members between 2011 and 2021



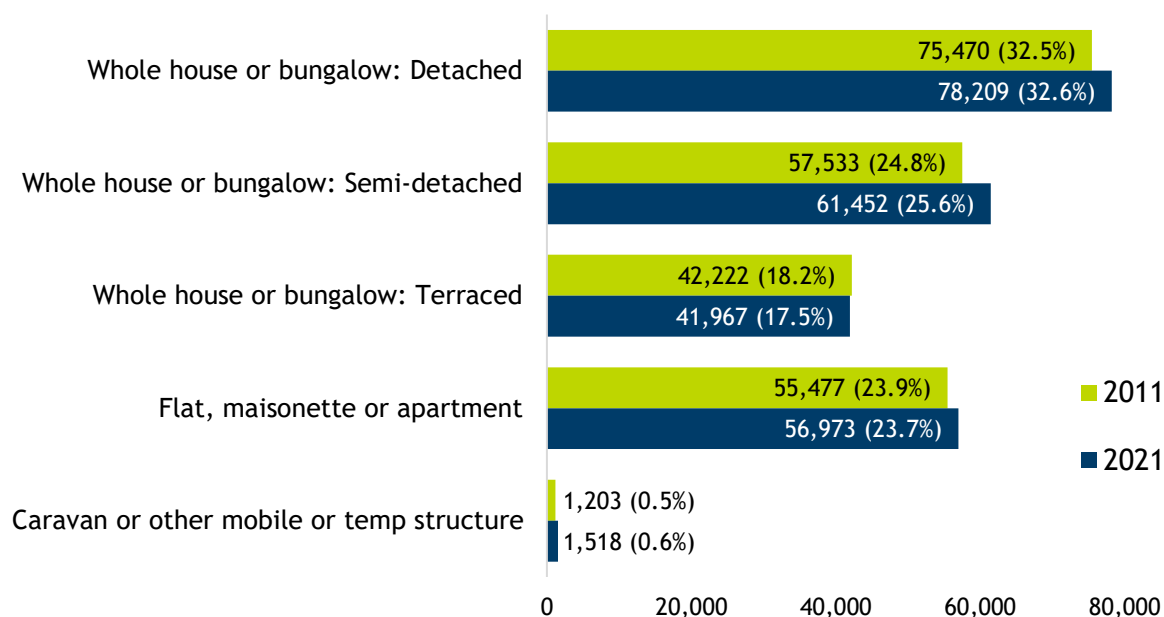
Source: ONS

Accommodation type

Around three quarters (75.6%) of East Sussex households lived in houses or bungalows in 2021, exactly the same proportion as in 2011. However, the type of house that households lived in changed, with fewer households living in terraced properties, and more living in detached and semi-detached properties than in 2011.

At district and borough level, only Hastings registered an increase in the proportion of households living in houses or bungalows overall. Conversely, the proportion of households living in a flat, maisonette or apartment¹ in East Sussex increased in all parts of the county except in the borough of Hastings. The greatest increase was seen in Lewes, where the proportion of households living in a flat, maisonette or apartment increased from 17.9% (7,560) in 2011 to 18.8% (8,210) in 2021. This follows a nationwide trend, with the proportion of households living in a flat, maisonette or apartment in England increasing from 21.0% in 2011 to 21.7% in 2021.

Number of households by type of accommodation in East Sussex in 2011 vs. 2021



Source: ONS

¹ The accommodation category 'Flat, maisonette or apartment' combines four sub-categories, namely (i) in a purpose-built block of flats or tenement, (ii) part of a converted or shared house, including bedsits, (iii) part of another converted building, for example, former school, church or warehouse, and (iv) in a commercial building, for example in an office building, hotel or over a shop.

Percentage change in the proportion of households living in different types of accommodation in Hastings compared to the rest of East Sussex

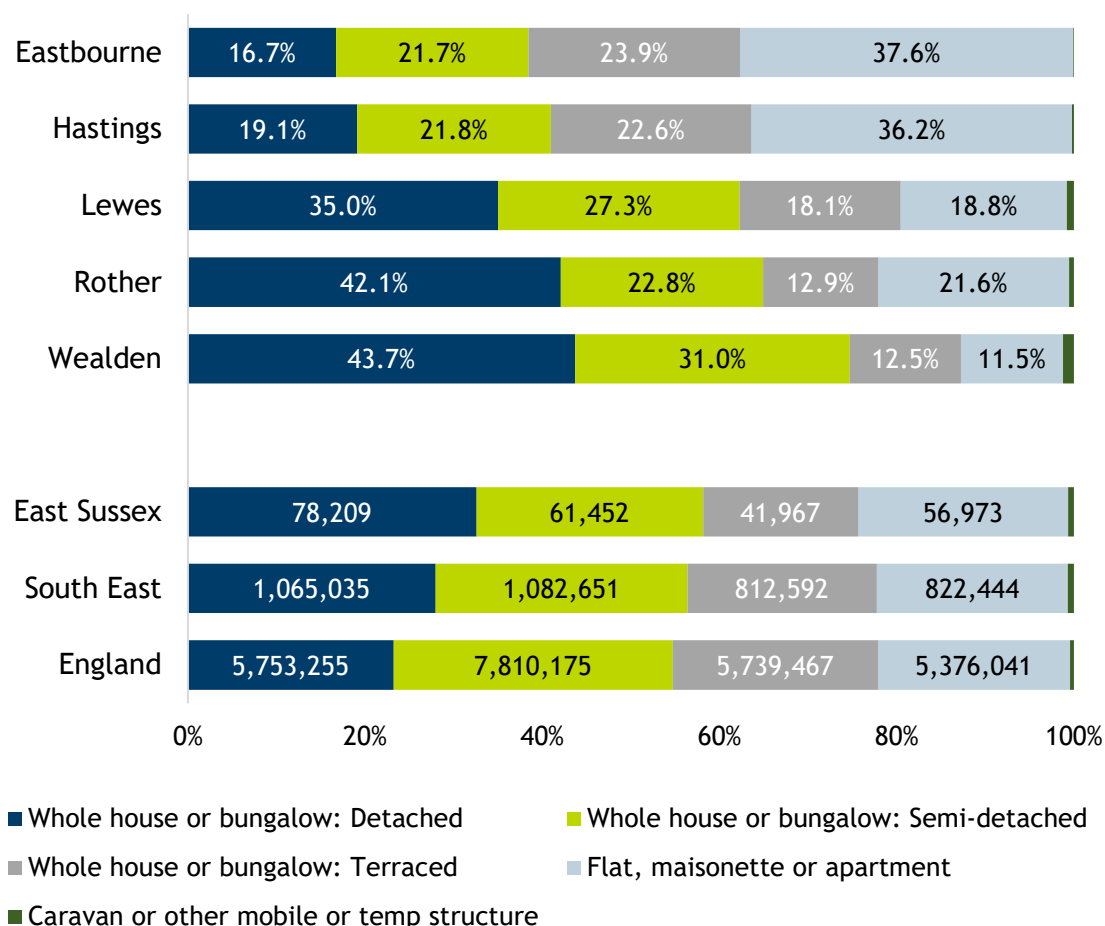


Source: ONS

As can be seen from the chart above, which separates the borough of Hastings from the rest of the county, the decline in the proportion of households in Hastings living in a flat, maisonette or apartment from 37.8% (15,540) in 2011 to 36.2% (14,640) in 2021 was mirrored by an increase in the proportion living in detached and semi-detached properties. In 2021, 21.8% of Hastings households lived in semi-detached properties (up from 20.6% in 2011) and 19.1% of households lived in detached properties (up from 18.4% in 2011). The other four districts in East Sussex conversely, all saw a slight decline in the proportion of residents living in detached properties, and only a modest increase (0.4%-0.6%) in the proportion living in semi-detached properties.

Despite Eastbourne, Lewes, Rother and Wealden all registering a slight increase in the proportion of households living in a flat, maisonette or apartment, the decline in Hastings was great enough such that overall, East Sussex recorded a small decrease in the proportion of households living in a flat, maisonette or apartment, down from 23.9% (55,480) in 2011 to 23.7% (56,970) in 2021.

Proportion of households by accommodation type in 2021

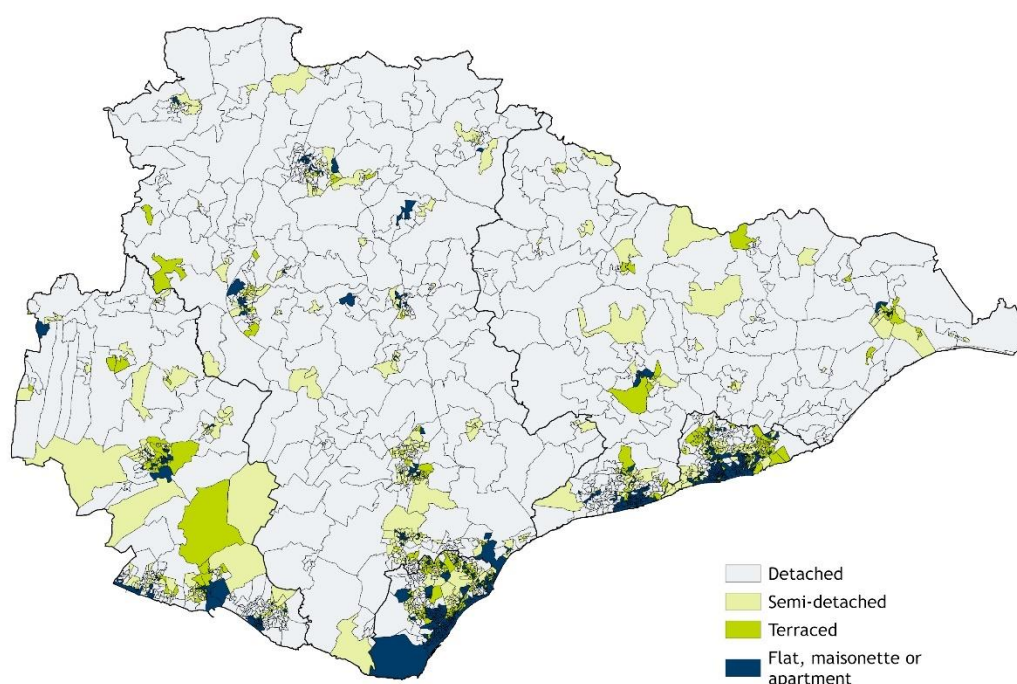


Source: ONS

Compared with England overall, East Sussex had a higher proportion of households in detached houses or bungalows (32.6% in East Sussex versus 22.9% in England) and a correspondingly lower proportion in both semi-detached housing (25.6% versus 31.5% nationwide) and terraced housing (17.5% versus 23.0%). The proportion of households in flats, maisonettes or apartments was slightly higher than the national average however, (23.7% versus 22.2%), driven primarily by the high proportion of flats, maisonettes and apartments in Eastbourne and Hastings.

East Sussex also had a slightly higher proportion of households living in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure in 2021 than England as a whole. 0.6% of East Sussex households (1,520) reported living in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure in 2021, compared to an English national average of 0.4%.

Most Common Accommodation Type by Output Area



Source: ONS, ArcGIS

The map above shows the most common accommodation type across East Sussex at Output Area (OA) level. As can be seen, detached properties were the most prevalent accommodation type across most of East Sussex, particularly in rural and inland areas. Semi-detached and terraced properties were more prevalent in the southern part of the county, with a few suburban clusters spread across the rest of East Sussex. As one might expect, flats, maisonettes and apartments were more prevalent in town locations - particularly those along the south coast, such as Bexhill, Eastbourne, Hastings, Newhaven and Seaford.

Overall, Wealden had the highest proportion of both detached and semi-detached houses or bungalows (43.7% and 31.0%, respectively), while Eastbourne had the highest proportion of terraced properties (23.9%), as well as the highest proportion of flats, maisonettes or apartments (37.6%).

Tenure

Tenure is whether a household rents or owns the accommodation that it occupies. Households that owned their accommodation were asked if they owned it outright or had a mortgage/loan or shared ownership, while those that rented their accommodation were asked what type of landlord owned or managed their property.

In 2021, 69.3% (166,390) of East Sussex households owned the accommodation they lived in, 30.6% (73,590) rented their accommodation, and 0.1% (150 households) lived rent-free. Wealden had the highest proportion of home-owner households (78.1%, 53,340 households) and Hastings had the lowest (57.1%, 23,090 households).

41.0% (98,380) of households owned the accommodation they lived in outright (without a mortgage) in 2021, up from 37.9% (87,980) ten years prior. In both 2011 and 2021, the proportion of East Sussex households that owned their properties outright was considerably higher than the English national average of 30.6% and 32.5%, respectively, which is perhaps indicative of East Sussex's older population structure.

Rother had the highest proportion of owner-households without a mortgage; nearly half of all households in Rother (48.4%) owned their property outright in 2021, up from 45.4% in 2011. Hastings registered the smallest proportion of outright owners at 31.3%, up from 26.9% in 2011, but recorded the highest percentage-point increase.

Despite an increase in the proportion of people owning their own homes outright however, an increase in the proportion of households renting their properties (coupled with a decline in the proportion of households with mortgages), meant that overall, the proportion of households that owned their accommodation fell across the decade, from 69.9% (162,050) in 2011 to 69.3% (166,390) in 2021.

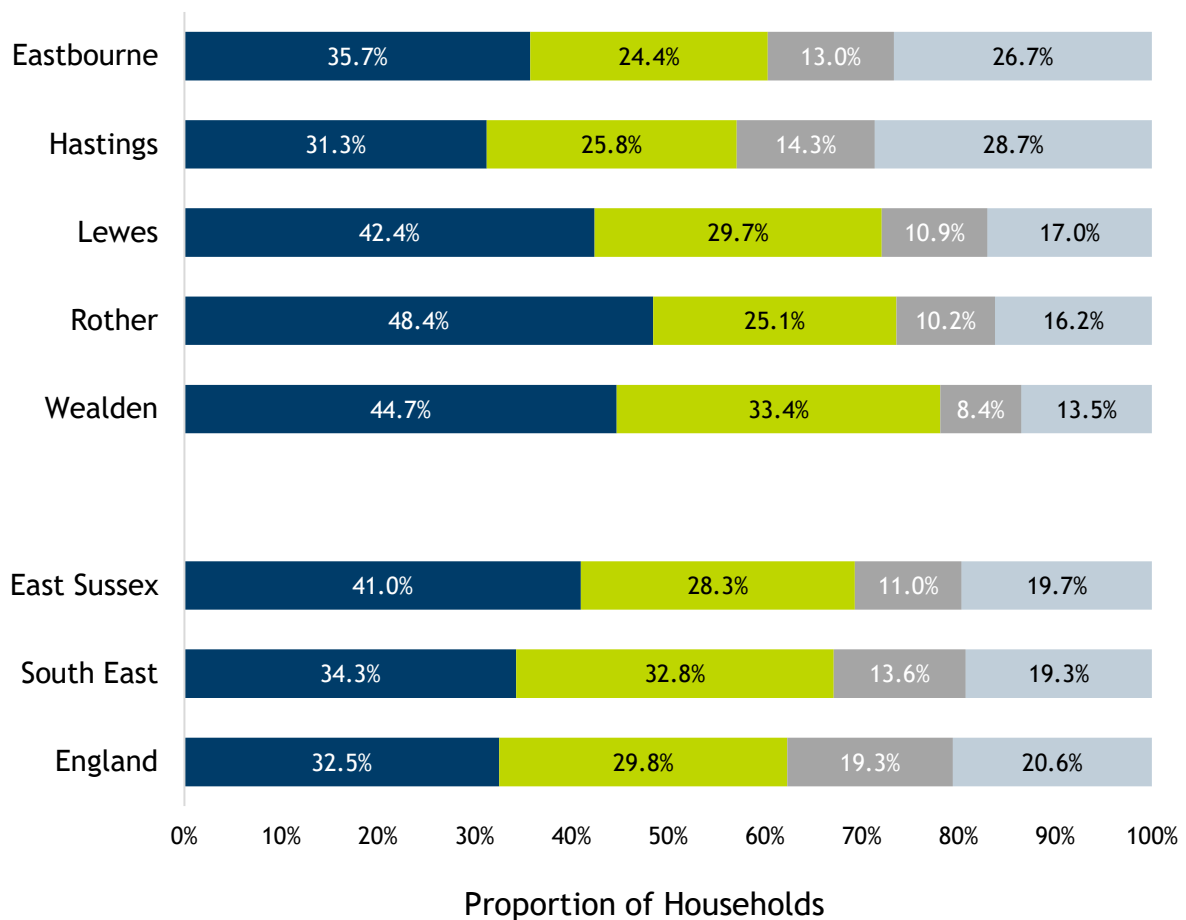
Between 2011 and 2021, the proportion of residents with mortgages, loans or who had made use of a shared ownership scheme fell from 31.9% (74,080 households) to 28.3% (68,010 households). By contrast, the proportion of households renting their accommodation grew from 28.8% (66,780 households) in 2011 to 30.6% (73,590) in 2021.

Only the borough of Hastings saw a decline in the proportion of households renting their properties, down from 43.3% (17,850 households) in 2011 to 42.9% (17,340) in 2021, which was mirrored by an increase in the proportion of households that owned their home (both with and without a mortgage), from 55.2% in 2011 to 56.6% in 2021; Hastings had the second largest increase in the proportion of households that owned their home in England after the Isles of Scilly, which rose from 41.7% to 44.5%.

Despite the increase, Hastings remained in the lowest 20% of English local authority areas for the share of households that owned their home in 2021.

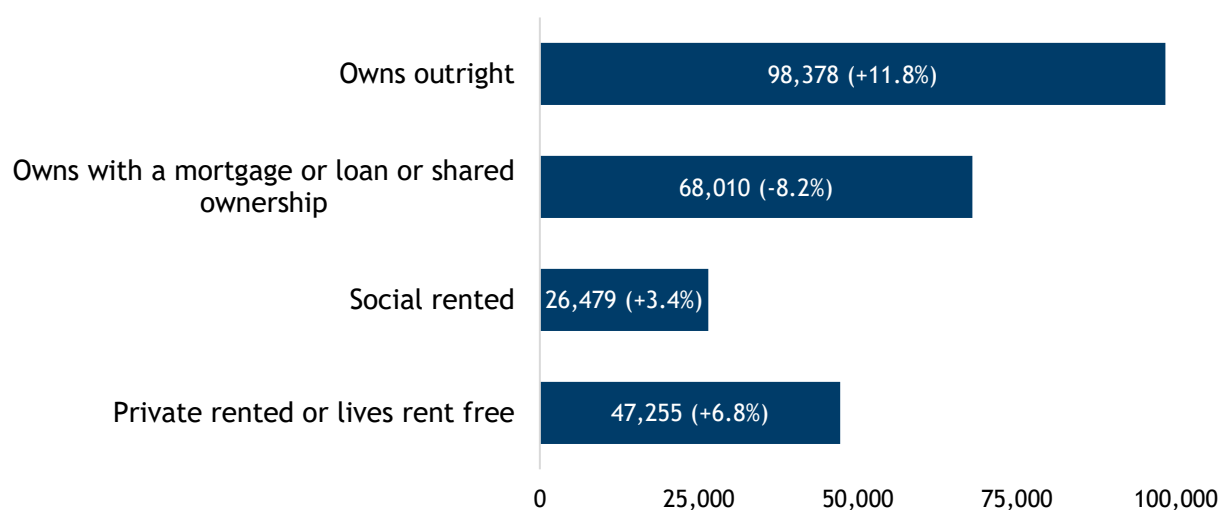
Conversely, the borough of Eastbourne saw the largest increase in the proportion of households renting, up from 36.5% (16,450) in 2011 to 39.6% (18,060) in 2021, and the biggest fall in the proportion of owner-households, from 62.4% (28,080) in 2011 to 60.3% (27,500) in 2021.

Households by Tenure



Source: ONS

East Sussex Households by Tenure (change since 2011 shown in brackets)



Geography	Number of households in social rented accommodation in 2021 (% of total households)	Number of households in social rented accommodation in 2011 (% of total households)	Percentage growth in number of households in social rented accommodation from 2011-2021
EAST SUSSEX	26,479 (11.0%)	25,600 (11.0%)	3.4%
Eastbourne	5,940 (13.0%)	5,953 (13.2%)	-0.2%
Hastings	5,771 (14.3%)	5,988 (14.4%)	-3.6%
Lewes	4,774 (10.9%)	4,609 (10.9%)	3.6%
Rother	4,293 (10.2%)	4,242 (10.4%)	1.2%
Wealden	5,701 (8.4%)	4,808 (7.7%)	18.6%
SOUTH EAST	519,352 (13.6%)	487,473 (13.7%)	6.5%
ENGLAND	4,005,663 (17.1%)	3,903,550 (17.7%)	2.6%

Source: ONS

The proportion of households in the social rented sector remained the same across the decade in East Sussex at 11.0% (26,480 households), which is low compared to the English national average of 17.1%. However, there was some variation within the county that is worth mentioning. Whereas in Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes and Rother, the proportion living in social rented accommodation fell across the decade, Wealden saw a notable increase in the proportion in the social rented sector, up from 7.7% (4,810 households) in 2011 to 8.4% (5,700) in 2021. By contrast, the proportion of households in the social rented sector in England as a whole fell from 17.7% to 17.1% across the decade.

It is important to note that despite the increase, however, Wealden continues to have the smallest proportion of the population in the social rented sector of all the districts and boroughs within East Sussex.

Rooms, bedrooms and occupancy rating

The 2021 Census used Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data to count the number of rooms in a dwelling. This was instead of using the approach from previous censuses of asking the question on the census form. All rooms in a dwelling apart from bathrooms, toilets, halls or landings, kitchens, conservatories, or utility rooms are counted. For households living in a shared dwelling, the number of rooms is counted for the whole dwelling and not the individual household.

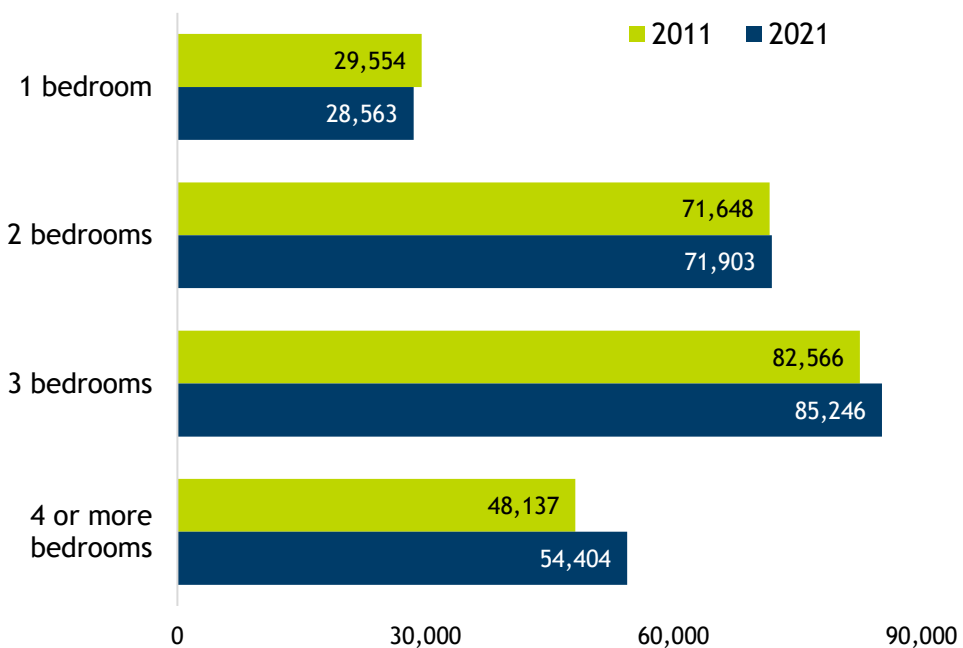
Across East Sussex, 11.3% (27,080) of households had one or two rooms, 70.1% (168,310) had three, four or five rooms, 16.5% (39,640) had six, seven or eight rooms, and 2.1% (5,100) had nine or more rooms. On average, households in Wealden had the greatest number of rooms, while households in Eastbourne and Hastings had the fewest rooms.

The VOA method for counting the number of rooms differs in several ways from the method used in the 2011 Census. For example, the VOA method includes storage rooms, which were excluded from the 2011 Census, but excludes kitchens, conservatories and utility rooms, which were included in the 2011 Census. For this reason, the 2021 Census data on the number of rooms should not be directly compared with 2011 data.

What can be compared, however, is the number of bedrooms. In 2021, as in 2011, the Census asked respondents about the number of bedrooms available to their household. The data shows that the proportion of households with one, two or three bedrooms decreased between 2011 and 2021, whereas the proportion with four or more bedrooms increased:

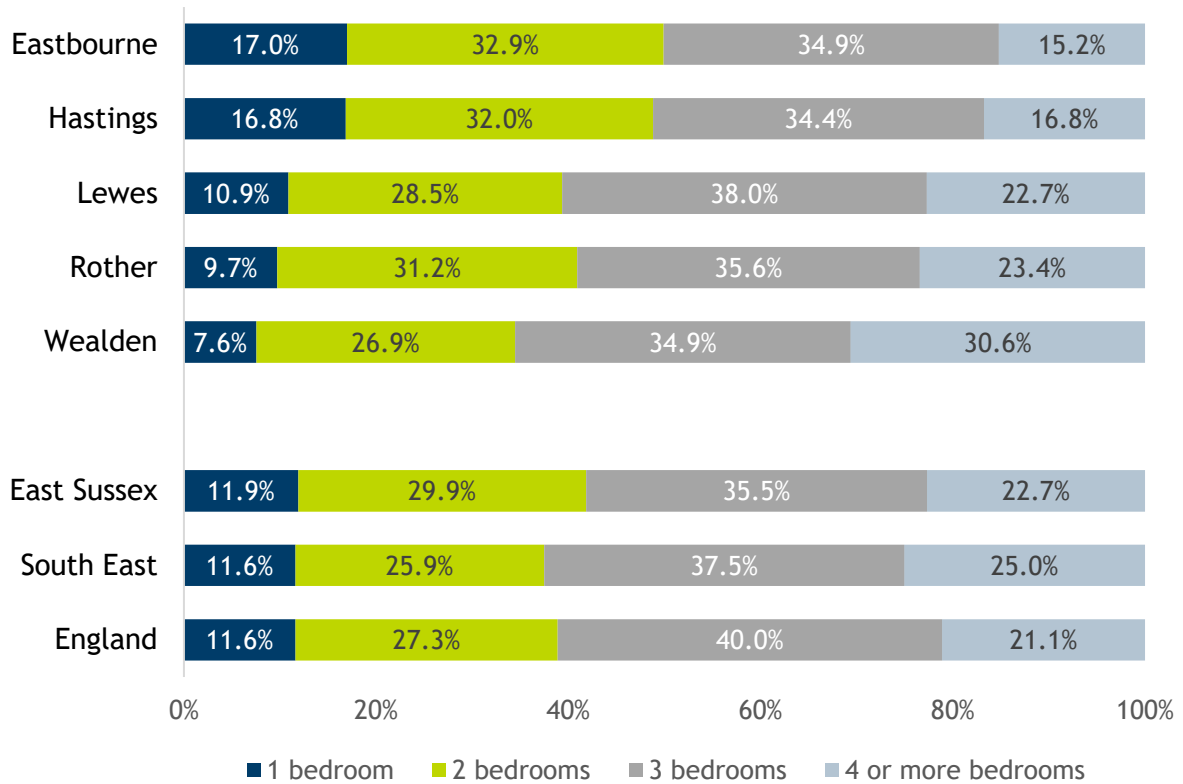
- 11.9% (28,560) of households had one bedroom in 2021, down from 12.7% (29,550) in 2011
- 29.9% (71,900) of households had two bedrooms, down from 30.9% (71,650) in 2011
- 35.5% (85,250) of households had three bedrooms, down from 35.6% (82,570) in 2011
- 22.7% (54,400) of households had four or more bedrooms, up from 20.8% (48,140) in 2011

East Sussex households by number of bedrooms



Source: ONS

Number of bedrooms in households

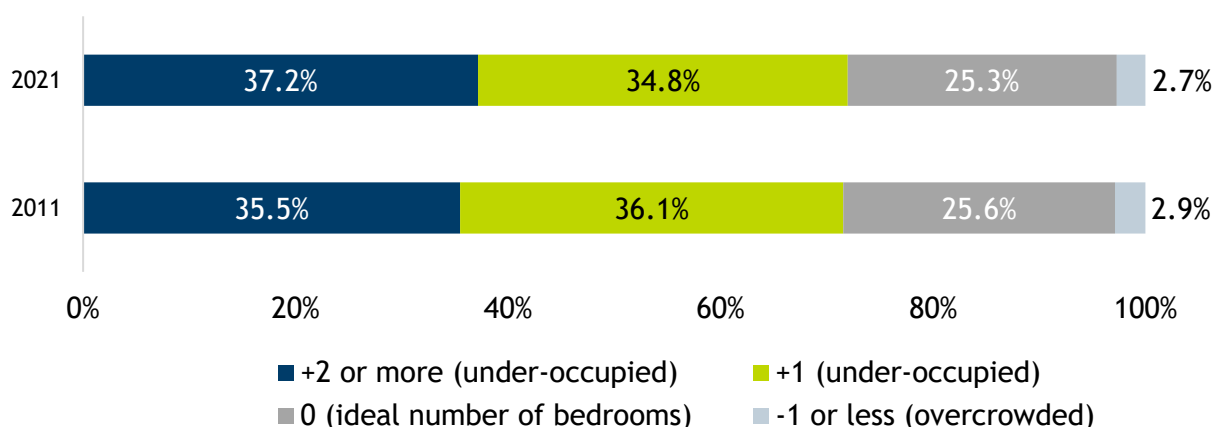


Source: ONS

Compared with England overall, East Sussex had a higher proportion of households with 4 or more bedrooms (22.7% in East Sussex versus 21.1% in England). Within East Sussex, the percentage of households with four or more bedrooms was highest in Wealden at 30.6%, while the percentage of households with just one bedroom was highest in Eastbourne (17.0%).

The occupancy rating for bedrooms indicates whether a household’s accommodation is overcrowded, ideally occupied or under-occupied. This is calculated by comparing the number of bedrooms the household requires to the number of available bedrooms.

Bedroom occupancy rating of East Sussex households



Source: ONS

The number of bedrooms a household requires is calculated according to the Bedroom Standard, which states that the following should have their own bedroom:

1. Married or cohabiting couple
2. Single parent
3. Person aged 16 years and over
4. Pair of same-sex persons aged 10 to 15 years
5. Person aged 10 to 15 years paired with a person under 10 years of same sex
6. Pair of children aged under 10 years, regardless of their sex
7. Person aged under 16 years who cannot share a bedroom with someone else in 4, 5 or 6 above.

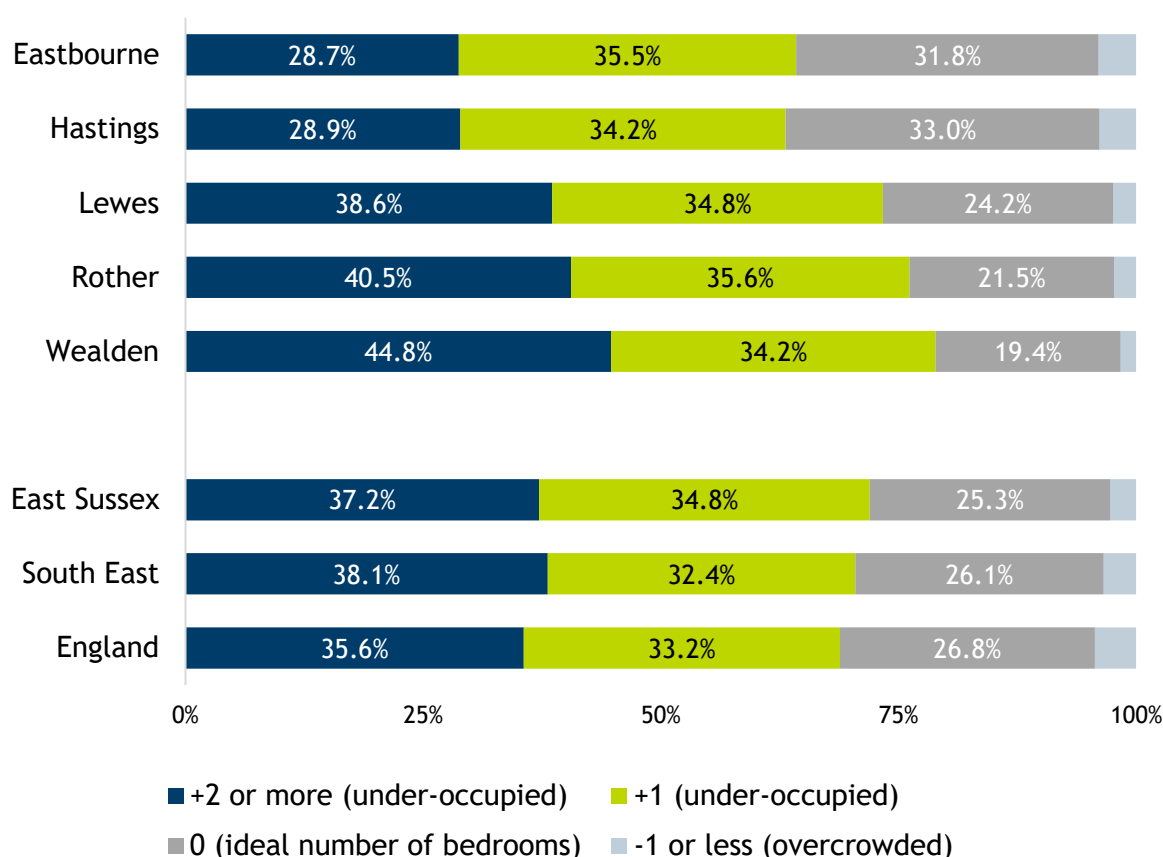
An occupancy rating of -1 or less implies that a household's accommodation has fewer bedrooms than required (overcrowded), while an occupancy rating of +1 or more implies that a household's accommodation has more bedrooms than required (under-occupied); 0 suggests that a household's accommodation has an ideal number of bedrooms.

Between 2011 and 2021, the total number of 'under-occupied' households in East Sussex increased by 4.1% from 165,960 to 172,840. During the same period, the total number of 'overcrowded' households decreased by 0.9% from 6,620 to 6,560, while the number with an ideal number of bedrooms rose 2.3% from 59,330 to 60,720.

Put another way, compared with 2011, the overall proportion of under-occupied households increased slightly from 71.6% to 72.0%, while the proportion with an ideal

number of bedrooms decreased slightly from 25.6% to 25.3%. The proportion classified as overcrowded also decreased across East Sussex as a whole from 2.9% to 2.7%, but increased in Eastbourne and Hastings from 3.8% to 4.0% and from 3.5% to 3.9%, respectively.

Bedroom occupancy rating in 2021



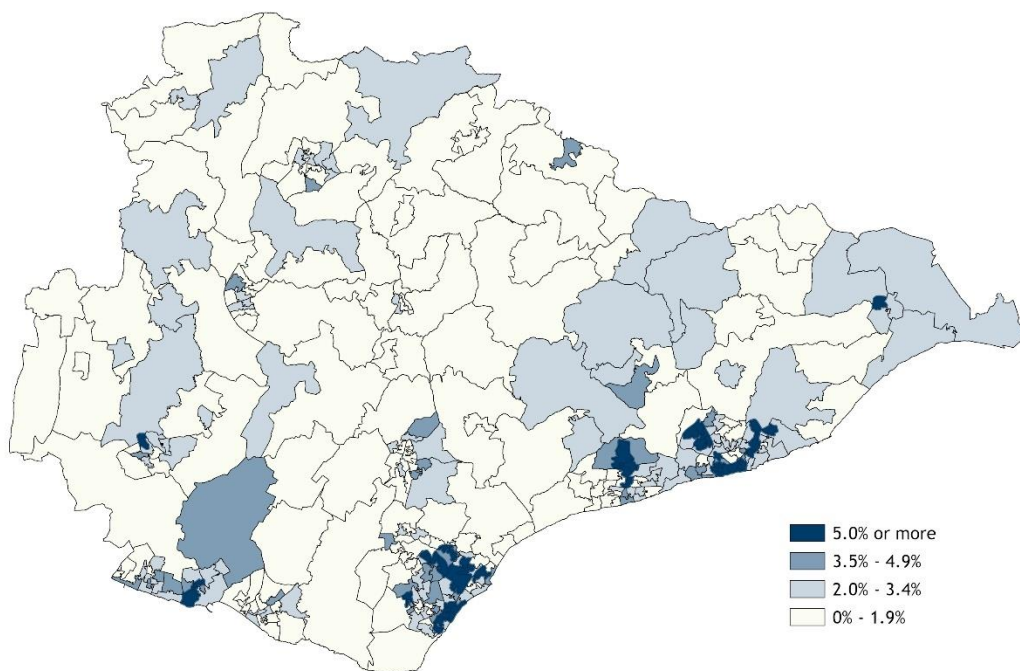
Source: ONS

The chart above shows the proportion of households within each district and borough within East Sussex by bedroom occupancy rating. Eastbourne had the highest proportion of overcrowded households in 2021 (4.0%), Hastings had the highest proportion of households with the ideal number of bedrooms (33.0%), and Wealden had the highest proportion of under-occupied households (78.9%).

Compared with England overall, East Sussex has a lower proportion of overcrowded households (2.7% versus 4.4%) and a higher proportion of under-occupied households (72.0% versus 68.8% in England).

The map below shows the proportion of households across East Sussex at LSOA-level that are considered to be overcrowded (that is, with a bedroom occupancy rating of - 1 or less). The darker the shade of blue, the greater the proportion of overcrowded households there is. The LSOAs with the highest proportion of overcrowded households were Eastbourne 010C (11.0%) and Eastbourne 010B (10.9%) within the Devonshire Ward of Eastbourne, followed by Hastings 005D (9.9%), Hastings 005A (9.5%) and Hastings 004B (9.1%), located in the north eastern Hastings wards of Baird, Tressell and Ore.

Proportion of overcrowded households by LSOA

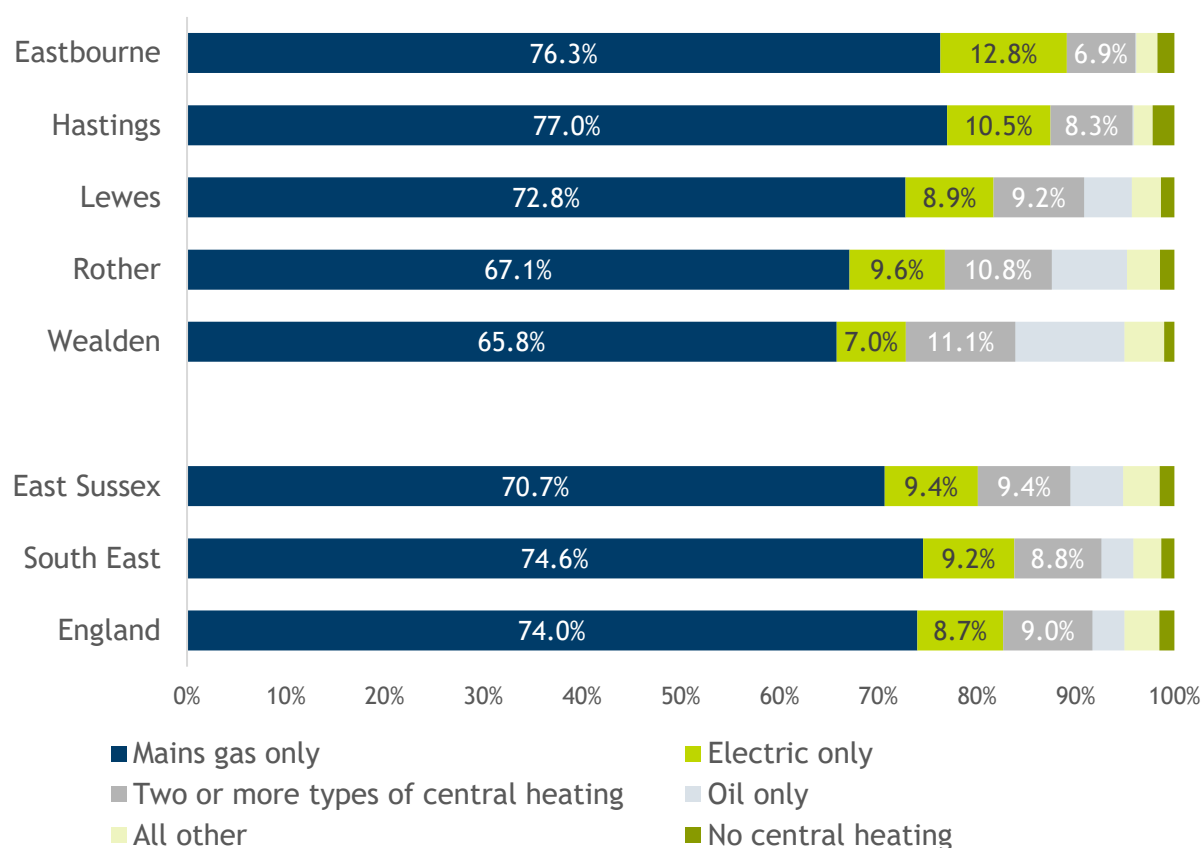


Source: ONS, ArcGIS

Central heating

The vast majority of households in East Sussex reported that they had central heating in 2021 (98.5%, 236,530 households), in line with the English national average (98.5%). Most (71.2%) reported having mains gas central heating only. Overall, East Sussex households had a broadly similar mix of central heating types compared with the English national average, albeit with a slightly higher proportion of oil-only households.

Central heating by type



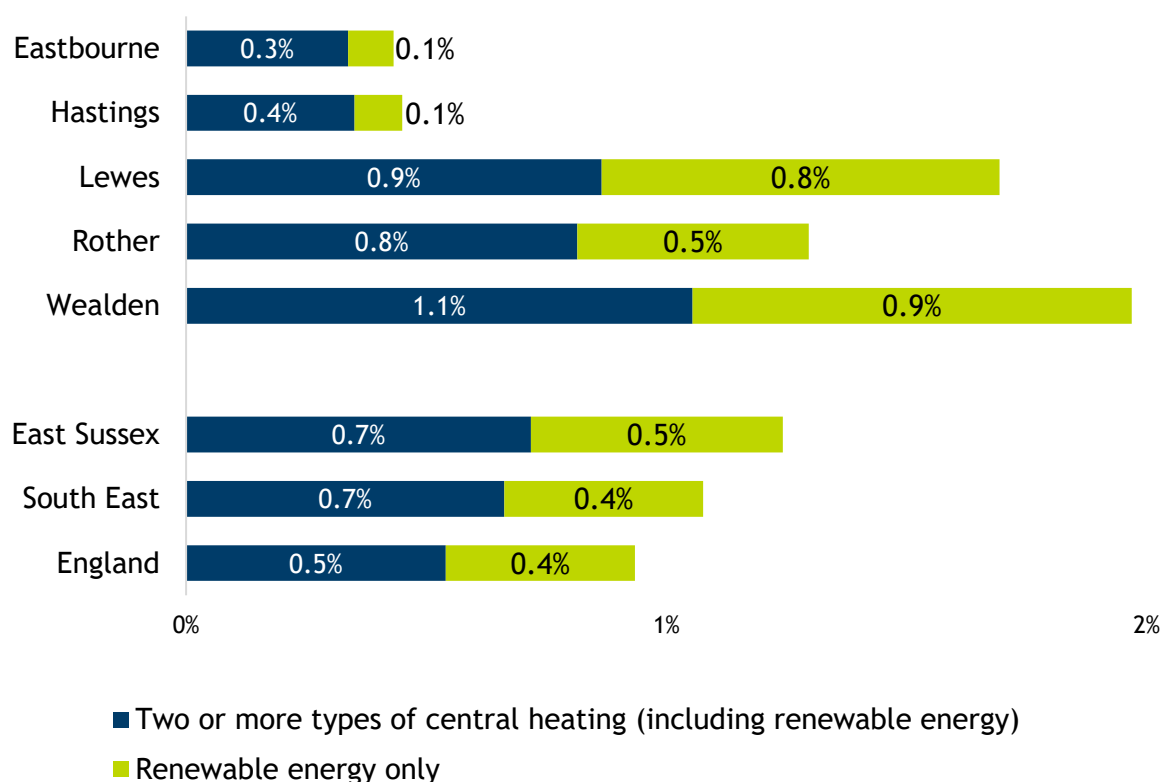
Source: ONS

Between 2011 and 2021, the number of households with two or more types of central heating increased by 136.6% from 9,570 to 22,650. This is in line with the increase in England as a whole of 135.7%. During the same period, the number of households without central heating fell by 45.1% from 6,540 to 3,590, bringing the proportion of households with no central heating down from 2.8% in 2011 to 1.5% in 2021, which

again, is in line with the proportion of households nationally that do not have central heating (1.5%).

That said, there was significant variation within East Sussex, with Rother and Wealden registering a higher proportion of oil-only households and therefore the lowest proportion of households with mains gas central heating only. Hastings, meanwhile, had the highest proportion of households with no central heating at 2.2% (900 households) although this had fallen from 4.5% (1,870 households) in 2011.

Households using any form of renewable energy in 2021



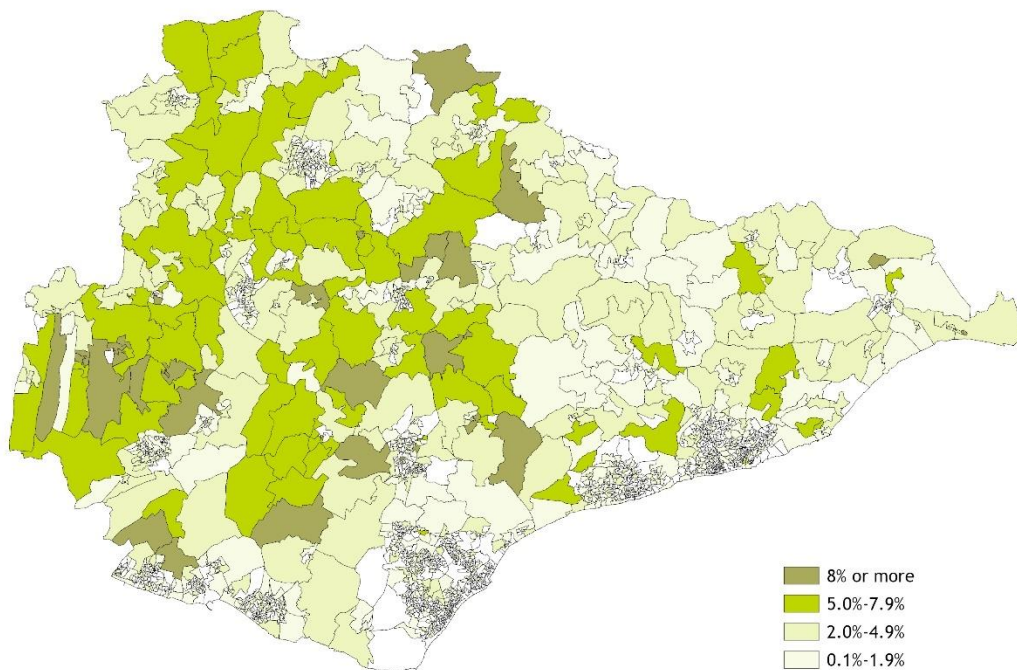
Source: ONS

For the first time, the 2021 Census recorded whether a household's central heating used renewable energy sources. The chart shows the proportion of households using at least one type of renewable energy. Overall, 1.2% of East Sussex households (3,000) used at least one renewable energy source, which is higher than the national average (0.9%). Lewes recorded the greatest use of renewable energy at 1.7% (740

households), while in Eastbourne and Hastings, only 0.4% (200 households in Eastbourne and 180 households in Hastings) used at least one renewable energy source.

The map below shows the proportion of households across East Sussex with central heating that uses at least one renewable energy source. As can be seen, households located in the western half of the county and away from the coastal towns are the ones most likely to be making use of renewable energy sources.

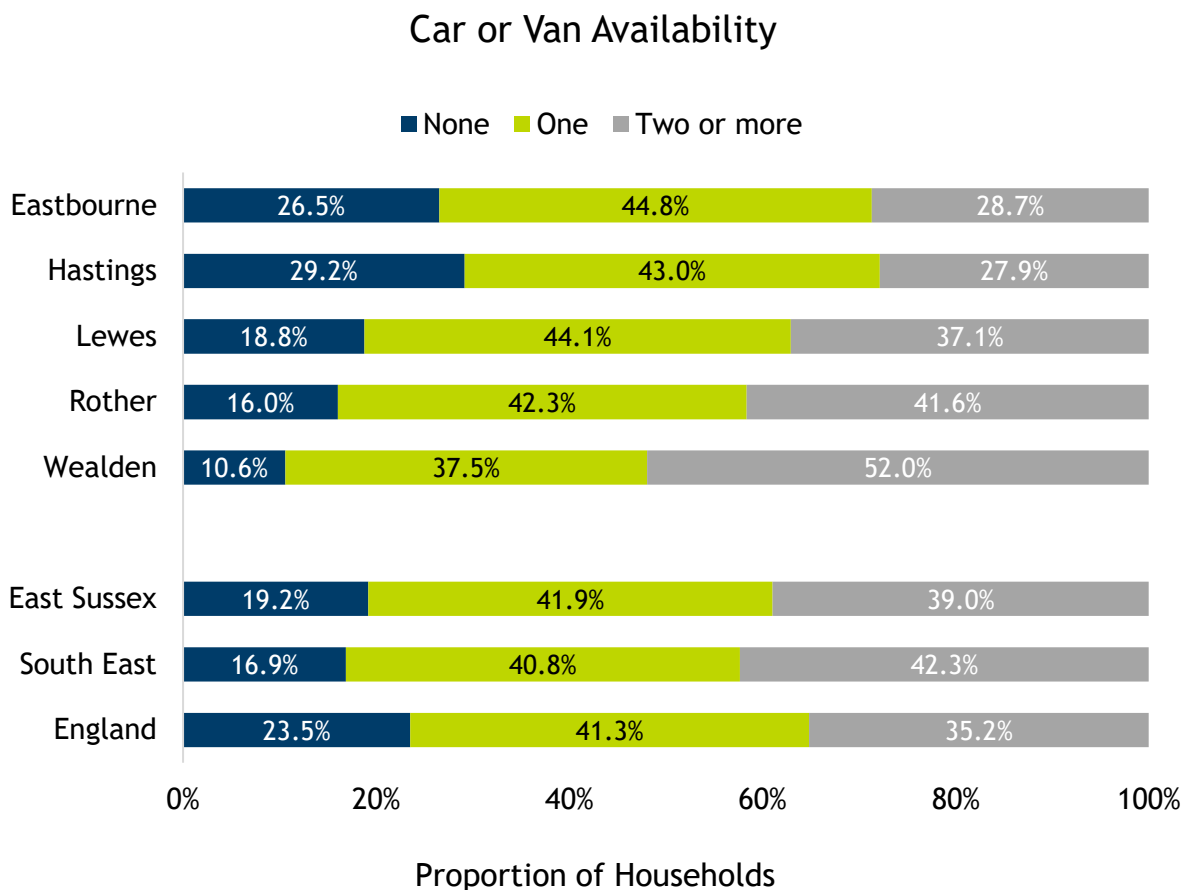
Proportion of households using any renewable energy source



Source: ONS, ArcGIS

Car and Van Availability

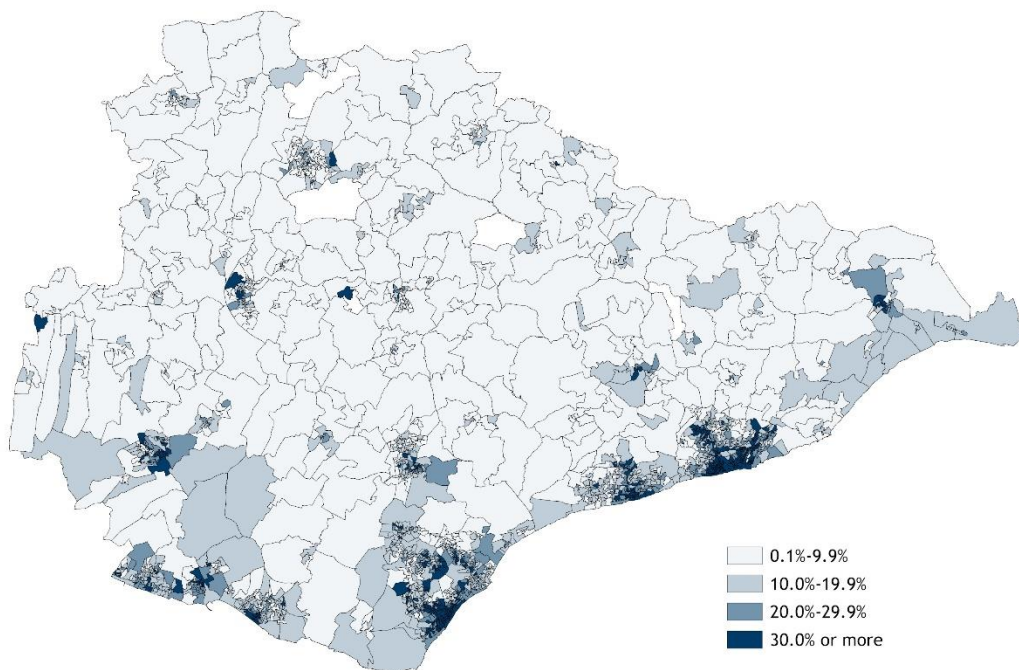
As in previous censuses, the 2021 Census asked households how many cars or vans the household owned or had available to them. The number of households in East Sussex owning a car or van increased across the decade. In 2021, 80.8% (194,050) of households had at least one car or van, up from 78.1% (181,230) in 2011. The greatest increase in car ownership was in Hastings, where the proportion of households with a car or van has increased from 66.7% (27,470 households) in 2011 to 70.8% (28,650) in 2021. Further, the proportion of households with two cars or vans increased from 25.9% (60,170) to 27.7% (66,460) and the number with three cars or more increased from 9.0% (20,720) to 11.3% (27,080).



Source: ONS

Compared to England overall, a higher proportion of East Sussex households had a car or van available to them (80.8% versus 76.5% in England).

Proportion of households with no cars or vans in household in 2021



Source: ONS, ArcGIS

The map above shows the proportion of households across East Sussex without a car or van. Higher concentrations of households without a car or van can be seen along the southern coastal region of the county, but also in towns such as Battle, Rye, and Uckfield, among others.

Limitations and mitigations

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces census data for a range of different output geographies. This includes census statistics for small areas/neighbourhoods right up to statistics for large administrative units. When added together, detailed census results for smaller areas may not exactly match the same data for larger areas. This is because the ONS uses statistical disclosure control methods which swap very small numbers between areas, and/or add small changes to some counts (cell key perturbation). For example, they might change a count of four to a three or a five, to make sure that it is impossible to identify specific individuals. This means that data for small areas may not sum to the totals for higher geographical levels.

For this reason, in any discussion of the census results, we have chosen to round numbers to the nearest 10. Where percentages have been provided, these are based on unrounded numbers. Tables published in this report and on East Sussex in Figures website contain unrounded data as supplied by the ONS, but come with the caveat that individual numbers and totals may vary slightly between tables depending on the selected output geography, as detailed above.

Census statistics are estimates rather than counts, and therefore have measures of uncertainty associated with them. As with all self-completion questionnaires, some forms will have contained incorrect, incomplete, or missing information about a person or household. While the ONS takes numerous steps to correct and minimise possible sources of error, as described in their [Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\) Report](#), no census is perfect.

Further Information

For more information about the census data visit the [ONS website](#). For queries specifically relating to East Sussex, please contact the Research and Intelligence Team via email at esif@eastsussex.gov.uk.

The Research and Intelligence Team, Governance Services, provides demographic and socio-economic data, intelligence and insight to support East Sussex County Council and other East Sussex Partners. The Team also manages East Sussex in Figures (ESiF), the Local Information System for East Sussex. ESiF is a web-based information system that contains detailed, up-to-date and reliable information on a very wide range of topics. Visit www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk for more information.