

## **Census 2021 – West Suffolk data summary**

Labour market, travel to work and education. February 2024

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## About this document

- This document summarises the Census 2021 data that have so far been released, at the West Suffolk level. Further information and analysis tools from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Suffolk-level summaries by Suffolk County Council (SCC) are available at: [Healthy Suffolk – Census in Suffolk](#)
- The maps in this report were taken directly from the above analysis by SCC and this report follows much of the structure of SCC's summary but replicated at the district level. We are grateful for SCC colleagues' work in this area.
- Further summaries of West Suffolk data will be issued as more data is released.

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## Glossary of terms used

OA denotes 'output area'. This is the smallest geography for which census data are released.

There are **587 output areas** in West Suffolk in 2021, with an average usual resident population of just over 300 people.

LSOA denotes 'lower super output area'. All data available at OA level are also available for LSOAs.

**There are 107 LSOAs in West Suffolk**, with an average usual resident population of just under 1,700 people.

MSOA denotes 'middle super output area'. There are **21 MSOAs in West Suffolk**, with an average usual resident population of just under 8,500 people.

LTLA denotes 'lower tier local authority' (district and borough council areas).

Please note that US military personnel and dependents **are included** in the results for West Suffolk if they were in the district on Census night.

All data used in this paper were sourced from the 2021, 2011 and 2001 ONS census outputs. Some total counts may differ slightly.

# Labour market

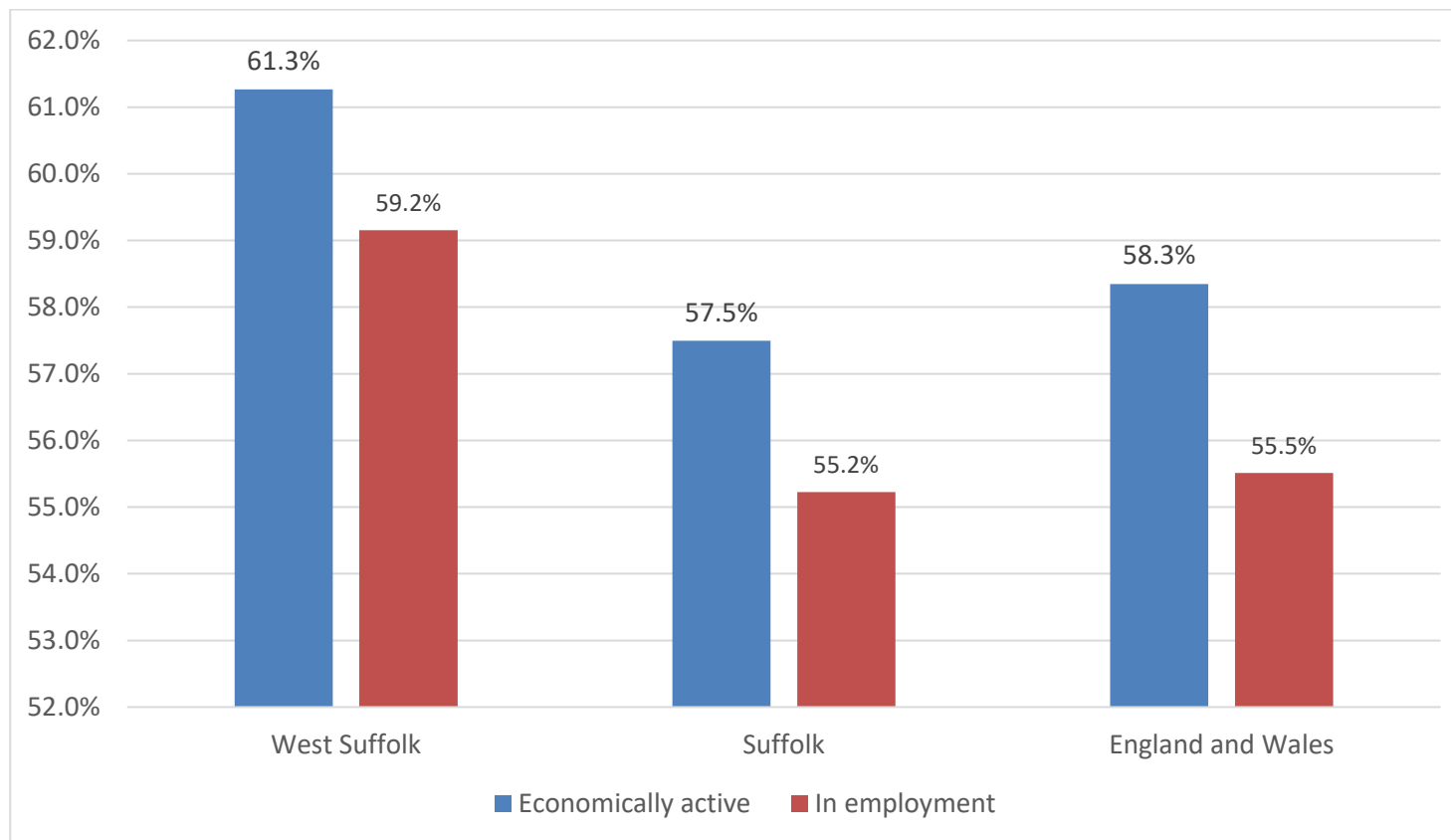
## Economic activity status

**Table 1: Usual resident population aged 16 and over by economic activity status, West Suffolk, Suffolk and England and Wales, 2011 and 2021 censuses**

|   | West Suffolk |         |        |                       | Suffolk               | England and Wales     |
|---|--------------|---------|--------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|   | 2011         | 2021    | Change | Percentage change (%) | Percentage change (%) | Percentage change (%) |
| Total (16+ population)  | 139,367      | 148,130 | 8,763  | 6.3%                  | 5.9%                  | 6.7%                  |
| Economically active (excluding full-time students)                | 89,907       | 90,755  | 848    | 0.9%                  | 0.0%                  | 3.4%                  |
| Economically active (excluding full-time students): In employment | 86,020       | 87,626  | 1,606  | 1.9%                  | 1.3%                  | 5.3%                  |
| Economically active (excluding full-time students): Unemployment  | 3,887        | 3,129   | -758   | -19.5%                | -24.4%                | -23.6%                |
| Economically active and a full-time student                       | 3,095        | 2,448   | -647   | -20.9%                | -23.5%                | -21.2%                |
| Economically inactive: Total                                      | 46,365       | 54,927  | 8,562  | 18.5%                 | 17.5%                 | 14.6%                 |
| Economically inactive: Retired                                    | 31,180       | 34,831  | 3,651  | 11.7%                 | 12.7%                 | 8.2%                  |
| Economically inactive: Student (including full-time students)     | 3,751        | 4,541   | 790    | 21.1%                 | 20.5%                 | 14.3%                 |
| Economically inactive: Looking after home or family               | 4,884        | 6,102   | 1,218  | 24.9%                 | 20.6%                 | 29.0%                 |
| Economically inactive: Long-term sick or disabled                 | 3,364        | 4,395   | 1,031  | 30.6%                 | 29.7%                 | 13.6%                 |
| Economically inactive: Other                                      | 3,186        | 5,058   | 1,872  | 58.8%                 | 51.4%                 | 54.0%                 |

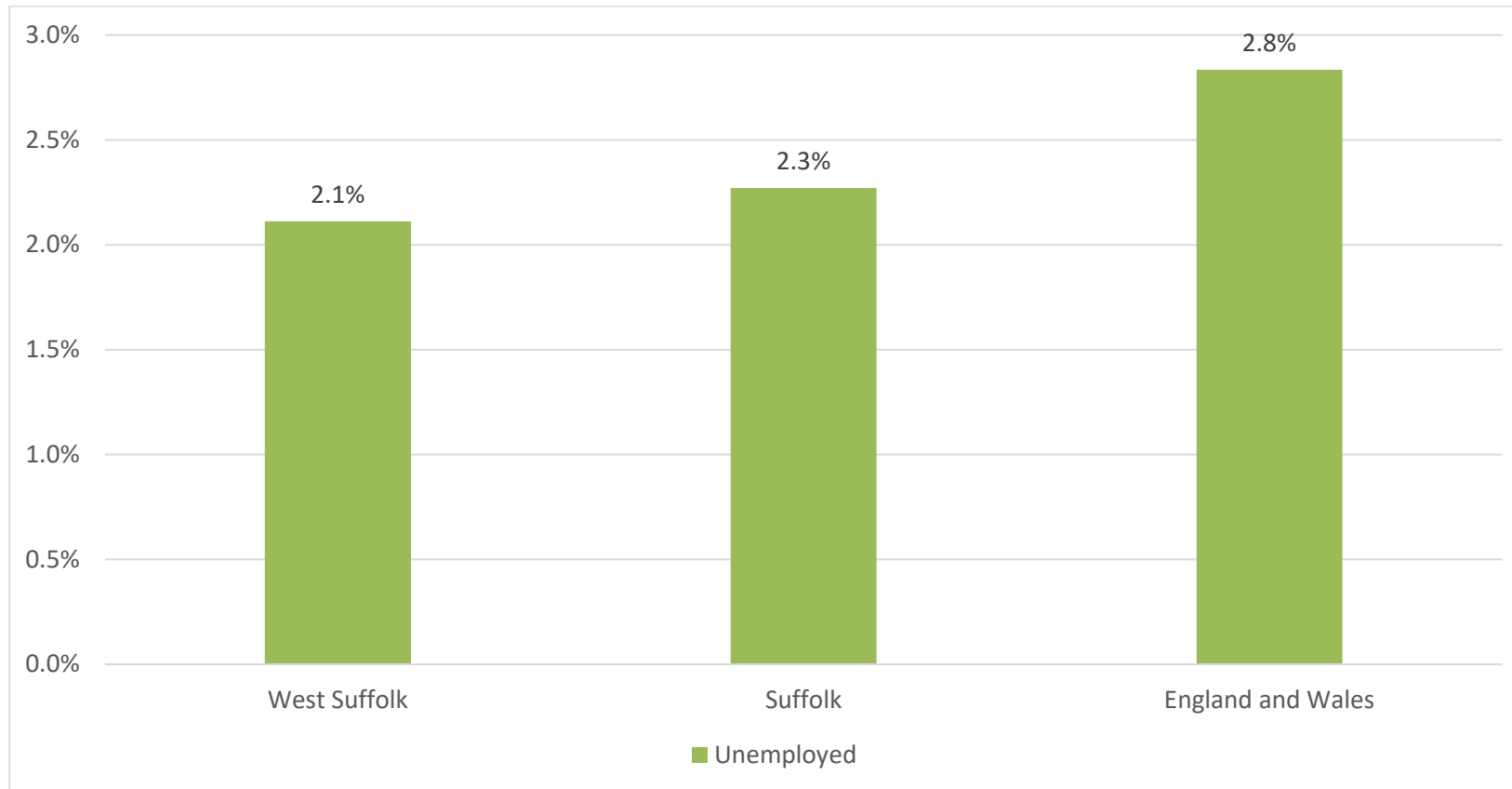
- These data indicate that the number of people who are economically active but not a full-time student in West Suffolk in 2021 remains almost the same as in 2011 (0.9 per cent increase). There has also been minimal change across England and Wales on average, with the economically active population (excluding full-time students) increasing by 3.4 per cent since the last census.
- The number of people in employment in West Suffolk has increased by 1.9 per cent over the past decade. There was a 5.3 per cent rise nationally.
- There are 19.5 per cent fewer economically active but unemployed (that is not in employment but are looking for work) residents in West Suffolk in 2021 compared to 2011. In Suffolk there was a 24.4 per cent fall and nationally a 23.6 per cent fall.
- Just over 3,100 West Suffolk residents were unemployed at the time of the 2021 Census. The number of people in all economically inactive groups has increased over the past decade. There are over 4,300 people who are long-term sick or disabled in West Suffolk in 2021, an increase of over 1,000 since 2011. This figure has seen a percentage increase (30.6 per cent) more than double that of England and Wales (13.6 per cent).
- Retired people account for around 40 per cent of the increase in the economically inactive population in West Suffolk between the 2011 and 2021 censuses. There are over 3,600 more retired people living in West Suffolk in 2021 than there were in 2011, a rise of 11.7 per cent. 23.5 per cent of the population aged 16 and over in West Suffolk is retired (the equivalent figure for Suffolk 27.1 per cent and England and Wales 21.6 per cent)

**Chart 1. Percentage of usual resident population aged 16 and over who are economically active and in employment. 2021 census**



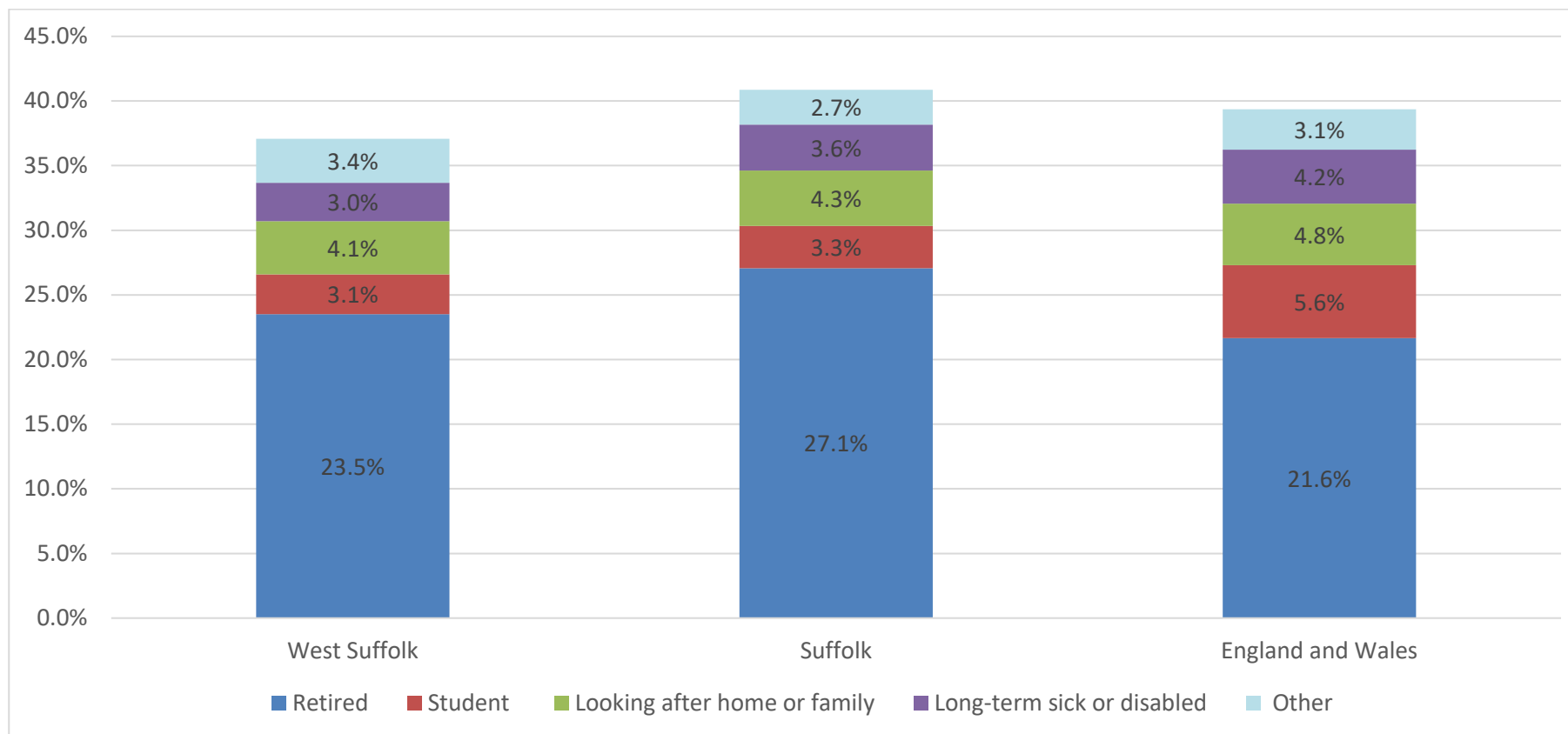
Economic activity levels in Suffolk vary from 52.7 per cent in East Suffolk to 61.4 per cent in Ipswich, with West Suffolk at 61.3 per cent.

**Chart 2: Percentage of usual resident population aged 16 and over who are economically active and unemployed. 2021 census**



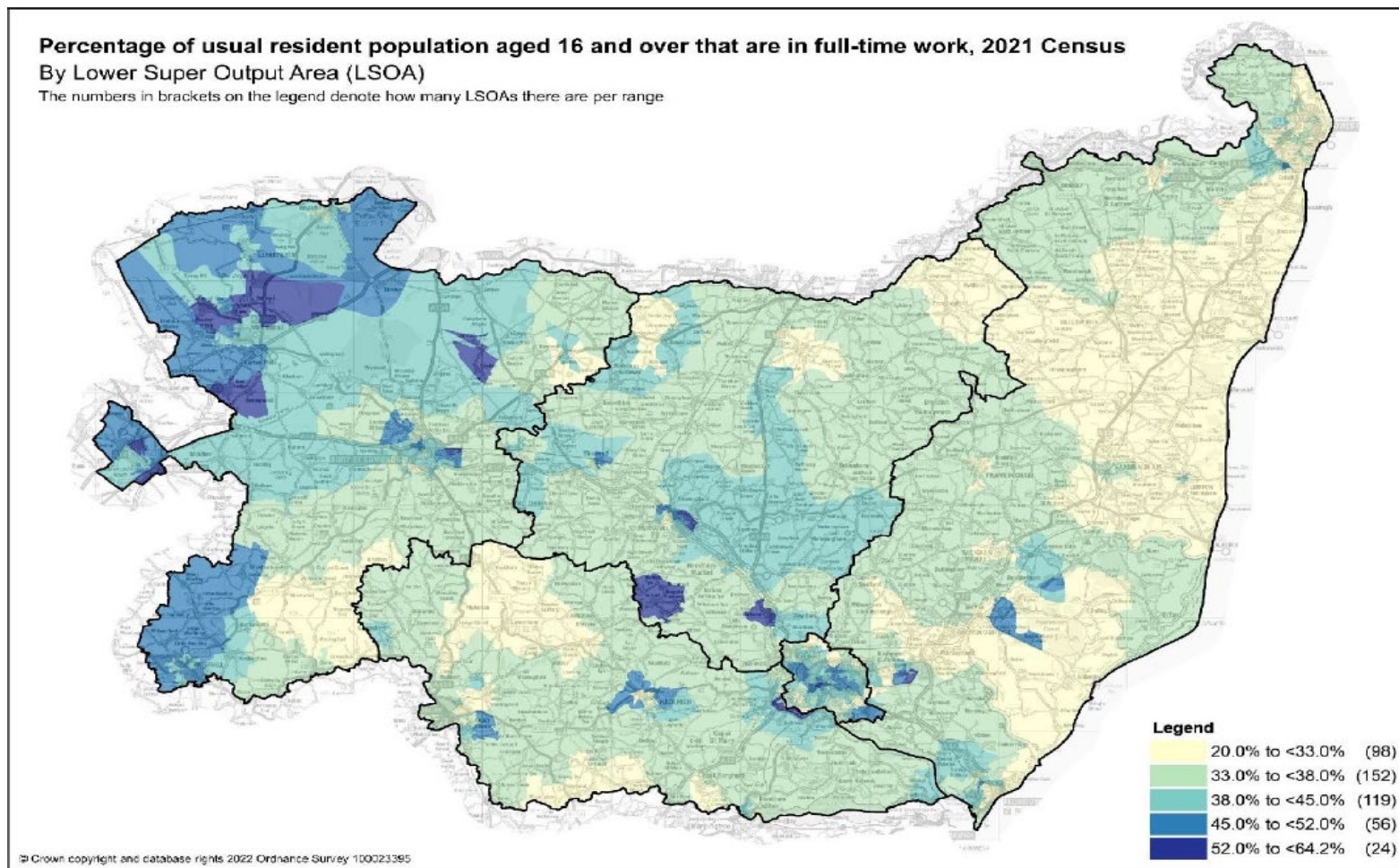


**Chart 3: Percentage of usual residents aged 16 and over; economically inactive. 2021 census**



Across the county, Ipswich has the smallest economically inactive population; 36.4 per cent in total, followed closely by West Suffolk at 37.1 per cent (Suffolk 40.9 per cent, England and Wales 39.4 per cent). Ipswich and West Suffolk have the youngest population profile of Suffolk's LTLAs (lower tier local authority (district and borough Council areas))

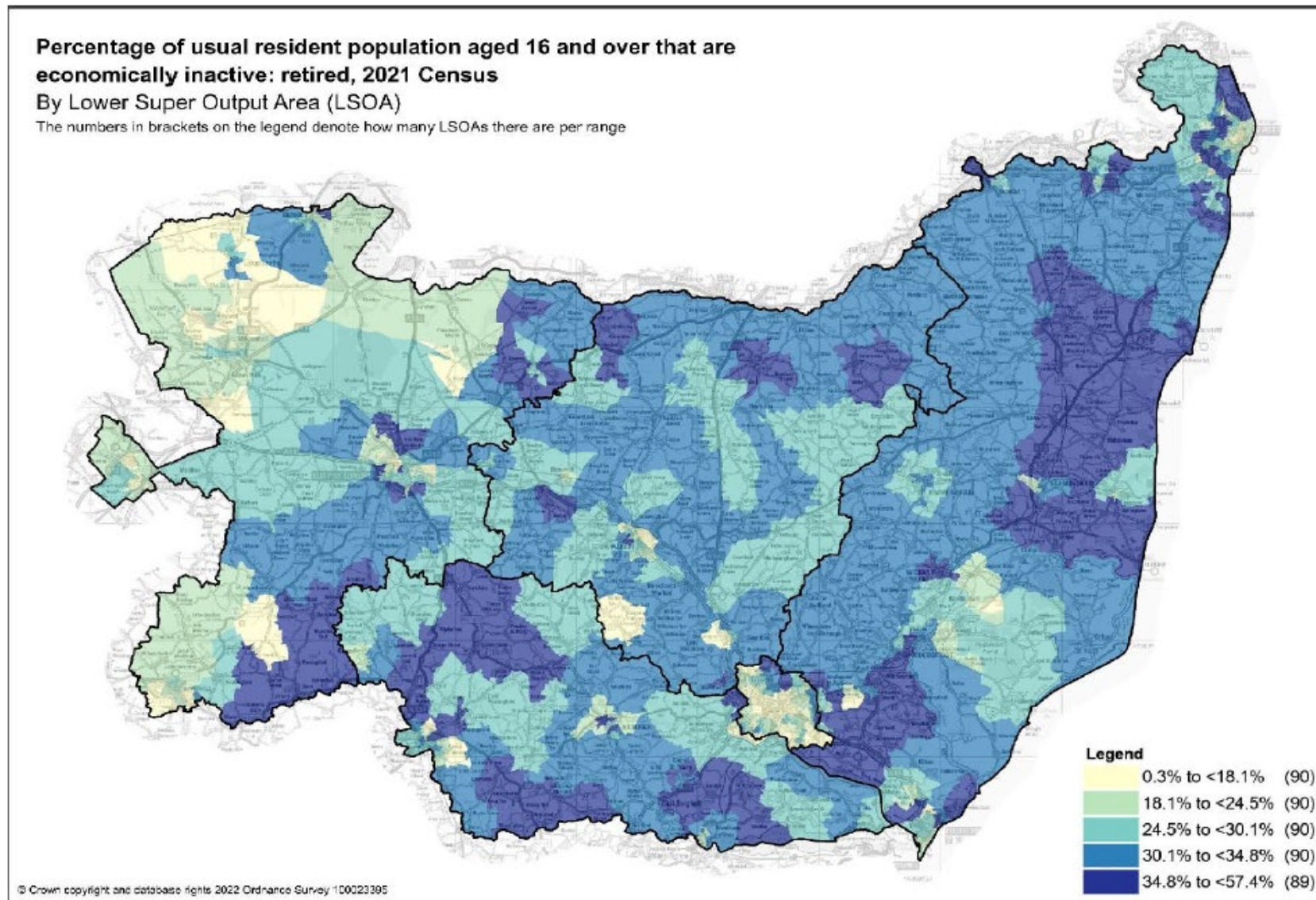
## Economic activity status – full time work



The map shows the percentage of the usual resident population aged 16 and over that were in full-time work the week before the 2021 Census, by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA).

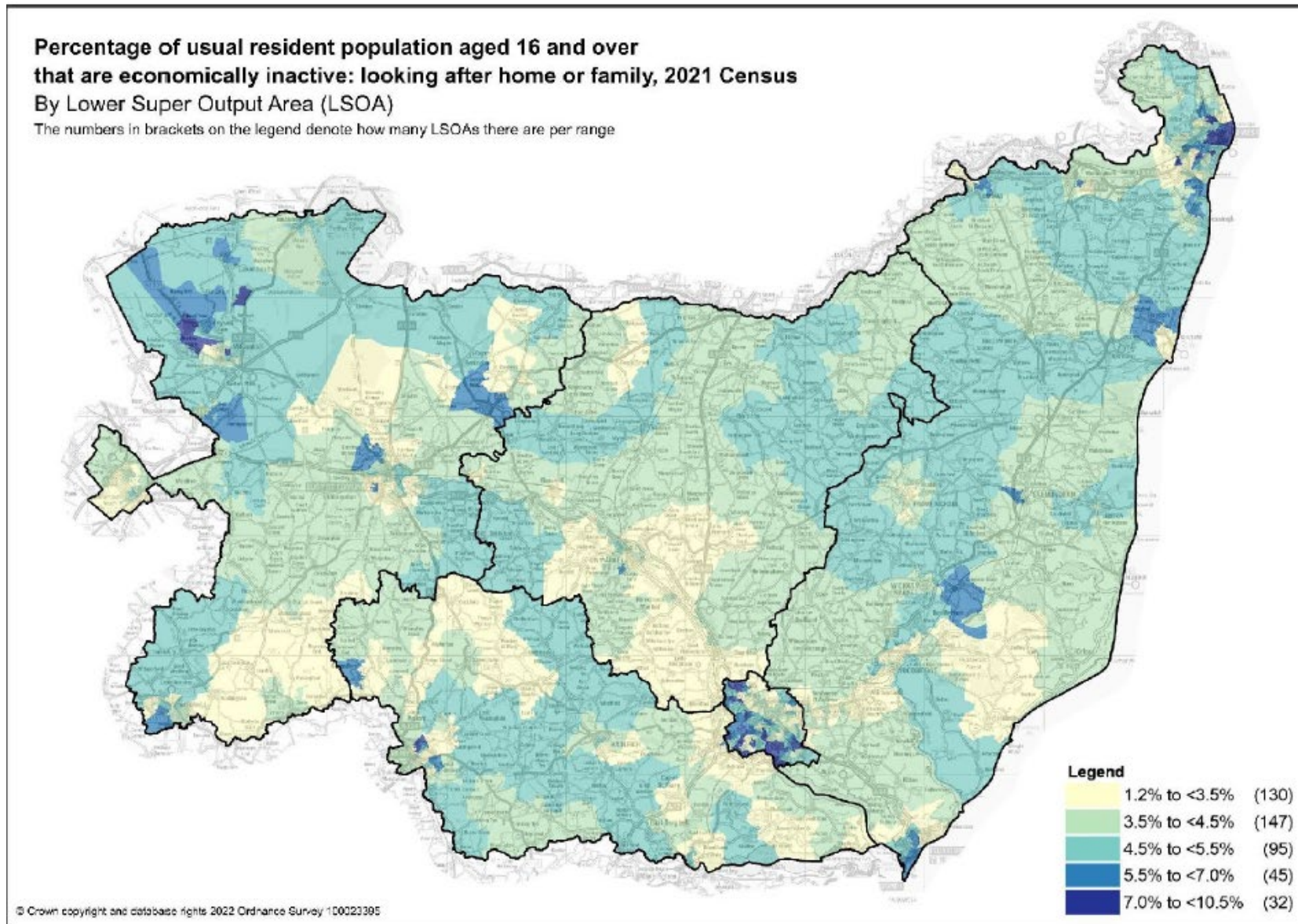
The highest levels of full-time employment across the county are found in West Suffolk; particularly Newmarket, Red Lodge, the Mildenhall area, Moreton Hall and around RAF Honington.

**Economic activity status – retired**

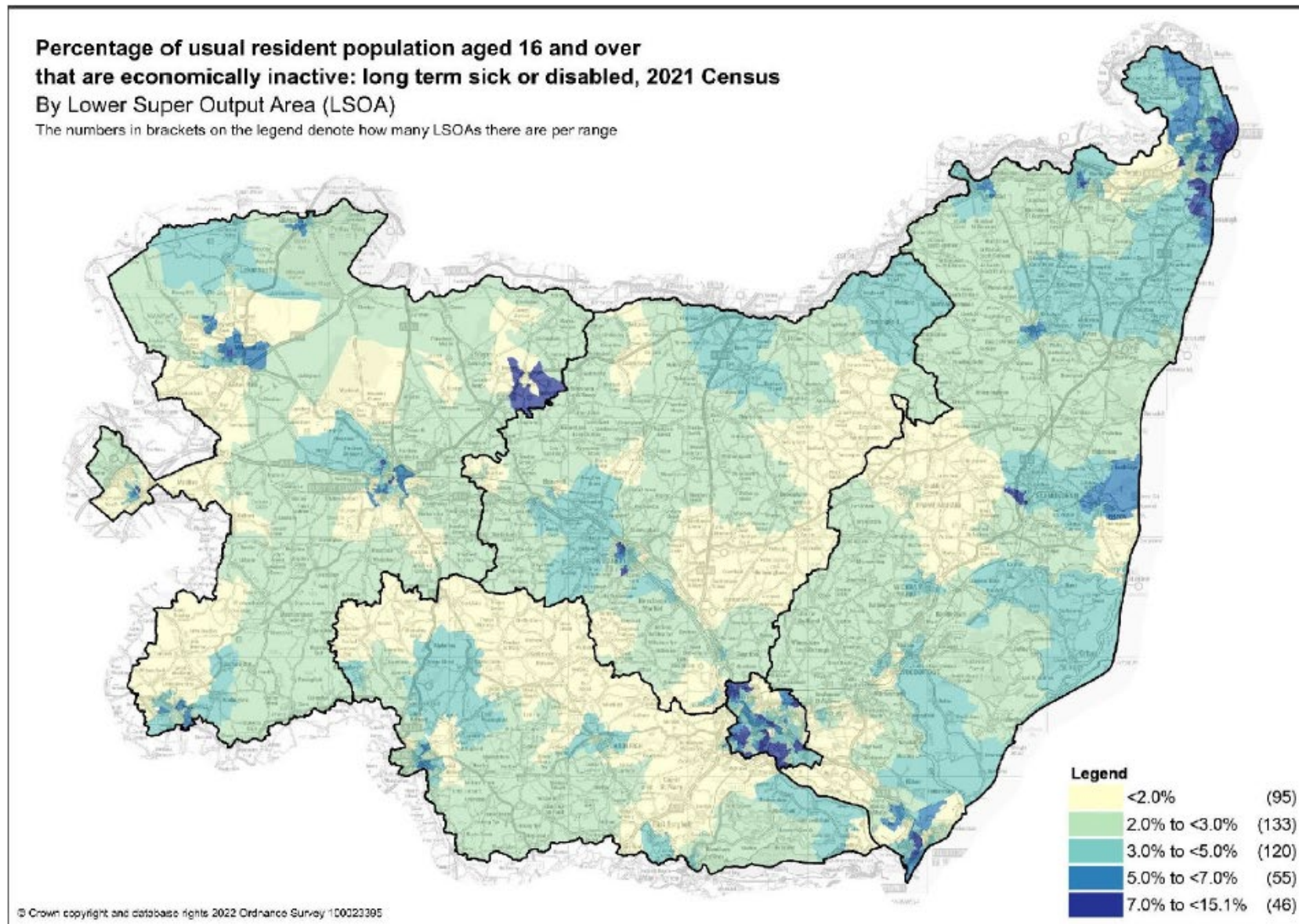




**Economic activity status – looking after home or family**



**Economic activity status – long term sick or disabled**



## Employment history

Employment history information

- **Definition:** Classifies people who were not in employment on Census Day into:
  - Not in employment: Worked in the last 12 months
  - Not in employment: Not worked in the last 12 months
  - Not in employment: Never worked

**Comparability with 2011:** Not comparable. The question on employment history changed between the 2011 and 2021 census.

**Chart 4: Employment history of residents aged 16+ not in employment. 2021 census**



- Of the 58,508 people aged 16 years and over in West Suffolk who were not in employment on Census Day, 13 per cent had worked in the last 12 months, 68.7 per cent had not worked in the last 12 months and 18.3 per cent had never worked.



- West Suffolk has the highest proportion of people who were not in employment at the time of the census but had been in work during the previous 12 months of any Suffolk LTLA (13 per cent).

## Employment – by industry

- Manufacturing has long been an important industry in West Suffolk, with just over 1 in 8 residents classified in this sector in 2011 compared to 1 in 10 in Suffolk and 1 in 11.2 nationally. The number of people employed in the sector has **fallen** by more than a fifth in the past decade, compared to a 13.9% drop across England and Wales. Over 8,000 people living in West Suffolk still work in manufacturing: about 1 in 11 residents, slightly higher than the ratio across Suffolk (1 in 13) and country (1 in 13.7).
- Human health and social work employment has seen the largest increase in both absolute and percentage terms in West Suffolk. There are 2,767 more jobs in this sector among residents in 2021 than there were in 2011, a rise of just over 27%, slightly higher than the national trend.
- In contrast to manufacturing, jobs in construction in West Suffolk have increased markedly from 2011 to 2021, **rising** by 20.2 per cent and now employing over 8,000 residents. There are a number of large house building projects and highway infrastructure works in progress in the county at the time of the Census, while in 2011 house building in particular was sluggish in the aftermath of the financial crisis. The trend in West Suffolk has been reflected at county level (15.4 per cent increase) and nationally (17.8 per cent increase).
- Public administration and defence has increased by 25.1 per cent in West Suffolk in percentage terms, contrasting with a much smaller rise in Suffolk (2.7 per cent) and nationally (3.5 per cent). West Suffolk has a larger percentage of jobs in public administration and defence than other LTLAs (8.8 per cent, the next highest being 6.4 per cent in Mid Suffolk). The air force bases at Lakenheath, Mildenhall and Honington are a large influence on the employment figures for West Suffolk.
- The number of jobs in the wholesale and retail trade has **decreased** by 5.9 per cent in West Suffolk although they represent over 14 per cent of the workforce (1 in 7 residents). There were also decreases in Suffolk (4.4 per cent) and England and Wales (1.5 per cent).
- Over 400 fewer West Suffolk residents have a job in the accommodation and food services sector in 2021 than in 2011, a **drop** of 10.6 per cent. It is possible that a significant part of the trend in this sector is due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; jobs in this sector across Suffolk and England and Wales also fell by 11.7 per cent and 8.2 per cent respectively between Censuses. Just under 1 in 22 West Suffolk residents held a job in this sector in the week leading up to the 2021 census.

- With the increasing importance of technology in many aspects of everyday life, information and communication is a key growth sector. The number of West Suffolk residents employed in the sector has increased by 562 (26.6 per cent) between the 2011 and 2021 censuses. Nationally, jobs in this sector have risen by more than 21.7 per cent.

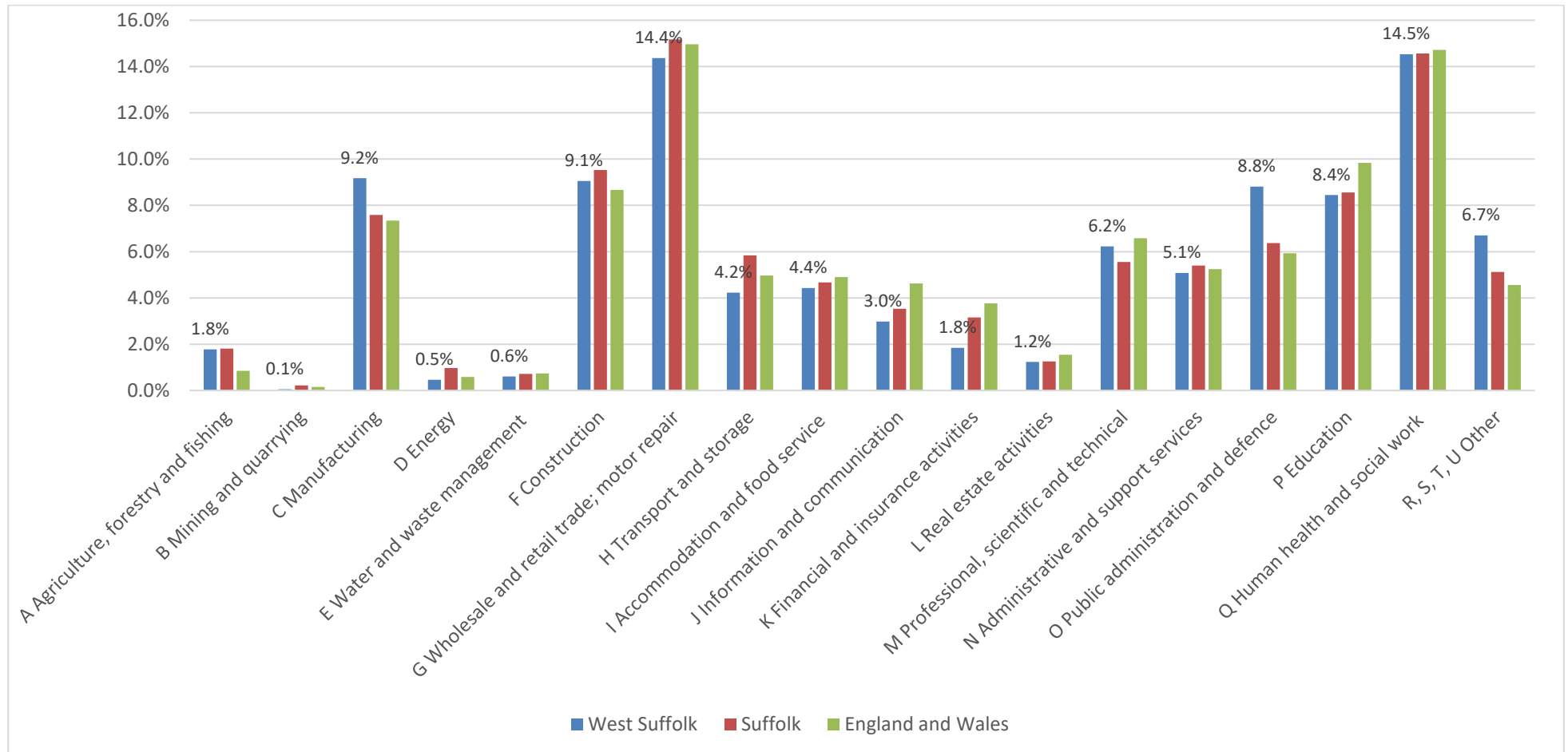
**Table 2: Employment by industry, 2011 and 2021 censuses**

| Industry  | West Suffolk |        |        |                       | Suffolk               | England and Wales     |
|---|--------------|--------|--------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|   | 2011         | 2021   | Change | Percentage change (%) | Percentage change (%) | Percentage change (%) |
| All categories: Industry  | 88,023       | 89,626 | 1,603  | 1.8%                  | 1.2%                  | 4.7%                  |
| A Agriculture, forestry and fishing                                     | 1,678        | 1,592  | -86    | -5.1%                 | -0.6%                 | 4.3%                  |
| B Mining and quarrying  | 42           | 52     | 10     | 23.8%                 | 9.6%                  | -8.1%                 |
| C Manufacturing   | 10,562       | 8,222  | -2,340 | -22.2%                | -22.0%                | -13.9%                |
| D Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply                   | 340          | 415    | 75     | 22.1%                 | 13.6%                 | 7.0%                  |
| E Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities   | 563          | 539    | -24    | -4.3%                 | 1.4%                  | 8.6%                  |
| F Construction  | 6,752        | 8,116  | 1,364  | 20.2%                 | 15.4%                 | 17.8%                 |
| G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles | 13,682       | 12,872 | -810   | -5.9%                 | -4.4%                 | -1.5%                 |
| H Transport and storage   | 4,064        | 3,785  | -279   | -6.9%                 | -1.6%                 | 5.2%                  |
| I Accommodation and food service  | 4,444        | 3,971  | -473   | -10.6%                | -11.7%                | -8.2%                 |
| J Information and communication   | 2,111        | 2,673  | 562    | 26.6%                 | 12.2%                 | 21.7%                 |
| K Financial and insurance activities                                    | 1,868        | 1,656  | -212   | -11.3%                | -10.2%                | -8.6%                 |
| L Real estate activities  | 1,101        | 1,104  | 3      | 0.3%                  | 1.5%                  | 12.0%                 |
| M Professional, scientific and technical activities                     | 4,912        | 5,583  | 671    | 13.7%                 | 7.9%                  | 4.8%                  |
| N Administrative and support service activities                         | 3,967        | 4,550  | 583    | 14.7%                 | 21.2%                 | 12.6%                 |
| O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security         | 6,309        | 7,893  | 1,584  | 25.1%                 | 2.7%                  | 3.5%                  |
| P Education   | 6,630        | 7,573  | 943    | 14.2%                 | 0.0%                  | 4.0%                  |
| Q Human health and social work activities                               | 10,258       | 13,025 | 2,767  | 27.0%                 | 21.2%                 | 23.2%                 |
| R, S, T, U Other  | 8,740        | 6,005  | -2,735 | -31.3%                | -13.2%                | -4.1%                 |

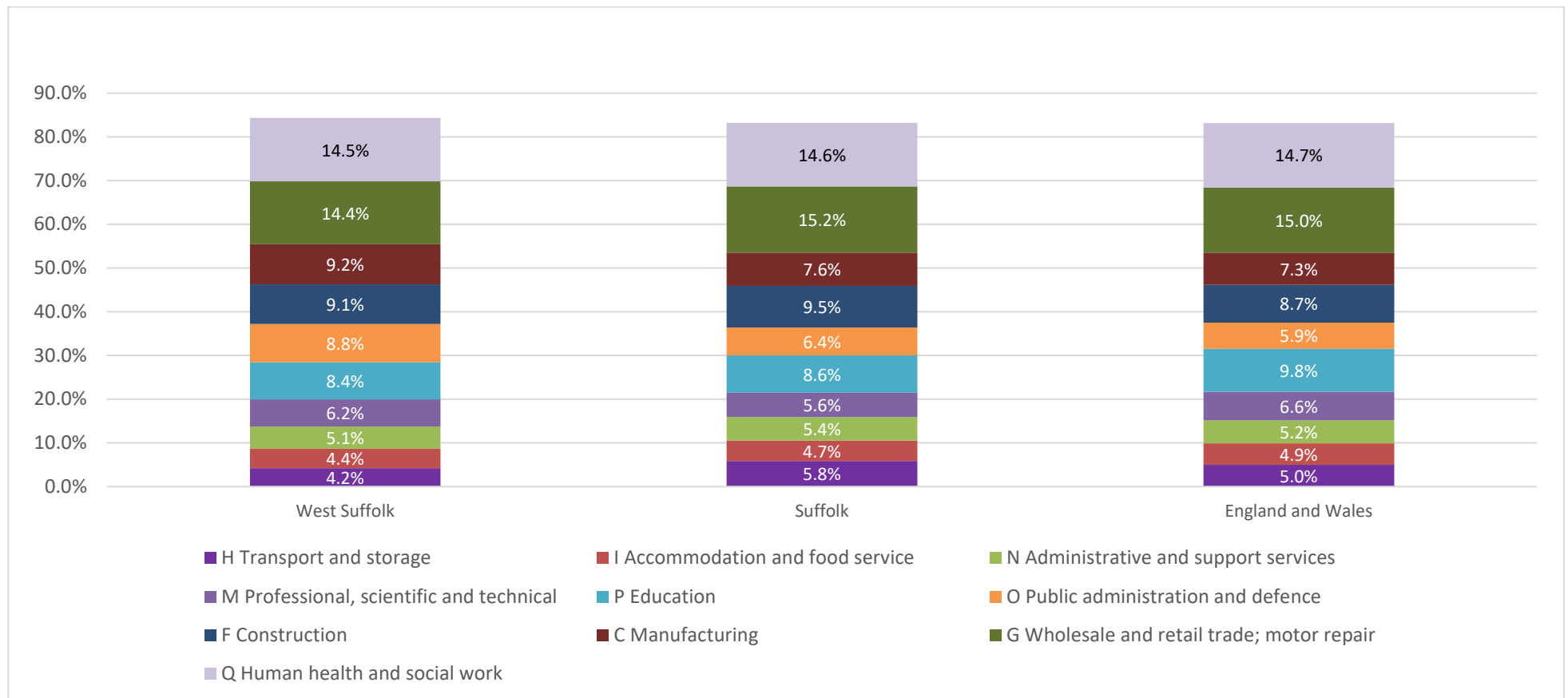
This dataset provides estimates that classify usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment the week before the census by industry.



**Chart 5: Percentage of employment by industrial sector: West Suffolk, Suffolk, and England and Wales. 2021 census.**



**Chart 6: Largest sectors by percentage of total jobs. 2021 census**



Nearly 85 per cent of residents in West Suffolk are employed in ten of the largest sectors.

## NS-SeC (National Statistics Socio-economic Classification)

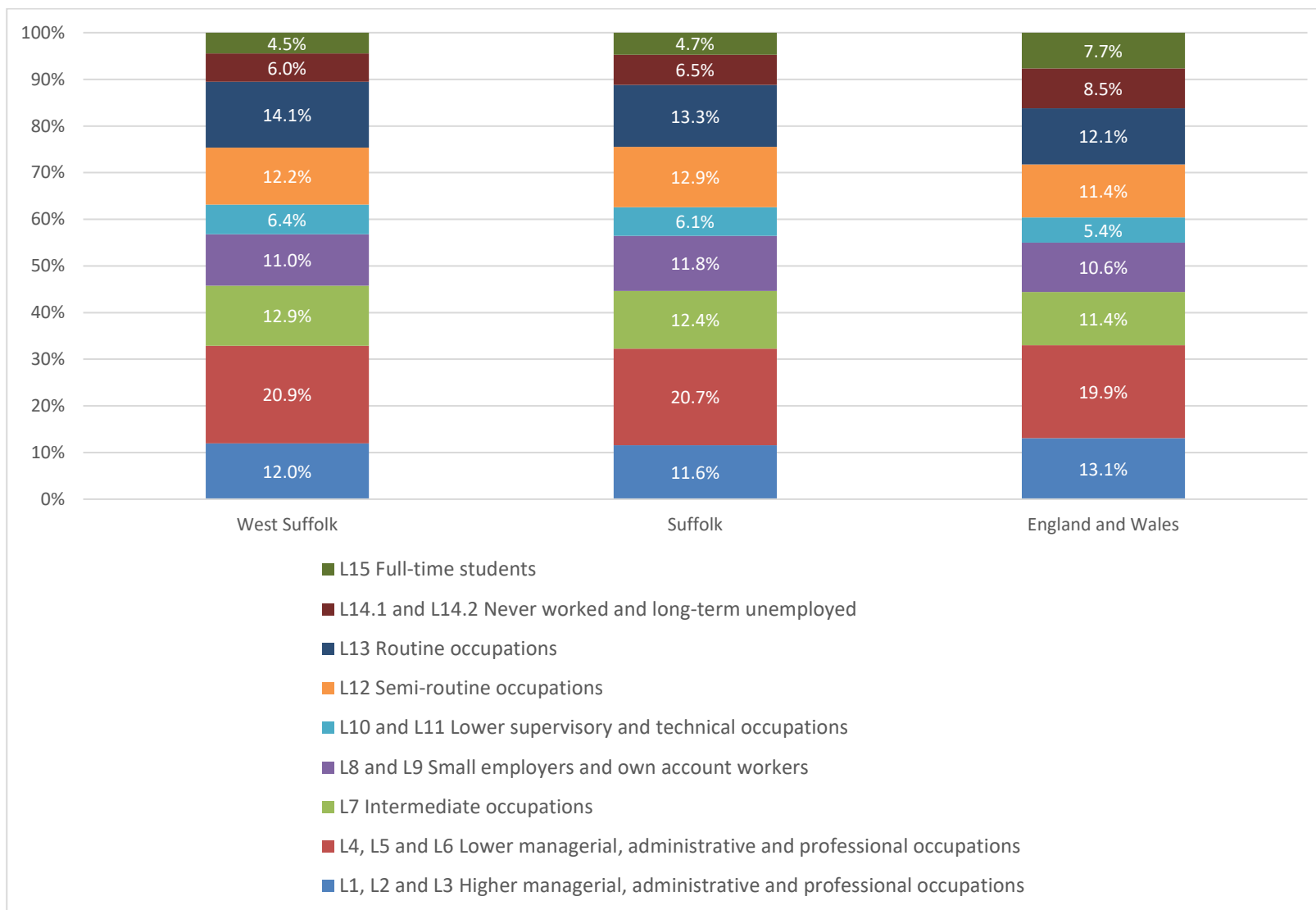
The NS-SEC has been constructed to measure the employment relations and conditions of occupations. Conceptually, these are central to showing the structure of socio-economic positions in modern societies and helping to explain variations in social behaviour and other social phenomena.

The 2021 census economic activity tables released in December 2022 separated out full-time students who are economically active from the other variables in the economically active group. To generate comparable figures from the 2011 census, it has been necessary to subtract outputs from table DC6108EW (Economic activity of full-time students by student accommodation by age) from the table DC6107EW (Economic Activity by sex by age). The key statistics tables from 2011 restrict economic activity data to the 16 to 74 age group so cannot be used for this comparison. The economically inactive parts of these tables offer a more straightforward comparison.

**Definition:** People aged 16 years and over are economically active if, between 15 March and 21 March 2021, they were:

- in employment (an employee or self-employed)
- unemployed, but looking for work and could start within two weeks
- unemployed, but waiting to start a job that had been offered and accepted.

**Chart 7: Percentage usual resident population aged 16+ by NS-Sec, 2021 census**



L4, L5 and L6 lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations accounts for the largest proportion of residents aged 16+ in all of Suffolk’s Districts and Boroughs, as well as nationwide.

## Occupation

These data are not comparable with those from the 2011 census. ONS changed the classification for Census 2021

**Table 3: Usual resident population aged 16 years and over in employment the week before the 2021 census by occupation**

| Occupation (current)   | West Suffolk |              | Suffolk     | England and Wales |
|--|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------------|
|  | Count        | Percent (%)  | Percent (%) | Percent (%)       |
| Total: All usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment the week before the census | 89,619       |              |             |                   |
| 1. Managers, directors and senior officials  | 11,402       | 12.7%        | 12.6%       | 12.8%             |
| 2. Professional occupations  | 14,748       | 16.5%        | 16.7%       | 20.2%             |
| 3. Associate professional and technical occupations  | 13,094       | <b>14.6%</b> | 13.1%       | 13.2%             |
| 4. Administrative and secretarial occupations  | 8,094        | 9.0%         | 9.4%        | 9.3%              |
| 5. Skilled trades occupations  | 10,962       | <b>12.2%</b> | 12.2%       | 10.3%             |
| 6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations   | 9,252        | <b>10.3%</b> | 10.1%       | 9.4%              |
| 7. Sales and customer service occupations  | 5,825        | 6.5%         | 7.6%        | 7.5%              |
| 8. Process, plant and machine operatives   | 6,778        | <b>7.6%</b>  | 7.7%        | 7.0%              |
| 9. Elementary occupations  | 9,464        | 10.6%        | 10.6%       | 10.5%             |

West Suffolk has a similar breakdown of employment occupations as those seen across Suffolk and nationally.

- The largest difference is found in professional occupations, which accounts for 16.5 per cent of West Suffolk residents in employment, compared to 20.2 per cent nationally. Professional occupations still account for the largest proportion of roles in West Suffolk
- A larger proportion of West Suffolk residents are employed in associate professional and technical occupations, skilled trades occupations, caring, leisure and other service occupations and process, plant and machine operative occupations than the national average.

# Travel to work

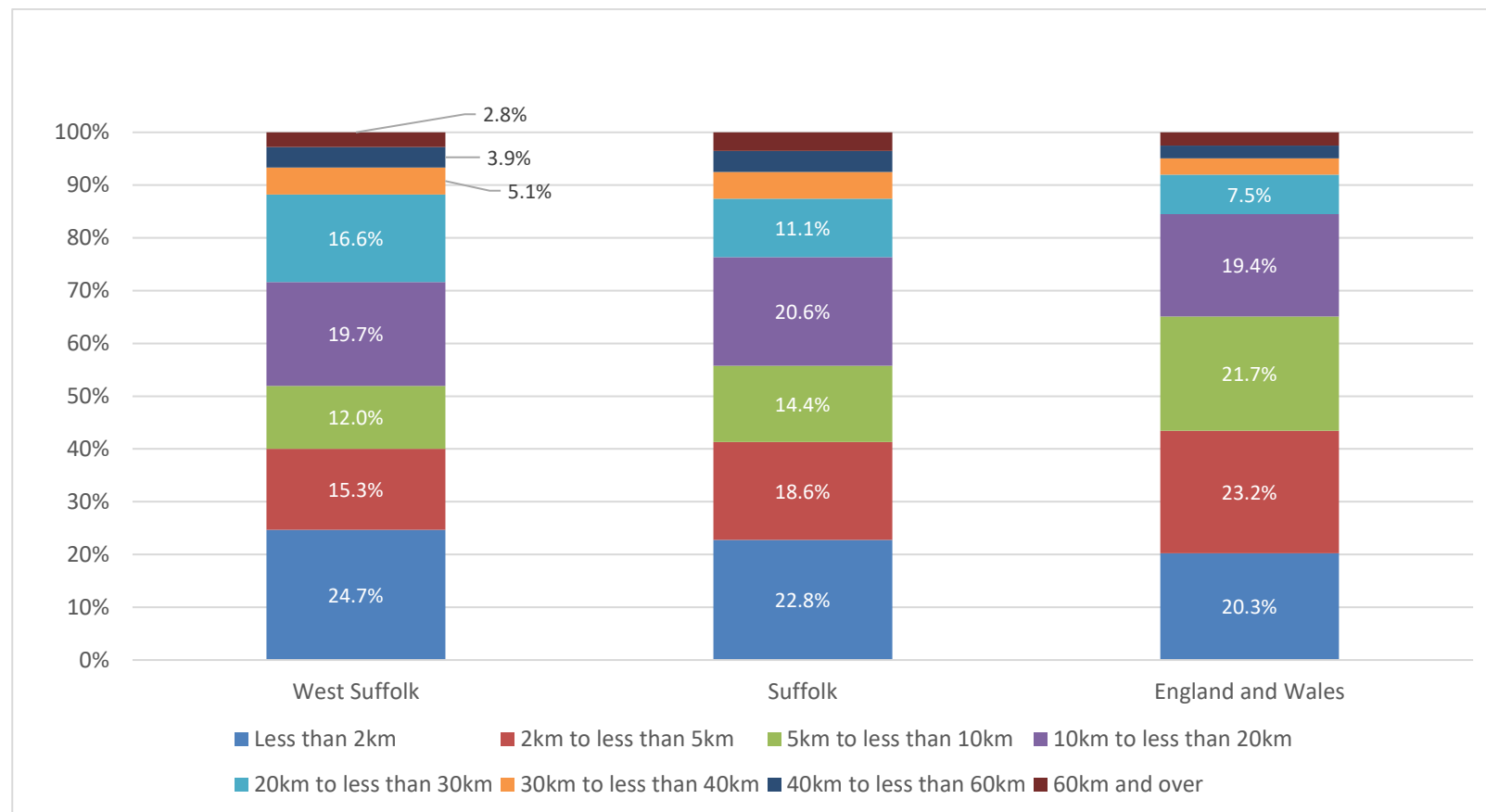
## Distance travelled to work

**Table 4: All usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment the week before the census by distance travelled to work**

|  | West Suffolk |             | Suffolk     | England and Wales |
|--|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
|  | Count        | Percent (%) | Percent (%) | Percent (%)       |
| Total: All usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment the week before the census | 89,619       |             |             |                   |
| Less than 2km  | 13,525       | 15.1%       | 13.1%       | 11.0%             |
| 2km to less than 5km   | 8,397        | 9.4%        | 10.7%       | 12.6%             |
| 5km to less than 10km  | 6,553        | 7.3%        | 8.3%        | 11.8%             |
| 10km to less than 20km   | 10,771       | 12.0%       | 11.9%       | 10.5%             |
| 20km to less than 30km   | 9,094        | 10.1%       | 6.4%        | 4.1%              |
| 30km to less than 40km   | 2,798        | 3.1%        | 2.9%        | 1.7%              |
| 40km to less than 60km   | 2,137        | 2.4%        | 2.3%        | 1.3%              |
| 60km and over  | 1,520        | 1.7%        | 2.0%        | 1.4%              |
| Works mainly from home   | 21,104       | 23.5%       | 26.5%       | 31.2%             |
| Works mainly at an offshore installation, in no fixed place, or outside the UK             | 13,720       | 15.3%       | 15.9%       | 14.4%             |

**Chart 8: Distance travelled to work. Census 2021**

Excluding those who work mainly from home or mainly at an offshore installation, in no fixed place or outside UK.



Almost a quarter of West Suffolk residents that travel to a workplace have a journey of less than 2km and over 50 per cent of residents have a journey of less than 10km.

28.4 per cent of West Suffolk residents who need to travel to a workplace take a journey of more than 20km; nearly double the England and Wales average and 4.6 percentage points higher than the Suffolk figure of 23.6 per cent.

## Hours worked

**Table 5: Usual resident population aged 16 years and over in employment the week before the census by hours worked per week, 2011 and 2021 censuses**

|                                    | West Suffolk |        |        |                       | Suffolk               | England and Wales     |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------|--------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                                    | 2011         | 2021   | Change | Percentage change (%) | Percentage change (%) | Percentage change (%) |
| Part-time: 15 hours or less worked | 8,317        | 8,639  | 322    | 3.9%                  | 2.8%                  | 12.2%                 |
| Part-time: 16 to 30 hours worked   | 15,325       | 15,970 | 645    | 4.2%                  | 4.2%                  | 4.8%                  |
| Full-time: 31 to 48 hours worked   | 50,429       | 53,528 | 3,099  | 6.1%                  | 4.1%                  | 7.4%                  |
| Full-time: 49 or more hours worked | 13,952       | 11,482 | -2,470 | -17.7%                | -15.1%                | -12.8%                |
| All categories: Hours worked       | 88,023       | 89,619 | 1,596  | 1.8%                  | 1.2%                  | 4.7%                  |

The number of people working 49 hours or more in West Suffolk has fallen by 17.7 per cent since the 2011 census. There has been a similar fall in people working the longest hours across Suffolk (-15.1 per cent) and England and Wales (-12.8 per cent).

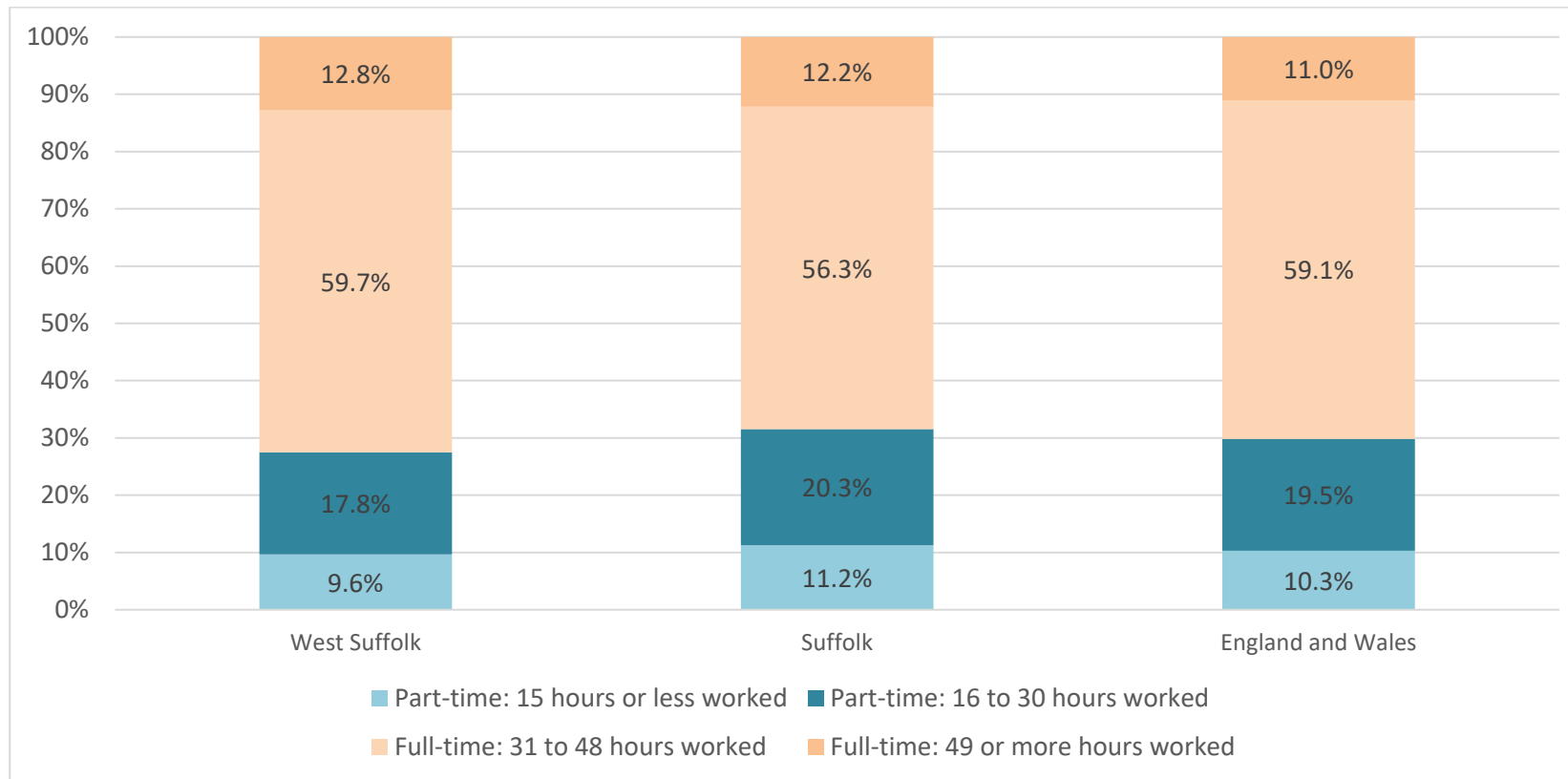
There has been a modest rise (+3.9 per cent) in the number of part-time jobs entailing 15 hours or less per week in West Suffolk. This type of work has increased much more strongly nationally (+12.2 per cent).

The number of people working 31-48 hours per week has increased by 3,099 in West Suffolk since 2011, a rise of 6.1 per cent. There has been stronger growth in the number of people working these hours in England and Wales (+7.4 per cent).

Part-time work of 16 to 30 hours per week has increased to a similar extent in West Suffolk as across Suffolk and England and Wales as a whole (4.2 - 4.8 per cent).



**Chart 9: Hours worked per week, Census 2021**



The percentage of residents with jobs in West Suffolk who work full-time is the highest of Suffolk’s LTLAs, this is also higher (72.5 per cent) than England and Wales (70.1 per cent)

## Method used to travel to work

**Table 6: Usual resident population aged 16 years and over in employment the week before the Census by method used to travel to work, 2021 census**

|  | West Suffolk |             | Suffolk     | England and Wales |
|--|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
|  | Count        | Percent (%) | Percent (%) | Percent (%)       |
| All usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment in the week before the census | 89,623       |             |             |                   |
| Work mainly at or from home  | 21,104       | 23.5%       | 26.5%       | 31.2%             |
| Underground, metro, light rail, tram   | 67           | 0.1%        | 0.1%        | 1.8%              |
| Train  | 353          | 0.4%        | 0.6%        | 1.9%              |
| Bus, minibus or coach  | 1,056        | 1.2%        | 1.5%        | 4.2%              |
| Taxi   | 309          | 0.3%        | 0.3%        | 0.7%              |
| Motorcycle, scooter or moped   | 404          | 0.5%        | 0.5%        | 0.5%              |
| Driving a car or van   | 51,600       | 57.6%       | 54.6%       | 45.1%             |
| Passenger in a car or van  | 3,729        | 4.2%        | 4.0%        | 3.9%              |
| Bicycle  | 2,073        | 2.3%        | 2.6%        | 2.0%              |
| On foot  | 8,080        | 9.0%        | 8.3%        | 7.6%              |
| Other method of travel to work   | 848          | 0.9%        | 1.1%        | 1.0%              |

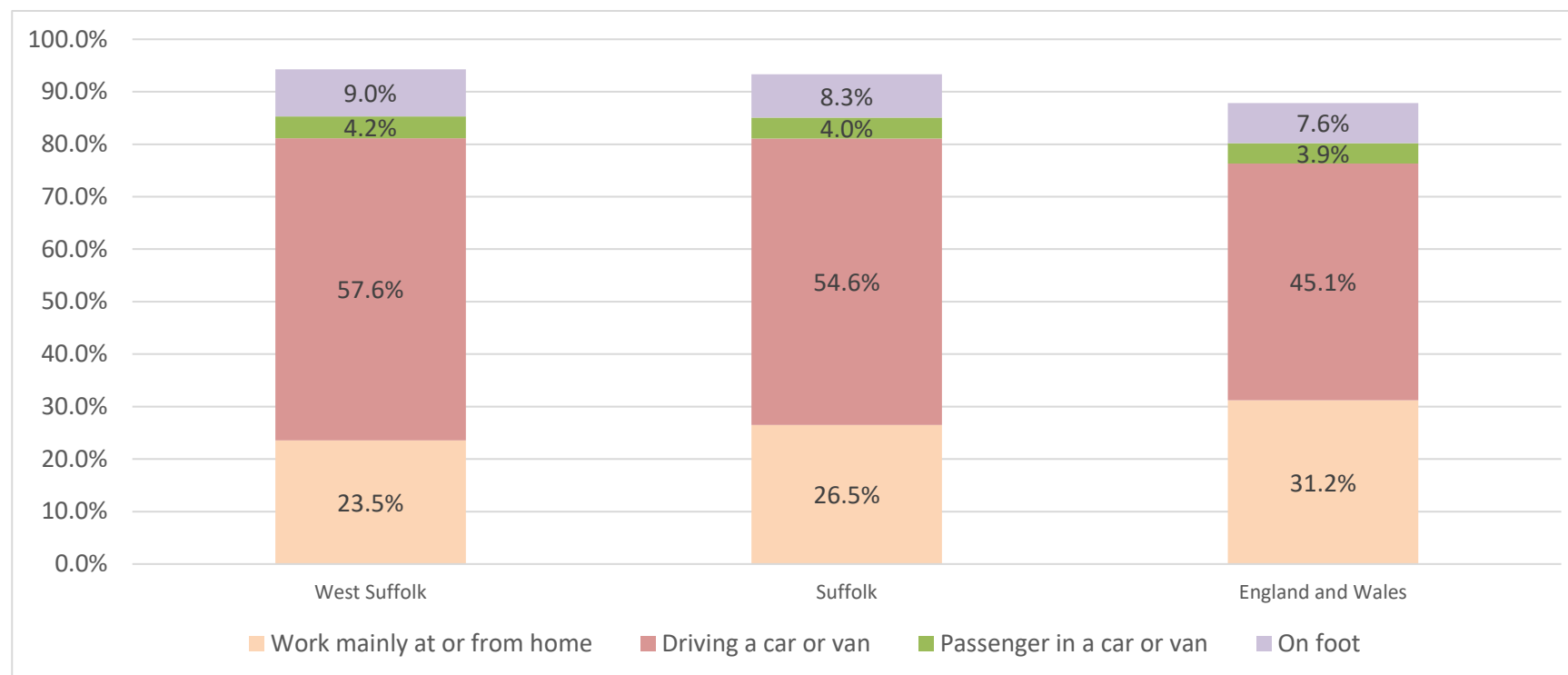
More than half (57.6 per cent) of West Suffolk workers in the week before the 2021 census travelled to their workplace by car or van. This is higher than the Suffolk figure (54.6 per cent) and the England and Wales figure (45.1 per cent).

Alongside a larger proportion of workers travelling less than 2km in West Suffolk than seen nationally, a greater proportion of people in the district also travel to work on foot. Over 8,000 people in West Suffolk reached their place of work on foot, 9 per cent of all workers, 1.4 percentage points above the England and Wales figure of 7.6 per cent.

More than 2,000 people travelled to work by bicycle in West Suffolk, 2.3 per cent of residents. This represents a larger proportion of workers cycling to work than the national average of 2 per cent.

1.6 per cent of West Suffolk residents in work the week before the 2021 census travelled to work on public transport; 1.2 per cent by bus, minibus or coach, 0.4 per cent by train and 0.1 per cent by underground, metro, light rail or tram; a total of 1,476 people. These forms of transport were more commonly used across England and Wales as a whole.

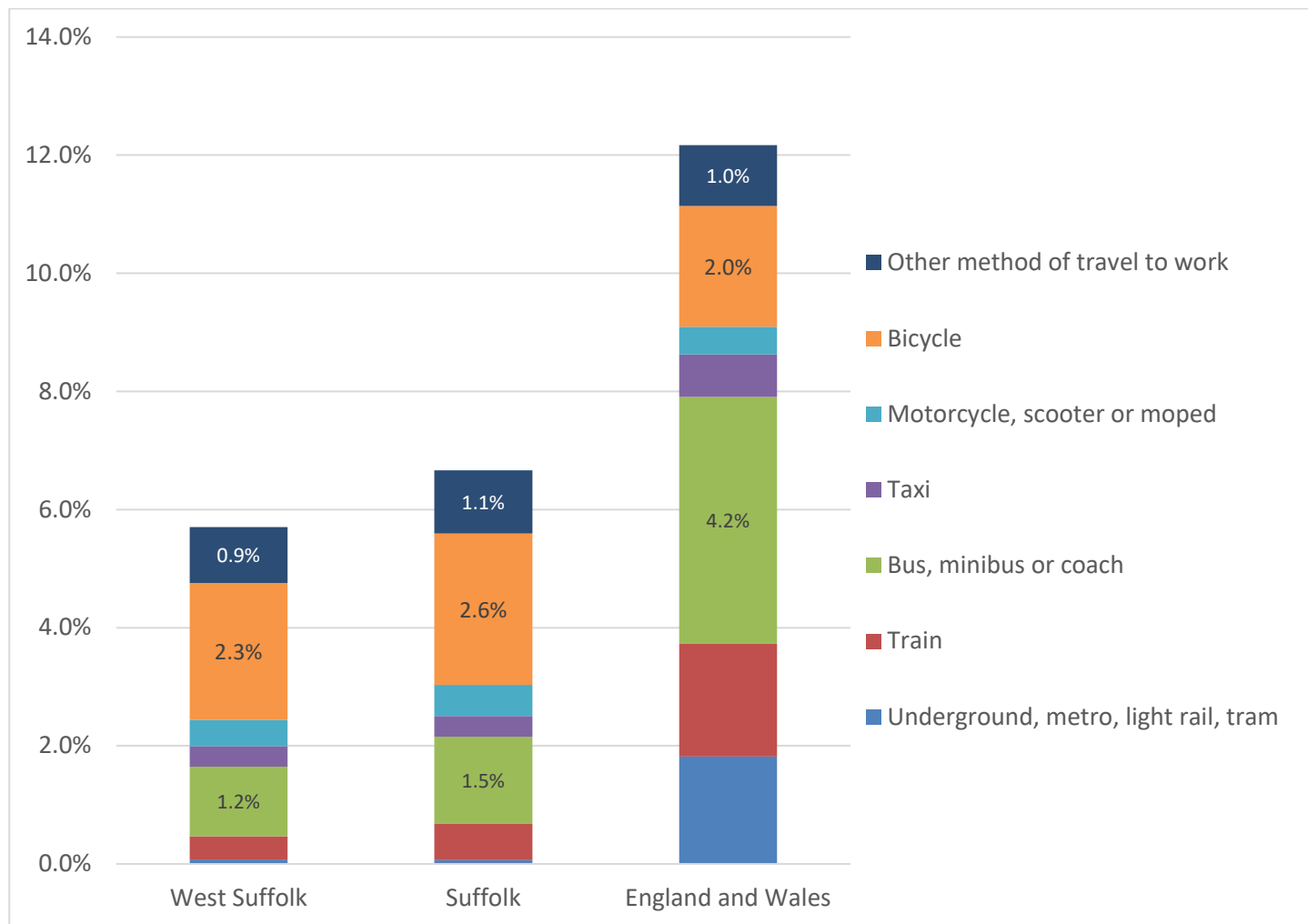
**Chart 10: Percentage of usual residents aged 16+ in employment the week before the Census who work mainly at or from home, travel to work driving a car or van, as a passenger in a car or van or on foot, 2021 census**



West Suffolk had lower rates of home working than the Suffolk and national averages.

All districts and boroughs in Suffolk have higher rates of car or van usage than the national average. 57.6 per cent of workers living in West Suffolk travel to work by car.

**Chart 11: Percentage of usual residents aged 16+ in employment the week before the Census who travel to work by methods other than car, van or on foot, 2021 census**



Travel to work by bicycle is more common in West Suffolk than nationally.

## Education data

The highest level of qualification is derived from the question asking residents of England and Wales aged 16 years and over to indicate all qualifications held, or their nearest equivalent. This may include foreign qualifications where they were matched to the closest UK equivalent. Therefore, this dataset provides estimates that classify usual residents aged 16 years and over by their highest level of qualifications. The types of qualification included in each level are:

- **no qualifications:** no formal qualifications
- **Level 1 and entry level qualifications:** one to four GCSE passes (grade A\* to C or grade 4 and above) and any other GCSEs at other grades, or equivalent qualifications
- **Level 2 qualifications:** five or more GCSE passes (grade A\* to C or grade 4 and above) or equivalent qualifications
- Apprenticeships
- **Level 3 qualifications:** two or more A Levels or equivalent qualifications
- **Level 4 qualifications and above:** Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree, or postgraduate qualifications
- **other qualifications,** of unknown level.

Please note, apprenticeships data collected by the census did not include the level or type of an apprenticeship. Advanced further education was deemed the best fit overall for traditional trade or craft and modern apprenticeships.

Although highest level of qualification is broadly comparable between 2011 and 2021, there are caveats. The changes to the collection methodology mean that a reasonable proportion of respondents will have identified a different qualification level than they did in 2011 even though they still hold the same qualifications. Therefore, any change in qualification levels when compared with 2011 will be partly a result of the methodology changes and be partly indicative of real change. As such, caution is advised in interpreting these with data - avoid drawing conclusions from the differences or using them to inform planning or evaluate policies.

## Highest level of qualifications

**Table 7: Highest level of qualifications achieved in West Suffolk by count and as a percentage of usual residents aged 16 and over, Census 2011 and Census 2021:**

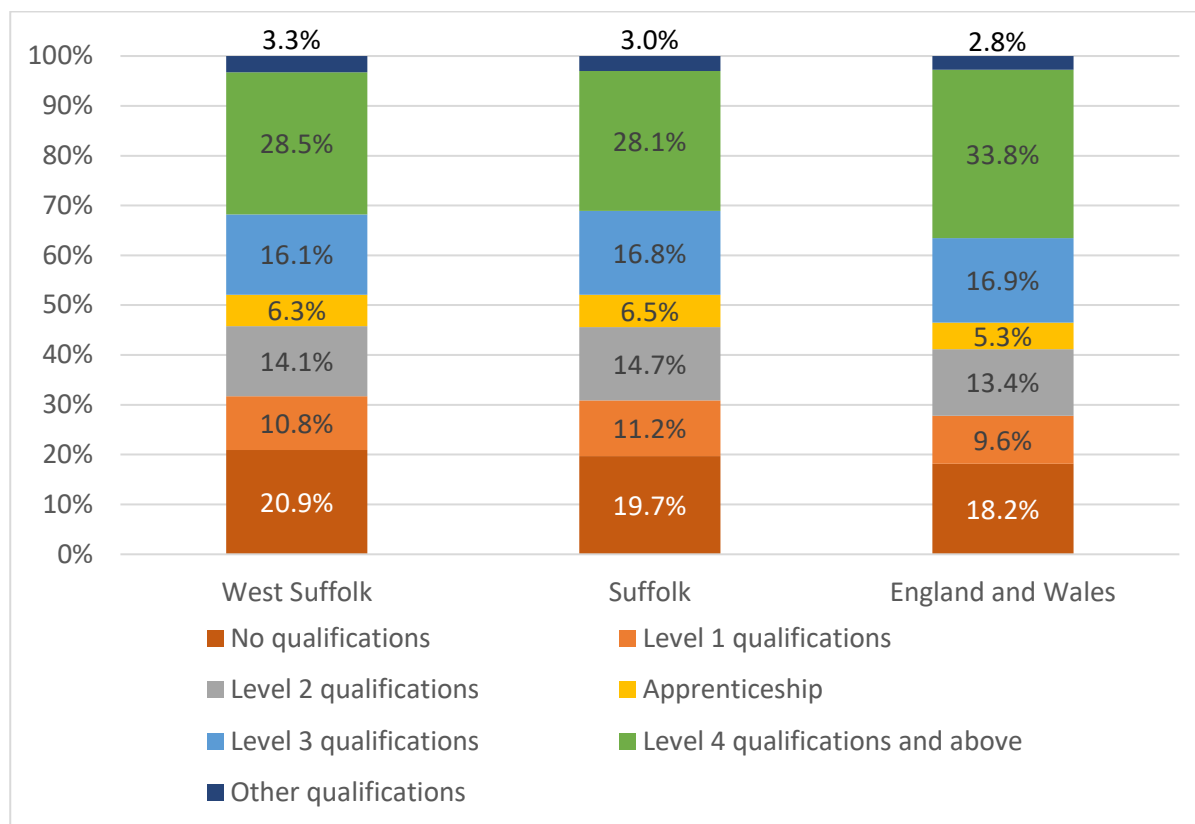
|                                  | West Suffolk 2011 |                | West Suffolk 2021 |                | Change |                       |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------|-----------------------|
|                                  | Count             | Percentage (%) | Count             | Percentage (%) | Count  | Percentage change (%) |
| No qualifications                | 32,782            | 23.5%          | 31,016            | 20.9%          | -1766  | -5.4%                 |
| Level 1 qualifications           | 19,857            | 14.2%          | 16,000            | 10.8%          | -3857  | -19.4%                |
| Level 2 qualifications           | 22,509            | 16.2%          | 20,814            | 14.1%          | -1695  | -7.5%                 |
| Apprenticeship                   | 5,526             | 4.0%           | 9,349             | 6.3%           | 3823   | 69.2%                 |
| Level 3 qualifications           | 15,871            | 11.4%          | 23,853            | 16.1%          | 7982   | 50.3%                 |
| Level 4 qualifications and above | 31,603            | 22.7%          | 42,235            | 28.5%          | 10632  | 33.6%                 |
| Other qualifications             | 11,219            | 8.0%           | 4,861             | 3.3%           | -6358  | -56.7%                |

Across West Suffolk, on the day of the 2021 census, 28.5 per cent of usual residents aged 16 and over indicated that their highest level of qualification was at level 4 or above; 5.3 percentage points lower than the England and Wales estimate of 33.8 per cent, but an increase of 33.6 per cent (10,632) since the 2011 census.

The second most common category was no qualifications (20.9 per cent), 1.2 percentage points higher than the Suffolk estimate of 19.7 per cent, and 2.7 percentage points higher than the England and Wales estimate of 18.2 per cent. Although, the number of West Suffolk residents within this category has decreased by 5.4 per cent (-1,766) since the 2011 census, note Suffolk and England and Wales saw a 14 per cent decrease in this category.

Apprenticeships were the highest qualification for 6.3 per cent (9,349) of people, 1 percentage points higher than the England and Wales estimate of 5.3 per cent; also, showing the largest increase of 69.2 per cent (3,823) since the 2011 census.

**Chart 12: Highest level of qualification across West Suffolk, Suffolk and England and Wales as a percentage of estimated population, Census 2021**



All of Suffolk’s districts and boroughs have a lower percentage of residents whose highest level of qualification was at level 4 or above compared to the England and Wales estimate of 33.8 per cent.

All of Suffolk’s districts and boroughs have a higher percentage of residents whose highest level of qualification were either apprenticeship, level 1 or level 2 compared to the England and Wales estimate.

Of all Suffolk’s districts and boroughs, West Suffolk has the largest proportion of residents (20.9 per cent) with no qualifications.

Of all Suffolk’s districts and boroughs, West Suffolk has the largest proportion of residents (3.3 per cent) with ‘other qualifications’

## Education data – comparison across regions and counties

**Chart 13: Summary of highest level of qualification across West Suffolk, counties, regions and England and Wales as a percentage of estimated population, Census 2021**

